Techniques for a High-Yield Followup Study in the Field

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THERE EXIST today hundreds of comprehensive studies in the behavioral and biological sciences, which if followed up and reevaluated after the lapse of a major interval of time could produce extremely valuable data. Even more valuable information could be obtained if long-range followup studies could be made, using the original data as a base. Many research workers have undoubtedly been intrigued by such a possibility, but may have abandoned the idea because the venture seemed too complicated, too expensive, or unlikely to be fruitful because of the erosion of time.

This paper demonstrates that, with the use of proper logistics and sound advance planning, such studies are not only possible, but are economically feasible and can be eminently successful.

A long-term followup study of 125 children, 111 of whom were placed for adoption, made by the original investigators after an interval of 16 to 21 years, illustrates the problems and some of the solutions. The base group on which research results were reported in the 1930's and 1940's included children whose mental development was of interest at that time. The original research was reported in two previous studies (1, 2) and a final followup study (3). The first

Dr. Skeels is chief, Special Program Development Section, Community Research and Services Branch, National Institute of Mental Health, Public Health Service. Dr. Skodak is director of psychological services, Dearborn (Mich.) Public Schools, and special consultant to the National Institute of Mental Health. study included 25 children, 11 of whom had been placed in adoptive homes during childhood and 14 who had remained under institutional care. The second study included 100 children adopted in early infancy and given intelligence tests periodically into adolescence.

A followup study of these children in adulthood necessitated locating not only the 125 children, but their adoptive parents as well. This represented more than 250 interviews plus additional contacts to obtain school, vocational, marital, or other information. Thus, the occasional consideration of a possible followup was originally rejected as unrealistic and impractical. In addition, the principal investigators had become involved in other professional activities, both geographically and functionally distant from the earlier studies.

The decision to attempt the study, regardless of these drawbacks, was precipitated in the spring of 1961 when Dr. Robert J. Havighurst (professor of education, University of Chicago, and member of the Community Services Advisory Committee, National Institute of Mental Health) called on Dr. Skeels. Havighurst urged serious consideration of a study to find out what happened to these children who were now adults, 25 to 35 years of age. He stressed the importance of this information in view of the scarcity of studies of adults on whose early development such extensive baseline information was available.

A proposal was therefore submitted to the appropriate authorities within the National Institute of Mental Health, and approval was given to execute the followup study. It was agreed that the adoptive parents and the children should be located and interviewed, regardless of their current residence within the continental limits of the United States. Because of the nature of the study, it was also apparent that the followup could be made only by the original investigators. Their other commitments introduced the additional problem that the study could be made only on a part-time basis, fitted in between other duties. Stretching out the time period of the study created difficulties which will be discussed later.

Original Base Data

The Skeels-Dye project (1) had included 25 children originally located in a publicly supported orphanage. Thirteen of the children examined at ages 7 to 30 months were found to be mentally retarded, and they were transferred to an institution for the mentally retarded. There they were placed singly or by two's on wards of older girls and women (aged 18-50 years) with the hope that the attention devoted to them by the relatively brighter women might have a beneficial effect on the children.

In the 1930's the orphanage was typical of such institutions of that day. While they were given good physical and medical care, these children suffered from maternal deprivation, lack of one-to-one emotional relationships with mother surrogates, and had little opportunity for intellectual stimulation. Although other resources are now available in this State, and have been for several years, at that time there were no alternatives such as developmental foster homes.

In contrast to the meager environment provided for the supposedly "normal" child by the orphanage, the older women and girls in the institution for the mentally retarded made much of their small charges. As a result, marked progress by the children was seen within a year in almost every case, and 11 of these 13 children were subsequently placed for adoption in carefully selected homes. In the meantime, the 12 other children, similar in age but not retarded at the beginning of the observation period, had remained in the orphanage, because of such factors as temporary illnesses or legal impediments to placement. During their residence they were routinely retested at comparable ages, and showed a different pattern of development. They were identified as a "contrast group."

