

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

TALES FROM THE WAREHOUSE
THE CLASS OF '65
REMEMBERS

THE CLASS OF '65

Rosinda N. Alexander - Veterans Administration, specialized in adult foster care
Geraldine (Gerry) Aronin - Assistant Secretary, Maryland State Department of Social Services; President, Women's Alliance of Maryland
Margaret R. Blessing - no contact
Myra Bonhage-Hale (formerly Myra O'Brien) – Director, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Unit, Weston State Hospital; Owner, Herb Farm in West Virginia
Jeannemarie T. Bardoli - no contact
Susan A. Claggett - Military social work
Benjamin N. Davis - Director, Maryland Chapter NASW; grant writer, Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services
Marjorie W. Feinblatt *
Betty Golombek - Jewish Family and Children
Paul Gunning - Private Practice, York, PA; Governor's representative, Alcohol & Highway Safety
Elmira Heist - Director, Queen Anne County Department of Social Services
Myra R. Herbert - Administration, Department of Education, State of Virginia
Ferne Kandell Kolodner - Social Security Administration
Barbara A. Mikulski - Senator, US Senate
Phyllis R. Miller * - Faculty, University of Maryland School of Social work
Martin B. Millison – Faculty, Temple University
Marion Monk * - Maryland State Social Service Administration, Child Welfare
Norma E. Muller - Charles County Department of Social Services
Judith H. Ratliff - Private Practice
Evelyn F. Slaght - Associate Professor of Social work, George Mason University
Rosalynde K. Soble * - Faculty, University of Maryland Dental School
Nancy R. Tankersley - Montgomery County Department of Social Services
Carl Thistel - Program Director, Drug Abuse, Shepard Pratt Hospital, MD
Valeria A. Tocci - Geriatric Evaluation Specialist, Maryland Department of Health & Mental Hygiene
E. Anne H. Whitaker - No contact; visiting student from Scotland
William B. Wise - Director, Kent County Department of Social Services

* Deceased

FOREWARD BY *HARRIS CHAIKLIN*

When I think of the class of '65, one phrase comes to mind: "They stuck together." As far as I know, no other class in the University of Maryland School of Social Work's history has had the kind of reunions they have had.

I won't try to explain this but would like to note some of the conditions that were present when they were in school. The class was of a size where everyone got to know everyone else, and people substantially took their classes together. As the school grew this was not possible.

The old warehouse with its creaky stairs, where the school was first located, fostered a camaraderie that could not be carried over to our next home in the former law school.

There was another important intangible. This was the third class in the school. Verl Lewis, the first dean of the school, and the university had picked the initial class carefully. Verl had deep conviction about the importance of public agencies and the need to promote the standards. He made sure the entering classes had broad representation from the community and took in students that later admissions people wouldn't. In some sense this class was the high point in the school's history.

Subsequent to this, both Verl's desire to grow and pressure from the university to grow led to some faculty hires that did not fit into Verl's vision. His unfortunate heart attack brought this phase of the school's growth to a close. During the next phase the pressure to grow was even greater. This led to the hiring of people, many of them not social workers, who gave a different cast to the school and its mission.

There are so many things I could talk about. Verl was not a flashy guy. But he was very smart and deeply committed to social change, public welfare, and scholarship. I wonder how many people knew that by chance a man he had worked with in a Connecticut prison had been transferred to Patuxent. As long as Verl was at the school he visited him once a month.

There are some humorous stories. When Shirley Buttrick, who taught social policy and economics, first came, her voice bothered me for two weeks; I felt I should know it. Then I recognized it. She had been an economics instructor when I started college at a University of Connecticut branch in New London in 1946. When I asked her about it, she was horrified; she thought if I told people about it, they would think she was old.

She was probably a year or two younger than I was. My start at college was after army service and the university had taken over a maritime training school to accommodate returning veterans. In those days she was Shirley Miller with a new MA in economics from Yale and working on her Ph.D. there. Imagine a lecture hall filled with 500 ex-GI students. The professor is away and out walks this little woman in high heels, a tight skirt, and a page boy bob. The hall erupts in hoots and hollers. Suddenly this voice from Brooklyn erupts, "All right you guys, none of that, we are here to study economics." I remember once in a discussion section on Gresham's law (bad money drives the good out of circulation), I argued that in the ETO after the war it was reversed and the bad money was turned into good. Needless to say, I didn't win the argument. Nor did I ever, with her.

I taught research from the point of view that research thinking and practice thinking were the same. I looked to have students present their research at a research day. Usually there was a picnic at my house after this. After Verl left, people who did not hold to the standard were assigned to direct projects.

I was very much a believer in what Verl Lewis was about. His early departure was a great loss.

INTRODUCTION: *THE CLASS OF '65 REMEMBERS*

It was 1965. The School of Social work, University of Maryland, was graduating its third class. Graduation was both exciting and sad. We were 26 people who over the past two years had bonded and without realizing it had become an extended family. Almost as one we had laughed, cried, cursed, studied, rebelled, comforted and supported each other, and, finally, graduated. And now, forty years later, with our experiences at the school a permanent part of our lives and with a lasting relationship with each other and as a class, we decided to write our remembrances of the warehouse days and after.

What was the warehouse? It was a four-story, 1920s edifice at 645 W. Redwood Street. Our school was on the second floor of this downtown building, and the entrance was a small door leading to a narrow hall and an equally narrow stairway that opened onto the school; offices and classrooms were all located in these close quarters. Our lunchroom was a vending machine dispensing watery chicken soup and coffee of a similar quality. Banging on the machine could be heard when it didn't produce either food or money. We were downtown with all of the social problems visible and with a vending machine that not only didn't produce its meager food but often ate our limited money. Good place to learn about social problems.

Who were we when we embarked on this course of study for a master's degree in social work? Twenty-six of us graduated. We ranged in age from 21 to 45 with the majority in their thirties. There were 21 females and five males, 24 white and three African-Americans. Sixteen were married, eleven had children, one was a widow with a child. The majority of the enrollees had work experience, and many were able to receive a work-study stipend or a salary from social welfare agencies.

What was the social climate when we attended school? We spanned an era of hope, despair, and hope again. John F. Kennedy was president in 1963 when we began our studies, and there was hope that his leadership would result in new and innovative social policies. He was assassinated in 1964, and there was deep despair at the horror of what had happened and for the future of the country. Lyndon Johnson became president and with him came the War on Poverty, which began a period of innovation, new social welfare programs, and hope again. The era of the War on Poverty had its impact on the profession and on all of our careers. New avenues for social workers were being created with new programs for the poor. We were fortunate to be students at this time. Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique* was published in 1963; and, thanks to Dr. Chaiklin, it became required reading for us. It was the beginning of a new era for women, and we

were there at the beginning. We were fortunate that our school took a leadership role in developing the track in community organization. To some of us community organization added a new dimension to the study of social work that became the foundation for our future as professional social workers.

And so we started. What follows are the reminiscences of the class of '65. Some are long, some are vignettes. They cover all facets of our experience—admission, classroom, curriculum, field placement, faculty—and the bonding of our class. We write this as history for the school from one of its earliest classes—a class that produced the first female senator to win a national senatorial election in her own right. We remember that our senator began her political career as secretary to our president, Bill Wise; and, as far as we can remember, they are still secretary and president of our class. They were elected for one issue—too many papers due at the same time. They fought and won a concession and we kept them in office waiting for the next issue.

We also write this to reflect on changes in the curriculum at the school and wonder if we have lost or gained as these changes were made. Although the social climate has changed dramatically since 1965, those of us who pursued a career in community organization continue to believe that the principles and methodology of community organization have a place in our society; and we bemoan the diminution of its importance.

Part 1

THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
WHAT IT WAS LIKE THEN

THE CAMPUS

The ghost of Violet White lives in the warehouse at the foot of Pine Street on Redwood Street. That location was a logical home for the first School of Social work in Maryland. Violet White was a sergeant on the Baltimore City Police force whose office was located on Pine Street, two blocks above Redwood Street. She was well known to all of the Protective Services workers at the Department of Welfare and probably to many private agencies serving families and children as well. The Pine Street station housed juvenile and female defendants.

The school, with its administration, faculty, library, and classes, were all housed on the second floor of this functioning warehouse. The only intrusion was a windowed office overlooking the drug activity on Pine Street. This was the domain of Dean Verl Lewis. The rest of the faculty was housed in the rear of the building, probably to keep them from running off. In the center were two classrooms. All rooms except Dr. Lewis's office were windowless. This was probably done so that students and faculty wouldn't be tempted by all the advantages that the surrounding campus had to offer – drug dealers, domestic violence, juvenile gangs, stray dogs, rats, cats, and an occasional unconscious body on the sidewalk.

The building was of a unique design, aesthetically challenging in its unique mix of grays and whites. Into this atmosphere of intellectual stimulation was brought the reality of life. The first floor was an active loading dock. Rather than Musak, we had the constant sound of trucks being unloaded and the colorful language of the warehouse men. These sounds together with the truck fumes lent an aura of the real world to prepare us for our future.

The building was not lacking in social amenities. Even though we had no sunlight, and even though the air was polluted with truck fumes and there was a constant hubbub from the loading docks, we did have a cafeteria, including a coffee, tea, and chicken soup machine saved from a New York City automat – a genuine relic of the 1940's.

This was our baptismal font. This was our launching pad to stem all social ills, organize our eager communities, and salvage all the wounded ids and egos. We were ready to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. We were going to be honest-to-God real social workers.

A BIRDS-EYE VIEW OF THE CLASS OF '65

East side, west side – we came from all around Baltimore and Maryland. We were the third class admitted to the University of Maryland School of Social work. Its first class had graduated the previous June. The profession of social work was establishing a foothold in the greater Baltimore area and, to a lesser degree, in the outlying counties.

Sixteen students were from the metropolitan area of Baltimore, two were from the D.C. area, and two each from Southern Maryland, Western Maryland, and the Eastern Shore. One student was a transfer from Scotland. Although the selection process was most likely thought out well, the most troubling aspect was the racial imbalance. There were only three black females and no black males.

All but two students were employed in social work prior to entering the School of Social Work (this included the transfer student from Scotland). The largest employer was the Department of Public Welfare; others included Family Services, psychiatric facilities such as St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Child Study Center (now Woodbourne), and Jewish Family Services.

We were older: 17 were married, 10 with children. We included one widow. Several of the married women with children had returned to the work force after raising their children. Three in our class married during or immediately after graduate school – two to each other, Carl and Gerri Thistle (Gerri did not return for the second year), and one, Marty Millison, to a student in the following class of 1966, Linda Raichlen. Poverty chooses poverty.

