STRESS AND SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION
PARANOID-LIKE-THINKING, AN ADAPTIVE MECHANISM

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Paranoid-Like-Thinking, An Adaptive Mechanism

Submitted to the Institute for Clinical Social Work

in Partial Fulfillment of

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Katherine M. Kolodziejski

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INSTITUTE FOR CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK

We hereby approve the Project Demonstrating Excellence

Stress and Social Work Education
Paranoid-Like-Thinking, An Adaptive Mechanism
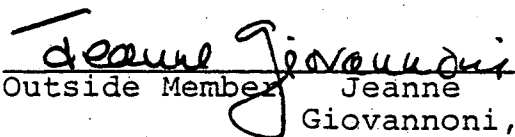
by

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"...

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the
slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
and by opposing, end them?"

From "Hamlet"
by William Shakespeare

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ABSTRACT

Many studies have addressed student responses
to stress in the learning process - typically anxiety,
depression and somatization have been identified. This
study explores a response called paranoid-like thinking.
The phenomenon is familiar to those educators and prac-
titioners who work with students engaged in the process
of clinical learning, but little has been documented in
the literature.

An effort has been made to explore this manifes-
tation through theoretical understanding of several
components which tend to create stress for the learner;
the learning process, the organizational structure,
the development of competence and the unique character-
istics of clinical learning in social work education.
Ego Psychology has provided the primary theoretical frame-
work. The setting for observation of the phenomenon was
a graduate school of social work. Empirical data was pre-
sented for illustrative purposes.

It is hoped that a contribution has been made which
furthers the understanding of social work education and
its vicissitudes. The finding that paranoid-like thinking
is an adaptive mechanism of positive value has implication
for further study related to this stress response.

Chapter I

STRESS AND SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

An Exploration of One Component

Overview and Introduction

As a clinician, engaged in the education of social
workers for more than twenty years, I have been concerned
about the stress produced in this process. "Growth
through pain" was once a cliche in social work educational
circles, but does not now enjoy much currency. However,
we continue to address the concept of stress in clinical
learning as a "given" without much attention toward
clarifying its nature and elements. While we acknowledge
that each student will experience and react to the
stresses in highly individualistic ways we often also
identify common characteristics and patterns. Two of
the common mechanisms for coping with stress have been
documented in the literature, namely anxiety and de-
pression. A third that I have observed which has gen-
erated much informal discussion but received little
formal attention, is what I call non-pathological-
paranoid-like-thinking. It is this component of response
to stress that I want to explore. The observation of
this phenomenon has taken place in the Graduate School
of Social Welfare at the University of California at Los
Angeles. It is through the lens of a faculty member
of the school that I plan to study this response.

Understanding the range of coping devices, styles and mechanisms for adapting are all of interest and importance in my faculty role with students. The component focused on in this project is of particular interest because of its seemingly high incidence, because it has not before been isolated and examined, and because it seems to serve productive functions. This common phenomenon in social work education seems to help maintain homeostasis and an adaptive posture for the student.

The phenomenon is likely to show in a variety of ways in a school including the "rumor mill", "grapevine" or "wire" and is possibly a group dynamic. However, it also appears as an individual response. Having made this observation, many questions can be raised. No single study could hope to cover all. There are for example, a range of questions which relate to the individual having the response; is it a person whose personality formation contains little basic trust who is most apt to develop paranoid-like-thinking when under stress? How is it related to projection as the person's primary defense? How well is the person actually doing in school? The innumerable possible variables involved in the manifestation of this phenomenon, make it difficult to single out one factor as opposed to another factor for thorough analysis. The "system", social issues of the times, personal and cultural crises, the job market, etc., could each contribute to the development of

paranoid-like-thinking.

The above is hardly an exhaustive listing of possible questions attendant upon exploring this phenomenon but give some indication of the complexities involved. Any attempt at factor analysis or a 'hard' research approach which took these many complexities into account, might occupy a professional lifetime. Because I believe the phenomenon is a common and highly productive one, I wish to begin an exploration, at least on a limited basis. This study will attempt to examine certain aspects of a graduate school of social work, the stress produced, and one form of response to that stress.

A. Purpose of the Project

The thrust of this project is to explore a phenomenon rather than to answer specific clinical research questions. It is well documented that learning produces stress. It is my contention that clinical learning, as in social work education, tends to be particularly stressful for several specific and unique reasons. An observed response is paranoid-like-thinking. I believe this phenomenon is a common one, that is distinctive in nature, and that it represents an adaptive or coping mechanism.

The goal then, is to do an exploratory study of stress in clinical social work education for the purpose

of further understanding the phenomenon called paranoid-
like-thinking. A sub-goal will be to relate the
observance of the phenomenon to the organizational
structure in which social work students and educators
interface. If it is a common and productive adaptive
mechanism, its illumination should be an important con-
tribution. Further understanding of clinical learning
in social work will add to our fund of knowledge con-
cerning this educational process. Moreover, understand-
ing this particular component, establishing its char-
acteristics and functions might provide some ways of
ameliorating the "pain" associated with clinical learning.

Clarification and knowledge of paranoid-like-thinking
may have implications for organizational structures and
behaviors. If institutions which are concerned with
clinical teaching are sensitized to the presence and
dimensions of the phenomenon they might have greater
control over its generation and effects. This study
might also have implications for other than social work
clinical learning. It certainly opens for further study
a facet of the educational process and of coping
mechanisms used by students in the face of inherent
stress.

B. Areas to be Explored

The framework of Ego Psychology seems to best
encompass the separate strands in this study, connecting

some disparate elements. Ego Psychology allows for
understanding such primary factors as concepts related
to stress, unique stress in clinical learning, coping
or adapting mechanisms, and the paranoid process.
Through this framework we can also look at stages of
maturation, the acquisition of competence and styles of
learning. Ego Psychology and the Developmentalists have
distilled their theoretical constructs from a number of
other areas which include animal psychology, child de-
velopment, psychopathology, psychoanalysis and inter-
personal theories enabling us to view the phenomenon
from multiple vantage points. It takes into account the
psychic structures of the individual, the environment,
culture, social impacts: a wide range of factors which
influence the processes of learning and adapting. This
framework is of interest and is applicable in compre-
hending the individual in a given situation.

Three areas of literature will be reviewed. Each
presents many interrelated aspects which have relevance
to the study. The areas which will be reviewed are as
follows:

1. Psychodynamic literature will be taken from
Ego Psychology, especially the developmentalists such
as Erickson and White. Attention will be focused on
mastery and attainment of competence. In addition, this
body of literature will provide the basis for clarifying

and defining the specific kind of paranoid-like-thinking which characterizes the component of reaction to stress which is under study. Authors used for this portion will include Fenichel and Meissner. It will also be the source for the exploration of the unique stresses in clinical learning. Some of the authors who have written about this aspect are Ekstein and Bruch.

2. The literature on Educational Psychology will be reviewed for content which addresses stress associated with learning. Special attention to the sub-area of Andragogy will be given. In this literature is also found material related to differences between coping and defending in the learning process. Authors include Mechanic, Bruner and Knowles.

3. Some Organizational and Management literature will also be used, pertinent material will focus on impacts and constraints on the individual caused by the organizational structures. Authors include Etzioni and Eckles.

The intention of the study is to meet the following objectives:

1. Establish that learning is stress-producing. The production of stress in the learning process will be established through research studies and through the literature review from the field of Educational Psychology.

2. Establish that clinical learning is particularly

and uniquely stressful. This area will be detailed from empirical data, from anecdotal accounts, from impressionistic familiarity with clinical learning and from readings related to the teaching and learning of psychotherapy.

3. Submit illustrative material related to the component of reaction to stress which is under study. There will be some brief exploration of commonly identified responses to stress but emphasis will be placed on the one which seems to be paranoid-like in nature. Clarification and elaboration will come from empirical data, anecdotal accounts, interviews with colleagues, students, etc., and general observations. A number of reports and vignettes about paranoid-like-reactions to specific situations will be presented.

4. A selected review of the Instructional Evaluation Rating Form used by the University of California system which seems particularly relevant to this study, will give some information related to organizational structure. The assumption here is that ratings of the faculty and school on selected items reveal some of the organizational climate which directly affects the student's sense of security. The three items selected for review are those which address the quality of interaction between students and their instructors. The items for review are: a) The instructor was concerned

that the students learn and understand the subject
materials. b) Students are made to feel welcome in
seeking help or advice in or outside of the class.
c) Students were free to disagree with the instructor
and/or to express their own ideas.

5. Develop implications related to the paranoid-
like-thinking which will have been demonstrated. Detail
regarding the component and its characteristics will be
deduced from the above data and from the experience with
the phenomenon.

6. Develop implications related to the role of the
organizational structures in the production and effect
of paranoid-like-thinking. Material which illustrate
the organizational aspects' contribution to the develop-
ment of paranoid-like-thinking will also be deduced from
the above data and from the literature.

C. Working Definitions for Key Concepts and Terms

Since many of the terms used in this study have
varying meanings dependent upon context, it seems im-
portant to specify the terms as used in this undertaking.
The defining process also clarifies concepts. The
following represent my working definitions.

1) Adaptation

Adaptation or coping is the process used by the in-
dividual to deal with stress. (Defined later) It is
how the individual deals with what is perceived as diffi-

cult situations and with the factors affecting these perceptions. Whether or not a person experiences stress will depend on the means, largely learned ones, that the person has available to deal with his/her life situation. Thus, the disruptive aspects of stress are likely to become manifest when the individual perceives his/her coping means as lacking or insufficient or when they actually do become so. In other words, the more coping, skill, understanding, support, ability, capacity, etc., a person has, the easier he/she will be able to adapt to what the environment stimulates in the way of discomfort. The term adaptation refers to the many ways in which a person deals with his/her situation and the feelings aroused by the situation. Coping behavior is considered the same as adaptation within the study. Individuals develop, through their life experiences and personality structures, various patterns for dealing with what they perceive as problems, difficulties, and situations which require something unusual from them. The original meaning of "to cope" was to maintain a contest or combat, usually on even terms or even with success, over something or someone else, so that coping, like adaptation, is an attempt to deal with and overcome problems and difficulties.

2) The term Clinical Learning will be used throughout this study to denote an exposure to, movement toward, and understanding of the complex human procedures.

Another specific aspect of "clinical learning", as used here, relates to the use of the total person of the helper as a technique, tool, or means through which change will take place.

3. Competence

The term competence is used to describe an individual's ability to take the initiative and to act upon the environment rather than standing by passively and allowing the environment to control the person and to determine the individual's acts. The competent person has both the skills necessary to interact successfully with the world and the confidence required to brave new ventures. This view of competence coincides with the popular definition as denoting being able, proficient, adept and effective in some aspect of life. The first criteria of competence then implies a specific degree of knowledge required for a specific level of performance, often referred to as "mastery". In addition to the mastery criterion of competence, there is a second criterion; an individual's self-confidence or sense of being competent and thus able to cope. This sense of confidence permits the individual to enter and explore new situations, new areas of learning and skill development. The relationship between skill and self-confidence is spiralling and growth requires that both be present.

4. Defense

The meaning of this term as used in the study is a

conventional one not the psychoanalytic one. It does not, except where so stipulated, relate to the person's attempts to ward off unacceptable interpsychic conflict. Here it is primarily used to convey the process of protecting, resisting or preventing aggression, assault, or attack. This may or may not be a conscious process. The term used is a descriptive category which characterizes behavior and serves in the function of the ego.

5. Paranoid-Like Thinking

This term denotes something different from paranoid thinking. It has the general characteristics of paranoid thinking in which a person believes that there exists a conspiracy and a malevolent pattern in the behavior of friends, associates, organizations, where in fact, no such conspiracy or pattern exists. Paranoid-like thinking, however, is a more vague, often unrecognized, ill-defined sense of danger, based on the possible ill feelings of others towards the person. Further characteristics of paranoid-like thinking can be described as being non-delusional, containing a germ of truth, and the person's knowing that the paranoid-like feelings are over-determined. Paranoid-like thinking comes into play when the integrity and security of the individual is threatened. Some individuals are highly susceptible to slights, because of attitudes they have toward themselves as social objects. But most individuals resort to such thinking when conflicting reactions can neither be

successfully resolved nor ignored and in particular, when certain kinds of outcomes are expected by the individual. Paranoid-like-thinking is characterized by a heightened tendency toward excessive or irrational suspiciousness or distrustfulness, a sense of foreboding that things will go wrong, that others will help to make them go wrong and that wariness is the watch word. Persons with paranoid-like-thinking generate a behavior mode which is continuously tense and slightly antagonistic. They are direct, have purposefulness, and they present themselves as defending against threats. In terms of their response to external influences, they are touchy, guarded, suspicious, wary. In terms of affective experience, there is a general contraction of subjective experience, a narrowing of affect (as in projections), a loss of capacity for spontaneity and abandonment, extreme tension and slight antagonism. In terms of the sense of pressure, the person with paranoid-like-thinking lives with an awareness of threat of superior force or authority. The threat experience is external. General reaction is defensive.

6. Stress

Stress refers both to the difficulties experienced by individuals and to their response to them. Though not clearly defined in the social sciences, stress factors are physical, social, or cultural ones which

lead to experiences of discomfort and which evoke unusual social and psychological responses. Stress is also a response to emotional tensions, anxieties, fear, depression, discomfort. Sometimes the stimulus is called stress while sometimes the behavioral symptoms -- anxiety, fear, depression, etc., are called stress. For our purposes, stress is defined as the discomforting response of a person to a particular situation and we assume the individual experiencing stress is motivated to reduce or eliminate it.

Chapter II

METHOD OF THE STUDY AND ITS LIMITATIONS

The method employed in this study is a theoretical and exploratory one based on observations and the literature. The observations are based on clinical understanding of reactions among students, to a variety of elements in their educational experience in the UCLA graduate school of social welfare.

This study represents a sharply limited look at one component, paranoid-like-thinking, as a reaction to stress, among students in our program. There are no before and after measures; there are no indicators as to who among the individual students might come to the experience with a paranoid style; there are no instruments for measuring specific attitudinal or value stances which might predict individual susceptibility to the development of paranoid-like-thinking. The study is limited in that it makes no attempt to compare the actual performance in school with the individual's paranoid-like-thinking. Nor are we attempting to examine individual attributes such as I.Q., competencies, or personality constructs, in the individual's overall performance and adaptation to the educational experience. The possible social variables which could affect the phenomenon under study are innumerable, including such elements as age,

race, cultural background, prior experience, present interpersonal situation, motivation, etc. There has been no attempt to correlate the phenomenon under study with existing profiles, developed through psychological instruments, of social work students. Most of those which are examined such as the Strong-Kuder inventories and the California Personality Inventories were elaborate long-range studies of which the profiles developed on social workers were minor parts and it would have involved another major scholarly undertaking to identify the aspects which might have relevance.

One study which was examined and has relevance was done by Ruth Salzberg at UCLA. She undertook a one year study of our students numbering 140 individuals, from the frame of reference known as the Internal versus External Control Inventory. This instrument was developed by J.B. Rotter, a psychologist interested in social learning and education. The instrument, after much validation and standardization, is used to determine whether a person feels he is in control of his fate, or whether he feels at the mercy of whatever fate has in store for him; thus, internal or external control. Salzberg's study of our students indicated that, predominantly, they tended to be persons who fell into the category of "externals", or individuals who tend to perceive their own power as being minimal, their

rights and privileges as adults not secure, and that situations and circumstances about which they have little to say can and do significantly affect their lives. (Note #4)

Another limitation of this study is that no attempt is made to utilize the findings except by implication and example. The purpose being not to arrive at definitive statements of principles or implementations, but simply to report on observational data of a certain kind. This is clearly a beginning exploration of a phenomenon which is failiar to everyone interacting with social work students. It would seem that the same constructs could apply to the students in any kind of clinical learning, so another limitation is that the study does not attempt to encompass the learning processes and development of paranoid-like-thinking among the other clinical disciplines. Many other limitations are apparently some of which were in Chapter I.

A. Populations and Organizational Setting

The graduate school of Social Welfare at UCLA is a well-established program, having approximately 22 faculty and a student body of approximately 150, using 60+ field placements with more than 80 field instructors. The students are persons with an AB degree selected from an applicant pool approximately 10 times larger than the group finally chosen. Students range in age from 20 or 21 through the early fifties; they represent a broad

social-economic-cultural spectrum, about half have had
some social work related employment. No specific under-
graduate preparation is required for admission but a
better than average (3.0 gpa) academic achievement is
required. From the large pool approximately 80 are
chosen each year and the selection process focuses on
the applicant's abilities, competencies, and values
which are congruent with social work.

The admission process in institutions providing
social work education are a rigorous and often negative
experience for the applicant. It is assumed that the
careful process of review, the high degree of selectivity
in choosing students and the need to have demonstrated
competence will produce a class of highly motivated
persons, who have good capacity to learn, who are oriented
to people and ones who are themselves basically emotionally
healthy. The faculty of our school have a sense of
assurance that the best possible candidates have been
chosen to enter the few 'slots' available. Faculty assume
that students have minimal pathology and are reasonably
well-adjusted, that the expected level of anxiety can
be handled but that basically the persons admitted have
an excellent chance to succeed in the program. The indi-
viduals who make up the class also have the sense that
they were "chosen" from among many and therefore in some
ways are preferred. Yet the beginning feelings of well
being soon vanish, with students feeling they are not

cut out for this work, have questions about the career,
or that they won't make it in this school.