The Skodak-Skeels study (3) included 100 children who had been placed in adoptive homes in early infancy. All were under 6 months of age at placement, with few having been under hospital or institutional care for longer than 2 to 4 months. These children were given individual tests approximately 1 year after placement and before completion of legal adoption. They were re-examined at average ages of 4, 7, and 13 years, with the last contact occurring in 1946. The children, now adults 25 to 35 years of age, were completely integrated into the adopting families. The families were considered representative of middle- and upper-middle socioeconomic strata, and they had undergone necessary screening by the social agencies which placed the children.

Preliminary Estimates

In 1940–46 the subjects of the study were all living in Iowa and immediately adjacent areas, but it was anticipated that this might not be the situation by the 1960's. There was no way to estimate the geographic scatter or, indeed, the rate of attrition through deaths. It was cautiously guessed that perhaps a total of 75 percent of the subjects could be located and interviewed. Of special concern was the anticipated difficulty of locating girls whose adoptive parents might have died, and who would have changed their names through marriage and left the home community. In the light of these considerations a rough estimate of \$50,000-\$75,000 was made for the cost of locating the parents and children and conducting the 250 or more interviews.

Public Relations Groundwork

To be assured of the cooperation and collaboration of the many State, county, and local social agencies which could be of service in various aspects of the research, advance visits were made to explain thoroughly the followup study to every possible interested individual and organization. Some 30 personal interviews were conducted with officials of the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station, State University of Iowa, the State mental health authority, the board of control of State institutions, the Iowa State Department of Health, and the Iowa Children's Home Society.

In addition, there were personal interviews with personnel of the State hospitals and residential institutions for the mentally retarded, training schools for delinquents, the Iowa State Department of Public Instruction, and others. In short, no possible stone was left unturned to assure that, when the investigators began to establish contacts with the subjects, every interested or concerned official had given his approval to the enterprise.

In each instance, the reception afforded the investigators was one of complete cooperation and enthusiasm for the project. It was also pointed out to each of the officials interviewed that the investigators were fully aware of the need for careful, tactful, and diplomatic handling of contacts with the adoptive parents, the adopted children, and any relatives, neighbors, friends, or acquaintances whom it might be necessary to see in attempting to locate a family.

Locating Parents and Children

The task of actually locating the families came next. Occasional contact with a few families had been maintained over the years, but most of the addresses were 15 to 20 years old. In the highly mobile, post-war period many, or even most, of these could have become worthless.

The first step in verifying those which might still be correct was handled in Washington, D.C., headquarters of one of the investigators. It could be duplicated in any large city where the following resources are available: (a) outof-town telephone directories for the communities in question, (b) Polk's city directories, (c) local city directories, (d) Associated Credit Bureau of America and its local affiliates, and (e) specialized area directories such as, in this study, the North Iowa Directory Service.

Through the Polk's directories or centrally available telephone directories, or both, 58 of the 93 sets of adoptive parents of the 100 children in the Skodak-Skeels study were found to be living in the same city or town as that last listed 15 years previously. (Seven couples had two children in the study.) Three additional sets of adoptive parents were located through the North Iowa Directory Service. This is published in Algona, Iowa, and includes township maps with the names and locations of people living on farms. The Des Moines office of the veterinarian in charge, Animal Disease Eradication Division, Agriculture Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, maintains a complete file of directories for each of the 99 counties in Iowa. Thus, in 65 percent of the cases, it was possible to locate the family by these simple means, and it remained only to set up a visit with them.

In the Skeels-Dye study, with 21 years having passed since the last contact with the experimental group, it was possible to locate adoptive parents for two of the children through central telephone directories and one through Polk's directory. In the contrast group, 6 of the 12 were located by a visit to an institution for the mentally retarded.

At this point, one might question why the followups were not then made by letter, questionnaire, or other written communication which might have saved the expense of time, travel, and personal contact. However, the fact that the investigators were able to obtain information on 100 percent of the subjects can be attributed almost solely to the process of personal "sleuthing." In several instances, for example, both adoptive parents were dead, the adopted daughter had married, and of course was known by a different name. Thus, any correspondence, after 15 or 20 years, would have been returned marked deceased, or unclaimed, or unknown, and the investigator would have been left without further clues.

In other cases, the fact that an L. B. Jones was found to live at a particular address in a particular city did not necessarily mean that this was the specific L. B. Jones being sought for the study. Thus, highly confidential correspondence might have fallen into the hands of a complete stranger. For this and other reasons, the personal interview approach was deemed to be the most feasible.