Many of the spouses were an integral part of our success. Lou Aronin was the chief shepherd. Richard Muller and David Slaght challenged us with their conservative views. Joan Gunning and Joan Wise made valiant efforts to keep their student husbands on track. Ed Durkin's daughter and Paul Gunning's son were born during the second year. David Slaght, our thoughtful artist, painted the portrait of Verl Lewis, which now hangs in the school's new home.

There seems to have been an unspoken supportive network, a bond with this class almost from the beginning. One of the obvious reasons was that several of us had been employed either at admission or, in the recent past, at the Baltimore City Department of Public Welfare, while others were employed by the more rural county departments of welfare. About half of our class knew each other by name at least.

We were people who cared for people. That obviously drew us into the profession and

gave us the impetus to apply to graduate school. It was perhaps a key to the school's selection process. The school, in its goal of inclusion rather than exclusion, made decisions that brought together people with complementary assets.

As we review our admissions process now, it appears quite obvious that the school was looking for something in addition to intellectual ability. This process of selection included the usual intake considerations – undergraduate degrees, fields of study, grade point averages, scores on the Miller's Analogy exam – but these academic criteria were not the basis of admission for a significant number of the class of '65. There were probably six to eight of us whose G.P.A. fell below the magic number of 3.0. About half had degrees in unrelated fields – literature, fine arts, liberal arts. We even had a former Jesuit .

Next came the interview. Some of us were quickly assured that we were academically unqualified, but the interviewer would petition on our behalf. Some were expected to show real identity with our client base. Some were brought in to keep the rest of us in order. It worked.

We had from the start our acknowledged leaders, Bill Wise and Gerry Aronin. Gerry and her husband, Lou, held our first social gathering, which really set the tone for our class. We were as much a social group as an academic one. During the two years of our graduate studies, Saturday night gatherings became a regular factor in the cohesiveness of our class. Most of the students attended, and many hosted these gatherings. We knew each other not only as students but also as friends. We celebrated the birth of Paul and Joan's son and Ed Durkin's daughter. We cheered the engagement of Gerri and Carl Thistle and Marty and Linda Millison.

Barbara Mikulski was admired for her personality, sense of humor, and commitment to her community. We still share in Barbara's accomplishments. The charisma that has been her hallmark in politics was obvious to her classmates from the beginning. She charted her own path.

Our class was a true mosaic of personalities, strengths, and diversity, which led us to a multitude of accomplishments. We were supporters of each other, sharing knowledge and sharing ourselves. One of the most significant accomplishments was the graduation rate. Of the 30 who started on time, 26 graduated in 1965 and two graduated later; two did not return the second year. We started as a loose federation of hopefuls and finished as a family of professional social workers.

THE CURRICULUM

ADVOCACY AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS. Then as now, the curricula in most schools of social work were focused on psychoanalytic theory on the assumption that we can only help the clients if we understood the underlying causes of their behavior. We were fortunate at the School of Social Work to have Carol Germaine and Irma Stein, both of whom believed in the problem-solving approach to casework. Beginning “where the client is” meant to our faculty that we should find out the critical problems that brought the client to the agency and address those problems **first**. A social history was only appropriate if concrete services did not resolve the primary issues of concern to the client. If the problem was lacking money to feed their children, the caseworker’s job was to help them qualify for and secure available public funds (ADC, donable foods, WIC, food stamps, etc.). The assumption in most cases was that it was the lack of resources that was creating the crisis for the client, not whatever psychosocial issues they were facing.

That philosophy carried over to the macro/community organization curriculum, where the message was clear that our oppressive society, not the individual, was responsible for many of the social problems we were addressing. Our community organization, policy, and administration classes included trips to facilities in the community serving the poor, to assess the adequacy of services. It was assumed that, where services were lacking, we as social workers would come away with a sense of responsibility for advocating for expansion and improvement of resources for the poor and oppressed.

It was an era when institutionalization was the primary response to almost all social problems. We learned, as part of a course, what it meant to be locked on a ward with the mentally ill. That was an educational experience that confirmed for us the need to improve services to this population; the sparse barren surroundings, the lack of a clock, a calendar, or any reading material were extremely depressing. Those on the ward were out of touch, in part because of their surroundings. At Baltimore City Hospital, we saw the distressing and depressing social isolation of the elderly who were institutionalized there, further convincing us of the need to advocate for more community-based resources.

Advocacy was more than just a word in the curriculum. It was also expected in our field experiences, where we learned to practice advocacy whether we were in a clinical placement or a community placement.

Although the problems faced by the poor then are no different from the problems of the poor now, schools of social work today do not necessarily mandate community in-

volvement or exposure as part of the curriculum. Homelessness is a chronic problem that was exacerbated by deinstitutionalization, but no school now would consider doing what the School of Social Work did then – set up a whole unit within the Baltimore Urban Renewal and Housing Agency (BURHA) to help organize the community to respond to the problems that all of these communities were facing. Barbara Mikulski, years later, used experiences gained at the school to stop the development of a highway through residential communities in Baltimore that was displacing poor families.

OBSERVATIONS IN INSTITUTIONS. During the first year we had opportunities to observe social welfare institutions, which we would visit, as well as the family, in which the students were required to observe infant-mother relationships and interactions. The institutions selected for study and visiting were a state mental hospital, a chronic illness unit, and families who were facing eviction because of urban renewal. Students had to record their observations and prepare a paper at the end of the term. Classroom instruction focused on reviewing the reading, receiving training in observation techniques, learning the comparative method of analysis, and analyzing the nature of social problems. This observation course was part of the philosophy of Dean Verl Lewis, who “wanted students to understand those people in the most desperate conditions in our society.” When Dean Lewis left, so did the course. The commitment to public services that he expressed through this course in the curriculum is something that the profession could use today.

Following are some observation experiences of Gerry Aronin and Paul Gunning:

Gerry Aronin. “Baltimore City Hospital (BCH) was used as an old-age home, an infirmary for the aged. For two weeks I visited and observed this program where people had been shelved. The long, sterile corridors were lined with the entrance doors to the “homes” of the members of this community, each of which housed six residents. At some of the entrances would stand one of the residents. All of them had been living in this institution at least six years. Although BCH was a hospital, none of these residents were sick, only old. It was an institution with a strict, regular routine that was the same for all.

“I interviewed Miss H, who had been living at BCH for 77 years. It was the only home she had known. She had been admitted as a homeless female, probably “mentally defective.” She had no known relatives and no visitors. She could not read or write and had trouble communicating. She lived in her own world. She was trusting in a childlike fashion. She was proud that she could care for herself and her home—a bed and locker-type closet.

“When I visited, the program at Baltimore City Hospital was closing. Miss H did

not want to leave, she was scared. She told me she had left the hospital once to go to a volunteer dinner. She was so scared she clutched the hand of one of the volunteers and she kept her eyes closed during most of the trip. She never left the hospital again. Now she must leave.

“I never learned what happened to Miss H. The plans called for community care homes. Would they be small homes or more like nursing homes? The goal was to return these people to the “commerce of the community.” How would a patient like Miss H be remobilized from the institutional life? Would the loss of identity be restored in these new community care homes? Miss H was an extreme case, but is there such a vast difference among 20, 30, 40 or 77 year olds in such situations?

“Where would Miss H be placed today, forty years later?”

Paul Gunning. “I live in fear of the time when some anxiety-ridden adult will bring charges against me for the trauma I inflicted back when I was sent to observe babies. This was the initial requirement set forth by Dr. Manion Maginnis, Ph.D. , a staunch ally and disciple of Anna Freud and a legend in her own right.

“Somewhere in this city are 40-somethings who have endured a lifetime of the ‘infant recognition syndrome.’ This affliction occurred between the third and fifth months of their lives when they sensed the presence of strangers. We warehouse workers were sent out into the infant population of Baltimore City to study the phenomenon of infancy by inflicting ourselves on total strangers between the ages of three to six months. Our primary theatre of action was the University Hospital Well Baby Clinic. The course was Childhood Development. The textbooks were heavy and expensive and, for my part, unopened.

“So I sat in on two different occasions, totally uninvited, no introduction – I just plopped down in a hard chair in the middle of the Well-Baby Clinic, more observed than observing. Nobody challenged my presence, called security, or asked me if I was a pedophile – not even if I was a priest.

“After about 30 minutes of active baby observing, I went home or more likely to a bar to write down my observations. I have no idea what I wrote or was expected to write. That was the first of many community ventures required by the school of social work. It was also the strangest.

“Dr. Maginnis was a good soul. When she interviewed me for continuation into

the second year and I told her I had a two-year-old daughter and my wife was expecting, she helped me get a paid field placement at the V.A. She truly loved her work and I hope wherever she is, there are babies of all colors, shapes, and personalities.

Part 2

TALES FROM THE WAREHOUSE
HOW I GOT INTO THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

GERRY ARONIN

It was the summer of 1948 when I arrived from the big city (New York) to the small “town” (Baltimore), married a little less than two years with a new undergraduate degree from Brooklyn College—totally liberal arts. Where to work? Where else but the Baltimore City Department of Public Welfare (DPW). I learned to take applications (intake) and provide casework services to the sick, the old, and the mostly single mothers faced with multiple problems—financial, physical, emotional, minority status, limited education, and, often, post-traumatic stress disorder, the result of being raised in dysfunctional families. I stayed until 1950 when I left to have a family. But I knew I would be back; and in the fall of 1959, two children later, I returned to DPW.

Being a working mother in 1959 was not easy. I was the only one in my immediate neighborhood. I hired a housekeeper, but my children were the only ones to come home from school to a house without a mother and I was reminded of it all the time. Being a working mother then was a super guilt trip. I was back to carrying a book that listed all my AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) families through the alleys and back streets of Baltimore. Maybe it was a message of some sort, but the first day of my return I was assigned as the case worker to a “children’s farm”. I entered a house with dozens of unattended children ranging in age from a few months to four or five years old. I will never forget the sight, the smell, and the sounds from the children. I accompanied Policewoman Violet Whyte, a real legend in Baltimore. I was to see Policewoman Whyte many, many times in the years ahead because she was stationed at the Pine Street police station, a short block away from the warehouse that became the location of the University of Maryland School of Social Work in 1961 and that, in 1963, became my home away from home for two years.

To say I was fortunate to be at DPW at that time is an understatement. Esther Lazarus was the director; she was a creative, innovative pioneer who was always looking for ways to focus more attention on the rehabilitation of families. She started the Protective Services program. In January, 1960, the Maryland State Department of Public Welfare developed a pilot project to provide “intensive services” to AFDC families. One of these special pilot projects was to be in Baltimore, and I was chosen to be one of five agency-trained workers for the project. Sometime after this special project was completed, I was asked to write an article for *Public Welfare*, the journal for the American Public Welfare Association. Titled “What’s Good about Public Welfare,” it was published in April, 1963.