As D. Mechanic, a social psychologist, states:
"Graduate schools have their own distinctive cultures
which the student must at least, in part, acquire.
Particular values are maintained, specific interests are
pursued and traditions often persist, although students
come and go. Each student group has its own peculiarities
and what is true of one group need not be true of others,
but a persistent and overall system of assumptions,
opinions and values, and attitudes seem to characterize
a school or department." (Mechanic, 1969, P. 47). It
is difficult to identify what characterizes our school
but there are persisting themes which seem relevant to
this study. One is that students complain the faculty
is distant, unapproachable, disinterested, and uncaring.
Students have often asked for more informal opportunities
to interact with faculty. Such opportunities have been
provided with little, if any, effect. Either students
did not avail themselves of the opportunity or they did
not want to continue the process. Another myth in our
history is that, if a student is in treatment himself,
it is best not to share that with the school. This
appears to be based on pure fiction because the faculty
generally is very much in favor of ones using help,
knowing when it is needed and faculty make referrals for

treatment. Another rumor heard about our school is that it is anti-clinical. This too, seems specious in that most of the students are by choice in the case work tract although they could elect community organization or later, administration. Furthermore, most of the place-ments are in mental health settings. Perhaps these ex-amples suffice to give some rough idea of rumors which affect the climate for students.

Another important aspect of this particular organi-zational setting is the philosophical stance of the faculty. It is varied. Although in general the common agreement that Ego psychology is the theoretical base from which social work learning is approached, wide variation exists among instructional staff. We also con-cur that the precepts of androgogy (self-directed learn-ing) influence an individual's response to stress in edu-cation.

Androgogy, as contrasted with pedagogy (defined as teacher directed learning), points up different assumptions about the learning process. 'Teacher directed' assumptions about the learner are essentially that a student is a dependent personality and that the teacher has the re-sponsibility of deciding what and how the learner should be taught. 'Self-directed' learning assumes that the human being grows in capacity, grows in need to be self-directing and is an essential component of maturing.

'Teacher-directed' assumes that the learner's experience is of less value than that of the teacher. 'Self-directed' assumes that learner's experiences become increasingly rich resources for the teaching process and should be exploited along with other resources. 'Teacher-directed' assumes a progression in which all students become ready to learn certain things at certain prescribed levels of maturation, and that a given set of learners will therefore be ready to learn the same things at the same level of maturation or age. 'Self-directed' assumes, on the other hand, that individuals become ready to learn what is required at individually determined times; that each individual therefore has a somewhat different pattern of readiness from other individuals. 'Teacher-directed' learning encourages students to enter the learning process with a subject-centered orientation, so that learning experiences should therefore be organized according to units of content. 'Self-directed' learning encourages a natural orientation which is task or problem-centered; therefore, the learning experiences should be organized as task accomplishing or problem-solving projects. 'Teacher directed' learning assumes that students are motivated to learn in response to external rewards and punishments - grades, degrees, etc., and fear of failure. 'Self-directed' learning assumes that learners are motivated by internal incentives such as need for esteem,

desire to achieve, urge to grow, satisfaction of accomplishment, desire to know something specific, and curiosity. (Knowles, 1975).

The philosophical stance of our faculty ascribes to self-directing concepts of learning. As Alvin Toffler described in "Future Shock", our world is so rapidly changing that the only stable characteristic will be change. This implies that education can no longer just transmit what is known, its main purposes must be to develop the skills of inquiry and the ability to learn. Our department has identified these purposes as primary attainments to be inculcated in the product of our two year program. Yet, in many ways, the constraints on the organization tend to go counter to this basic philosophical premise which is based not just on the concepts of androgogy but also on the conviction that our students are mature and competent individuals. Of course, it is true that whenever an individual enters into certain educational situations given requirements must be met. This is not only true in educational institutions which also have requirements imposed on them, but in the social work profession itself where criteria are set and must be met. These external impositions are represented by licensing boards: accrediting bodies which define the basic knowledge, skills and values; charters for agencies; and codes of ethics which professional organizations themselves develop and

impose upon their members. There is little disagreement with the need for standards but it is important to see that these standards do have a direct effect upon students, making them feel infantalized and powerless, thus interfering with the self-directed learning process.

However divergent these ideas are, many educators are attending to the principles of andragogy simply because adult learning and maximizing of adult potential have become more important in today's society. Education is no longer associated only with youth. Knox suggests this is "because of rapid social changes, naturalistic and equalitarian values and an aging population have shifted our attention to the dynamics of the processes by which adult life unfolds." (Knox, 1977, P. 28) He also emphasizes that growth and development do not take place only because of the passage of time but because the combination and interaction between stability and change is generative of production. Knox acknowledges that basic to adult learning is the student's sense of self or identity. He says, "...positiveness of self concept and level of self-esteem tend to increase with growth...when they are dependent on others to define who and how they are - then that individual is more prone to difficulties in this realm of his personality equilibrium". (P. 331)

Knox has done many research studies with both college and non-college bound adults. A primary finding is that

optimal self concepts help people to use their intellectual abilities more effectively. In addition, a good self-concept is a partial predictor of successful occupational performance. He also found that ... "shifts in self-confidence, particularly any turning points at which a trend toward more positive views of self is reversed and a negative trend begins, are more likely to reflect decline of satisfactory interaction with significant others and cause more defensiveness.... Others with an inadequate sense of self crumble under stress and break down or suicide, experience prolonged depressions, chronic and acute anxiety states as well as somatic complaints, and serious illnesses." (P. 343)

The sense of self is affected by the individual's resolution of childhood and adolescent ego crises related to trust, autonomy, initiative, industry and identity. If the transition to adulthood is successful, the individual achieves a fit between past potential and experience, current sense of identity and aspirations, and societal expectations and opportunities for the future. During adulthood, additional ego crises relate to intimacy, generativity and integrity. The evolving self concept of those who go for advanced education tend to reinforce a positive view of prior performance and acceptance of self. Typically, these people view themselves as having influence in interpersonal relationships.

A positive self-concept reflects high self-esteem, self-confidence and both self-differentiation and personality integration. A positive self-concept is associated with self-actualization and effectiveness. (P. 399).

A. H. Maslow (1968) has been a consistent voice accentuating a non-deficiency theoretical approach to the development of personality and productivity. He suggests that adjustment and stabilization, while positive because they tend to decrease pain, are also negative if they block development toward higher and higher ideals and competencies. His major thesis is that growth continues throughout life and that self actualization, self-respect, belonging, obtaining affection are all basic needs for life and security. Healthy people have sufficiently gratified their basic needs for safety, belongingness, love, respect, etc., so that they are motivated primarily by trends to self-actualization.

Maslow departs from most writers of the psychodynamic school regarding motivation. (P. 25) He says they tend to agree that needs, drives and motivating states in general are annoying, irritating, unpleasant, undesirable, to be gratified and thus gotten rid of. So that motivated behavior, goal seeking and compensatory responses are all techniques for reducing these discomforts. Psychodynamists use descriptions of motivation as need, tension, drive, and anxiety reduction. Maslow on the other hand, believes

that impulses are desired and welcomed, are enjoyable and
pleasant. If they constitute tensions, then they are
pleasurable tensions, with the creative person welcoming
his/her creative impulses, the talented person enjoying,
using, and expanding his/her talents. This is in contrast
to dynamic theories which postulate that reductions are
in order to achieve equilibrium, homeostasis, a state of
rest, a lack of pain. Maslow states if..." motivational
life consists essentially of a defensive removal of irri-
tating tensions and if the only end product of tension is
a state of passive waiting for more unwelcome tensions to
arise, and in their turn to be dispelled, then it would
be impossible for change, development, growth, or movement
to come about." (P. 27)

Maslow makes another specific point which has bearing
on our considerations. He indicates that growth and
safety go hand in hand. Growth takes place in relatively
small increments and each forward step is made possible by
the feeling of being safe, of operating out into the un-
known from a safe home port, of daring because retreat to
a familiar position is possible. "Assured safety permits
higher needs and impulses to emerge and to grow toward
mastery." (P. 49) This principle is one which the school
and faculty accept although adherence to it is uneven.
It is a purpose of this study to acknowledge that the
organizational structure, its values, principles and pur-

poses do significantly effect the student population, their feelings of safety and their ability to utilize the learning opportunity to its maximum.

Most of the observations made about the paranoid-like-thinking as a reaction to stress comes out of my own role as student advisor. Over the past 23 years, I have had that role with approximately 500 graduate students in the UCLA School of Social Welfare. Although the school structure provides for two kinds of advisors, field advisor and academic advisor, it is the impression of those in the school that the academic advisor plays a minimal role and has a much more administrative function than that contained in the role of the field advisor.

The field advisor's responsibility is twofold. One is that of liaison to the field placement agency, in which the student is doing his or her practicum and the second is that of advisor to the student. The liaison responsibility includes on-sight visits to the agencies, systematic conferences with the field instructor (agency-based), a continuing assessment of the student's performance, assignments, and adaptations in the agency. The second responsibility, that of student advisor, begins early in the student's experience within the organization of the school. The field advisor is the students' link between practicum and campus, between the experiental and the academic aspect of their education. Students are generally encouraged to utilize advisors as resource persons, as sounding·boards,

as those to whom the student might bring concerns, problems
and issues. Also, the advisor's responsibility is to be
available and interested in all of the impacts and con-
straints students experience as they attempt to use the
field course as the laboratory for all of their other learn-
ing. Problems brought to the field advisor frequently
relate to reality as well as to interpersonal, and inter-
psychic factors. The field advisor should be the first
line of defense when difficulties or problems arise. The
field advisor is the one with whom students must discuss
reality factors, such as loss of a car or illness, or other
experiences which effect their performance in the practicum.
This person is also seen as a mediator between conflicting
demands of school and agency.

The university field faculty, (of which the field ad-
visor is a part) is made up of persons who are first and
foremost clinicians. One of their primary concerns there-
fore, is the individual's functioning, particularly the way
in which the individual takes hold and utilizes himself -
or, adapts. In contrast to the academic advisor, the
field advisor is apt to be interested in the total situation
with which the student is confronted. These clinicians,
who are assigned field advising functions in the school,
see themselves as social workers first, academicians second,
and each of them has come to academia from clinical
practice. The "gestalt" from which the field advisors

come is one of concern for the individual student, interest
in the total person and the student's integration with
all parts of the school and its curriculum.

Clinical expertise provide a climate in which the
field advisor serves many functions. An open, receptive,
trustworthy field advisor often becomes the student's
confidant, quasi-therapist, good mother, and at times -
his nemesis, betenoir, enemy. That same field advisor,
as liaison, will also relate to the field instructor in
similar ways. Field instructors may also bring their
fears, biases, and hangups to the liaison person. The
liaison or field advisor certainly is a buffer between
the student and the agency's field instructor, between
agency and school and tries to remove any impediments to
a good learning situation. The job requires continual
monitoring, constant identification of problems, especially
as to locus, direction, duration and proportions. Given
that there are at least two sides to every issue, that
there are distortions, self-protections, and mixed per-
ceptions in interactions, the advisor's role demands
clinical understanding. When differences arise it is the
liaison/advisor who must mediate. The role calls for
evaluative judgment as to whether the situation is toxic
or growth producing. The role calls for constantly rede-
fining, modifying and sorting out both the nature of the
problem and the degree to which that problem interferes

to a significant degree with students' learning.

In the role described above a wide range of students have shared with me their fears, concerns, worries and general anxieties. Within this wealth of shared information and experiences there seems to be a common theme which has not been previously reported in the literature. It is paranoid-like-thinking. Students are frequently saying " I feel paranoid about such and such or so and so. " Students often bring to the advisor their suspiciousness in order to check out its veracity. Most of the time the student indicates knowledge that he is feeling paranoid; he knows these feelings are exagerated responses to the reported situation; he can usually identify the cause of such feelings; and he knows the feelings will subside. Clearly, the feelings are not delusional. As with most paranoid processes there is almost always a grain of truth which the student irritates like a grain of sand in an oyster, until not a pearl - but a whole pile of abrasive granules (fear) have been scraped together. It is almost as though the corrosiveness itself helps to drain off the effects which are troublesome.

In the Chapter VI we shall examine the phenomenon of paranoid-like thinking in detail through examples which have surfaced in work with our students.

Chapter III

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

As social workers we are taught that the organization of an agency greatly effects the quality, quantity and nature of services provided the clients. So too, in education it seems important to know the effects organizational variables have on staff and students. Structural aspects of organizations tend to create their own unique issues and dilemmas. It would seem that these structures have promotional influence on the component of paranoid-like-thinking, or conversely, be one of the factors which mitigate against its development. The field of organizational behavior and management has not yet developed a universally acceptable topology which covers all institutions, but one classification known as "Mock Bureaucracy" might best describe the UCLA School of Social Welfare.

Characteristics of a "Mock Bureaucracy" (Goldner, Alvin, "Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy", The Free Press, Glencoe, Ill. 1954 (pp. 282-4), are as follows: 1) the rules are imposed on the group by some outside agency; 2) neither superiors nor subordinates can ordinarily, legitimate the rules in terms of their own values; 3) enforcement of the rules tends to violate the values of both leaders and members; 4) deviation from rules is viewed as an expression of uncontrollable needs or of

human nature; 5) deviation from rules is often status
enhancing for members, and for leadership, but when leader-
ship is put into conflict about conformance, tensions
develop. These characteristics of a Mock Bureaucracy
emerge within the context of the more pervasive bureau-
cratic structures which are designed to ensure the sur-
vival of an organization.

A. Review of the Literature

From the earliest times there have been organizations.
Studies of how they function and affect their members
grew out of the industrial movement. Most of the theo-
retical work focused on how to obtain greater productivity
from members. The organizational imperative has been:
"the nature of any organization is that members are com-
pelled to perform tasks that will maximize rewards and
minimize trouble for the organization." (Alex Thio)
(1978, P. 74) In general, theory related to organizational
behavior tends to support several principles: The organi-
zation provides the mechanism to: 1) translate societal
mandates into operational policies and goals, to guide
behavior and structure; 2) design structures and pro-
cesses through which the goals can be achieved; 3) secure
resources in the form of materials, staff, clients and
societal legislation necessary for goal attainment and
survival; 4) select and engineer the necessary tech-
nologies; 5) optimize behavior toward increased effect-

iveness and efficiency; 6) evaluate performance to facilitate systematic and continuous problem-solving. (Sarri, 1971, P. 25).

The first theoretical construct related to organizational behavior was called the Classical Theory of Administration, which was characterized by pidgeon-holing people in terms of their function. Then came the Scientific Management phase where workers were seen as motivated by rewards and the organization was characterized by clearly defined divisions of labor with a highly specialized personnel and a hierarchy of authority. A subsequent development was called the Human Relations School of Thought. It emphasized the emotional, unplanned, non-rational elements in organizational behavior. From it grew interest in and considerations of informal structures within the organization; i.e., friendship groups. The Human Relations School also pointed up the importance of leadership as it effected emotional communications and participation. Later, two main concepts of the Classical and Human Relations schools of thought - formal and informal aspects of an organization - were brought together in the Structuralists' approach. This school of thought introduced the idea that some conflict and strain between members and the organization was inevitable and not necessarily undesirable. Structuralists thinking grew out of the writings of Max Weber, who decried the "harmony

approach" that the Human Relations School advocated. His approach recognized fully the inevitable strains, which can be reduced but never eliminated, between organizational needs and personal needs; between rationality and non-rationality; between management and people; and certainly between ranks and divisions. Structuralists acknowledged that there were haves and have-nots within any organization.

Max Weber was very interested in the distribution of power and the decision-making process. He felt the major organizational question was "how to control the participants so as to maximize effectiveness and efficiency while minimizing the unhappiness this very need to control produces." (Etzioni, 1964, P. 51)

There seems to be consensus that the three major facets in organizational structure are opportunity, respect, and power. Opportunity corresponds to hope and provides means for individuals. Respect, which in organizational theory is more important than love or approval - provides the social ground for self-esteem. Power is the kingpin of any system because it receives respect and guarantees access to opportunity. There is also general agreement that as competence grows, demands for power also grow, because power provides the means of objective control over what effects one's destiny. (P. 246)

Recent interest in organizational behavior and

management has centered on revision of thinking related to productivity and humanistic qualities. Recognition is now being given to the fact that people work harder when they are motivated, that they seek to fulfill basic human needs while higher order needs satisfactions carry the most motivational value. Recognition is also growing that goal direction can create self-discipline and that people seek responsibilities if given the opportunity and resources for fulfilling them. Compare this to what was once the basic question for management; "how best to play on human fears and appetites to regulate behavior?" (P. 241) There is agreement that until recently administrative tasks seemed related to finding external controls so that productivity could be sustained and exploited. Now, as also suggested by the study of andragogy, internal motivation is viewed as far more sustaining, creative and productive. Currently, new ways of studying organizational structure through systems theory are beginning to appear. In systems theory it is understood that all elements, persons, roles, constraints, goals and every aspect relate to and affect every other element, person, etc.

One of the respected social scientists who has studied organizational theory and behavior is Robert Merton. Dissatisfied with Freud's psychoanalystic theory of deviant behavior as it represented free expression of libidinal

and biological impulses, he developed the theory of
anomie - the means gap. He believed that society in fact,
encourages some deviance by not providing what is needed
to meet goals. He emphasized that from kindergarten to
college, parents, teachers, and significant persons are
encouraging "success", that only winning is important, only
the top is good enough. In contrast, the institutionalized
or legitimate means of achieving high success goals is
not freely available to all people. His work was de-
rived primarily from looking at poor and deprived persons,
but has general applicability. According to Merton's
anomie theory, one of the characteristics of many of our
social systems, including educational institutions, is
emphasis on competition; the out-doing of one's peers.
Morally, we recognize the desirability of coordinating
the goals and means phases of the social structure, but
it is clear that imperfect coordination of the two exists
which leads to anomie and alienation. He describes anomie
as arising from an incongruent emphasis in our society
upon the relative importance of attaining culturally
valued goals on the one hand and the availability of legi-
timate, institutionalized means to reach these goals on
the other hand. (S.H. Traub and C.B. Little, 1975).