There still remained about 50 families who were not located through the directories. Among these were some who lived in small communities for which neither telephone nor residence lists were available. Others might have

Vol. 80, No. 3, March 1965 761-814-65-5 moved to a neighboring suburb or across the country, but further "where to look" leads were needed. These, then, necessitated a personal trip to the last known address. To conserve time, travel was by plane to the nearest central point, then by rented car for local travel. Federal or State cars were not used, because in small towns and rural communities observers and neighbors might assume that the visitors were from the FBI or the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The most valuable source of cooperation in the smaller towns was the postmasters who, of course, were not permitted to give out addresses of citizens, but who were uniformly helpful in providing the name of a banker or other person who had been in business there for many years, or an elderly lady who might be located through the telephone directory and who might possibly be of assistance. In cases of this kind, the investigators presented themselves as old friends of the family, without stating the real purpose of the interview or jeopardizing the confidentiality of the mission.

Extremely helpful also were the operators of the ever-present corner filling stations, where frequently the only posted list of telephone numbers in a rural area could be found. The corner grocer or the local general store also proved to be productive contacts in farming communities where families live in widely separated parts of the county.

In larger cities, the next step, after failing to find the family at the last known address, varied in terms of the case at hand. However, a good starting point was found to be a stop at the old address to find out whether the present occupant knew the whereabouts of the previous ones. Failing that, frequently someone next door or across the street had the required new address, or neighbors were persuaded to give the name of some old-timer in the community who might have been acquainted with the family. When all this proved fruitless, sometimes a visit to the local utility company would divulge a meter registered to the name in question, and thus a new address to explore.

Also in larger cities, when it became necessary to have recourse to the postmaster as a source of information, the official nature of the inquiry and its purpose were stated, since there would not be a problem of direct acquaintance with the principals.

Through these means, every one of the original participants in the studies has been located and firsthand information obtained. All children were interviewed, except those whose parents specifically requested that this not be done and when the child preferred not to be interviewed.

Methodology in the Field

Three essential qualities determine the success of locating the subjects of an in-the-field followup study: flexibility, ingenuity, and tenacity. The investigators concluded that ordinary citizens should not try to disappear—they can always be located through patient effort.

Some quotations from the investigators' trip reports illustrate the need for ingenuity and tenacity in searching for persons in this kind of a study.

On October 6, I flew from Des Moines to Iowa City, and picked up a rental car to visit several towns for interviews with adoptive parents and children and to make inquiries on some cases where we did not have a recent address.

Drove to Sutton, a town of about 1,500, to inquire about the Hawkins family. This was the first case in the followup study where a trip was made to the town of last known address (21 years earlier). Since they were not listed in Polk's Directory or the telephone directory, I surmised that the family no longer lived there. I had no previous experience as to whom to contact or where to start. With great trepidation, I decided to stop at the post office and see if the postmaster had any suggestions.

Since this was a small rural community, I did not state my mission, but simply said that I was with the Public Health Service, that I used to be with the University of Iowa, that I had not been back to Iowa for 14 years, and that I was a friend of the Hawkins family and since I was in that part of the country, I was quite anxious to learn where they were. The postmaster thought for a moment and said, 'Yes, they moved away from here years ago.' I indicated that I had assumed that. He then said, 'I think if you will call Hazel Wilford, she can probably tell you their present location.'

I telephoned this lady and stated my interest, and she said, 'Oh yes, they live at Cambridge, Iowa.' She stated that they had moved there many years ago. I then said I believed they had two children, a boy and a girl. 'Oh yes,' she said, 'the boy lives at Holdrege, Minn., is married and has two children, and the girl lives in Oklahoma. I don't know the exact address, but she is married and has two children. Oh, wait a minute! My sister says she has three children.'

One of the most difficult and time-consuming cases was that of Ruth.