When the project was over, I knew I had to go on; I knew I needed to be able to work in

projects that would provide the support and leadership to help people help themselves. I needed the knowledge and training to do that: how to get the people the resources they needed; how to get the power to set up special projects; and how to generate attention to help people in their neighborhood and with the systems that affected their lives. I needed to go to graduate school and get a master's degree in social work (MSW). Again I was fortunate; the University of Maryland initiated an MSW program here in Baltimore so I wouldn't have to travel out of town (the guilt remained). Baltimore City DPW, thanks to Esther Lazarus, gave me a work-study placement that paid me full salary and a field placement the first year. Without the salary school would not have been possible.

Soon after my article was published in *Public Welfare*, I was on my way to the School of Social Work for my admittance interview. I was scared as I climbed up narrow steps to a rather dark hallway with offices and classrooms on each side. This was the warehouse, this was the School of Social work. I walked into a small office. Behind the desk sat Dr. Harris Chaiklin, with his feet up on the desk and his hands behind his head. He looked at me and said, "So what's good about public welfare?" I froze.

I got in. The special project, the work/study stipend, the warehouse, Esther Lazarus – all gave me the opportunity for a life-changing experience. Only Harry Chaiklin remains, and I still don't know how he let me get through a stammering, stuttering interview. But I learned that Harry always knew things we couldn't decipher.

JUDITH FINE RATLIFF

It all started when I was a junior in college. My philosophy in literature professor, knowing that I was very active in campus theatre, asked me if I knew about psychodrama. (I didn't want to ask her if she'd met my family, so I said no.) I then contacted National Institutes of Mental Health and St. Elizabeth's Hospital in DC to see if either of them had a psychodrama department. St. E's did. I was accepted as a volunteer in that department three afternoons a week that summer between my junior and senior years. Following graduation, I went to University of Wisconsin for a year of graduate work in theatre. Near the end of that year, the director of the psychodrama program invited me to be an intern in the new training program, and I accepted. Near the end of my second year there, as I was contemplating the need for further training as a mental health professional, Harry Chaiklin appeared. He had come with Dick Somebody or other, who was a sociologist and a friend of the psychodrama director and who had just written *The Tunnel Back* about the then-new drug treatment approach in California. Harry observed a group I ran, told me everything I did wrong, and then said that if I wanted to go to the University of Maryland School of Social work, he would help me get a stipend. I decided to go, called him, and he did help me to obtain a two year, no-strings grant from National Institute of Mental Health to be a psychiatric social worker. And that's how I ended up in the elevator in the warehouse. I'm not sure whether all those linked events represented fate or serendipity.

PAUL GUNNING

Most, if not all, of the class of '65 were working at the time of admission in social work or in a related profession. I had graduated from Towson in 1962 and was working at the Baltimore City Department of Public Welfare in the Protective Services Division. I was a caseworker for young men released from the juvenile detention facilities. This was a precursor to the Juvenile Services Administration. While in college, I had worked as a houseparent at Children's Home, now Woodbourne. Since this was a live-in facility, I received room and board and \$7 a day for four days work.

My responsibility was to provide complete care from 6:30 A.M. to 9:30 P.M. for a unit of seven boys ranging in age from nine to 11. They went to school in the community, so I had time for my own college classes.

There were about 35 residents – both boys and girls – and two social workers among the staff, who provided individual and family counseling on the premises; between their sessions they seemed to drink a lot of coffee and smoke a lot of cigarettes. I envied them. They came in at 9:00 A.M., left at 5:00 P.M., and seldom had to deal with fights, temper tantrums, running away, homework, bath time, clean-ups, cuts, bruises, disappointments, disagreements, drunken family members, or the multitude of life's shit that the kids were encumbered with and shared with me on a daily basis.

It seemed to me that sitting in an office for 45 minutes with a kid was much safer than having to drag, cajole, or threaten, in order to get them off the third-story roof after they'd been told they couldn't go home. So I applied to the newly ordained University of Maryland School of Social work to be admitted in September of 1963.

I'm not sure of the full admission procedures, but I remember doing a biographical sketch and an obligatory "Why I Want to be a Social Worker."

The next step was an interview with Dean Verl Lewis – a good and decent man, but a very proper, reserved person. I think I was his ticket to social work heaven. My school record at Towson was deplorable. I had left Towson on two occasions, once to go in the Army; the second time, I simply dropped out and carried 16 hours of F's. I was readmitted under strict probation, solely because I was married and my wife was pregnant. My grade point average was 1.91, so I needed special permission to graduate. Dr. Lewis had a real challenge on his hands.

Dr. Lewis, in a very non-threatening manner, indicated he had serious questions about my ability to handle graduate school. He wanted to know why I had applied to the

School of Social work. I noted my experience and that I was married with a daughter. If I didn't know what I wanted to do by now, when would I know? He agreed to accept me on the condition that I take two sociology courses of his approval and get an A in both in order to demonstrate my academic ability. I was able to comply. It not only allowed me to be admitted, but demonstrated to me I could do the academics. I'll be forever grateful to Verl Lewis, the first and best dean of the School of Social work.

Of course, the election of Kennedy as president, the first Irish Catholic, did have some influence. He instituted a seldom-discussed policy that required all land grant colleges to admit high-risk Irish descendents to graduate schools. I got the lucky number.

BARBARA MIKULSKI

I grew up in the Highlandtown neighborhood in Baltimore. It was a blue-collar community, close-knit, a mosaic of immigrants. My parents ran a small grocery store. They saw many people through hard times, often offering credit to those out of work. I wanted to be a doctor or a scientist, like my hero, Marie Curie, but I was a bit klutzy, so I majored in social work at the University of Maryland School of Social work.

How did I get to the School of Social work? President Kennedy had decided to launch the War on Poverty, and I decided that what I wanted to do was go to graduate school in group work. I was working at what was then called the Baltimore City Department of Public Welfare in its Protective Services Division as a child abuse worker. Along with my co-worker Gerri Aronin, I was doing some experimental things. I decided I wanted to be a group worker. So what was the best group work around? Well, it was at Catholic University where Dan Thursz, who was regarded as the guru in group work, was teaching. I went over to see him and poured my heart out to him, telling him I wanted to be a social worker but that I wanted to work with groups. I wanted to change the world. He listened patiently, but his foot kept moving. When I finished, he said that he was sure I could get into Catholic U, but I needed to know he was leaving for the University of Maryland School of Social Work .

He was helping to start a new program there—a new curriculum, a new field called community organization (which is now often called social strategy). He wanted to establish a School of Community Organization that would build on the social work legacy of settlement houses and advocacy. He envisioned the social worker organizing people, mastering the political process, and reorganizing through self-help—in other words, the social worker as advocate for public policy, as an energizer, as a facilitator, but most of all as a change agent, whether at the local level or at the state or national level.

He saw social work as working with the power sources as well as with the powerless to empower them. This sounded like what I wanted, so I signed up. I got an NIH grant in community mental health, which paid my tuition and gave me a living stipend.

MARTY MILLISON

I really don't remember anything about my MSW admission experience. I applied, got accepted, and attended.

Anyway, what I thought would be valuable to pass on would be the fervor of our times and how we saw social work as a profession with the means to change things.

Were our excitement and our sense of power related to the 60's? to the school? Or were they unique to our group?

It serves a purpose, I believe, to share our 1965 experiences with today's social work students, faculty, alumni, etc. We felt we could make a difference then. Even if the times are different now, this may still be a good message to share.

MYRA BONHAGE-HALE

As a 26-year-old widowed mother with a two-year-old child, I was employed at the Department of Public Welfare in Baltimore City in the General Public Assistance (GPA) Division. Something in my upbringing or perhaps in my generally agitated state prompted me to always do an exemplary job and do more than anyone else in my position. This character flaw did nothing to endear me to my co-workers. I realized early on that there was nowhere to go with just a bachelor's degree, as supervisory positions demanded a master's degree.

The Department of Public Welfare, however, did support caseworkers in continuing their education and so I applied to the School of Social Work. I remember taking the Miller's Analogy Test and getting a 90, which was very good.

Why did I choose social work in the first place? Well, in the 50's, women who were not married directly out of college could be either teachers or social workers. I liked to help people so I chose social work.

So, you could glean from these meandering remarks that I was being very practical and motivated primarily by the need for shelter, food, and clothing for my daughter and myself. (Maslow's theory, remember?)

EVELYN SLAGHT

It was 1963. I had been in Baltimore off and on since 1961 when, as an undergraduate sociology student at Antioch College, I was given the opportunity to complete my last co-op job at the Baltimore City Department of Public Welfare (DPW). Esther Lazarus was making Protective Services' jobs available to budding social workers, and I jumped at the chance to work in the After Care unit with youth coming out of institutions for delinquent behavior.

Not only was the DPW a great place to gain some beginning skills, but soon they offered me the opportunity to attend the new School of Social work at the University of Maryland. My full-time salary was to continue, providing I did my field work there and committed a year for a year of service after I graduated. I jumped at the opportunity! The problem was that I was not a star student at Antioch (I had on a 2.7 GPA). I applied nonetheless, and received word that my acceptance was conditional on an interview with Harry Chaiklin. In hindsight, I probably would not have been considered at all, except that Harry was also into delinquency and respected the academic excellence of Antioch. Thus, he surmised that my 2.7 was probably the equivalent of a higher GPA elsewhere. I also had the necessary work experience (It was expected that applicants have some "real world" experience). My Antioch co-op jobs, plus the year I had spent working at the DPW after I graduated, gave me the needed experience.

The school worked at recruiting serious intellectuals who were not just out to get the degree, but wanted to learn what they needed in order to perform their jobs more effectively. The school's willingness to consider some who did not necessarily impress with their GPA was noteworthy.

We were given the opportunity to switch to the community organization major the second year, and I decided that I did not want to change the world one client at a time but rather to take on the entire system, so change I did! It is interesting to note that some of the community organization majors, including myself, received stipends from NIMH for their second year. That the National Institute for Mental Health saw a need to promote community organization was related to their involvement at the time in the development of community mental health centers. Their willingness to support majors in community organization was critical to making the switch.

BILL WISE

I came to social work by way of Shakespeare, Shelley, Eliot, and Milton. We had settled in Chestertown after I under-qualified for a teaching job at Washington College (my MA and good looks vs. Dr. Tatum's Ph.D.). I took a job as caseworker in the Kent County Welfare Department with the idea of treading water there until another English lit position opened at the college.