In a recent paper, "Leadership and Organizational
Functioning: 'Organizational Regression:'",Otto F. Kernberg (1978).
makes many references to paranoid-like-thinking as one of

the regressive features encountered by leaders in organizations. He states that the tendency for staff to see the leader as pursuing all tasks only in terms of the leader's own personality problems, is a simple analysis of very complex issues. He further implies that the non-leaders often find this an acceptable and readily available means of projecting blame away from oneself, friends or parts of the system one wants to protect. In his description of Bion's basic assumption groups regarding the 'flight-fight' group, he says that this type of group is united against vaguely perceived external enemies and expects the leader to protect them. He also notes that in most groups, "splitting, projection of aggression and projective identification are predominant. The search for nurture and dependency which are characteristic of the dependency group is here replaced by conflicts around aggression and control, with suspiciousness, fight, and dread of annihilation prevailing." (P. 5)

Kernberg does agree that administrators often bring their own problems into their tasks and that the temptation to exercise authority in order to quell uproar and rebellion produces ..."the unavoidable transferential distortions of the perception of his (administrators) behavior on the part of the staff may amplify his expression of aggression dangerously and may bring about paranoid distortion in the minds of his staff." He further speaks of

group interaction which subject the leader to... "paranoid,
regressive processes in the administration who may now
fear that the most vehement and irrational of his opponents
has completely taken control of the group... (P. 16)
aggression directed at the parental images and/or projection
onto the leader is an important aspect of group life; dis-
appointments and rage, rebellious hatred are the counter-
parts of idealization of and submission to the leader,
stemming from oedipal and preoedipal relations to the
parents." (P. 17) Although Kernberg was writing as a
leader in a hospital setting, his observations have bearing
on our discussion.

B. Empirical Observations

E.W. Stewart in "The Troubled Land" (1972) spoke
with feeling from the turmoil of the Sixties, to which
his title refers. One notable sentence reads: "Probably
no other area of life exemplifies the theme of rapid
change as thoroughly as education and our educational
systems." (P. 388) The school, from which vantage point
this study has been undertaken, is in that way no different
than other educational institutions. As a school, we are
attached to the University of California system, thereby
having little autonomy and narrow influence on many im-
portant features which affect the school. Some of the
constraints have been discussed in Chapter II relating to
the several layers of mandate, sanctions and accreditation.

These may not reflect the social climate at any given time and are beyond the scope of this study, but it is important to acknowledge that trends in the greater society and their ripple effects do intimately impinge on the school.

Organizationally, the U.C.L.A. School of Social Welfare is a small school within the larger statewide University system governed by extensive levels of bureaucratic hierarchy. As such, the Dean has limited power and the faculty even less. Like students, many faculty feel that they are powerlessly caught in a set of expectations and demands which are at times in conflict with individual convictions. In this way, the structure itself exerts influences which provide a fertile ground for the development of paranoid-like-thinking. Some aspects of the climate produced by our particular administrative and organizational structure deserve elaboration for our purposes. There is no implication that other organizational aspects may not be equally or even more influential.

The status hierarchy in most schools of social work mirrors that found in most agencies, whereby the person with the best practice skills is at the bottom rung of the status ladder. The field instructor, who is closest to practice and therefore, at least theoretically, closest to the student's paramount interest is in our system an extended faculty member. Persistent efforts to bridge incongruities between campus and field are somewhat inadequate

and incomplete because the field instructor is only peri-
pherally involved with the school. The field advisor,
also close to the student's experiential exposure is in no
known instance a tenured faculty member, which means a
yearly contract with low salary, little job security and
no voice in the formal decision-making process. As Strean
(1978) writes "...Educators, like practitioners, are
rewarded by being moved away from direct service if they
perform well in it... Schools of social work, like agencies,
do not as a rule dignify those concerned with practice."
(P. 256)

Another aspect which has specific bearing is related
to the profession's questions about "clinical" social
work. During the 1960's and early Seventies, schools were
called upon to give curricular emphasis to social problems,
social action and policies. Long before that, disagreement
about the value and viability of 'clinical' or psychiatric
social work existed. Some of this dicotomizing continues.
Our faculty is not immune to these divergent strains, nor
are we immune to factioning within the framework of what is
'clinical'. Social work education has for some time been
caught in the dilemma around defining the parameters of
clinical work in such a way that practitioners will have an
identity rooted in knowledge, values, and skills which are
visible both within and without the profession. (S. Cooper
1977) An expertise that differentiates clinical social

work practice from other professions and from the broad
field of social welfare is sought by some, shunned by others.

One of the common complaints of our students is that
faculty are not interested or accessible. Part of this
is acknowledged by students to be a result of their own
temerity in seeking out faculty, including advisors. But
there are several structural elements which also contri-
bute. One is that all students have two advisors, one
for the field and one academic: this may tend to neutral-
ize both, with the student feeling some confusion about
what is appropriate with whom. Another is the time crunch
factor; students are all on campus basically two days per
week, the other days they are in the field. Physically,
then, it becomes difficult to have interchanges outside
of class. For many years the faculty has voiced a wish
to adopt a block plan model. One reason for the wish is
to deal with this structural problem. For a variety of
reasons no forward action has taken place on this arti-
culated desire.

Student government is a source of constant concern
on the part of the students; the faculty is almost totally
uninvolved and/or concerned. As an outgrowth of the commit-
ment to an ethnically balanced student body, various groupings
have been formed representing the special needs and interests
of each ethnic group (called caucuses). Each group elects
its own officers and a coalition formed, representation

from each has a channel of communication with the school's
administrator. In effect however, it seems that divisive-
ness and self-centered interests seldom allow the coalition
to present issues or recommendations to the Dean and/or
faculty. With such an unwieldly structure, it is difficult
to arrive at consensus and many of the faculty feel that the
students are doing their own thing and that that is good
enough.

These are some of the structural and organizational
matters which tend to stimulate paranoid-like-thinking.
Clearly, there are many other details which would have
an influence, but they need to be the subject of another
study. The intention here is to give only some examples
of why students may feel "put down", devalued and powerless.

Our school, its structure and organization, is the
lens through which we have looked at the phenomenon of
paranoid-like-thinking. It might appear that the organi-
zation itself is to blame for the generation of such feel-
ings, or that the institution is insensitive to students'
needs for security, etc. This has not been the case inso-
far as can be determined. What is suggested is that the
nature of organizational and administrative structure in-
herently carries capacities to promote paranoid-like-thinking.

The above conclusion comes not only from direct ob-
servation, and from contact with administrators and colleagues,
but from a review of some objective data. At the end of

each quarter each instructor is evaluated on twenty-five
items by each student. This Instructional Evaluation
Rating Form is used system-wide for feedback to each in-
structor and to each department or school. Our Depart-
mental Summary was reviewed for the purpose of clarifying
our students' response to three of the twenty-five items.
The particular three items were chosen because they re-
lated to feelings of security, acceptance, and rights and
because they reflect values our profession espouses. The
items reviewed were: a) the instructor was concerned that
students learn and understand the subject materials; b)
students were made to feel welcome in seeking help or ad-
vice in or outside of the class; c) students were free to
disagree with the instructor and/or to express their own
ideas. (Appendix) A review of the Departmental Summary
ratings on the items mentioned was undertaken for each
quarter for the academic years 1976 through 1978. On each
item our school's ratings were higher than the mean across
other departments or schools at UCLA and higher than the
mean when compared with all other nine campuses within
the University of California system. Since the review of
these items was connected with the climate of caring and
concern for the student, it would appear that our school's
organizational climate is rated above average on values
and attitudes which are thought to be fundamental to our
profession. Hence, students in our school felt instructors

to be more concerned that they learn, more willing to be helpful and more accepting of differences than most students in the U.C. system felt their instructors to be.

Most students seem unaware of the many institutional boundaries which shape the experience they are having in the school. For instance, as reported in Chapter II, the demand for a Bill of Rights pertaining to the field was unrealistic; students were not even aware that such a unilateral decision could not be made because the school had few if any, controls over the agencies which are used for placement. The described method of announcing field placements is not done out of capriciousness or insensitivity, but because there is not enough field staff and secretarial assistance to handle the field assignments individually. Complicating factors like limits on resources, power in only limited areas, accountability to accrediting bodies and the like, are seldom known or of interest to the students. The complex process of decision-making is seen by the students as simple, direct, and manipulative. They seem not to consider that decision-making must take into account the greater good for the most people involved; the constraints of money, personnel, technology and resources; relationship to tasks to be accomplished, timing, deadlines and numerous other factors. The decision makers must also resist doing damage to the prerogatives and privileges of everyone concerned.

Finally, it needs to be mentioned that organizations and their administrators do need and want the functioning to be smooth. Smooth functioning is manifested, among other things, by lack of demands, dissent, complaint and uproar. As Merton has pointed out in his writings, conformity is the most popular mode of adaptation. Since this mode involves accepting prescribed goals, the paths for attaining them, and an assumption that the administration plus all of the members of the organization are trustworthy and working toward the same goals, conformity among students may be seen by those in the organizational hierarchy as optimum and desirable. It follows that administrators will strive to minimize any elements which interfere with the smooth operation of the organization. By so doing, administration asks students to take at face value that administration knows best and that the shared goals have the same order of priority for all concerned. When this does not, in actuality, prove to be the case, disappointment and dis-illuionment are compounded.adding to feelings of power-lessness and infantalization in the student body.

It must be recognized how gratifying it is for students (and others) to attribute the cause of all problems to the administration or the structure of the organization, rather than focus upon the painful and complex interactions in which they are engaged. In an educational system with multiple requirements and the general stresses involved in learning,

it is difficult to tease out the responsibilities, con-
flicts and structures which may produce paranoid-like-
thinking. Despite the finding that our social work students
felt better about their instructors than did most UC stu-
dents, paranoid-like-thinking was typically present. The
suggestion is that even a relatively benign atmosphere
within the organization does not effectively modify the
generation of such phenomena. This can be understood be-
cause of the several factors discussed above.

One of these factors is the nature of a "mock" bureau-
cracy, where most of the rules are set from outside the
organization. The rules may have little relationship to
the values and convictions of the members or leaders,
the administrator may see his role as avoiding any conflict,
and little power is invested in any of the members. Another
factor is that anomie and alienation exist insofar as stu-
dents are in competition with one another and not all
students have the same means to accomplish their goals,
nor do we provide the same means for all students. Yet
another is that the decision-making process is vague;
neither the staff nor students have power so that most
people tend to "do their own thing." This is also in the
best tradition of academia where the democratic principle
is valued even though it might lead to divisiveness or
lack of coordination. The nature of a "mock" bureaucracy

leads to issues of congruence between students, faculty, and administrator's priorities and goals. Yet another factor is the multiple persons and organizations to which our students must accommodate, each with separate demands, expectations, goals and structures. It can readily be seen that the adaptational process is extremely complex and difficult.

Chapter IV

Review of Literature - Ego Psychology

and Education Psychology

There has been an affinity between analytic thought
and education from early Freudian times. Ferenczi as
early as 1908, said: "Education is to psychology as hor-
ticulture is to botany." (Ferenczi, as quoted in Ekstein,
1964). Many theoreticians from the psychodynamic and neo-
Freudian developmentalists have attended to providing a
basic theoretical superstructure for education. There has
been acknowledgement that mental mechanisms and learning
were interwoven in the process through which students
passed. Many have written about this interweaving, Lewin
(1964), said: "Education on the student's part is a quest
for omniscience." Glover (1937) wrote that "education is
an inhibitory process covered by systems of rationalization"
and felt that it was not only a conscious volitional pro-
cess, but also a ready made designation for a combination
of unconscious mental mechanisms. Pearson (1959) thought
"The aim of education is to consolidate the organization
of the ego and the superego so that the free discharge of
instinctual energy is curbed by the defense mechanisms of
identification, reaction formation, and sublimation and
the energy itself is directed to permissible modes of ex-
pression." (P. 352) There seems to be some general con-

sensus that learning takes place when the educational process is ego syntonic and that it must include control as well as libidinal expression.

The Zabarenkos (1974) (P. 324) develop the strains of psychoanalytic thought related to education in terms of its positive attempts at resolution of libidinal conflicts. Their writing reflects the psychosexual model set forth by Freud in terms of developmental metaphors. Thus, during the early phase of the educational process the oral greed and drive for incorporation is made manifest by energy which is directed towards absorption, assimilation, and orientation with teachers being the source of supply and determining how those supplies will reach the student. As the learner moves toward the anal phase and is ready for weaning, the learner becomes more critical of the supplies and the supplier, crying it is not enough! At this juncture, which also might be associated with Mahler's concept of individuation-separation, protest is apparent. Sutherland (1951) felt the teacher is then in a position of power most positively handled by permitting the expression of criticism, and offering permission for the learner to search for his own answers without punishment or the withholding of needed information. The anal stage evokes a struggle for dominance, with the student struggling for control over what has been taken in or given by the teacher, yet wanting to claim it for himself in no uncertain terms. In the

phallic phase the issue is competitiveness, with the student demanding admiration for his excellence. In the genital phase the student obtains gratification, learns more, masters more and exhibits more while he actually is freed to be more creative and problem solving in his thinking. The Zabarenkos think this framework is limited for understanding adult learning.

Many modern authors are at variance with the libidinal or drive theory, feeling that it does not go far enough in terms of understanding learning, whether in adults or children. As White says: "a child's emotional development cannot be adequately conceptualized by an exclusive libido model, no matter how liberally we interpret this concept... and when the prototypes derived from libido theory are translated into interpersonal terms they still do not constitute adequate models for development... In particular, they fail to embody the development of competence, and they tend to direct attention away from certain crises in the growth of the child's sense of competence." (1960, P. 99) The Ego Psychologists, especially Erikson and Hartmann, seem to have envisioned a comprehensive look at development, especially as it relates to learning and the development of competence. These authors tend to add additional dimensions to ·understanding learning as they move beyond the notion that motivation is related to drive reduction. For example, Hartmann (1958) says that drive reduction

cannot account for the range and variety of our adaptive accomplishments, that an independent source of motivation must be assumed for the growth of competence, and that effectiveness or ego strength cannot be understood apart from growth.

The works of Erikson are most congruent with views to be elaborated further in this study. He sees growth as a life-long continuum, and he relates the child's unfolding capacities to his encounters with the social and interpersonal environment. In some respects the eight stages of development described in detail by Erikson have some similarities with Freudian concepts but go further and incorporate the motor and cognitive capacities of the individual, not simply the inter-psychic structures. His developmental model provides for the acquisition of information, exploration and mastery for its own sake through curiosity, exploration of all kinds, and manipulation of all kinds which develops competence more or less autonomously.

Erikson's developmental phases are of importance for our understanding. The oral phase is described as having the task of developing trust versus mistrust and the infant is affected by his relationships with the first object from which he differentiates himself - namely the Mothering person. It is during this task mastery that the defenses of introjection and projection appear. One must assume that in Erikson's concepts the incorporative mode is predominate

if the task mastery is to take place. The anal phase in

Erikson's terms is the battle for autonomy, the outcome

of which is decisive for the ratio between love and hate,

between willfulness and cooperation, between freedom of

self-expression and its suppression. If the child can

weather the struggle and achieve 'self-control without loss

of self-esteem', he will emerge with a lasting sense of

"autonomy and pride". This struggle for task mastery sug-

gests that it is not only related to retention versus

elimination but that there might be a profound intrinsic

crisis in the growth of social competence. The child,

during this period, is interacting in new ways with his

environment - if one just considers his growing competence

with locomotion and gains in coordination we can appreciate

the enormous mastery in his ability to deal with his physical

world. The evolution of self-esteem and assertiveness

(sometimes called negativism at this age) is closely con-

nected with motor development, and the acquisition of

language. In the phallic phase which denotes the beginnings

of the Oedipal Complex in Freud's constructs we find Erik-

son's ego crisis to be one of maintaining a sense of

initiative, as opposed to guilt and shame. The attainment

of locomotion and language gives rise to the use of imagi-

nation. The child is able to contemplate the roles of the

significant people around him and to begin to see his own

place in the family and with people in general. Latency

is in Erikson's framework ascribed the task of developing
a sense of industry. That is, the child needs to feel
useful, to make things, deal concretely with elements
which have direct significance in the adult world. His
efforts are enhanced by positive identifications with
those who know how to do things. The dangers lie in the
possibilities of not being successful or of the supports
being weak, leaving the child with a lasting sense of in-
adequacy, inferiority and insecurity. Erikson(1950) and Sullivan(1953)
agree that this is the period when a definite pattern in
the growth of social competence is manifest. Here, the
world of peers begins to compete with the family circle
for the child's identifications. It is interesting to
note that both Sullivan and White tend to propose the idea
that the effects of the first five years of life can be
substantially changed by developments during later child-
hood - especially during this latency phase when mastery,
reinforced by peers, becomes such an important part of the
self-esteem picture. The genital phase of psychosexual
development has been investigated by many. Freud, Bernfeld
and Deutsch have illuminated the increased instinctual
drives with the threat to established patterns of ego con-
trol. There is a struggle to maintain and expand one's
defenses. It is the time of confusions as to roles, models,
ambitions, etc. Erikson calls it the identity crisis.