On October 20, 1961, I stopped in Bradshaw, population 355, to try to find the Ted Mitchell family. Their daughter, Ruth, was also one of the 13 experimental children, and the last contact with this home had been in 1941. I went to the post office, but the postmistress said she did not know them at all. I asked her if there was some old-timer who might know them, and she suggested that I see Dr. Gifford, a dentist, who had been the previous postmaster. I went to his office and waited until he had finished with the patient in the chair. I then stated my case, and he indicated he had known the Mitchells, but did not know what had happened to them.

He suggested seeing John Richmond and Albert Johnson, farmers in the area where the Mitchells used to live. At the John Richmond farm, no one was home. The man at the next farm did not know about the Mitchells, as he had lived there only 11 years. He pointed out the third house up the road as that of the Albert Johnsons, so I went there, but they were also away from home.

I then stopped at one or two farms on the way back, and an elderly gentleman told me that the Mitchells were members of one of the less common religious faiths, the only family of that denomination in the area, and that they had not had much truck with the people in the village, which probably accounted for the fact that it was so difficult to find out about them. He stated that Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell had separated, and Mrs. Mitchell had married again. He said that one person who had been in rather close contact with their daughter, Ruth, was a Mrs. Wilbur Marshall who lived out beyond the Albert Johnsons.

I went to see Mrs. Marshall, but no one was home. I then stopped at a filling station on my way back to get the telephone numbers of some of these people, and the operator of the filling station told me that the Marshalls were building a house in town and might be working over there. He showed me where it was and I went over, but apparently they had quit work and, I thought, perhaps gone home. I therefore went again to the Marshall residence, but still no one was there. On the way back I stopped at the Albert Johnsons and was able to talk with him, but he did not know where the Mitchells had gone. Finding that John Richmond and his wife were now at home, I also stopped there, but they, too, did not know the present whereabouts of the Mitchells.

For the next 3 days I tried periodically to telephone the Wilbur Marshalls with no success. Finally, the rural operator said that apparently they could not be reached because they had moved into town and had no phone as yet in their new house. Therefore, I may have to go back to this town at a later time and see if I can possibly find Mrs. Marshall. [From a later report] October 25, 1961, I again drove to Bradshaw, going directly to the Marshalls' new house. This time I found both Mr. and Mrs. Marshall there. Mrs. Marshall said that her daughter had been a friend of Elizabeth, a daughter by birth of the Mitchells; that Elizabeth was married to a Ralph Strand, and was living in Des Moines. She thought that Elizabeth could tell me where Ruth was, and where Mrs. Mitchell, the adoptive mother, could be located. She mentioned that Mrs. Mitchell had remarried. She couldn't remember the specific address, but thought Ralph Strand would be listed in the Des Moines telephone directory. (I had visions of several Strands being listed.) On further questioning, she said they live somewhere on 4th Street Place.

I felt fortunate to have gotten this information. I drove back to Des Moines and immediately looked up Ralph Strand in the telephone directory. As expected, there were two of them, but fortunately one lived on 4th Street Place. I went there that same afternoon, only to find no one at home. The next morning I went out there, and again no answer to my knock on the door. I then went to a neighbor to ask if the Strands were away on vacation.

From the neighbor I learned a great deal without divulging the purpose of my inquiry. She informed me that the Strands had separated, and that Ralph came home in the evenings. I said that in earlier years I had known Mrs. Strand's mother, and that I was interested in locating either Elizabeth or her mother. She did not know where Elizabeth was, but the mother, formerly Mrs. Ted Mitchell, worked at the Green Lantern Restaurant; that she was now Mrs. Donald White, and lived at 4078 Grand Avenue.

The next morning I went to the indicated residence and had a very satisfactory interview with Mrs. White, the adoptive mother of Ruth, one of the 13 children in the experimental group. Early in the interview she asked, 'How did you find me?' and I gave the obvious reply, 'Well, it wasn't easy !'

Not all were so difficult, as the following experience illustrates.

October 1961. One Saturday afternoon I decided to try to find one subject in a town of about 700 population. The only address was the name of the town itself, and that as of 1941. I stopped at the post office, which, of course, was closed on Saturday afternoon. However, I happened to spot an elderly lady mailing a letter, and I asked her about the family. She knew exactly where they lived.

I drove to the residence and interviewed not only the adoptive mother, but also the adopted daughter (one of the 13 experimental children), who happened to be visiting her parents with her two children. Thus it was possible to get complete information on all of the people in this family unit on the first try.