I had done a spell of "social work" at the Baltimore City Department of Public Welfare some years before and had accomplished little beyond meeting and marrying my current wife of 46 years (not that there's anything wrong with that!). The experience in Kent County was immeasurably different; I began to believe that sensitively delivered services, in spite of their inadequacy, could make a difference in people's lives. I guess I began thinking like a real social worker – that change could come for the poor, the sick, the disadvantaged through both individual interaction and system change.

The Kent County DPW and a State DPW supervisor conspired to woo me with a full salary arrangement for two years if I were accepted into the University of Maryland School of Social work. Both of the aforementioned were women and I suspect there may have lurked a gender factor to recruit more men to the profession. (However, my ego then and now rejects such prosaic concerns.) If memory serves me, and such is not always the case, I was accepted at once and abandoned thoughts of other lines of work.

Those were heady times for social change; John Kennedy was president, the civil rights movement was coming into being, and I read stuff that convinced me that good could be done by embracing either Sigmund Freud or Saul Alinsky—or both. I don't remember my admission interview. (Is that significant?) I do remember that I made application with a certain sense of manifest destiny. They waived the Miller's Analogies Test because I already had a graduate degree. The state was paying me all that money (\$4,000 as I remember) to go to school. There was without doubt a convergence of the mechanics, the dynamics of the times, and my conviction that I could (even must) be an agent for change.

Part 3

MORE TALES FROM THE WAREHOUSE
MY LIFE AS A STUDENT

MYRA BONHAGE-HALE

In school, I was exposed to Betty Friedan, Saul Alinsky, Harry Chaiklin, that feminist teacher that Ben had a crush on [Shirley Buttrick], of course, Dan Thursz, all the gang I hung around with—Barbara Mikulski, Gerry Aronin, Evelyn Slaght, Ben Davis, Marty Millison, Val Tucci, and many others – and finally to the whole Kennedy idealism. I started out as a Republican and became a Democrat in just two years – and always very opinionated. In the second year of my education at the University of Maryland, I became so incensed at the treatment of my client at a hospital that I changed from a case-work major to a community organization major.

I became very committed to the principles of social work, so committed and so loud about it that I was always loved by those I worked with in the community and not so much by administrators.

During the summer between the first and second years of graduate school, I was working at the Baltimore City Department of Public Welfare with mothers of premature babies as part of my protective service caseload. If the mother had missed appointments for the baby, they were referred to Protective Service for support and needed resources. I accompanied one young mother with her baby to City Hospital for a follow-up visit. The trip was a long one from the mother's home to the hospital, which was high on a hill with a winding driveway up to it. I wondered how any young mother with a baby could climb that hill after getting off the bus. That was my first inkling of the ridiculously long procedure the mother had to go through. We waited hours in line (with the baby), and were seated in chairs in various waiting rooms – it was six hours or so before the mother ever got to see a health practitioner. There was nowhere to eat, nothing to drink, the baby was very fretful and I – well, after I finally got the mother and baby home, I decided to drop casework and be a community organizer. It seemed to me the system was the problem and not the poor. I have never regretted making the change, and very seldom had reason to question the definition of the problem.

In my second year practicum at the School of Social Work, I was placed with four or five other women students in the Upton area of Baltimore as a community organizer. Upton was a very interesting part of Baltimore; it was on the west side and housed some leading black intellectuals, lawyers, ministers, and politicians. The politician group included the Mitchells, whose matriarch, Juanita Jackson Mitchell, started the NAACP by daring to go into what was then an all-white department store to buy clothes. It was a diverse neighborhood, with one individual being a retired dancer who had performed in Paris with Josephine Baker and another, a poor, single mother with many children. It was also a dangerous neighborhood. After one of my first meetings

in the neighborhood, I was walking with several other neighborhood women whom I asked, "How safe is it here at night?" One of the women answered, showing me a bottle that she kept in her pocket and shaking it, "It's safe with me; this bottle is full of lye and I would use it if I needed to!"

Each of us was assigned a few blocks in which we were to organize at least one block club by the end of the semester in order to get a passing grade (B was a passing grade). One of my blocks was McCulloh Street, where I met a resident who was very upset (start where the client is) because she was not getting any help from the city. I can't remember what the problem was, but I did something about it and got her some help. There was a gathering place on McCulloh and the next day after I had helped the woman, I stopped by there. She was there with a lot of other women and she raced up to me and shouted, flinging her arms around me, "Thank you, thank you, you is stone white." I was so happy to be recognized as helpful and I relayed this wonderful news to my supervisor, Roy Borom (a really great guy), at my weekly conference with him. He smiled and said gently, "Myra, that really wasn't a great compliment; it means that you are very, very white." My ego was deflated, but somehow I recovered. At the end of the semester I had formed three block clubs in my area.

The regal old lady who had danced with Josephine Baker in Paris lived in a house, which she owned, in Upton. When I went to visit her, she told me that the building inspectors for Baltimore Urban Renewal and Housing Authority (BURHA), where we five courageous students were placed, had visited her home to inspect it and told her she had over thirty-eight violations; but if she paid them a certain amount of money, they would overlook them. She told me she chased them out of her house with a butcher knife! They never came back to bother her.

I remember being asked by some housing inspectors to go with them to see what an inspection was like. The inspection was at an apartment above a store on Pennsylvania Avenue, the main drag. We climbed the dirty stairs to a dilapidated apartment where a much-befuddled woman huddled on her sofa. They went through their song and dance and I listened carefully. We then left. As we left, one of them peered at me from under his beetle brows and said with a smirk, "You might want to check your clothes and your hair, that apartment is crawling with bed bugs." They got me! I started to itch and went home quickly, took all my clothes off, threw them in the washer, washed my hair, my body, threw my shoes in the yard, and generally had a bed bug anxiety attack. I never did see any bed bugs, and I'm not sure there were any – but I am pretty sure they laughed the rest of the day and probably into their dark night.

One of the first meetings I had organized was in a neighborhood woman's little row

house (on one of the side streets). The neighborhood had originally been one of wealthy upper-class white people and the little row houses in back of the big town-houses were those of the servants. A number of us piled into the house and there was a flurry of seating, when one of the visitors pulled me aside quickly and told me to sit in a wooden chair, not in an upholstered chair. I did as she suggested. I found out later that often upholstered furniture had, you guessed it, bed bugs! So, from then on, when I entered a house I sought out the wooden chair.

Speaking of little row houses, I remember one house where a gracious elderly lady resided. You entered directly into the living room from the front door and the room was only about ten feet wide by eight feet deep. This room was unique in that the entire side wall was dominated by a huge fish tank in which a huge orange fish managed to swim with difficulty. It had to be four feet long at least. I asked the lady about the fish and it turned out it had started life as a little goldfish in the 10-Cent store – and grew and grew and grew. She really loved the fish that took over her parlor! I didn't know goldfish were of the carp family.

Another little row house story about Lena Boone. I met Lena early on. She was a beautifully built woman, something like an Amazon, with dark glistening skin and a very assertive, aggressive manner. She became a leader in the community, eventually heading the Henry Highland Garnett Neighborhood Council, which was the umbrella group for the entire area. There are three things that I remember most about her (I must say I really valued working with her): she was creative, persuasive, and most gracious to me. The thing that really stood out when I first visited her was that she had a waist-length portrait of herself on the side wall of the living room in her little row house. The portrait was about six feet high and towered over the whole room.

The second thing I remember about working with Lena was when she ran the Afro-American Newspaper's Clean Block Program. The neighbors on her little street actually washed the sidewalks and street by hand with soap and water and fined anyone caught littering. The artists on the block had painted beautiful murals on walls and on some sidewalks. It was truly delightful.

The third thing about Lena: Another community member (a male) asked me once why I worked with her: "You have created a monster". She was a great leader if a little officious. And perhaps a woman in a leadership position is a little intimidating!

One day at work I got a frantic phone call from another neighborhood leader. She was so upset I couldn't understand what she was saying at first. She just kept saying. "The neighborhood is going to be ruined. This is the end. We have tried so hard and these

people, these dirty people have moved in. What can we do? What can we do?" After she calmed down a little, I asked her who these people were, and she said in a righteous tone: "They are those Peace Corp hippies; they're dirty and hairy and their clothes are ragged and our block will be ruined!"

I visited an elderly man, quite dignified, in his home during the Beautiful Backyard Contest, which we organized after the practicum. He took me to his lovely backyard, which we viewed from an overlooking porch. Filled with flowers and some vegetables, it was truly a feast for their eyes. This odyssey was somewhat shattered when he said, "This is where I stand with a stick with a broken bottle on the end of it and kill the rats as they run by."

One thing I realized about the women I worked with in Upton was that, as they became leaders, there was a sequence to their ascendancy to leadership: First, they straightened their hair; then they bought a wig and wore it to all meetings; and finally they got a phone in their house.

One day a woman whom I very much admired – she was a wonderful, single mother of five lovely children renting a home around the corner from Pennsylvania Avenue – called me one day very disillusioned. She and her children were looking out the window the night before and saw that some people had broken into the drugstore on the corner and were robbing it; they were taking stuff out and loading it up in a car. She told the children that she wanted to show them what a good citizen would do. Having no phone herself (she supported herself by taking in ironing and numbers), she walked warily past the burglars to a phone on the corner and called the police. Returning to her home, she was pleased to see that the police came rapidly and arrested the burglars. After one patrol car took them away, the police in the remaining patrol car proceeded to load it for an hour or so with stuff from the drugstore while her children watched. A civic lesson, right?

Speaking of making ends meet, among the many single mothers in Upton, there was a tactic called "Grocery Bag Prostitution." That was always at a specific time of the month, a week or less, before the next welfare check came.

One evening leaving work, I realized I had locked myself out of my Volkswagen bug, which my husband and I had bought five years before. I stood there with what was probably a pained and puzzled look on my face. Some kids coming home from school saw me, and said "What's wrong, Mrs. O'Brien? (that was my name then). I told them. One kid said, "We can fix that!"; and within two seconds, just using a bent coat hanger, he opened my car door. I thanked them profusely and never locked it again. To tell the

truth I always felt pretty good in Upton; I think, as with most of my relationships with clients as a social worker, they knew I was there to help, sometimes ineptly but with a good heart.

But there was one time in Upton when I was a little fearful; it was at a neighborhood block meeting that I had organized. We were all sitting around a table in our wooden chairs when a woman came in, carrying a knife and carrying on something awful. She was scary. It so happened that I had been holding a baby of one of the members on my lap and I must confess I continued to hold that baby on my lap until the woman was persuaded to leave. Yikes!

At one of the first HHGNC meetings, the agenda was the problem with the rats in their neighborhood. One couple said, "We can only stay a few minutes. We have left our baby at home and if we aren't there, the rats will start eating him."