The task is to establish one's own identity clearly with
parameters which are not rigid but firm, with a sense of
worth and some realistic assessment of abilities, capacities
and long range plans. Sullivan also describes the task
of late adolescence as that of establishing a fully human
mature repertory of interpersonal relations. The impor-
tance of Erikson's adult-related phase is well established.
They are: intimacy versus isolation; generativity versus
stagnation; and ego integrity versus despair. The degree
to which an individual has negotiated the generativity
task successfully, will undoubtedly greatly influence his
ability to learn and to establish a career. Yet, Erikson
believed that these tasks were never fully accomplished
and that the unremitting tension in the struggle for mas-
tery is the very essence of life.

White's (Note #5) (1960) competence model of development
pays homage to authors mentioned above, but decries their
lack of attention to conceive of all growth as the acquisition
of mastery and sense of competence. He submits that the
whole realm of learned behavior, whereby the child comes
to deal effectively with his environment, is related to
his ego development and mental structure. Learned behavior
includes manipulation, locomotion, language, the building
of cognitive maps and skilled actions, and the growth of
effective behaviors in relation to others. It assumes
motivation independent of drives, has immediate satis-

faction in feelings of efficacy and has adaptive signi-
ficance in the growth of self-esteem. He likens these
motivations to independent energies in the psychoanalytic
scheme. The adult's actual competence and sense of com-
petence are built through life from the individual's
history of mastery and efficacies. The sense of competence
is held to be a crucial element in any psychology of the
ego.

Another author who has ascribed all learning as based
on the idea of the development of competence is F.E. Nardine
(1972). He defines the term "competence" as an individual's
ability to take the initiative and to act upon his environ-
ment rather than allowing the environment to control him.
"The competent individual sees himself as master of his own
destiny and captain of his fate, not a pawn of capricious
and uncertain fortune." (P. 337) He sees the entire educa-
tional process as one to promote a positive self concept
and sense of achievement, which leads to competence building.
The relationship between skills and self confidence is a
spiral one, and growth requires that both be present.
Knowledge and mastery ideally lead to development of confi-
dence in one's skills and ability, and confidence supports
the efforts to master new skills, the achievement of which
in turn buttresses confidence. Thus, self confidence is
the sine qua non of competence growth, as it provides the
basis for taking risks and for expanding one's skills into

new areas." (P. 337) He indicates that most adult learners
are those who feel themselves to be competent but are not
willing to remain in what he calls a maintenance situation
(holding still with what is familiar), but require of them-
selves an enhancement situation - where minimum needs have
been satisfied and they are free and motivated to experi-
ment with alternative methods of gaining new ends. Nardine
has conducted some basic research on the relationship be-
tween sense of confidence and learning. The primary finding
was that as children obtain mastery over school assignments,
greater and greater degrees of confidence will follow.
Although the experiments were conducted with school children
at elementary levels, he believes that the same will apply
to all levels of education. He and others tend to identify
adult learners as needing more positive reinforcements for
the spiral to accelerate appropriately. There are some
indications that adult learners suffer more stress in the
educational process because of their high motivation -
they come for further education because of a perceived need
or motivation, they have attained competence at some level
and now submit themselves to another challenge, they usually
have more to lose because of family, economic and personal
commitments. Adult learners may also suffer some stress
simply because our society has associated learning with
youth - especially institutionalized learning - until quite

recently. The entire area of learning has undergone change in recent years. We need here to examine some of the current thinking.

Learning takes place through education which is a process whereby a person gains knowledge or understanding or develops skills, by studying, by instruction, or through experience. It is characterized by, or associated with, a change in behavior patterns, and modification of experience through knowledge. It is thought to be primarily a cognitive process and according to Fred Luthans (1977, P. 230), it utilizes the free will of the person and concepts such as expectency, demand and incentive. Behavior is seen as purposeful and full of direction. This implies that particular behaviors lead to particular consequences and that most people are aware, consciously, of their goals and behaviors which are based on these cognitions. He further indicates that learning in general, involves (1) a change in behaviors, (2) which is relatively permanent, (3) which is based on some preceding form of practice, (4) and which is followed by reinforcements. He also discusses a chronic situation associated with learning, that it presents tension, disequilibrium, and stress. That as order and bits of learning fit together, the learner is able to restore his equilibrium and to proceed through the various stages of learning.

W. Bion, (Note #1, 1973) also discussed the fact that learning

carries with it the task of tolerating frustration and pain. He suggests that in the unknown is a nameless dread - (can this be paranoid-like feelings?) that without frustration there is no learning. Bion makes many overtures toward advocating self-directed learning. He indicates that answers are "nowhere." Every interaction in a learning process is to him a transformation of one kind or another for the individual.

Other authors, such as Amacher, (1977), a social worker, have characterized clinical learning in the following steps: (1) effective recall and reworking of past experiences, (2) unevenness with periods of development, and quiescence among the various aspects, (3) movement from explanation to understanding, a deepening process, learning and re-learning, (4) interactive qualities, ideas or learning stimulating other ones, and necessitating then a need for discussion, dialogue, integration and synthesis, (5) movement from general to more differential understanding, that is the simple becoming complex, (6) integration of ideas gradually become a part of the larger or inter-related system of understanding. (P. 203-220) Bruner (1966) puts forth the following principle about learning: "that all learning is growth; that all learning is composed of facilitating understanding, and that the process of learning is for one to gain control of his environment in the multi-faceted way that means mastery." (P. 244)

Most authors characterize intellectual growth as follows: (1) an increasing independence of response from the immediate nature of the stimulus, (2) the internalizing of events into a storage system that corresponds to the realities of the environment, (3) an increasing capacity to say to oneself and others by means of words or symbols what one has done or will do, (4) dependence upon a systematic and contingent interaction between a tutor and a learner, (5) a facilitation by use of language which ends by being not only the medium for exchange but the instrument that the learner can use in bringing order into his environment, (6) an increasing capacity to deal with several alternatives simultaneously, to tend to several sequences during the same period of time and to allocate tensions in a manner appropriate to the multiple demands.

Piaget, who attended mostly to epistomology, the nature of knowledge per se, not the process that makes growth possible, also discusses a theory based on equilibrium and disequilibrium, a cycle between accommodations to the environment and assimilation of the environment to an internal schema. His contribution is mainly descriptive of the nature of knowledge that a child exhibits at each stage of development. However, his recurring theme, also expressed by others, of equilibrium and disequilibrium in the learning process brings us to the whole notion of stress and learning. (Ginsburg, H. and Opper, S. 1969)

A. Learning and Stress

In the literature related to learning and education generally, there is a good deal of attention given to the notion of stress. It is often expressed in terms of equilibrium, disequilibrium, tension, lack of homeostasus, etc. For our purposes, the term "stress" is going to be used in a general way as the social sciences have adapted it from the biological sciences. In the life situation approach, represented by people like Wolff (1953) and Selye, (1956), any threatening situation can be social in nature as well as noxious for the body organism. Such things as loss of status, loss of security, unsatisfactory interpersonal relationships, role changes, etc., tend to be perceived by the individual as socially or personally defeating and can result in manifestations of stress. In the social-psychological framework there have been a number of studies of the effects of stress situations on behavior and these have been reported in literature. Studies have no central theoretical frame but seem to stem from concerns about cognitive consistency and clarity of role expectation. Some were studies of people with marginal roles; such as prison groups, pre-surgery patients, people who have been subjected to brainwashing. Wolff and Thomas (1953) have written extensively on the development of stress. Their finding tended to indicate that so long as life runs smoothly, as long as habits are adjusted, situations do not produce

stress. However, when habits become disrupted, new stimuli demand attention and when the usual situation is altered, we have the roots of a crisis and the development of stress. Wolff believed that adjustment and control resulted from the individual's ability to compare a present situation with a similar one in the past and to revise judgments and actions in light of those past experiences. He, as a proponent of the life situation approach to understanding stress, states: "The stress accruing from a situation is based in large part on the way an affected subject perceives it. Perception depends on the multiplicity of factors including genetic equipment, basic individual needs and longings, earlier conditioning influences and a host of life experiences and cultural pressures." (P. 280) No one of these can be singled out for exclusive cause/effect relationship. The common denominator of most studies related to stress disorders is that stress is a reaction to circumstances of threatening significance to the individual. Stress producing situations require a response that is often easily learned, so that most normally functioning persons take the responses and adjustments they go through for granted. There are occasions, however, when persons are faced with situations where the necessary responses are difficult and cannot readily be made, or - time is needed to acquire appropriate response patterns. These may require efforts above the usual capacity of the

normal person, and it is possible that the individual's prior experience offers no effective means of dealing with them. Situations like floods, or bombings,are threatening to everyone who encounters them, whereas learning or educational situations may be perceived as threatening and debilitating only to some. In an educational experience, a stress situation is one in which most persons might have insufficient means to deal with the challenge. Insufficiencies may be a lack of capacity to manipulate them effectively or a time lag may be present before the individual has clarity about expectations. Thus, one might say that the stress reaction depends on the extent to which means can or cannot readily be brought to bear in meeting and handling the challenge; the extent to which the situation persists and demands attention and the degree of the individual's involvement in the situation. Stress generally means a discrepancy between the problem presented by the challenge and an individual's capacity to master or adapt to it. This definition makes clear the importance of skill and performance components as well as psychological mechanisms which allow for smooth adaptation.

The ego psychologists, in looking at stress, have underscored the need for adaptation which they speak of as defense mechanisms. The basic understanding of defense processes stems from the work of Sigmund and Anna Freud. In 1894, Freud used the term "defense" to refer to the

efforts of a person to protect himself against instinctual demands and conflicts arising in the human development. In 1926, in "Problem of Anxiety" he wrote that defense "shall be the general designation for all the techniques of which the ego makes use for dealing with conflicts which will eventually lead to neurosis." In 1936, Anna Freud elaborated on the mechanisms of defense in her landmark book. She makes clear that defense mechanisms have two things in common; they deny, falsify or distort reality, and they operate unconsciously so that the person is not aware of what is taking place. The mechanisms of defense as first described were closely linked with the theory of biological instincts. Thus, they were seen as a solution to fundamental instinctual problems inherent in the human biological structure. Defense was seen as the manner in which the organism dealt with the inevitable conflicts between biological needs and the expectations of society. Later, A. Freud wrote extensively on the healthy ego's use of defense mechanisms. Today we understand mechanisms of defense as a descriptive category to characterize behavior and to serve in the function of the ego rather than as only a neurotic function. Klein and others have also removed the theory of defense from the instinct theory; now defenses are viewed as the solution to conflicts engendered by social environment as well as by internal psychic phenomena.

B. Stress and Social Work Education

Social workers, like doctors and lawyers, usually look back on their educational experience in the professional schools as being stressful. (Mayer and Rosenblatt, 1974). Students who enter professional schools have strong aspirations but are often uncertain if they have what it takes to be successful, they make sacrifices to come back to school, they know it is competitive and that those without the needed competence will be weeded out. A high degree of anxiety is generated at the outset because they have, by coming to school, made a career decision which will be doomed if they fail in the educational undertaking. These aspects do not even consider self esteem investments.

Social Work students are under considerable stress at the gate because they are also entering a new and frightening experience where their humane concerns are to be tested; they begin with the awesome responsibility for the welfare of their clients. Most students have certain perspectives which bring them into this profession. They usually have high expectations of being helpful; if they just learn enough they will make the significant changes in the client's lives which need to be made. The student may feel his responsibility to make choices for his client (until he learns better) - as an attempt at omniscence, with a sense that "only I can help." Generally, idealistic persons are attracted to the field, they may be impressed by the aura of a professional school and a body of knowledge

which will give them specific means of being helpful in
the complex life situations of people with problems. When
they learn that is not the case, some disallusionment takes place
and more realistic expectations must be accepted if they
are to be socialized into the profession.

The self concept with which a competent stable and
mature person enters our field is often assaulted from
many sides. Smith,(1969) a Social Psychologist, indicates
that the stable self concept which the healthy adult has
developed out of progression through the developmental tasks
of childhood and maturity remains intact but, what he calls
the 'self precept,' is affected by day to day transactions
with others and the environment. His 'precept' may give
way to external events against which the student measures
himself in a multiplicity of ways. The 'precept' of self
then can affect performance and sense of competence causing
anxiety and a variety of manifestations without its touch-
ing the central self concept. During educational under-
takings the individual is at the mercy of many influences.
The entire situation in which one is defined as a student
may feel like a put down. The individual has lost power
over his own life, decisions are made for him, he is told
when and what he must do, study, turn in, etc. The issues
of powerlessness are abundant in the literature. It is
also the manifest cry represented by student complaints
that the schools, their deans and faculty are "paternal-

istic." In Mechanic's study, (1962) the issue of power
was important, students felt that the power was vested in
the professors, assistant professors, supervisors, etc.,
not in themselves.

C. Stress and Clinical Learning

It is well documented that social work education pro-
duces some stresses which are unique. We are also familiar
with the idea that clinical learning necessarily deals with
material which stirs up hidden conflicts within the students,
recreating ancient emotionally charged memories, patterns
and experiences. One of the hallmarks of the profession
and a heavily emphasized aspect in our educational program
is the development of self awareness. The student is bom-
barded with a mass of emotional material by the nature of
the profession. As the student applies new insights and
information to himself and/or his significant others he
often becomes concerned about the implications of what has
been newly learned, often resulting in changes in his
significant interpersonal relationships. Certainly, intro-
spective tendencies are multiplied. In addition, the
student is apt to learn that his own personality structure
has some soft spots, that all his feelings are not al-
truistic, that he is influenced by unconscious feelings,
that conflicts exist, that he has biases, even hostilities
and that his need for control and omniscense is uppermost.

These awarenesses can have temporary devastating effects
on the student's 'self precept'.

A high proportion of our students are young adults,
still in the process of emancipation, they are struggling
with dependence - independence conflicts, with identity
as to career versus marriage, etc. These aspects too,
make them more vulnerable to the vissisitudes of self-
examination.

Of course, the most notable stress producing part of
social work education is the practicum. It is here that
the pressure of being judged, scrutinized and turned in-
side out with all of one's attitudes, values and the
'self' exposed takes place. The application of clinical
knowledge, and in fact all curriculum content is played
out in the laboratory of the filed placement, where it is
implemented with real people, people who are in trouble,
who hurt, who come to the student seeking help. Schmidt
(1976) characterizes the practicum as generating feelings
of anxiety, disappointment, frustrations, feelings of in-
adequacy, vulnerability and finally at the end accomplish-
ment and gratification. She states "pain is generated in
the process of developing self awareness." Barnat (1973)
and Clemence (1965) both identify the field placement in
Social Work education, as having high impact and being
the most important aspect. They indicate there is progres-
sion from greater to lesser anxiety and lesser to greater

self esteem. Clemence emphasizes that the basic trust a
student possesses comes into play because clinical learn-
ing involves an ego process encompassing the total per-
sonality. Basic trust as part of the individual's person-
ality structure is affected by the degree of confidence
in the educational content, acceptance of the faculty and
the degree of assurance he has in his own capacities to
be a helper.

Miller (1977) reported on the topic of Clinical Learn-
ing from the writings of Bertha Reynolds and Charlotte
Towle. Both of these early social work educators were cog-
nizant of the heavy personal investment needed by students
in our field. Both paid attention to the psychic costs
to the individual in clinical learning, the conflicts, re-
sistances and pain involved in the process of developing
self awareness and in using oneself as the medium through
which help is delivered. Bertha Reynolds identified clin-
ical learning as a function of the whole person..." it
is inseparable from adaptation and is therefore mediated
by the achievements and limitations in the growth of the
learner." (P. 354) From the point of view of personality
as an equilibrium in forces in conflict, Reynolds concluded
that resistance will be an inevitable part of the learner's
total response and that defenses will be mobilized. More
stringent mechanisms are needed if learning is presented
in excessive amounts or in ways that threaten present ad-

justments. She further indicates that "trust of those
who teach, which is adequate to contain fear of their
power over the individual student to enforce change, then
constitutes a precondition for learning." (P. 355)
Miller says that although Reynolds' "conception of growth
through learning is advanced without any supportive, theo-
retical rationale, contemporary elaborations on the pro-
cesses of growth, particularly through looking at the
adult derivitives of separation/individuation issues, have
recently caught up with her wisdom-based conceptualizations
about learning and offer a coherent rationale for the
position she advances." (P. 357)

Charlotte Towle drew from the structural elaboration
of psychoanalytic theory of personality of the 1940's for
her consideration of learning and its location with re-
spect to personality variables. Towle's more scholarly,
dispassionate, and theoretically anchored analysis rein-
forces and extends a number of the ideas advanced by Rey-
nolds. Towle notes for example, that "the changes sought
by social work educators may be brought about in part
through concomitant life experiences and that learning
for practice and emotional growth appear reciprocally re-
lated..." (P. 359) She thus argues that the "core of the
student's preparation for professional roles is the re-
lationship context in which knowledge and skills are con-

veyed within a professional school." (P. 360)

She conceives of learning as an organic process through which the organism strives to remain intact, to preserve itself as a whole.

> "More specifically, learning is con-
> ceived as the process whereby the organ-
> ism continually adapts to the changing
> self and to the changing environment
> and strives for mastery of both. The
> factor of change from within and from
> without threatens the survival of the
> organism - it occasions discomfort,
> and evokes disequilibrium until the
> organism has incorporated the change
> through finding it useful. Such in-
> corporation, learning, yields an en-
> largement of self, a sense of growth
> and constitutes a source of satisfaction.
> Change may also induce regression and
> is often a prelude to the incorporation
> of learning. Professional education often
> does not allow for the incorporation phase
> - because learning culminates in performance
> in which much is at stake emotionally, in-
> cluding the learner's evolution of means
> for survival on satisfying terms with him-
> self, (his clients and his supervisor).
> There is much demand for change occurring
> both from within and without, and the student
> is often beset with strong fears. A natural
> tendency toward stability or homeostasis
> may become manifest in resistance to the im-
> pact of learning. In social work, learning
> is put to use immediately, when conscious
> attention and groping trial and error ex-
> perimentation obtain, learning may involve a
> particularly troublesome stage of actual
> self-consciousness. This is engendered
> in part by sense of loss of something
> in himself, and the learner may occasionally
> struggle to retain the old competences rather
> than incorporating the new. The acute self
> consciousness may also be the occasion for
> an expansion.

in sensitive awareness of self and
make a contribution to readiness to
face feelings, attitudes and conduct
more courageously. A product of pro-
fessional learning may be a gain in
self-mastery.