There was a very dignified older couple living in a rental apartment in Upton. Their apartment was scrupulously clean and comfortable. They told me what their rent was and how long they had lived there – over 37 years. We figured out how much money they had spent; the reality was that they could have been evicted for not paying the rent on time at anytime in the future.

One time the intrepid group of five prospective community organizers was invited to the home of one of the Upton landlords (called slum landlords). I didn't go, but I was somewhat appalled afterwards to hear one student say that they were impressed with the luxury of his home and that his carpet was so deep it was like sinking into it. I said, "Perhaps it was people's souls he carpeted with." I didn't see anything to admire about slum landlords. I understand that the per foot cost of apartment dwelling in Upton was larger than the per foot cost of the luxurious digs at Sutton Place nearby.

BEN DAVIS

The School of Social Work was a special place at that special time; and I have some very fond memories. The school was intellectually challenging and exciting. Shirley Buttrick opened our eyes to the problems of poverty in our society and gave us new ways to think about our social welfare system, its limitations, and the alternative options that existed. And she was a charismatic teacher. Harry Chaiklin's research course is one I'll be eternally grateful for; he taught me to think conceptually.

The casework side of the curriculum was equally endowed with outstanding teachers, like Manion Maginnis, who exposed us to Freud's theories. The school graduated some outstanding clinical practitioners from our class, like Judy Fine Ratliff (back then we called ourselves caseworkers and Judy was still Judy Fine). We learned about psychosocial study, diagnosis, and treatment. It was another one of the important concepts I took away from the school, and it's a concept, I think, that we may have lost sight of to our disadvantage, especially today with the rise in case management, which is simply casework with a new name. That is where our commonality with community organization came in. We looked at the person in his environment; and when he or she needed to connect with some system in his environment, whether it be the school or the hospital, or when he needed help with that system, we intervened and advocated for him or her.

Finally, but certainly not least, one of my fondest memories is of my first-year field placement at Crownsville State Hospital outside Annapolis and my supervisor there, Pearl Moulton. Crownsville had been the state mental hospital for African Americans until shortly before I came. It was the height of the civil rights movement and desegregation. I remember a session that we new interns had with the director of the hospital, a recently appointed white doctor with a radical perspective that was not unusual then, in which he informed us that the only difference between us (including him and all the staff) and the patients was that we held the keys (a message similar to the theme of a film from that period, *King of Hearts*).

At that time deinstitutionalization was the trend *du jour* for state mental hospitals, so much of our work was helping patients who had often been institutionalized for years make the transition to community life. There was one story floating around of a man who had been institutionalized at Crownsville since the beginning of the century. When they were putting him in an automobile to visit his new home, he panicked, thinking the car was a monster that was going to devour him. Automobiles were new when he had been put away.

Nancy Tankersley and I were Pearl Moulton's supervisees; we idolized her. I know it sounds corny, but that's how we felt. Pearl helped me to overcome an overwhelming anxiety so that I could do successful casework. How she did it I don't remember. Under her supervision, I had a gratifying success helping a patient accept his move to the community. When I began with him, he had refused a cigarette I offered him one day. This was surprising since cigarettes were prized among the patients; but as Pearl explained, he didn't trust me since I was new to him. Later toward the end of our work together, one day as we were returning from a visit to a possible aftercare home for him and walking up the steps to his building, he spontaneously asked me for a cigarette. I was ecstatic!

I remember one supervisory conference with Pearl where we were analyzing a peculiar gesture a woman patient had been making during a session I had had with her and we realized she was trying to tell us that her uncle had raped her and was the father of her child. So we knew we had to place her far from her uncle. It was during one of my supervisory sessions with Pearl that someone came in with the news that President Kennedy had been shot. We were stunned. It was a profound moment that we shared.

BARBARA MIKULSKI

It was an exciting time to be at Maryland. We had gifted teachers, like Shirley Buttrick, Harry Chaiklin, Ruth Young, and, of course, Dan Thursz. Our class was special, so many of us from that legendary class of '65 who went on to outstanding careers, like my dear classmate Gerry Aronin. Our building was not like the great building the school now occupies. When I went there, it was up a flight of stairs over a warehouse, we used to inhale the fumes from the warehouse. But you know it didn't matter because we had outstanding people who taught us at a very outstanding school.

We had been called to service by President Kennedy—"Ask what you can do." The great society was being created. We were talking about *The Other America* that Michael Harrington had revealed to us. There was the war on poverty; we at the University of Maryland and we the community organizers were going to be the platoon leaders in that war.

But, at the same time, the social work establishment was really suspicious of us community organizers. They didn't know if we were going to be real social workers. They weren't sure if and how groups were going to be organized for self-help. So what they said was we had to do our first year in basic casework because if community organization flopped, we could be caseworkers.

So guess what? My field placement was in York, Pennsylvania, at the York Family Service Agency. They sent me there because they said if I was in Baltimore, I could manipulate the system because I knew too many people. They gave me a senior citizen in a nursing home and an African-American welfare mother with nine children. After a couple of months I had to present a case before the other interns. I talked about what I was doing with the welfare mother and soon my supervisor stopped me and asked me if I had taken her family history. I said we hadn't gotten to that yet because I had taken her to Legal Aid, she was going to sue the State of Pennsylvania. Why is she going to sue the state of Pennsylvania, the professor asked. Well, she has two children, I said, one needs special education and the other wants to get into a commercial program to be a secretary. They had told the latter daughter she was too dumb for the commercial program and the other daughter she was too smart for special education. I felt she needed a lawyer, so she's got one and we're working on that along with Legal Aid, who is working on her divorce. My professor said, Oh, my God; what else are you doing? She asked if I had talked to the mother about her childhood. I said, not really. I've talked to her about her children because we came from Protective Services. Our first job was to look out for the children, make sure they were in school. She asked if I had talked to her about her dreams. I said yes, she has dreams of getting a divorce, dreams

of getting her GED. And the professor said, "You know, Ms. Mikulski, I think you're going to be a great social worker, but you don't have a therapeutic personality."

But I really valued the clinical people, then and now, and that's why in my career I helped to organize the resources for drug intervention, for domestic violence programs, for legal aid, because the whole idea of organizing is to get the tools so that people can engage in self-help.

VALERIA TOCCI

(as reported by Evelyn Slaght after a telephone conversation with Val)

Val came to Baltimore with her husband, who was getting a Ph.D. in one of the science fields at the University of Maryland, and her two small children. She decided that it was time for her to pursue a career; so she applied and was accepted to the University of Maryland School of Social Work. Her only problem was that Manion McGinnis, our in-house Freudian disciple, found out that she had small children and kept telling her she should drop out and stay home with them.

She was also working at the library at the time and brought her children with her. One day Manion came to the library and was greeted by Angelo, her 1 ½ year-old son. He spoke to her in very good English and gave her a big hug—and that was it! After that, Manion got off her back about being in school.

BILL WISE

Even my field placements were benevolent. I was working for the Kent County Welfare Department while at school, and my first-year field placement was next door in Queen Anne's County DPW. (I lived in Queen Anne's County and the two agencies shared a director who was one of the ladies who convinced me to apply to the UMSSW.) The second-year placement was in Baltimore City DPW Child Protective Services Unit. I was exposed to both rural and urban poverty and need, and there was not a helluva difference between them. There was more grass in the country but far fewer buses—mostly no buses at all. Our research project noted that poor people suffer social isolation even in the teeming city; in the country social distance is compounded by “long way from anything and no way to get there.”

I developed a great fondness for my fellow students right from the start. We were mainly all “mature students” who came to school from experiences in social agencies. The times they were changing, and students and (some) faculty fostered the idea that we could, should, must be part of it. There was a group learning that took place at UMSSW in 1964/65 that was as important to me as the academics.

We were in a new school that wanted to prove itself better than expectations, so maybe the faculty piled it on a little. My memory is that there was worry that some of us might break under the extraordinary workload and we did not want that. So we organized. Graduate school classes do not organize! We organized, elected class officers, and went to talk with the dean.¹ I think it worked. Actually, I think it worked better than we could have imagined because it is still working 40 years later.

Eleven of us, about a third of the class, did a joint research project, *The Paradox of Persistent Poverty*. It was an astonishing exercise in academic cooperation and restraint—not one of us suffered harm at the hand of another. The deadline for submission was reached only with typing and compilation help from spouses and friends. I believe we handed it in at one minute to midnight on the due date.

We had our first class get-together the summer between the two years and we have met pretty regularly every five years since. I honestly believe that conversations have been carried from school to party, to party, to party. We come together, after years, as if we had seen each other last week. I have no question but that whatever was forged among

¹I always thought it amusing that I was elected class president and Barbara, class secretary. I have concluded, now that some wisdom has accrued in my 75th year, that Barbara, Gerry, Judy, Evelyn, et.al., all recognized (remember it was the 60s) that men were paid closer attention to and, anyway, if there was to be confrontation we'll throw Bill Wise to the wolves.

us at the warehouse went into what I brought to my single post-graduate employment as a social agency director.

Part 4

AFTER THE WAREHOUSE

LIFE IN THE TRENCHES

ROSINDA ALEXANDER

(as reported by Evelyn Slaght after a telephone conversation with Rosinda)

Rosinda's two years at the School of Social Work had represented for her a fresh start; she was a new divorcée then with a small child to raise. Following graduation and the fulfillment of her year's commitment to the Baltimore City Department of Public Welfare, she went to work for the Veteran's Administration, where she stayed for over 20 years as the adult foster care worker, placing mentally ill veterans from the VA mental hospital at Perry Point, MD, into foster care in the city and then following up with them. Over the years, she says, she brought several hundred men into the community and helped them make a positive adjustment.

Before her retirement in 1987, she spent several years at the VA Loch Raven Hospital, doing discharge planning. Since her retirement, she has enjoyed volunteer work at the Waxter Center, the Enoch Pratt Reading Mentoring Program, the YWCA, the Youth Hostel Program, Parents Against Lead, Meals on Wheels, and the Living Room.

She remembers the Warehouse days with great fondness.

GERRY ARONIN

The class of '65 had a great graduation party where we sang our farewell, "Give our regards to Pine Street, Remember us to Lombard Square." And so it was over—what do we do now? Out of the womb—no protection from the faculty, no more hugs and pats on the back from our classmates. What interesting tales as we look back over 43 years, and looking back we do as we meet with regularity to laugh, to reminisce, and to hug each other.

I went back to the Baltimore City Department of Welfare (BCDPW). Once again Esther Lazarus came forth to demonstrate her vision and her foresight for the program and the people she served. She created the Division of Community Services to assure that the BCDPW would be involved with planning and implementing community-based programs and that BCDPW would be a major partner with community agencies and in the War on Poverty. I became the assistant director of this new division, and what a time it was! All of the newly developed skills of community studies were applied: working with neighborhood groups, coordinating with other community agencies, exploring with welfare families the everyday problems of living. We developed a volunteer program, we received federal demonstration money to implement the first Emergency Service Center in Baltimore, we formed partnerships with the developing Urban Services Centers, and we took leadership in Vice-President Hubert Humphrey's program of providing summer jobs for teens. It soon became apparent that we needed to know politics—how the political process worked, how legislation was introduced and processed, how budgets were approved. My classmate, Barbara Mikulski, and I went to see the President of the Baltimore City Council, William Donald Schaefer, and asked him if he would help us learn about the city political process. He agreed to spend time with us, commenting that it was the first time social workers asked to learn about it. To me it was the beginning—learning and dealing with the political process has been central to everything in my career as an administrator in a public social service agency. Need I say what the role of politics has meant in the career of my classmate.

Politics, community organization, demonstration projects, welfare recipients, coordination—they all came together in a demonstration project called the Family Living Program. It began with a call from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. It was the time of civil rights unrest, summer was coming and it would be hot in Baltimore. What could we do to keep it "cool"? We developed a program to provide special services and money to families with four or more children receiving public assistance, The Family Living Program. It was funded totally with federal funds, but we learned that in order to get it into the BCDPW budget, the project would need to be approved by the City Council. Piece of cake—it was all federal funds, no city funds involved, so

why shouldn't the Council approve. We were wrong—it was a welfare program and “these people” didn't deserve extra money for anything.

The program was to be located in the 6th Councilmanic District, south Baltimore, basically a white, blue collar, Catholic neighborhood. So began a process of community involvement, community organization, politics, neighborhood reaction, threats, and intimidation of such intensity that people feared for their safety.

The process with the City Council involved three hearings—the first an introduction and discussion, the second a discussion and vote, the third normally some additional discussion, pro and con, then another vote, traditionally a repeat of the vote taken at the second hearing. After the first hearing we knew we were in serious trouble. We began community meetings, individual meetings with the power points in the community, and strategy meetings with leaders from the welfare community (there were such in those days). We met with each member of the City Council, and we met with religious leaders from the neighborhood. The city was divided into six councilmanic districts, each with three elected officials. We lobbied hard. The leader of the Democratic Party, a State legislator whose area included the 6th district, was on the scene to make sure that the legislators voted “right”. We realized that the potential deciding vote was Councilman Dominic Leone, the third vote in the sixth district. He was leaning toward a “yes” vote and we pushed hard. We won at the second hearing by one vote—the yes vote from Leone, the last member to vote. Since we understood the third hearing to be a formality, we felt victory was ours. But the following week when we met with Leone, he told us that his bar had been trashed with threats of worse if he voted again for the program, his children were being harassed and attacked by classmates, and he couldn't endanger his family; he would be voting “no” at the third hearing. We couldn't push him. We decided on one final effort. We met with all of the church leaders in the 6th District and on the Sunday before the final vote, sermons in churches throughout the district preached on the need to pass this program. The vote came that Monday night and it was tie when Councilman Leone got up to speak (which he rarely did) and said, in a brief speech that had resonances of Jimmy Stewart in the movie *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, “There comes a time when a man has to vote for what he believes—I vote YEA.” We won. Community organization plus lessons in politics had been put to the test, and we won.

The Family Living Program was my first big community organization project after graduation. There were many others, all of which involved, in some form, the principles of community organization and research. I have never regretted majoring in community organization. I wish there had been more emphasis on the political process, which, in my view, is an essential element in anything social workers undertake.

I retired as Deputy Secretary, State Department of Human Resources, in 1983. A career that was full of great experiences and disappointments. The era of the War on Poverty was filled with excitement and hope. The years following brought disappointments, the hope of the sixties gradually diminished, the political philosophy and arena had changed. I am convinced that, by whatever name, community organization is essential to bring about community, political, and legislative change.

In 1988, after I retired, I was asked by a group of women who operated women's programs to help them figure out where they were going, what they should be doing. These women were pioneers; they had developed programs for homeless women, for rape victims, for battered women, and for the displaced homemaker. They were competing for limited state funds. The programs were loosely organized and suffered from a lack of fiscal stability. There was no public awareness of them or of the need they were trying to meet. In June, 1983, a coalition was formed, the Woman's Alliance of Maryland. I became the first president and so began a major effort in community organization. We used the basic research process learned from Harry Chaiklin. We identified our goals—increased funding and establishing a continuum of services throughout the state were the major ones—and the steps we needed to take to reach these goals. These steps included education, raising public awareness of the need; breaking into the political process; getting competing programs to work together; getting into the budget of the State Department of Human Resources (essential but no small task); and identifying women's groups to support us. Could The Woman's Alliance become a viable organization?

We waged a massive education campaign. As a coordinated group we gained organization strength, we met with all of the major political leaders in the State Legislature, we made alliances with all of the state's women's groups. We met with Governor Harry Hughes, who commented about the benefits to him of having to deal with the Alliance instead of each group individually. In fiscal year 1983 the four categories of programs had a total of \$779,061 in State funds; in fy 1984 we had 36 programs statewide with \$1,008,013 in State funds; and in fy 1988 the Alliance had 53 programs and \$4,292,968 in funds.

What a trip that was, what a combination: community organization, advocacy, the principles of research, and dealing with the political process. And it all started when I was accepted into the University of Maryland, School of Social work in 1963 when there was excitement and hope that we could, and the faculty gave us the tools to do it.

BEN DAVIS

In my professional life as a social worker, I was not on the frontlines of the war against poverty. But as the first executive director of the Maryland Chapter, NASW, I sometimes found I had to act as an advocate, not in defense of the poor but in defense of the profession. In a hit or miss way, I discovered that my strength as an advocate didn't lay in the frontlines but behind the scenes, writing and researching. My earliest effort was a long letter to the editor of the Baltimore Sun, defending the profession against the attacks of the Nixon administration and its allies. The profession was a primary target for them; this particular instance was an attack against the incompetence of "social workers" in child welfare agencies. This attack demonstrated, for me, their ignorance about the profession, an ignorance that was typical of the public in general, so they could get away with it. I felt the public needed to be educated about the profession. My letter illustrated, through a brief history of the profession, the difference between a professionally trained social worker and the untrained paraprofessionals that the public often called social workers. The letter was published in full and generated some good response.

Later on, one of our committees became concerned about the state human resources' efforts to dilute the professional standards of the state social work positions. I realized the committee needed solid, coherent data to mount a fight against these efforts. My strategy was to collect information from the state on social work positions and the proposed changes as well as information on comparable positions of other mental health professionals like psychologists, and then make a chart comparing the state requirements for the various professional positions. We published the chart in the chapter newsletter. It proved a critical tool in our ensuing fight to maintain standards. It also generated interest from the nursing association, which invited me to speak to them about my findings. The personnel department of the Baltimore City Department of Public Welfare had a copy hanging in her office.

PAUL GUNNING

My professional future was shaped by two separate events following my graduation from the School of Social work. The first was personal – entering into a 12-Step Recovery Program for my alcoholism in 1966. The second was legal – the creation of the National Institutes for Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse (NIAA). The creation of two federal agencies led to the development of a formalized system of prevention and treatment of alcohol and drug addiction at the state and local levels. These two agencies were the work of two very different U.S. senators – Harrison Williams and Harold Hughes. Both were recovered alcoholics at a time when these disorders were generally regarded as socially unacceptable. Their efforts led to the creation of NIDA and NIAA in 1980.²

Early in my recovery, I was named director of the Child Study Center, a residential treatment center for disturbed children in Baltimore. The center had been plagued with internal management problems, and I was appointed with the task of broadening its base of financial support and exploring possible mergers with other similar facilities. The result was the creation of the current Woodbourne Center. The Board of Directors wanted me to remain as director of the new center, but for personal reasons essentially related to my recovery, I decided to buy a house and move to York, Pennsylvania.

Under NIDA and NIAA, Pennsylvania had a statewide system of county agencies responsible for implementing drug and alcohol prevention and treatment services in their respective jurisdiction (Pennsylvania is a commonwealth, so local governmental bodies, through the county commissioners, are the primary unit of government). The resulting network of 45 separate county programs then developed an independent body of county administrators, which negotiated with state and federal agencies for funding and set the terms for much of the current funding for drug and alcohol programs in Pennsylvania.

I became the first director of the newly created York/Adams Drug & Alcohol program. My background as a social worker and my understanding of social systems combined with my five years of recovery gave me an opportunity to have an influence on the development of a comprehensive community system of drug and alcohol services. I was soon elected chairman of the statewide County Drug & Alcohol Administration Association for two consecutive years.

² These two men's lives took separate paths. Senator Williams was later found guilty of taking bribes from gambling interests in Atlantic City while Senator Hughes eventually created a Retreat House for World Peace on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

These were the incubation years of the treatment system. I was in a lead position to develop a broad array of programs, ranging from prevention, out-patient services to acute and long-term residential programs. My basic understanding of community programs and their link to residential programs was a product of my education at the School of Social work. It was the basic principle of meeting the client at his or her level of need. Much of the foundation for these programs required community meetings, meetings with legislators, and meetings with county commissioners.

After seven years in York County, I was appointed assistant director of Alcoholism Programs under the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. I also served as the Governor's representative for alcohol and highway safety. It was during this period that Maryland implemented its comprehensive DWI program. My major task was to secure funding from the legislature and create a separate treatment system on the local level to assure that DWI offenders had mandated treatment available throughout the state.

During this period, I also secured funding to develop a statewide contract to encourage and assist industries in developing Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) designed to provide intervention services for social and interpersonal problems for employees and their families.

I was very fortunate to have come into the drug and alcohol field in its infancy. Probably 75 percent of the people in the field were recovering people; few had degrees and practically none were social workers. I was fortunate to have had a very strong academic background as well as two very good field placements at Family Services and the Veterans' Administration. Further, I had my own struggles with alcohol, and my five years of recovery through active participation in self-help groups gave me a unique perspective.

Even today I am active. After about a 10-year struggle, York will be opening a non-hospital detox center. I have been part of a continuing community group that has pushed for this program.

My experience since graduation has been treatment-focused. I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW). I just sold my private outpatient center after 18 years. However, treatment doesn't grow in a vacuum. It has taken a considerable amount of work to bring about, financial, legislative, and community supports. I became a community activist in order to assure the opportunity for treatment to come into being.

BARBARA MIKULSKI

Well, I did graduate and worked in the War on Poverty. I helped to organize a program for the elderly, and I did a lot of volunteer work—helping to start a credit union, going to the Baltimore City Jail every Monday night to work with the women prisoners.