From the standpoint of the principles
of stability, of economy, and of
progression in learning, the demands
of professional education at times
threaten the intactness of the self
or ego, present heavy reliance on
automatic learning for mastery, and
deplete energy. As a result, intense
feelings and intense emotions at times
stretch the integrative capacity to
the utmost. To maintain stability
of the personality, in the interest
of its economy, and in order that the
energy may be available for more than
marginal learning, the student will
need the help afforded through an edu-
cational process in which his need
to learn in certain ways is met."

"...It is the character of social work
education to demand growth from within,
which can occur only gradually; there
will be phases of resistance to change,
fragmentary regression with plateaus
and slumps in learning, and considerable
partialization of learning because
synthesis is difficult to achieve and
partial insight is gained usually be-
fore it becomes total... "

"The educator's responsibility entails
appreciation of the multiple influences
impinging on the learner, an obligation
to understand the learner's character-
istic ways of learning and sensitivity
to shifts so as to articulate with the
ebb and flow of his efforts to inte-
grate new learning and to find the tempo
at which encounters with new learning
can be paced optimally. The educator
is advised to respect the necessities
for the learner's exercise of the pro-
tective function of his ego, and to
promote the expansion of his ego span

through educational measures that when-
ever possible instill realistic hope
and engender self-confidence." (P. 360-
361)

These concepts are just as valid today as they were
in 1954. Another of our profession's early theoreticians
was Annette Garrett (1954), who wrote: "...Basic to the
methods used in social work education is emphasis on the
uniqueness and individuality of each student and the neces-
sity of flexibility of approach and procedure to meet the
varying needs of each student..." (P. 9) She stresses
introduction to the profession must concentrate on the
student as a person. Garrett suggests that the campus
case work advisor provides the student with possibly the
first contact with a mature attitude of respect for the
self as a person, of acceptance of irrational behavior,
and of cooperative interest in helping him/her to progress
from where he/she is to higher levels of professional com-
petence.

A concomitent of the practicum in social work educa-
tion is the field supervision. Supervision in general
has enjoyed a remarkable history in our profession. The
practicum is integral, valued and indispensible. It is
through this one to one tutorial process that the student
is truly socialized into the profession, here is the stu-
dent's model and mentor. As Hilda Bruch (1974)says,
"Treatment is a very personal experience so no wonder in-
dividual supervision is still the preferred way of teaching

clinical skills. It requires highly individualistic learning." (P. 105) She speaks of supervisory styles and reflections of the learner's style which may affect the way the supervisor is perceived. This she equates with the therapeutic process, identifying that the style of the individual student and the style of the supervisor will affect one another in much the same way transference and countertransference affect patient and therapist. The parallel process in supervision and treatment has been the subject of much attention.

In the definitive book on clinical learning, Ekstein and Wallerstein (1958) elucidated this process in detail. They address the 'learning problem' of the clinical student by saying:

> "The learning problem is that problem the
> therapist has in responding appropriately
> and helpfully to his patient and is the
> final justification of the entire
> supervisory and training structure. The
> student comes to his supervisor in order
> to acquire psychotherapeutic skills. He
> discovers in his work with his patients
> that at times he acts and responds within
> the psychotherapy situation in ways that
> are determined, not by the objectively
> demonstrated needs of the patient, but
> by characteristic, automatic, and inappro-
> priate patterns within himself. These
> he discovers to be his learning problems".
> ..... Often "these problems were projected
> into the student's relationship with his
> supervisor as problems about learning..."
> All of this could convey the impression that
> these problems are to be regarded as impedi-
> ments to true learning, neurotically
> based obstacles to be gotten rid of so

that proper learning can proceed with
optimum efficiency. Actually, any pro-
cess involving personal change is impos-
sible without affective components and
the consideration of these components -
(inevitable in the most normal of inter-
personal relationships) - is what is meant
by working with the learning problems"
.... "Working out and solving the learning
problems (and the problems about learning
as well) is the very process of learning
- it is itself the learning that is sought
and not just the necessary preliminary." (P. 158)

Thus, one of the prime tasks of the supervisor is to iden-

tify with and for the student his patterns of interacting.

The process of exposing oneself in the supervisory

situation is usually cause for some mistrust, some de-

gree of defensiveness. There is apprehension of what can

be used against one, and what the supervisor knows about

the student's personality construction creates resistance

and fear. The highly charged and delicate role the field

teacher has is highlighted by these authors. It is only

with some development of trust that they feel a student

can dare to expose himself, despite fear of possible

consequences, and that in itself is a considerable step

forward in the clinical learning process.

Kell and Mueller (1966) describe the supervisory

process in clinical learning as one in which the student

allows the supervisor to view all his needs, conflicts,

life experiences, attitudes and values as potentially

useful in his role as helper. The supervisor needs to be

able to mobilize the clinician's adequacies and competen-
cies through clarifying his/her possible weaknesses. They
see it as neither a teaching nor a therapeutic relation-
ship, although it contains elements of both. The primary
mode through which growth takes place is in reference to
the study of the dynamic interaction of the supervisee and
his/her clients in the effort to assist the client. (P. 97)
The dynamic interaction between supervisee and supervisor
and the understanding of that interaction seems just as
important. Yet, the function of the supervisor is also
to provide needed controls to meet the best interests of
the client, agency, and student, while encouraging the
student to be creative, to explore, to grow and take risks.
The outcome of these conflicting functions can result in
mixed messages and therefore confusion and fearfulness on
the part of the student.

Annett Garrett (1954) suggests that each student enters
the supervisory sitaution with a readymade transference
reaction out of their life experiences. Recognition of
this phenomenon can quickly free the supervisor to see the
student's behavior more clearly and to understand what it
means. She says, "for example, the student's demands for
specific directions becomes, "If you really like me, you
will tell me what I can do so that I can learn faster.
You withhold because you want to keep me helpless." A
student's inability to express her/his own opinions be-

comes "you are wonderful and perfect. I wouldn't dare have any differences of opinion or my illusion that you (like my mother) are perfect, lest it shatter. Then I would discover that I hate you (her)." A student's with- holding in conference becomes "You pretend to be so kind and understanding, but I'll not be taken in. I know you will be mean and take advantage of me if I give you a chance as did my old supervisor (mother, sister ??)." (P. 31) One can begin to appreciate the power those in the super- visory position have, whether or not distortions are in- troduced by the student. Towle further describes this phenomenon, "A realistic fear exists in the mature student who begins practice in advance of his knowledge of the what and the why and the how of working with people. His/her sense of responsibility, concern not to fail those who need his/her help, and high expectations of himself/herself, conspire to create acute distress as specific case situ- ations exceed his realistic competence or his feeling of competence to function." ..."As application of learning occurs in the conduct of practice and as a consequence of his need for close relationship with the field super- visor, the authority dependency conflicts of the learner's developmental stage may become focused and worked through largely in that relationship. The anxiety produced by realistic incompetence then may be reinforced by the fear, hostility and guilt feelings evoked in the relationship

with mentors upon whom he must depend in order to attain his/her goal."(1954, p. 251)

Perhaps in summary fashion it needs to be reiterated that stress among social work students is a common phenomenon, based on several unique elements. 1) The student is beginning something new for which he/she may have had limited opportunity to prepare. 2) The student is asked to examine himself/herself in ways that are unfamiliar and usually create discomfort, at the same time that there is learning of new material which stimulates old or latent conflicts. 3) The student is asked to expose himself/herself in a new way and to a variety of persons at one time - to the school and to its faculty, to the field instructor and the agency, to the client's demands/needs, and certainly to himself/herself as helper with lofty ideals about what that means. 4) The student is being judged by numerous persons incuding himself/herself, which affects self-esteem. 5) The student is placed in a role, which by definition takes away from the sense of autonomy, power, self-determination, and sense of competence.

D. Defending, Coping and Adaptation

There are of course, many different ways, some conflicting, of looking at this area of functioning. As an educational psychologist, Brunner (1966), writes about the differences between psychological health and illness, part

of which includes a distinction between coping and defending, especially as these reflect on a human being's intellectual life. "Coping reflects the requirements of meeting problems as we encounter them while still respecting our integrity. Defending is a strategy whose objective is avoiding or escaping from problems for which we believe there is no solution that does not violate our integrity of functioning." He states that "integrity of functioning requires some level of self-consistency or style, a need to solve problems in a manner consistent with our values, attitudes and life enterprises." (P. 129) He is divergent from the psychodynamic model, in tending to see these phenomenon as separate, not connected, as cognitive in antecedence, and as having volitional aspects. Studies he conducted at the Judge Baker Guidance Clinic were aimed at distinguishing the difference between coping and defending because he feels that they are too often intermingled. His primary purpose was to answer the question of how people learn from past experiences so that future learning can be handled with a minimum of pain and effort. His study concluded that play was a preparation for learning in children because it serves the function of reducing the pressures of impulses and incentives, making it possible thereby for intrinsic learning to begin. Further, that demonstration of competence had a spiral effect which allows for greater and greater achievements.

Brunner also writes about coping and defense as having

different objectives, and requiring different processes

within the individual. Defense is dominated by the need

to locate in the environment whatever may be disruptive or

create stress. He believes that defensiveness overshoots

its target by including in its range anything that can be

construed as dangerous. Coping, on the other hand, he

likens to regression in the service of the ego, that is,

a process which, though it may appear to be regression on

the surface, is actually working through unconscious (or

metaphoric process) aspects toward gaining conscious con-

trol, in some degree, so as to grapple with the problem.

In summarizing the differences between coping and

defending, Brunner writes:

> "what seems clearest to me is that there
> is deep discontinuity between the two -
> not only in their objectives but also
> in the nature of the processes involved.
> Defense, dominated by the need for
> locating whatever may be disruptive,
> overdoes it. ...Unconstrained by
> conscious processes, defense operates
> by the use of the unlimited and pre-
> emptive metaphor -- literally, a kind
> of guilt by association that, under
> extreme stress, finally implicates
> so much of the person's world as being
> potentially dangerous that he becomes
> truly crippled. This is the mode of
> so-called unconscious. It seems highly
> unlikely that, on its own, the un-
> conscious could be much of a creative
> source of thinking. Rather more likely,
> it is only when the metaphoric processes
> come under conscious control in some
> degree that they can serve a useful
> function in coping with problems --

what in recent years has been called
"regression" in the services of the
ego." (P. 147)

In his study with Ph.D. candidates examining stress,
D. Mechanic (1962) describes coping as behaviors which
are relevant to defining, clarifying, attacking and meet-
ing the task which may be causing stress. Any behavior
which has consequences relevant to the situational demands
he refers to as coping behavior. When behaviors are aimed
at handling feeling states evoked by the situation and the
coping process he calls them defenses; "thus, defense re-
fers to the maintenance of the integration of personality
and the control of feeling states." (P. 52) Mechanic's
study is a pioneering one, which emphasizes adaptation as
regards student status and stress.

He defined stress as a discomforting response which
calls forth the individual's natural attempts to regain
equilibrium, thus allowing for the study of adaptation.
The 1962 study was elaborate in design and detail but cen-
tered on how individuals dealt with what they perceived
as difficult situations, and on the factors affecting their
perceptions. Whether or not a person experienced stress
seemed to depend on the means, largely learned, that
he/she had available for dealing with the actual life
situation. Thus, stress was likely to become manifest when
the individual perceived the means of rectifying the situ-
ation as lacking or insufficient, or when means became

progressively less available because of increasing expec-
tations. Mechanic also found that stress was less manifest
when the individual had means of coping with the environ-
mental stiulation. Means were defined as having skills,
knowledge, understanding, information, supports, abilities,
capacities, etc. Mechanic called these means for coping -
adaptation.

His term adaptive or adaptation, referred to the ways
in which the individual deals with his situation and the
feelings aroused by the situation. The primary interest of
his study and subsequent book was to formulate the proces-
ses of adaptation to stress within the context of group re-
lationships in an educational institution. How adaptive
means were learned, used and discarded became important in
the study and was a major emphasis. Mechanic felt it was
useful from both a theoretical and practical point of view
to attempt to understand how the individual learns to elimi-
nate stress through functional habits and attitudes, per-
haps so that educators and others might be more effective
in this area. He suggests that in some persons the ability
to deal with stress situations might be highly developed
while in others it might be highly constricted. For this
reason, the means available to a person or group for deal-
ing with stress, the modes of transmission of these means
and the many factors affecting the definition of both threat
and adaptation are important. Mechanic further specifies,

when the behavior has consequences relevant to the situational demands it is called coping behavior. In other words, coping behaviors are relevant to defining, attacking and meeting the task. When the behavior is aimed at handling feeling states evoked by the situation and the coping process, he called it defense; thus, defense refers to the maintenance of the integration of personality and the control of feeling states.

Adaptation deals with both coping and defending. The severity of stress experienced depends on the number of available means for coping and defending and their efficacy. To the extent that the person has effective means of dealing with possible threat the situation can be successfully mastered. To the extent that means prove ineffectiveness, stress will increase. "Mastery or its opposite, helplessness, is the key to the ultimate emotional reaction" (R. Grinker and J.P. Spiegel, 1945, P. 129)

In terms of concern with discontinuities in social systems resulting in stress, Merton (1957) has argued that social structures exert definite pressures upon certain persons in the society forcing them to make such deviant adaptations as innovation, ritualism, retreatism and rebellion. When an accute incongruency develops between the cultural norms and goals and socially structured capacities of persons to behave in accord with them, a state of anomie exists. Individuals who learn cultural goals and values, but who

fail to acquire the means to fulfill these because of their location within the society, adapt to these anomic conditions by making the deviant adaptations described by Merton. Because of the complexity of our society, persons often are faced with conflicting or contradictory demands. Role conflict theorists have been concerned with describing and predicting the adaptations that a person makes when faced with these demands. Stress responses may be socially induced when persons are faced with incompatible demands which they consider equally ligitimate, and to which they cannot easily adjust.

What links these various points of view is that they all in one way or another have been concerned with symbolic behavior. That stress is not an event, but is a response, and so no matter how we look at it we must take into account how the individual views his/her situation, the relevance of his/her view, and which adaptations are possible.

From the viewpoint of an adult educator, Knox (1977) has written that "adaptation takes place in a sequence of time periods, which requires a changed structure of participation by the individual." (P. 537) The adaptation begins when the individual initiates some efforts to accommodate to the changed circumstances associated with the change event and ends when a stable structure of participation has been reestablished. Elements of the adaptation strategy may be deliberate or reactive, and they

may be active or passive. The greater the diversity of
the structure of participation, the easier the substitution
and expansion to compensate for a lost role. When the
change event entails the addition of a major role relation-
ship the process is facilitated. if the new role is toward
an established and important domain of participation.
Change is often accompanied by a heightened readiness to
engage in educative activities and frees the adult to in-
vest in new ways. He also indicates that adults need help
in understanding the processes they are experiencing so
that priority setting, problem solving, and coping may be
utilized for dealing successfully with the stress that
accompanies any change events. He states "change tends to
overwhelm initially and help is needed if growth is to be
produced... especially if it is related to self-directedness
and the individual's feeling of self-worth." (P. 544)

Although divergent views have been reported there are
some common principles which have relevance to this study.
There is consensus that learning produces change and
stress, that stress is connected to environmental demands
and situational aspects, that it is not totally dependent
upon inner self esteem. Consensus also seems to indicate
that social work learning, and perhaps all clinical learn-
ing, have some specific and unique stress producing aspects.
There is further agreement that the individual seeks to
reduce discomforting responses to a situation, and these
attempts to reestablish homeostasis or equilibrium can be

done through the process of defending oneself; and through coping, that is - behaving in ways designed to grapple with the situation itself. Both, with infinite variations on both themes, are adaptive.

The key concept of dealing with stress is <u>adaptation</u> - here, the person who attempts to adapt is faced with a twofold problem; to deal with the actual demand of the situation and to orient the self to utilizing what means he/she can to reverse the stress. The more difficult the situation the more likely is the person to develop fear, anxiety, depression and general upset; and, to the extent that these feelings interfere, effectiveness as a "coper" is limited. So he/she must in some manner control uncomfortable interfering stimuli and maintain relative comfort or integration. Adequate adaptation depends on some careful balance between coping and defense processes. In short, adaptation requires that the individual be able to bring means to bear so as to satisfactorily achieve some result in regard to functioning, to inner security, and to the reality demands.