After a long time, after the murder of Martin Luther King and the difficult riots that followed, when I had been placed in charge of all public services, I decided that I was worn out and I was going to get a doctorate in public health, so that when Ed Muskie became president, I could go to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and be an assistant secretary for something.

It was at this time that I got my start in politics through my involvement in the road fight. I was all set to go for my doctorate in public health when I got a call from a friend, a young social worker, Tom Fierello, about a meeting on a proposed 16-lane highway that would run from East Baltimore through West Baltimore, destroying my neighborhood and the first black home-ownership neighborhood in Baltimore, Rosemont. The politicians and the planners supported it and thought that the communities would not fight back.

Why were he and another friend, Elaine Lowrey, talking to me about this? Well, they explained it was because, with my graduate degree, I knew about community organizing and also because my family roots were in this community—the Mikulski bakery and my father's grocery store were really loved. We were known to be on the side of the people.

So they described the route and how it would take away neighborhoods. The rationale was to provide a way for trucks to get through Baltimore easily. We, both the blacks in West Baltimore and the ethnic whites in East Baltimore, were viewed as the other side of the tracks and dispensable, we would be under the control of the bosses. Of course everyone knew African Americans didn't have power. In addition, the owners of the homes in these European and African American ethnic neighborhoods were not going to receive relocation benefits and were only going to get the assessed value of their homes, which was about one-third their market value. The whole social fabric of our communities was going to be destroyed—the playgrounds, the little shops that gave us an identity.

So we were fighting for our homes and communities—but, if the road had to be built, we wanted a fair deal, we should get relocation benefits and fair market value.

The communities began organizing. On the east side, a neighborhood lady, Betty Deacon, organized her neighborhood into the United Neighborhood Improvement Association. I attended the meeting that Tom Fierello had invited me to and out of that meeting we organized SCAR, the Southeast Council against the Road. We came up with that name because we had to create an image. Then we created a new coalition of neighborhood groups called SECO, the Southeast Community Organization, which United Neighborhood Improvement Association joined.

Because of my involvement with some of the African American leadership in the civil rights movement, we could talk to the leadership on the west side, which had formed a group called RAM, Relocation Action Movement. We in SCAR made the decision to attend the State Road Commission hearing on the west side and show our support to RAM. This was significant. Crossing Broadway or Charles Street to go to the west side was the turning point in firmly establishing the coalition because Baltimore was a segregated town. It was after the riots. People said blacks and whites would never get together. African Americans were referred to in ugly terms. And we were called the honkies and the Pollocks.

When we walked into the hearing, there were about 300 or 400 African Americans there; we were about 60 white folks. We signed up to testify. West Baltimoreans poured out their hearts about what this highway would mean to them—the neighborhood destruction without any of the highway’s benefits. A man by the name of Frank Milkowsky from East Baltimore, who worked on the docks and had been a merchant marine in World War II, testified that he had fought in WWII to save America and now he was here to join with the black community and the veterans and their wives to save the neighborhoods of Baltimore. We clapped, we sang. His testimony had broken the ice. Mutual need, mutual respect, mutual identification—that’s how we then created a citywide group called MAD, Movement Against Destruction. It was a new day in Baltimore.

As we fought, we could see that we were really up against big politics. That’s when I decided to run for the city council. I had the good fortune to have grassroots support and won the race. My very first act was to introduce legislation to repeal the highway. It failed, but I then called the mayor, who was beginning to change his mind about the expressway, thanks to the urgings of his housing authority director, Bob Embry, and his advisor, Walter Sondheim. Out of that we got an alternative plan that was devised by Wally Orlinsky, the president of the City Council—the Fort McHenry Tunnel. We won. We created the Fort McHenry Tunnel, which leads traffic through Baltimore without disrupting neighborhoods. We saved the neighborhoods and legally saved Baltimore. Now Baltimore is reinventing itself---from the inner harbor to the digital harbor.

We used principles of community organization to fight the highway. We organized when we felt we needed to save our community. And unlike Saul Alinsky, who organized on anger, we organized on coalition. Black and white, east side and west side. We didn't make the other side the enemy, we made the road the enemy. Later I went to the House of Representatives and then to the Senate as the first woman from the Democratic Party elected in her own right. Each time they said I couldn't do it, but I knew I could because I knew how to organize and how to organize at the grassroots level. And I could organize because I went to the University of Maryland School of Social work, where I learned from the best of the best. The principles I learned there work, whether you're fighting for change in your community or for legislation in the Senate.

So when I first got to the Senate, I did my homework. I established a relationship with the old guard, starting with Senator Byrd, listening to him and watching him and other effective senators in action. In this way I learned the rules, ways of being effective. When I went to move on my first bill, I asked Senator Byrd for advice and suggestions. Then on the day I offered that amendment, he was around, but I didn't need his help because I had done my homework with him. And I continued after that to do my homework, going to all the hearings and traveling on Senate fact-finding trips, because homework impresses the Senate leadership.

And the other thing I did was treat everybody fairly, including the Republicans, even when I was at war with them on something like the Anita Hill debacle. When I chaired the VA HUD committee, I was pretty cranky with Senator Alan Simpson because of his rough behavior towards Anita Hill. But when he came to me as chair of the VA HUD committee about an EDI grant for a drug treatment center for Native Americans in Wyoming, I was not going to turn my back on him or American citizens in desperate need because of a battle I was having with him on another important issue.

I never in my fights got personal. So that's how we did it and that's community organizing. Live and in person.

MYRA O'BRIEN

Throughout my professional career, I was committed to the clients; and that career spanned several decades with the Maryland Food Committee; Big Brothers of Baltimore; New Directions for Women; the Center for Displaced Homemakers; and Weston State Hospital (psychiatrically disabled, mentally challenged, etc.), first as a social worker and eventually as a department head in Psychiatric Rehabilitation. I learned to be not only a practitioner but also a teacher in the process. And I was always an advocate.

EVELYN SLAGHT

Harry Chaiklin turned out to be a true mentor. He inspired my continuing interest in working with delinquents; and as soon as I had completed my one year of service at the DPW, I moved over to a delinquency prevention program, thanks to the availability of “Poverty” money. My BURHA internship gave me a level of comfort on the streets with the youth that I would not have obtained otherwise.

I was put in charge of the budget, and, thanks to the Administration course, managed it easily. That led to a job with the newly formed Department of Juvenile Services, where I was hired as the prevention specialist. I used my program development skills in finding and helping community groups apply for the new “Safe Streets” money through the Law Enforcement Administration Agency. My link to law enforcement through this job was important when I began teaching police officers in the Administration of Justice degree program at George Mason University. Getting law enforcement to adopt social work values was a challenge. The officers learned the developmental stages of human behavior and so learned to handle different age groups appropriately. Through the Substance Abuse course, they began to understand that drug abuse is a health issue as well as a law enforcement issue, and that teaming with social workers could make their job easier.

My community organization background had a tremendous influence on how I carried out my administrative duties at both the Department of Juvenile Services and, later, the Social Services Administration. For example, when we began working on developing diversion programs at the Department of Juvenile Services (the “we” were myself and my graduate student interns), I insisted that we rely on community agencies rather than the state to staff and run these programs. My supervisor, a social worker with a clinical background, disagreed. I convinced him that it would be better in the long run if the programs were contracted to private community-based agencies since it would provide crucial community support. It turned out to be a critical decision, because when federal money stopped, the community groups lobbied for and secured state money to assure their continuance.

For several years, I was employed as the policy director for the Maryland Committee for Children, primarily serving as their lobbyist, a job I obviously could not have handled without the community organization knowledge and commitment.

I returned to the University of Maryland at Baltimore when I decided to work for a Ph.D., but found the curriculum woefully lacking in rigor and research. I went instead to the sociology department at the University of Maryland at College Park and com-

pleted my dissertation through the Institute of Criminal Justice.

Teaching has been an adventure where my years in the warehouse paid off. I have taught social policy at three universities now, focusing on the increasing unwillingness of government to respond to the growing needs of the poor. I have viewed the policy courses as a vehicle for generating interest and involvement in advocacy and social change. None of the universities where I have taught have a Macro/CO option as a major, making it all the more pleasant to return to the University of Maryland at Baltimore to teach policy.

BILL WISE

After graduation I went to work as director of Queen Anne's County Department of Welfare and stayed there for nearly thirty years. During those years the population of the county exploded and the agency more than tripled in size. We took on new programs, suffered RIF's, and saw operating budgets grow and contract. Local departments had rapport with the state office, conflict with the state office, and finally more or less became state agencies as the local role in directors' appointments was marginalized.

There were many changes in that agency over those thirty years. We hired the first black employee in Queen Anne's County government. In 1966 I was the only MSW in the agency; in 1993 most of the social work staff were MSW's. When I went to work there, I was one of two men on a staff of five; when I retired I was one of two men on a staff of 53. (Not everything changed!)

My agency was a player in a vast array of service expansion efforts on the Eastern Shore for which we had no first-line responsibility. We were involved in the expansion of mental health services, drug and alcohol treatment services, day care for children and adults, homemaker services, and services for children and youth.

I had many comments, both before and after retirement, about the good vibes and professionalism in my agency. Looking back, I believe those attributes were a legacy of the School of Social Work, not so much from class work as from classmates. My staff paid me a great tribute when, recognizing that I had a growing problem with alcohol, they arranged intervention and treatment for me instead of trying to get me fired.

I had a number of contacts with the school over the years. I supervised field placements for a couple of students, and then, as a member of the Salisbury State College (undergraduate) advisory committee, worked to bring the MSW program to the Shore. It was a treat in that process to work along with Ruth Young, who had been my favorite teacher.

It was not such a treat to observe that a sea change had occurred at UMSSW. In our day we, faculty and students alike for the most part, were fired with Kennedyesque idealism. We were focused on doing for our country through its established institutions. Change the institution as necessary, fix the system when it was broke, and we can change people's lot for the better. In the '80's I sensed from students in my agency and from working with the Salisbury Advisory Committee on the MSW issue that there was little emphasis at UMSSW on public agency employment. Private practice and industry paid better and were less frustrating. Poor people? Oh well, we will always have them

anyway.

When I retired in 1993 I served on several mental health and social agency boards, but I have drifted away from them as things changed too rapidly for me to keep up. I stay active with a twelve-step recovery club house, and in A.A. I am part of a volunteer water-testing program with the Chester River Association that strives to save the river and the Bay. I fear we do better with addicts than we do with polluters.

Ten years after the smoke had cleared, I wrote the following and read it at our class reunion. I sensed its truth a little at the recent get-together for Gerry's birthday.