From a personal point of view, the individual must have the capacity to control and manipulate the mechanisms. If in context of a group, the group may develop some paths of adaptation, the individual must learn to use these paths effectively. Mechanic's study, like Grinker's, demonstrated that the community sets the limits, provides the

alternatives and defines the meanings to be attached to
various situations, but the person's own capacities and
prior patterns play an undeniably significant part. In
Mechanic's study the organization limited the ways of
coping - i.e., they could not cheat. Less obviously, the
organization also limited the defensive techniques that
were seen as adaptive - i.e., if the defensive device
became too bizarre, it was defined as deviant and resulted
in pressures and sanctions. So, each person needs vali-
dation from the organization and community that his/her
values and beliefs, that serve as defenses, are okay.
Serious consequences follow coping or defense patterns
which are bizarre or interfere with adequate adaptation.
Each student must select from available legitimate adap-
tive devices. Many other factors also influence the adap-
tive processes. The relationships between coping and
defense are not simple, they are interwoven and often serve
the same purposes. Mastery of difficult situations serve
both coping and defense needs, especially in situations
where much is at stake. In Mechanic's study, failure to
use acceptable adaptation quickly led to self doubt, ques-
tioning of motives and abilities, wariness to expose oneself;
all of which served to further handicap coping attempts
such as interfering with concentration. Lack of knowledge
of the duration of the stress also tended to make it more
difficult for the student to find adequate adaptive means.

Early reassurances and too early risk taking seemed to
lower effectiveness by creating self doubt, so Mechanic
emphasized that pacing was an important component for the
student to consider in his attmepts at adaptation. Long
term stress produced some other significant findings as
reported by both Mechanic and Grinker. Their studies
illustrated that the most adaptive individual engaged in
comforting cognitions, drew on past experiences, identified
with others undergoing similar experiences, joked, engaged
in avoidance, hostility, magical thinking, projecting and
creating a favorable picture of the future.

Schooling and professional education with its demands
and rewards certainly presents a long term stress producing
situation which requires the student to mobilize his/her
inner and external resources in order to adapt, cope,
and successfully complete the undertaking.

Chapter V

Paranoid-like Thinking

as a Response to Stress

In this study of paranoid-like thinking it is necessary to specify that we are not speaking of pathological conditions which have paranoid features. We are talking here about a process of thinking, not about an individual's style being of a paranoid nature, not about a fixed delusional system, not about episodic paranoid ideation of a psychotic kind. We are, instead, describing a situational response to stress which has features believed to be paranoid-like. The subjective experience has been delinieated in the reports and vignettes offered in Chapter VI, and is characterized by the individual feeling more than usual anxiety, accompanied by a general aura of suspiciousness, wariness and feelings of mistrust. The individual's life seems to be temporarily dominated by awareness of threat of superior forces or authority. The threat is felt to be external and his/her response must be one of defensiveness, he/she has to be careful. As noted earlier, the students in our program were aware of these "paranoid feelings", believed them to be over determined and not completely realistic.

For the purposes of this study the review of the literature on paranoid processes concentrated on non-

psychotic aspects. Although in the review we looked
at some of the conventional concepts related to paranoid
process, emphasis was placed on its function in adaptation.
Paranoid-like thinking is bound to defense mechanisms.

Otto Fenichel (1945) discussed paranoid feelings
associated with social anxiety. He described this
phenomenon as occurring in a person when that person does
not dare to decide what should be accepted and what is to
be rejected. He or she has trouble or inability to de-
cide, instead wants only to determine what others (usually
in authority) expect, then he/she can act accordingly.
Further, Fenichel describes paranoid-like thinking as
prevalent when the individual is caught in superego de-
mands that the ego should behave in accordance with what
is expected; if there is conflict the person is prone to
develop feelings such as "people might be against me".
This is not very different from Carl Sagan's (1977) state-
ment: "in paranoid thinking a person believes he has de-
tected a conspiracy -" ..." In times of rapid social change
there are bound to be conspiracies, both by those in favor
of change and those defending the status quo - detecting
conspiracies when there are none is a symptom of paranoia;
detecting them when they exist is a sign of mental health.
In America today , if you are not a little paranoid, you
are out of your mind. "(P. 181) He also suggests that
change always produces some suspiciousness because change

denotes variations in ritualistic and hierarchical thoughts and behaviors.

In American Handbook of Psychiatry (Arieti, Ed. 1974), attention is given to the usual ways people have of reducing or controlling anxiety. Operations which they call 'dynamisms', are those methods of the self-esteem system which decrease anxiety. The paranoid condition is one of them. It is used by normal individuals, and everyone has experieced such feelings at some time, to some degree. The author adds that whenever there is danger, even symbolic, to a person's self, role, function, image, etc., there is anxiety. Anxiety almost always calls forth some protective or defensive maneuver to preserve an acceptable self-image. "Paranoid thinking is a common defense in which the person attributes shortcomings or negative intentions to others that they may themselves have." (P. 895) Anna Freud talks about the guilt which cannot be accepted by some and which is then aggressively turned onto others. In such instances the behavior of the superego toward others is as ruthless as that of the superego toward the person's own ego in depression. The concept of "identification with the aggressor" she says, represents on the one hand a preliminary phase of super-ego development and on the other, an intermediate stage in the development of true paranoia. It resembles the

former in the mechanism of identification and the latter in that of projection. These are both normal activities of the ego and the results vary, from their use according to the materials upon which they are employed. (P. 120-1)

Sullivan (1953) constructed many of his principles of interpersonal thoery around what he called "social subordination". From childhood, the individual is presented with a succession of new authority figures who ask him/her to subordinate his/her own wishes, feelings, etc., for the greater good. Sullivan connected this with "rudimentary paranoia" in which the individual becomes vulnerable to the wishes and expectations of others often producing a degree of mistrust and wariness. This is especially likely to be manifest when the individual feels he has little to say about outcomes, when he is actually in a subordinate position.

In the theoretical appraisal of the paranoid process, which we are attempting here, the notion of paranoid construction or thinking occupies a central position. This term is intended to describe the central cognitive organization which both characterizes and derives from the paranoid process. However, it is also the aspect of the paranoid process which, perhaps more than any other, establishes its links and lines of continuity with other realms of ordinary human experience.

Meissner states (1978):

"In our previous description of paranoid
construction, I describe it as a cognitive
process, by which incoming impressions are
organized into a pattern of meaning which
is primarily validated by reference to
subjective needs rather than objective
evidence or consensual agreement. I would
specify in addition, that another important
parameter of the paranoid construction is
that it involves an intrinsic reference
to the individual's self-system.

...The paranoid construction then serves the
very important function of providing a
context of meaningful interaction and ex-
perience which provides a framework for the
meaningful definition of self, as well as
a setting in which the self is enabled to
achieve a sense of congruence and belonging.
Seeing the paranoid construction in this
light makes it obvious, that the paranoid
construction serves important functions
relevant to the maintenance of self esteem."
(P. 144)

Meissner has recently written extensively of the

paranoid process, examining it in great detail and from

many angles. He indicates that contemporary views of

paranoid thinking have shifted from the Freudian formula-

tions of the libidinal and dynamic aspects of the syndrome

and relate more to questions of the use of aggressive

feelings. Concern over homosexuality as the genetic under-

pinnings of the syndrome have faded and current concerns

center on power relations and power conflicts. According

to Meissner, paranoid reactions are a defense against

feelings of depression, of personal inadequacy, and dimin-

ished self-esteem. These aspects he sees as crucial in

the understanding of paranoid disorders or thought pro-
cesses. (P. 99) He makes the point repeatedly that paranoid
mechanisms are related to a variety of emotional states,
including normal ones. This is not intended to imply
that paranoid thinking is not to some degree limiting to
the individual whether it is in his interpersonal relation-
ships or in his freedom to learn and be creative. Meissner's
contention is that the reason the psychic response takes
the form of paranoid thinking lies in the nature of some
underlying lack in the individual's personality, or that
it is temporarily generated by external events over which
the individual feels he has no control. Examples of the
basic lacks seem worth examining, only two are pre-
sented in the interests of clarity and emphasis.

Loss of Trust - The dynamics of self-devaluation are
attributable to somewhat more developed stages of psychic
organization, but the rudiments of it stem from the earliest
strata of experience. The beginnings lie in the insecurity
of the infant in relation to the ones who are for him/her
and who introduce him/her to the culture in which he/she
will live. The issues are those delineated by Erikson -
which have to do with the development of a sense of basic
trust and a sense of autonomy. Erikson (1950), says:
"the general state of trust... implies not only that one
has learned to rely on the sameness and continuity of the
outer providers, but also that one may trust oneself and

the capacity of one's own organs to cope with urges and
that one is able to consider oneself trustworthy enough
so that the providers will not need to be on guard lest
they be nipped." (P. 248)... "From a sense of loss of
self-control or of foreign overcontrol comes a lasting
propensity for doubt and shame." (1950) (P. 254)

Loss of Power and Will - In the genesis of paranoia
the underlying psychotic issues are blended in varying
degrees with issues more specifically related to the de-
velopment of autonomy. The impairments in sense of
autonomy more than any other, relate to the development
of a paranoid style. Impaired persons tend to see them-
selves as victims with little sense of how they affect
their environment and others. Submission to another is
seen as the requirement from the object. Little opportunity
for the development of a stable sense of self has been
given, so that self worth is attached to others' opionions.

Most authors agree that paranoid construction or
thinking serves a defensive function especially in the
interests of an individual's narcissism. The pathological
manifestations which we associate with paranoid thinking
such as shame, guilt, envy and aggression, are well known.
More recent interest has centered on the individual's
attempt to salvage and redeem narcissistic deficits or to
assuage narcissistic injuries through this kind of thinking.

This construction also clearly relates to blame and to projection. It is generally agreed that projection is the characteristic and basic defense mechanism employed in paranoid thinking, it is understood to deal with painful or intolerable impulses by projecting them onto external objects. The process is rational in terms of the economic principle; that it is easier to flee from a threatening external source of pain than to avoid an internal source of pain.

Projection can only be considered meaningfully in relation to its correlative intrapsychic process - introjection. Probably, Melanie Klein is the best known theoretician to have developed extensive material related to introjection and projection. She was a pioneer in object relations thoery who also departed from Freud's theory of instinctual gratification, and believes that any gratification or lack of it revolves around an object. Significant in the development of the structures of the psyche are what Klein (1957) calls introjections, that is, taking in that which is good and needed from the love object; and projections or the evacuating of that which one dislikes or of which one needs to be rid. From this basic assumption she explored processes which she believed came from these two functions, especially envy, splitting and projective identification. She described them and the

defenses against them in great detail and much of her theoretical constructs depend upon these concepts. Projective identification seems of particular relevance to this study.

Projective identification follows as a result of splitting the good and the bad parts of oneself. The individual is always seeking to take in from his/her objects that which is good and in this way identifies with the object. When something in the object is found to be bad a conflict arises as to integration. Projective identification is an omnipotent fantasy, connected to envy, in which the individual acquires what is wanted without experiencing the pain of differences and separateness. The fantasy is that one can absorb the envied characteristics of the object without any differentiation between self and object. An important problem which results from this is that the individual incorporates the total object, which contains the bad unwanted and split off parts of the self. Therefore, taking in the good by taking in the whole person, rather than just their good qualities which requires separateness also means absorbing the painful and detested parts of oneself. A person usually attempts to split off those parts of self which are unwanted, such as feelings of inadequacy, ignorance, etc., and to be rid of them by projecting them into someone else. When projected into others, the unwanted parts are eventually re-introjected.

Psychologically, it is impossible to get rid of integral parts of oneself, they then are often lodged out in the world most especially in those admired persons with whom one has identified. This creates a situation in which fearfulness is generated, trust is challenged or the bad parts are reincorporated, bringing damage to self-esteem and destructiveness to relationships. Through the process of projective identification the individual rids himself of unwanted or unacceptable feelings by blaming them onto someone else.

Klein (1957), speaks of the "paranoid position" as being analogous to a state of projective identification. Envy is defined as the angry feeling that another person possesses and enjoys something desirable... that the envious impulse is to take it away or to spoil it. Splitting is when a person is not aware of unwanted parts of self and of unwanted feelings. These are then seen as parts of someone else and can become a source of envy. The inability to be in a good relationship with oneself creates a situation where all that is good is split off and external, and therefore not always available. Feelings of fulfillment are then sporadic and threatened. A good sense of self reflects one has been able to incorporate good internal objects into ones inner world. Klein underlines that growth and development in adults involves connecting and integrating the opposing forces, the good

and bad parts of oneself. Maturity insists on the capacity
to tolerate ambivalence and to integrate splits in many
matters, both internal and external. She indicates that
a common manifestation of the struggle to achieve such
adult integration is expressed through persecutory anxiety.

Healthy development consists of the integration
of the two views of one's own personality into a harmonious
sense of self, in relation to the external world. In the
process of this integration, there develops the awareness
of guilt and responsibility over earlier unconscious fan-
tasies. The state of concern for one's objects resulting
from one's awareness of guilt and responsibility is des-
cribed by Klein as "the paranoid-schizo position". In this
position there is an awareness of the fact that the person
and the object are separate. Considerable anxiety is ex-
perienced over what the separate object will do in relation
to self and others and persecutory anxiety is present.
Knowledge of one's separateness and of one's dependency on
others is significant in this phase of development. Reso-
lution of paranoid-schizo position involves a series of
factors which include acknowledgement of one's need and/or
dependency on others, tolerance of one's ambivalence
towards others, and finally, the desire to make restitution
for destructive fantasies associated with earlier develop-
mental stages.

Klein sees the development of object relations, which

begin in infancy and remain life-long, as being influenced by the infant himself/herself. The suggestion is, that the individual from birth, brings a set of constitutional factors which effect the degree and extent of envy, the capacity to tolerate frustration and pain. All of these influence the ability to find, receive and grow from that which is offered. Many times these factors prevent the person from obtaining from his/her environment, that which he/she needs.

The results of having developed good object relationships affects every aspect of adult development and functioning. Strength is gained from integration of good and bad parts of one's objects because it results in diminished persecution from idealized, powerful or frightening figures. Persecution can occur from idealized objects into whom all goodness has been placed. If a parent, teacher, or mate is so idealized that it creates an unequal relationship, the one idealized is experienced as intimidating and frightening. Self-esteem is diminished in comparison to them. Splitting has a detrimental effect upon relationships because when the good is lost sight of, "all is lost". Relief from persecution comes from an awareness of the relationship of the realistically good aspects of the relationships, acceptance of ambivalence, and a consistent sense of self. The processes described are engaged in throughout life. In this respect, they are .

normal functions of the ego, with life experiences influencing the degree to which they are manifest.

Meissner, (1978) in his study of the paranoid process makes a point that paranoid construction enjoys a very wide occurrence in the organization of human thought processes. In the course of every human life part of the struggle is the basic cognitive problem of integrating perceptual experience into meaningful patterns. Each person must come to see self in multiple and overlapping contexts, and fit into them in ways which are meaningful and, at the same time, give meaning to the individual's life and activities. Thus, he suggests that while paranoid-like thinking ranges over a wide spectrum of intensities the mechanisms and functions that characterize paranoid conditions are also identifiable in other relatively common, non-pathological and even normal aspects of human adaptations. This view helps to clarify some aspects of paranoid thinking and places it in a context in which psychotically distorting mechanisms can be seen as strikingly similar to mechanisms that in normal personalities serve adaptive and developmental ends.

Meissner sees the paranoid construction as specifically a cognitive integration and self-esteem preserving function. It accompanies and incorporates specific projections and derives its motivating force from its relation to the underlying introjective system. It is a complex cognitive

organization which is elaborated on the basis of not only projections, but also other sources of informational input derived both internally and externally. Thus, the paranoid construction can have a profoundly distorting effect on experience and reality testing without necessarily involving pathological projection.

Meissner states: "The paranoid mechanisms demonstrate even in their most distorted forms, an adaptive function which serve to preserve object-relations and defend the self from narcissistic injury. This adaptive aspect of the mechanisms extends beyond the reach of pathology to the level of normal and culturally induced adaptive patterns of action and interaction. These mechanisms can be socially and culturally reinforcing and supportive in one context or maladaptive in another." (P. 613)

The current interest in the study of narcissism, both disordered and healthy, seems relevant to our study of paranoid-like thinking. The works of Kohut (1977), Kernberg (1978), Winnecott (1965), Ornstein (1978), and others have recently shed light on narcissistic personality organization. They have, through their studies, given rise to the idea that we live currently, in what is known as the "Me" decade - that narcissism is a determinant for individual and social behavior. Perhaps for the first time, self-esteem is seen as having great importance, it being one of the dynamics in the understanding of personality.

One of Kohut's central themes is that for one to become
a self-confident adult who can give to others and meet de-
mands, a person must have grown up in a close enough
family to have lived through the primary narcissism when
he cannot distinguish between his own 'grandiose self'
and his mother or other objects of his libidinal drives.
It is thought that our current society tends to make for
difficulties in this realm because we have fewer close
relationships within families: fewer siblings and ex-
tended family members; plus working parents; so that the
child is often lonely and understimulated, causing him
to turn to himself for mirroring and stimulation. Although
not all children from today's family structure turn out
to have narcissistic disorders, some observers note a
general tendency for today's young adults to have less
persisting self-esteem, less consistent sense of self,
thus are more likely to be insecure; so that even slight
rejections or criticisms cause concern and depression.

In his workshops on Kohut, Polombo (1978) (Note #3) emphasized
that life stress often causes a regression which looks
like a narcissistic disorder. This is especially likely
to occur when there is loss of role, or object, and when
one is dissillusioned with what was formerly idealized.
He also indicated that one of the common responses in such
situations, is for the individual to become angered, feel
mistreated and need revenge. The concept of narcissistic

homeostasis appears in Tolpin's work (1971   ), (P. 348),
on narcissistic disorders. She describes a range of
equilibrium maintaining ego functions which serve to pre-
serve a cohesive self without serious fragmentation in
order to preserve mental organization. She says it is
through such means the child is able to acquire new struc-
tures, give up old bonds, and narcissistic needs. Many
studies on narcissism address the concept that when a
person's equilibrium and stress are in motion, introspec-
tion and self-consciousness emerge.

    If we consider the key concepts related to paranoid
thinking and those related to maintaining homeostasis,
it would appear that there is reason to expect the phenom-
enon of paranoid thinking to manifest itself. The idea of
projection of unwanted feelings and thoughts as one way to
preserve self-esteem has been well known as a baseline in
pathological thinking. Why would it not be useful as a
technique in non-pathological states? When one considers
the amount of stress social work students undergo, one
likely way of dealing with that stress could include pro-
jection. It could accomplish a number of purposeful things
for a student.

A. Adaptive Aspects of Paranoid-Like Thinking

    In the framework from which we are viewing paranoid-
like thinking it can be seen as a protective device, par-
ticularly useful in terms of preservation of self-esteem.

It is apt to be particularly useful when a person is in conflict about meeting demands which his/her or others' expectations place upon him/her. It is as particularly useful when a person feels powerless and vulnerable, and/or when the person is subjected to many significant judgments. We have looked at several sufficient reasons for students in the social work educational program to develop this kind of thinking.

Paranoid-like thinking is able to preserve self-esteem by the simple mechanism of projection. Through this mechanism the individual is able to eliminate concerns over his/her own feelings, lacks, inadequacies, and is, instead, busy watching, locating, and reacting to those around him/her who produce concern. In social work education, there are a series of judges whom the student must try to please. He/she clearly must meet the requirements of the school and its administration, the individual class instructors, the field instructor, collaborators with whom he/she works, peers with whom he/she shares many experiences, the client or patient with whose life he/she is involved, and himself or herself. In addition, the student often has a variety of others who are interested and tangled in his/her total experience, from the agency director to his/her mate, and family who also have vested interests in the performance, commitment and outcome.

Under this amount of scrutiny, exposure to varying points of view, diverse feedback, different demands and gratifications, one can see that any degree of insecurity would be magnified. It becomes self-preservation to rid oneself of doubt by hurling conflictual or emotionally laden material away from the self and onto others. Then it becomes "not I, who cannot function as expected - the field instructor doesn't help me to understand how to handle this situation" or, "it's not I who cannot understand - the field instructor expects too much of me." Or, "it's not I who is failing to perform in a satisfactory manner - it is the teacher who does not make clear what he wants from the assignment." Or, "it is not I who is hurt and disappointed in what I did with that client, the client is overly resistive." And so it goes with the student. The examples are endless and quite understandable. The student feels overwhelmed, unsure and probably frustrated, yet does not have the freedom to acknowledge deficiencies and actual inadequacies. Such lacks are usually based on insufficient information, time and accumulation of skills to perform as wished, but the student cannot even excuse himself/herself because of the self-esteem issues. The student is often unaware of his/her own fears of inadequacy and of the constraints on his/her knowledge, talents or creativity; so instead, wishing to rid the self of unacceptable feelings, projects them onto others through

blame. The point is that in order to continue learning, the student needs to preserve self-esteem and the inegrity of self. One's self image cannot easily tolerate the bombardment of doubt and inability which assails all students, especially in our field of study. Possibly, the more the individual student perceives himself/herself as competent and "Internal", the more the tendency to project is heightened.

Another way in which the development of paranoid-like thinking serves an adaptive purpose is by helping the individual to avoid social and emotional isolation. If one is depressed, overly anxious, or ill, the problem is self-contained and manifest in ways which may not be known by colleagues. These conditions tend to be subjectively experienced and may illicit little in the way of support. In the paranoid process, however, one is usually able to recruit others with similar feelings, views, and support needs. In the school setting, most of the students are going through the same difficulties, feeling the same doubts and afflictions. Usually, students have ample opportunity to share concerns, likes, dislikes, etc., thereby generating a support system. This process also may tend to increase the projective aspects which make the individuals feel better. The mechanism of blaming outside of oneself is easily acceptable to others who have a vested interest in the same kind of

"blame game", thus forces are joined and distortions compounded. Paranoid-like thinking is likely to provide a common ground for students to identify with one another, give support to one another and to find villainy where they need to.

A third purpose that paranoid-like thinking serves is that of mobilizing fight instead of flight. We are all familiar with the flight syndrome when anxiety overwhelms. The same can be seen in the withdrawal of persons who are depressed. In psychodynamic terms flight is a mechanism commonly used in a variety of guises for release from intolerable conflicts, feelings and situations. However, the person who if filled with righteous indignation, who feels faultless, and content with the self is in a position to be assertive, to contest other's views, to justify his/her position; in general to fight. Particularly when others agree with him/her, he/she receives verification of where fault lies, gets reinforcement for his/her thinking which makes it possible to protest and voice complaint with little fear of consequence. The fight rather than flight aspect is then instrumental to maintaining motivation at a high level, of perhaps getting the student to work harder and of maintaining his/her position long enough to develop competence to successfully complete the course. How much more productive this is than suicidal impulses, immobilizing anxiety, or physical

illness, all of which interfere more drastically than
paranoid-like thinking, with growing, changing, learn-
ing. One might expect that the common "bitching" of
student groups (a characteristic of many groups) is a
product of the paranoid-like process in its generation of
fight. Through this process libidinal energies may be
decathexted making it possible for students to actually
attend in a more complete and productive manner.

B. Adaptation to Stress in Social Work Education

Students come into the educational program with
many good feelings about being selected, feeling competent
and holding high self-esteem. Under the bombardment of
the factors we have explicated, the student soon becomes
filled with self-doubt. His/her values, attitudes and be-
lief system come under a different kind of scrutiny than
he/she has previously experienced; his/her fate is deter-
mined by many persons over whom he/she has no control.
Feelings of ineptness and inadequacy are stimulated; un-
resolved developmental and structural phases are subject
to reawakening by the content of the course of study. The
student is put in a powerless position and there may be
many factors in the educational system about which she/he
has little understanding and little if any, voice. All
of these factors conspire to make students feel vulnerable
and impotent and put the student under stress. Stress
calls forth a response as the individual attempts to gain

equilibrium.

The adaptive mechanisms employed by any person will depend on his/her own ego structures, basic self-esteem, defense patterns and a whole range of character traits. However, the incidence of paranoid-like thinking ranks it along with anxiety and depression as major responses to stress in social work education. It can then be assumed that it serves productive functions as do the other responses. These mechanisms are used similarly to protect the individual from conflict, perhaps to buy time to adjust more adequately, and to grapple with the stress-producing situation itself.

The arguments presented above are not meant to convey that this response to stress is all positive. The study has not attempted to evaluate the efficacy of this mechanism but it should be noted that stress which calls forth unusual coping devices engenders responses which are not particularly salubrious. We have mentioned anxiety, depression, somatic complaints along with the emphasis on paranoid-like thinking. On the continuum it is believed that parnoid-like thinking might be the most adaptive, given similar degrees of duration and intensity of the other manifestations. However, it should be acknowledged that there are costs, or negatives involved as energies go into excessive carefulness. The principal one might be that the self directed learning could abate with a con-

sequent leveling off of the learning curve. A decrease in motivation and a stifling of creativity might ensue. Another might be that conformity becomes a generalized way of coping encumbering the overall adaptation assertiveness, and risk taking. Another could be some alienation from peers and significant others who do not join in the thinking thus limiting support systems. Yet another might be a tendency which enhances a sense of helpless powerlessness if the power figures are to be feared.

Chapter VI

The Phenomenon of Paranoid-like

Thinking: Empirical Observations

Many of the authors reviewed in other chapters
speak graphically of the stress, the pain and discomfort
of learning and especially of clinical learning. What
seems to have been given attention are the evidences of
response to stress which are characterized by anxiety,
depression, and somatic reations. All of these manifesta-
tions are quite familiar to educators and a certain level
of them is expected. For example, in our school there is
what we call the 'November depression'. It is character-
ized by students' feeling generally hopeless, overwhelmed,
and inadequate. Its appearance is not unexpected, it is
not unreasonable and is based on several reality factors.
The student has been working hard, papers are in but not
returned so he does not have feedback as to his standing;
the field evaluation is forthcoming yet he has been in the
agency relatively few actual hours providing little vali-
dation of his effectiveness and making the field instructor's
impressions of him quite subjective. It is clear that
students then feel vulnerable to judgment and the depres-
sion becomes evident.

In general, at the time of each evaluation an upsurge

of persecutory feelings is apparent. If a student is having difficulty either in class or field, friends often suffer with him/her, seeking solace with him/her from advisor or instructor. Whenever a student is dropped from the program there is a sharp rise in anxiety, in feelings of vulnerability, and in paranoid-like thinking. Unfortunately, for reasons of confidentiality, the school administration and faculty are unable to share with the student body reasons for a dismissal. In the vacuum of little real information the students tend to be at the mercy of rumors, distorted facts, or their own projections. It has been noted that even in instances where the individual student decided voluntarily to withdraw from school, the remaining students become beset with fears about, "will I get the axe next?"

Because of the awareness of this kind of thinking, and because of the role served as advisor, many examples of paranoid-like thinking have come to my attention. Little attempt has been made to review, with others, my perceptions nor has any attempt been made to systematically collect descriptions of this phenomenon. Files, reports, and vignettes which portray this kind of thinking have been reviewed; no attempt has been made to evaluate or to judge them. The following are presented in an effort to further illustrate the kind of thinking we are trying

to understand. Attempts to classify examples into dis-
crete categories have not been very helpful, mostly be-
cause there is a tendency for each example to be multi-
dimensional and to overlap. However, the following ex-
amples are grouped roughly by common characteristics.

Individual or ideosyncratic: These examples are
largely spontaneous, often without apparent specific
causative factors. They are usually brief in duration,
are known to be irrational but their shadows may have an
enduring effect. In one instance, a student complained
good naturedly, that a certain instructor turned off his
hearing aid whenever she spoke. A bright well-functioning
student, she knew this was not true, but seemingly could
not rid herself of the conviction. She realized the mean-
ing to be that she thought the professor did not value
her contributions. Even after successful completion she
still held the idea.

Another example is one of the student who said she
was not sure she could survive in the field placement,
.that her field instructor believed in growth through pain,
because "only after I broke down and cried in her office
has she begun to treat me like a human. Until then I was
sure she was out to get me -- oh, not maliciously, but
to crack my shell." This student felt that her survival
meant she had to constantly be "coming undone" in order
for the field teacher to acknowledge that she was making

any real investment or progress.

A third example is represented by the male student who came to discuss his concerns about his field instructor, whom he saw as seductive, whom he thought was "putting the make on me". In the process of discussion he began to understand that what he considered too much intimacy, was part of the "whole self-awareness trip; she really wanted me to get inside myself." These examples might be seen as the kind which are replicated in many ways with many students, they are generated out of the overall process.

Precipitated: Some paranoid-like responses are more elaborated, grow out of a precipitating event and like the sand in the oyster, build up over time. A student who enjoyed a very high regard in the school, both with faculty and fellow students, came with real concern over her field placement saying, "I am so paranoid about Mr. X (field instructor) that I don't function very well. I feel so regressed, like I know nothing, all he does is put me down, I feel assaulted. I cannot understand why he thinks so poorly of me." The student was quite wrong. The field instructor thought she was very knowledgeable and competent. He also felt she was guarded and reserved in this setting. It was early in the academic year and little was needed to be done at the time. Some continuing dialogue was developed between the student and the field advisor. Soon it emerged that the student had learned

(at about the time she entered the academic year) that
she would likely need serious surgery. She had been in-
creasingly concerned about it, had shared it with no
one until a decision was made, and instead, had become
guarded and defensive in view of her vulnerability.
Since the field instructor was new to her, it got centered
there rather than at school with those who knew and valued
her.

One student believed that his confidential informa-
tion had been betrayed when a classroom instructor pre-
sented a case situation for discussion which had parallel
aspects to the student's own personal situation. The
revelation had not been to the instructor in question, but
to the field advisor who the student now saw as having
divulged the information. He felt that it was then widely
disseminated among other members of the student body and
faculty. All of this was quite coincidental in terms of
timing and content, but it took weeks for the student to
get past this conviction and its attendant hesitency to
be open with anyone connected with the school.

Another example of the same kind can be seen in the
incident which started when an instructor asked a certain
student to do an additional assignment in his class, be-
cause of suspected plagiarism. The class found out about
it and without knowing any details accused the teacher of
being "a hater of students", someone who was cruel, un-

reasonable, and who "had it in for us." Though the problem was effectively handled between the offending student and instructor, the "wire" on the teacher remained.

Group: Another kind of situation which generates paranoid-like thinking can be seen as a group phenomenon. In a student body our size, much of what happens with one student is known and discussed by many. In one instance, a student was obviously having an emotional breakdown. She was from another country and had no responsible relatives in California. Since much of her disturbance was manifest in school, the administration assumed the responsibility of getting an evaluation and care for the young woman. The student body became alarmed, generally caught up in ignorance of many facts, but also in conflict between feeling that the student's mental condition was no business of the school and feeling that she needed help. Ultimately, they felt that the school had gone too far when it was the psychiatric advice that hospitalization was necessary. Some equated the decision with the reported "Russian System" of hospitalization for dissenters as psychiatirc casualties, and some students voiced the opinion that it could happen to them.

The student body has a grapevine about placements which is subjective and highly dependent upon the experience of last year's students. It eventuates in a general belief that there are 'good' placements which ·

the 'good' students are awarded, and there are 'bum'

placements where the less favored students are sent.

This has little or no relevance to the actual placement

process which contains many determinants such as geography,

stipend allocations, prior experience, needs for exposure,

life experiences and other variables. It discounts en-

tirely the primary determinant which is the student's

individual educational needs as assessed by the field

staff.

Perhaps the most striking example of group engendered

paranoid-like thinking is when someone is counseled out

of the program because of inability to perform success-

fully. In one recent year, two students coincidentally

were asked to leave in the same week. Each termination

was for entirely different reasons, but both were perceived

by the students as being similar. The ripple effect perme-

ated the entire student body and almost everyone expressed

concern about their own viability in the program. For

several weeks, every faculty person as well as the ex-

tended or agency field instructor, was aware of acute

sensitivity in students to any criticism, or to anything

which was not completely reassuring and supportive. Most

faculty were deluged with individual students or groups,

asking if they were in any jeopardy. Some students felt

the "Sword of Democles" was about to fall on them just as

it had on their "unsuspecting"colleagues. Actually, the

students who were dismissed had known they were in jeopardy

for some time, each of them had been carefully worked

with in order to see if some amelioration of their diffi-

culties could take place, but to the student body generally

the picture was one in which the two students were summarily

dismissed with no warning or opportunity to correct what

was not up to standard. Students, as a result, developed

considerable mistrust of everyone: the field teacher,

the liaison, the administration of the school and even

their peers. These generalized feelings of mistrust and

fear were translated into a grievance to the administration

in which the student group presented a bill of rights. One

demand required a field teacher and agency to permit a

probationary period after any difficulty was identified.

Many of the demands were appropriate, but many were ones

such as the above, which the school could not foist onto

the autonomous agency, whose first duty is to their clients,

not to our students. These two dismissals created a storm

of paranoid feelings, which lasted for some time, as each

of the two students sought to reverse the school's de-

cision. This was an extreme situation, but these feelings

clearly surfaced even for secure students who cognitively

knew they were achieving. Of interest is the fact that

the very students who had complained about the lack of

suitability of these two colleagues were the ones most

affected by feelings of persecution and fear of like
eventualities.

Organizational: Societal events, the broad issues
of our times, and far-reaching decisions within the organi-
zation frequently stimulate paranoid-like thinking among
students. During the social revolution on the campuses of
this country these kinds of responses were prevalent and
often had that grain of truth in them. There continues to
be sensitivities related to minority status and stereotype
thinking which is often projected from students on to
faculty. For example, it became known that the student
affairs officer stated that the predominate number of
students on academic probation were ethnic minorities.
Though this statement was factual, the story developed
into one which implied that the officer had impuned the
intelligence of all minority students. Of course, that
caused considerable disruption.

Another example of this type of generation of paranoid
feelings was when the school changed its policy about
routinely doing admissions' interviews. The discontinu-
ation of individual interviews was dictated by budgetary
considerations but was seen by the student body as a de-
cline in the quality of students accepted for the program,
and would therefore eventually reflect on the caliber of
graduates. They feared they would be associated disadvan-
tageously with those less rigorously reviewed than them-

selves.

The school's method of field placement assignments is another example. As part of orientation, in the large lecture hall, students are handed a list of all agencies used for placement and each student must rummage through the list to ascertain his assignment. After the hush, accompanied by shuffling of papers, people begin to squeal with delight, hug one another, jump with joy, quickly check with their special friends as to their assignments: or they may be dredged in gloom, threating to kill themselves, tears may appear, and commiserating with one another takes place. General chatter follows about all the things that have been heard about a particular agency and/or field instructor. Some students may want to trade, some may become angry that someone else got what they wanted, some are concerned that their support system has been removed. Whatever happens, there are strong feelings and little hope that anything can be done about the field assignments. Only later is it possible to clarify with the advisor just what went into the decision-making. This format extends also to the assignments to sections of class, another important part of the educational experience. The group setting, manner of distribution of information, and the sense of powerlessness all contribute to feelings of persecution.

There are many forces which contribute to the phenomenon

but perhaps here it would be useful to cite some others
which do not fall neatly into the above illustrative
categories, but which commonly appear. The role of social
work has always suffered from diffusion; for our students
in secondary or host settings this seems to create paranoid
feelings. Students have expressed it in terms of "they
do not need me there, I make no unique contribution."
The tutorial supervisorial function in social work may
also play a part, in that the field teacher, who is also
a clinician, is seen as having knowledge about the student
which may reveal too much. One student expressed it as
"every time I open my mouth my field instructor knows more
about me than I do; it's unfair that he has all that amuni-
tion." Procedures which allowed for second year students
to be on admission review teams was warmly welcomed by
most students. One, however, felt that her ethnic community
now would know of her aging father's senility and it would
embarrass the family.