I am astonished at your suggestion that something funny might have occurred during our two years in graduate school. Although the passage of ten years has scabbed over the more serious wounds, I still wake at night in stark terror, sweating and shaking with the realization that I have five papers due tomorrow and I haven't been able to get one goddamned journal from the library because Judy Fine has them all locked up on the 112th floor of Sutton Place

And sometimes, sometimes in the vague light of sunset sitting on my front porch looking at the river, I'll notice a furtive movement just on the edge of vision and will go clammy with the thought that Paul Gunning's research sample has escaped and is running amok.

Funny? Oh no! Those two years were filled with more terror than in a collection of Poe stories, more anxiety than you'll find in a dozen mental hospitals, and more downright horseshit and hostility than at the OK Corral.

For all I know some terribly funny things have happened to me since graduation, but my capacity for enjoyable response was snuffed out forever by the third chapter of the statistics book. I can't be in the same room with someone---old acquaintance or new---without wondering, what is the statistical significance of what he just said? What the hell does it mean when she crosses her legs that way? Should I respond as parent-adult or child-parent or just keep my mouth shut (but if I do that, I'll be labeled as anal retentive)?

On top of all that I have lived for 10 years with the near certainty that they will take my diploma away from me because I never heard the Anna Freud tapes and never took the Miller Analogies Test.

Funny? Christ, I haven't cracked a smile since I learned the bloody school was in a warehouse! If you all expect what your warped senses of humor remember as amusing anecdotes at this reunion, don't expect any response from me beyond a vacant stare and a noticeable palsy of the hands.

Part 5

EPILOGUE

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

PUTTING THE SOCIAL BACK INTO SOCIAL WORK – EVELYN SLAGHT

Tales From The Warehouse is intended to stimulate a resurgence of interest in community involvement, thus putting the “social” back in social work.

The times were ripe for social work because it was the era of Kennedy idealism. The War on Poverty was underway. There was significant civil unrest, and women’s roles were changing. We were in the midst of all this political turmoil, with a mindset, thanks to the school, that emphasized advocacy on behalf of the poor and disenfranchised. What a time it was! We came away believing we could make a difference! We could change the system and make equal opportunity a reality.

The class assignments stimulated an interest in and commitment to improving the lives of the poor by improving services in the community.

- We did neighborhood studies.
- We observed at the University Hospital Well Baby Clinic, while reading *The Magic Years*, one of many community ventures.
- We interviewed the elderly and disabled at Baltimore City Hospital.
- We learned to deal with temper tantrums, runaways, bruises, disappointments, drunken family members, anger on the streets, and on and on.
- We waited in long lines for hours with clients to get them needed health care.
- We wondered what to do about the rats that viewed small babies as their next meal.
- We were locked on a mental health ward and observed the inhumane conditions that were commonplace for the institutionalized. We applauded the Community Mental Health Act. (In recent years, however, we have wondered where the “community” in Community Mental Health has gone.)
- We did internships at the City Department of Public Welfare in Child Protective Services when it was the only service to poor families and children and youth.

Our housing in an old building over a dusty old warehouse lent an aura of real worldliness to our education, via the noises from the loading dock, truck fumes, etc.

The cafeteria consisted of an Automat, a relic from the 1940's, where we could buy coffee, tea, or chicken soup.

Students were screened for their personal appropriateness, not their academic success, and many came from poverty and had firsthand experience with social problems. They had a deep understanding of what their clients were experiencing.

We needed financial and family support to go to graduate school. The DPW continued to pay many of us; and in the second year, The National Institute of Mental Health made stipends available to the Community Organization students. Without this help, most would have been unable to attend.

Family support was critical, especially for the moms who were already feeling guilty because their children had to come home to an empty house at the end of the day. We had a young widow with a child; so many projects were completed at her house to be supportive of her. We were "family" to each other!

Grassroots neighborhood development was undertaken in the field under the auspices of the Baltimore Urban Renewal and Housing Agency, a truly unique experience.

Most importantly, we learned how to deal with the systems within the community that affected the lives of the poor and disenfranchised that we served.

There were many people from those years who were special to us and whom we honor:

- Violet Hill White, a police officer located two blocks from the school at the Pine Street Station, who handled all juvenile delinquency cases. She was there, side by side with the DPW workers, when they went to court before Master McDermott (who had a social work degree). He believed that his job as Juvenile judge was to hold the worker accountable for securing the services that were needed to correct the juvenile's behavior.
- Gerry Aronin, our class leader. She and her husband, Lou, welcomed us to their home when we needed a break and a chance to share experiences and bond.
- Bill Wise and Paul Gunning, who maintained a wit that would keep us sane.
- Verl Lewis, the first and best dean of the School of Social work, a proper, reserved person, who could assess applicants better than anyone and give a break to those who needed it.

- David Slaght, for a wonderful portrait of Dean Lewis that hangs in the halls of the school, a gift from the class of '65.
- Shirley Buttrick, whose policy classes emphasized the need to bring about social change, through legislative action and a focus on macro practice.
- Harry Chaiklin, for putting us through hell and torture, called Research 101 — an experience we will never forget! Research, the most demanding and challenging course, instilled a way of thinking that affected how we acted as professionals; it was a life-changing experience. Will we ever forget *The Paradox of Persistent Poverty*, our joint thesis; social alienation; the merits and demerits of high-rise public housing; all those studies that were remarkably informative, changing our way of thinking.
- Dan Thursz, an acknowledged leader in the field of community organization.
- Those field supervisors who believed that the system was the problem, and not its poor, and allowed us the freedom to approach our casework responsibilities as advocates for the client.
- Dr. Lisansky, whose psychopathology course gave us the opportunity to “catch” a series of obscure illnesses.
- Esther Lazarus, for the foresight to view the Baltimore City Department of Public Welfare as a training ground for social workers.

Since then, we have wondered why we lost the War on Poverty and seem to be losing the War on Drugs. Why are social workers seemingly absent from the trenches?

Most of us found ourselves after graduation in high level administrative positions, in part because our MSWs were rare then, and in part because the emphasis on community and social change made us knowledgeable about social systems and good at program development and management. We helped create new agencies, influenced legislation, involved the community in determining its own destiny, and involved ourselves as members of community groups to bring about change in our own communities. That one of our own, Barbara Mikulski, went on to become a US Senator is a credit to the education we received.

A PITCH FOR NASW—CARL THISTEL

In the early 70's the warehouse was torn down to make way for an expanding University of Maryland at Baltimore campus. A group of us from the class of '65 have been gathering to share some recollections from those halcyon days, comparing our aspirations as we left the confines of the warehouse with the realities we faced in our career paths.

I did some crude number crunching and concluded that in a 42-year career, I've spent no less than \$3,700 in NASW dues. And just what have I gotten as return on my investment? A whole bunch. Let me explain.

In the early '60s we were pursuing an MSW, what sociologists refer to as the *terminal degree* necessary to enter the profession of social work. Of no small perceived importance as we saw it – the cap on our *bonafides* as aspirant practitioners, a decade before the advent of State licensing – was membership in the NASW with the coveted embossed gold medallion, ACSW, signifying another vital *right of passage* into the profession of social work. This notion persisted despite the negative vibes emanating from our faculty at the School of Social work, who faulted the NASW as organizationally inept and out of touch with the political realities of the times. The school, you see, was fervently about recruiting soldiers for the coming War on Poverty, not paving the way for careers in private practice.

But, like most of the warehouse gang, I decided that, inept and politically irrelevant as it may be, the NASW was about to be *my* organization as a fledgling professional. Not only would I join it, but I would burrow myself into its crushingly boring committee structure. Moreover, in what may have been a singular act of pure masochism, I sought and was elected to a chapter office with the ludicrous title of Vice President of Social Action. Yes, I'd do that *and* perform a frontline role in the War on Poverty. From this misadventure I would learn two vital things about the NASW and professional organizations in general:

(1) when militantly pursuing avenues of social justice, a salaried position, especially in the public sector, is, at best, an encumbrance and, at worst, a conflict of interest (Dorothy Dix could have told me that!)

(2) most professionals use their professional organizations **primarily** for valuable networking, collegial support, expertise sharing, job mobility, and development of lasting friendships. All else, including and especially social action, is decidedly **secondary**.

Robert Merton was on the mark in distinguishing the differences between the *manifest*

and *latent* functions of organizations—especially professional organizations with lofty, high-sounding goals. The latent functions of the NASW are what have been of incalculable value as a return on my paltry financial investment in the organization over the past 42 years.

So was the faculty right in disdaining the NASW? Only as applies to those lofty manifest goals of the organization. Yes, at the national level the organization is woefully bloated, hierarchical, and top-heavy, in many instances clearly out of touch with its local memberships. All the more reason for those of us who appreciate and benefit from those *latent functions* of the NASW to pitch in and bring it into the 21st century. I regularly advise young prospective members that merely joining NASW is a consummate waste of money. To make it pay off handsomely with reference to networking and those other career development functions, you must invest in the organization.

A REBUTTAL—PAUL GUNNING

When I graduated in June '65, I had money for either NASW membership or season tickets to the Colts. I had a seat right behind Dr. Lisansky who taught psychopathology, the course where you can catch all those obscure illnesses - some I still have.

STILL SO MUCH TO DO—GERRY ARONIN

These are our remembrances. Again, as we did forty years ago, we laughed, we sighed, we laughed some more, and we remembered. We rejoiced in being together and we wondered why we continue to care about each other. And we decided that the important thing is the caring, not the why. Maybe it was the times, maybe it was the size of the school, maybe it was the faculty, maybe it was the hope in what we could do, maybe it was just plain caring. What's the difference?

But in remembering, we came upon a challenge to social workers made by Abraham Ribicoff, a former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare at the 1961 Conference on Social Welfare.

“.....it seems to me in the urgent national interest that you—each and every one of you—help put the social back in social work...stop worrying about your professional status. Cut down on your verbiage and your long-winded memoranda. Join us in the programs we have, which we will undertake—campaign against slums and poverty in the midst of plenty, segregation and group tensions, of the terrors of old age. Break down the walls of artificial specialties and sub-specialties..... Stop worrying about intake and whether you and I can relate to each other. We have work to do. Let's take a hard look at our training methods..... The time has come for all of us to throw out our old, stereotyped ideas. The time has come for all of us to do a lot of soul searching, to look within ourselves in the light of experience and come up with new ways to meet new problems.”

But that was 1961—times have changed. The old methods are outdated. Who needs to observe the parent/child relationship, or the old people, or the institutionalized? We have social security, do we need to know why it was legislated? Do social workers need to learn the political process and advocacy? Do we need community organization? The war on poverty has been fought. Racial discrimination has been eliminated through legislation like the Voters Rights Act. That was 1961—this is 2007. But last year, through the wonders of television we saw the fury wrought by Katrina. We saw the plight of the poor, the elderly, and the hospitalized. We were able to observe and we know that the wars that we fought still need to be won.