Within the University system there is a requirement
that all course work receive a grade and that there be
documentary evidence upon which the grade was given. This
gives rise to many occasions for paranoid-like thinking.
A lesser grade than anticipated almost always raises the
specture of this kind of thinking. Students are heard to
say that the instructor did not like him or her personally,

that the teacher has certain biases different from theirs;
that, in the case of group productions, the other members
did not do their part, etc. In many instances the student
is willing to discuss the basis of the grade with the in-
structor, but too often they merely complain to others.
In the field course a pass-fail grade is used but the
evaluations at the end of each quarter are meant to be
documentation and feedback to the student. Inviariably
students tend to see only those parts of the document which
feel like criticism or negatives. Seldom do they see or
respond to the acknowledged good parts of the evaluation.
Students have raised issue over one word used by the field
instructor. Many have sought their right to place an
addendum to the formal evaluation. Though there is a
policy in the School that no agency field instructor's
evaluation may be used for reference material, students
believe any thing which is not a glowing report will jeopar-
dize their future career. At the same time they often
complain that the field instructor did not give enough
feedback about specific deficits. The School has had law-
suits brought against it because of the language used in an
evaluation. As an instrument for helping in the teaching-
learning process, the evaluation is a mixed blessing. It
is recognized that this written evaluation, done by the
field instructor, is not precise and is subjective. It is an
administrative vehicle which provides fertile ground for

the development of parnoid-like thinking. In the
evaluation process it is difficult for the individual
student to put his finger on the exact baseline from
which he is being judged. In fact, ours is admittedly
an inexact science, and much of what the field instructor
values or devalues is a reflection of his or her own
value system.

Many examples of paranoid-like thinking can be seen
in relation to issues about confidentiality. It is not
infrequent that students have personal problems which im-
pinge or interfere with their performance in school yet
they are reluctant to discuss them. They seem fearful of
being considered inadequate or of not "having their act
together". For instance, one student living with a boy-
friend, was having considerable trouble with her family's
attitude about this arrangement. This had produced a
situation where she was running back and forth between her
family and her boyfriend. Not only did this cause her
emotional turmoil, it also caused much travel and dis-
organization which interfered with study time and production.
It was only when she began to get incompletes, missed
field time and showed slippage in performance that she
shared her situation with the advisor. She explained
that she did not want any of her instructors to know she
was so "screwed up". Another example can be found in a
common concern. Many students hesitate to make any com-

plaint about their field instructor, agency or other
teachers because they fear the person to whom the com-
plaint is made will immediately intervene causing them
more trouble. One student was expected to be in the
agency one evening per week beside the prescribed 24-
hours of field time. She has endured this for several
months, found she was falling behind in her work at
school and finally brought the situation to the attention
of the advisor. She was fearful that if the advisor did
anything about it she would be branded uncooperative
since the agency needed her extra time. The dilemma
was that she wanted relief but also wanted to be seen in
a certain way by her field instructor.

We are apt to see the component of parnaoid-like
thinking aroused when   inappropriate responsibilities
are placed on students. This response is common when
students are expected to perform in ways for which they
feel unready. In a hospital setting a student was required
by her team to be the transporter for an actively psychotic
patient. The student was frightened of the patient and
did not feel she could handle any bizarre behavior, and
believed that the assignment was inappropriate. Because
she "raised a fuss" about it she came to feel that the
ward team was down on her. For several weeks this student
was reported as wary and guarded in interaction with the
team members. In discussion about the problem, the student

stated that she felt the team members held her in con-
tempt and doubted her professional capacity because she
was so afraid of a patient. In another instance a student's
thesis advisor, not knowning the agency policies, inad-
vertently instructed the student to follow certain procedures
in the collection of data in the agency. This caused con-
siderable chaos in the agency, surfacing many issues which
had not been clarified by the administration. Rules and
regulations were then forthcoming with most of the staff
having high feelings about the issues. The student came
to believe that he was the cause of a major administrative
decision, that his thesis advisor had put him in the
middle and asked him to take on inappropriate responsibili-
ties, thereby causing the uproar. Indeed, the student may
have presented the trigger mechanism and been scapegoated
to some degree, but his/her reaction seemed excessive in
relation to the situation.

Another area which tends to produce paranoid-like
thinking is that which involves moral./ethical dilemmas.
Practice in social work causes one to confront these
dilemmas daily. Help is provided for students faced with
such dilemmas around their cases; agency policies and the
code of ethics help to contain problems in this area, but
they are not all neatly contained within the agency struc-
ture. Students' private lives, like everyone else's, are
buffeted by problems of living, tangled with moral/   •

ethical questions. Consider for instance the example of two students sharing an apartment, one then having privy knowledge of acting out such as substance abuse on the part of the other student. Knowing this indicates trouble, what should the first student do? Or, the student who had innocently moved, from assisting a Ph.D. psychologist with his parents and children in treatment, to carrying cases on her own. In school she learned she was doing something illegal. She wanted the money this activity produced, thought at first she could hide the facts, finally came to discuss her dilemma feeling like a criminal. Or, the example of two ethnic minorities being in the same placement, one a strong able student, the other a weak one. The strong student found herself caught in an urge to defend and help the 'sister' in face of what both felt was a demanding field instructor in a high standard agency, instead of acknowledging the discrepencies in their individual abilities.

It is clear that some kinds of situations and circumstances are particularly productive of parnoid-like thinking. It is also clear that these situations are not simple, that there are overlapping considerations and many elements involved. It is hoped that the foregoing examples offer a sampling of the component under study. The intent is to demonstrate the many variations on the theme, and to provide some 'in vivo' illustrations.

In consideration that this writer's view might be skewed in perception of the phenomenon, some collaboration was sought on an informal basis. Social workers in the mental health section of the UCLA student health service were interviewed regarding their observations relative to the presence of paranoid-like thinking among students from our school. Four social workers, all of whom have been therapists in the program for many years, were interviewed. Each thought she had counseled 15 or 20 of our students in the university's mental health clinic over a period of years. Each indicated awareness of the wary, suspicious, need-to-be-careful feelings on the part of our students. They believed that all students, distressed enough to seek help, carried some of these characteristics. Each, however, expressed themselves as being able to identify and empathize with the high degree of stress social work students experienced. They also agreed that our students tended to have excessive concerns about confidentiality in reference to the School, and that they could characterize them as mistrustful and guarded.

This impression was echoed in interviews with 5 social workers from the Social Work Treatment Service in Los Angeles, who have had numerous social work students in treatment. The suggestion is that the phenomenon is quite common and generally acknowledged by persons who have access to social work students.

Chapter VII

Discussions and Implications

The impetus for undertaking a study of components
described as responses to stress in social work education
has many antecedents. The primary one being an aware-
ness of the often painful process inherent in clinical
learning. Student status in the Institute for Clinical
Social Work doctoral program gave drive and opportunity
for me to explore in detail one component which I have
called 'paranoid-like thinking'. In my experience as a
social work educator this response to stress has appeared
to be common, adaptive and little explicited. As a
faculty member at the University of California, Los
Angeles, School of Social Welfare I have been advisor to
a large number of students over a long period of time,
allowing me to know students in many different circumstan-
ces and in a wide array of situations. It is from this
experience that impressionistic data has been collected.

The study undertaken was limited in scope, empirical
in nature, and represented a beginning exploration of a
new formulation based on well known concepts. The
theoretical framework utilized both Ego and Educational
Psychology. However, the following areas were examined:
stress associated with the learning process; stress
associated with clinical learning in social work education;
responses to stress; adaptation; development of competence;

the paranoid process; and organizational theory and be-
havior as it effects the phenomenon under study.   Empiri-
cally collected reports, vignettes and examples were
used to illustrate the phenomenon of paranoid-like thinking
in order to demonstrate its scope and variations.

DISCUSSION:

Several points were maintained throughout the study
which were also basic assumptions.   They are set forth in
the following discussion.

Educators and mental health clinicians have known
that learning, in general, produces stress.   (Bruner 1966,
Mechanic 1962, Knox 1977).   There are indications that
self-actualizing and 'external' adults find stress can be
stimulating, rewarding and motivating.   (Knox, 1977;
Maslow 1968)   Especially in andragogy, the study of adult
learning, researchers have established that the educational
process has potential for fulfilling higher order needs.
The adult learner's commitment often predetermines striv-
ings for success and need for achievement, thereby creating
more than usual stress.   There is also some evidence that
the more competent the student feels him/her self to be
the more stressful may be the formalized structured educa-
tional experience.   However, self-directed learners are
likely to be the most eager, dedicated and able students
as contrasted with those who seek teacher-directed learn-
ing. Clearly adult, self-directed learners are motivated
by internal incentives which make them more vulnerable

in the educational undertaking. They are especially vulnerable in terms of self-esteem issues, career commitments and the sacrifices necessary to pursue education.

The Graduate School of Social Welfare at UCLA ascribes to the theory of self-directed learning, yet as a "mock bureaucracy" we often are mitigating against capitalizing on these precepts. In the review of organizational theory and behavior several aspects contributed to the germination of paranoid-like thinking. The principal one related to the student's feelings of powerlessness. This caused deliterious effects on the indivual student's sense of competence, self-esteem, and ability to control his/her environment.

Several other factors contribute to a climate rich in potential for developing paranoid-like thinking among social work students. One is the life space most students occupy. In addition to making career choices they are often confronting other major life decisions as to partners, establishing families or disengaging from their own families. Another is the idealism with which most enter our profession. Some disillusion necessarily accompanies acculturation to the profession, for example the need to learn that as social workers they do not become able to "fix" client's lives. Disillusion may, in turn, cause some rejection of the persons and/or ideals formerly idealized. Another is the new content being learned. It

has an effect on the students' perceptions of self and significant others, as it reactivates unresolved conflicts or partially mastered developmental tasks. The factor re-lated to accountability is another which generates paranoid-like thinking. In clinical learning the total person with his/her values, attitudes and biases are vulnerable to judgments by a large number of persons each of whom may have different expectations and demands. This leaves the student with multiple roles, multiple demands and few ob-jective ways of assessing their own attainments.

Many authors (Mechanic, 1962, Grinker, 1945, Selye, 1956) have written about responses to stress especially attendant anxiety, depression and somatization. Some (Towle (1954), Reynolds,(1965),Miller,(1977),Clemence, 1965) have written of stress in clinical learning, alluding to projection as one of the common mechanisms for defend-ing oneself. Since it is natural to project in order to be rid of unwanted parts of the self, a process is set up in which the student becomes not only defensive but an-tagonistic toward those aspects which are perceived as 'stressors.'

The study supported the contention that parnoid-like thinking was more likely to surface under certain condi-tions. 1) Whenever there are changes which affect the nature of the experience the individual student is having. The beginning of a new field placement; when there are

changes in society which affect him/her, such as the social revolution on campuses; when leadership or those to whom he/she is accountable changed; when new goals, objectives and demands are to be met. It is as though the cliche about fear of the unknown does generate such thinking. 2) Whenever there is a perceived reduction in one's power; i.e., when the student can exercise less self-determination or direction, when outside judgments are made in reference to him or her, or when self-esteem is threatened. 3) When new masteries are attempted; i.e., old competencies no longer suffice; new skills and knowledges are in process of being acquired; when expectations of oneself are high and frustrated. 4) When the organization interferes with usual ways of handling stress or adaptations; i.e., there are mixed messages to students as to their ability to make choices; have support systems; or when the administration makes changes without participation from students.

The study examined the non-pathological paranoid process as an adaptive coping device. A preliminary assumption and observation was that paranoid-like thinking was adaptive.

Recent writings (Meissner, 1978) have emphasized the adaptive aspects of the paranoid processes. He calls the paranoid process a cognitive one which involves the individual's self-esteem, so that it carries, as an .

important function, preservation of self-esteem. In addition, it is becoming clear that paranoid-like thinking (as defined for the purposes of this study) is within the range of normal responses to threatening and stress producing situations.

In a review of the phenomenon as observed in our school it was determined that the development of such thinking served three purposes - to preserve self-esteem; to generate fight rather than flight; and to recruit others, thus avoiding isolation. These were viewed as positive attempts to retain or reestablish equilibrium. There is no question but that paranoid-like thinking may also be detrimental to the individual in terms of the acceleration of learning, and confusions related to issues of trust.

Depression is usually accompanied by withdrawal and diminution of investment, creativity, risk taking and self-awareness. It can and does often lead to serious disruptions, even suicide. It clearly interferes with interpersonal interactions. Somatization is apt to carry with it pain, need for medical intervention, loss of time from school and is often experienced in isolation, if for no other reason than the person may be removed from others because of the physical problem. Anxiety is a concomitant of any stress situation, it is expected in new undertakings and ranges across a spectrum from mild to immobilizing. Depending on duration and where an individual is in the

spectrum this coping response may be costly to the individual.
For instance, if anxiety is immobilizing, the student may
fail before being able to remobilize, repair him or herself,
and begin functioning. In any event, it is an interference
with the progress of learning. While on the other hand, para-
noid-like thinking process accomplishes the positive functions
of preserving self-esteem, recruiting others, and generating
fight. It is possible that students who engage readily in
paranoid-like thinking in response to stress avoid other
less effective adaptive responses.

IMPLICATIONS:

The essence of this study has been to explicate charac-
teristics of a phenomenon well known to both clinicians and
educators who deal with social work students. It addresses a
response to stress in clinical learning and is meant to further
our understanding of paranoid-like thinking which accompanies
our educational process. Paranoid-like thinking has been de-
fined as non-pathological, time limited, non-delusional -
instead here it is a pervasive sense of mistrustfulness of
others, a looking for hidden meanings and motives in others'
behaviors, and a general wary need to be careful. The limited
scope of the study is apparent, but it is hoped that this be-
ginning exploration will generate interest in research of a
definitive nature. It would be relevant to consider some subject
centered research dealing with a host of questions which are

included here. Is paranoid-like thinking indeed a common and/or universal concommitant of learning, of clinical learning in particular? Do certain individuals with certain characteristics have a predisposition to such thinking? When is it not adaptive, and how much is dysfunctional for a given individual? Is it more a group phenomenon, than an individual one, and is it contageous? Can instruments be designed for measuring the component before, during and after the educational experience?

Some production of paranoid-like thinking has been attributed to structures within the organization. How valid is that attribution? Is this response to stress equally common in other organization structures which also have as their objective the education of social workers, but who have a different organizational model? Does this phenomenon also surface in other kinds of clinical educational organizations?

We have argued that paranoid-like thinking has a positive adaptive quality which is more functional than other responses to stress. That hypothesis should be explored further. Perhaps it has deliterious effects on self esteem? The entire question of adaptation is one which stirs controversy. Perhaps no other area of human functioning has more frequently been selected as a criterion for mental health than the individual's reality

orientation and success in mastering the environment. Some needed questioning of that criterion has been raised in recent years with conformity, as a conventional way of adapting, becoming anathema. Most clinicians agree that good mental health rests on one's attitudes toward the self, toward growth and development, toward integrity and autonomy as well as one's perception of reality and environmental mastery. So as Hartman (1953) said "... defenses may simultaneously serve the control of instinctual drives as well as adaption to the external world". (p. 81)

The most significant implication of this study relates to the understanding of students and their experience with the educational process in clinical learning. If educators are sensitized to the commonality and productive aspects of paranoid-like thinking the phenomenon can be addressed with less concern and trepidation thus allowing for its management in ways which might increase the salubrious qualities. Students too, might be more accepting of this reaction, thereby enhancing its functional and adaptive characteristics. In the same way we recognize anxiety, in the face of new demands, as having a stimulating and motivating influence, we might assume that paranoid-like thinking at an optimum level, as a response to stress, enables a student to do his best. Organizations might also be more deliberate in setting structures which do not

generate paranoid-like to an excessive degree.

CONCLUSION:

The concepts of reparation and restitution seem to
have relevance to this study. Although we usually think
of these formulations specifically in terms of pathology
and treatment that is not here the case. A major thesis
of the study has been that stress is produced in the pro-
cess of growth and learning, the need for response to the
stress is in order to restore or repair homeostasis and
equilibrium. It is in this context that we now tie the
constructs elaborated in the study to the theoretical formu-
lation of reparation.

Klein (1937) early identified this function as integral
to sound emotional development. Winnicotte (1965),
Hartman (1958), Kris (1975), Shor (1978), and others have
emphasized the human thrust toward self reparation. In
a recent book by Shor and Sanville (1978), they focused on
relationships in the therapeutic situation, the following
quote, however, seems relevant to the principles espoused
in this study as it emphasized growth and learning.

"When the primary illusion fails, a repair of the
presumed perfection is demanded and required. New capaci-
ties and skills are acquired to bridge the basic faults,
damaged trusting and self doubt." (P. 123) These sentences
seem to capture the essence of my contentions about the

educational process and the place of paranoid-like thinking
in the quest for success and the continual spiral of
growth. The human organism, in a constant state of flux
beginning with receptivity, disallusionment, defensive-
ness, reparation, and new levels of receptivity are
phases of growth and adaptation which continue throughout
the life cycle.

My commitment to educating clinical social workers
relies heavily on the constructs presented in this study.
A tenet of social work seems to be akin to reparation
and restoration. Our profession is dedicated to allevia-
tion or elimination of symptoms, to improve levels of
functioning, stabilization of progress and awareness with
a continual push to further growth and development. Much
of what our profession advocates for all persons should
be incorporated in the formal organizations and structures
designed to educate for the profession. These principles
require the acknowledgement of dignity, rights, and oppor-
tunity for self determination with use of one's full potential.

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