Quite another story is the chronological account of the attempt to locate Katherine. October 1961. Visited Iowa town which was the home of the Harry Tilson family on last contact. No Harry Tilson was listed in the telephone book. Called another Tilson family in the hope that they were related. Found that both Harry Tilson and his wife were dead, the father having died in November 1960. Also found that Katherine had married a Frank Adams, and that they had two boys. Katherine and her husband had graduated from high school. It was thought that they had moved to Florida, but since Katherine was troubled with asthma, she had mentioned thinking about moving to Arizona.

Returning to Washington, I found the Frank Adams family in Polk's Directory, with the necessary identifying information and their exact Florida residence.

January 1962. Arriving at the Florida town, found no telephone listed for Frank Adams, so set out to make personal contact. The address was a trailer at the rear of another house. Finding no one at the trailer, I inquired at the house next door, and found that the owner was an aunt of Katherine's husband. She said they had moved to Tucson, Ariz., 4 or 5 months earlier, because of Katherine's health, and gave their address in Tucson. Also, without stating the purpose of the visit, I was able to get the name of the medical specialist whom Katherine had been consulting, so a more specific and valid diagnosis of her health can be obtained at a later date.

March 1962. Using a city map of Tucson and the address supplied by the aunt, tried unsuccessfully to locate the residence, since Frank Adams was not in the city telephone directory. Failing to find any house corresponding to the address, I went back to the post office and obtained a map which showed the approximate location of the cabins, in one of which they were supposed to be residing. Also found an elementary school in the area which might be helpful if one of the boys was old enough to go to school.

Armed with the new information, made an unsuccessful house-to-house inquiry at each of several motels and courts in the indicated area. Went to the school, but found no Adams boy registered. The principal, however, named another elementary school in the vicinity. This school was also another dead end. Here, however, the principal suggested checking with the utility company, as most people in the area have their own gas or electric meters. This check finally located the Frank Adams family at an entirely new address. Interviewed Katherine and had an opportunity to observe her two boys, ages 6 and 7.

Pertinent Findings

After 16 to 21 years all 25 experimental and contrast group children (Skeels-Dye study) and all 100 adopted children (Skodak-Skeels study) and their families were located, proving that it is possible to locate 100 percent of the population in such a study. There is little doubt that this success was influenced by the fact that the adoptive parents were substantial, law-abiding citizens, who were well and favorably known in their communities and who had no need to attempt to disappear. The children who remained under institutional care were, of course, easily located.

Survival data. The proportion of those who survive after any interval of time depends in part on the health of the group at the beginning of the study. All the children were in normal health at the time the records were begun. This meant that there were no known chronic or major illnesses or medical conditions which would have influenced longevity. Some had had infantile illnesses which were common in the era before antibiotics (middle-ear infections, digestive difficulties) but were judged to have made acceptable recoveries to the point that they could be placed in adoptive homes.

Of the 100 adopted children, 3 had died. One girl died at age 16 of lupus erythematosis, another girl died at 23 of cancer (within 3 months of the first detected symptoms), and one boy was drowned in a flash flood at age 27. One child in the contrast (Skeels-Dye) group died at age 15 following a spleenectomy. All of the experimental group were living.

This mortality rate among adults aged 25-35 years, who had experienced early separation from their parents, amounts to 4 out of a population of 125 or a rate of 3.2 percent. Compared with the general population who remain in their original family setting, this is less than the expectancy for a cohort of white males and females born in 1930 and alive 1 year later. The expectancy of deaths for males in this group over a 30-year period is 5 percent and for females 3.6 percent (4).

The adoptive parents of the 100 children, who were 55-78 years of age in 1960-64, had been in normal good health 30 years earlier when applying for a child to adopt. They constitute, therefore, a sample which is possibly somewhat selected in comparison with their own age group (cohorts). The main result of the required physical examination is probably the elimination of applicants with severe physical disabilities, since the 25- to 40-year period is generally the peak of maturity, before the onset of the various deteriorative conditions.

Among the 100 adopted children (Skodak-

Skeels group), there were actually 93 adopting couples in 1930-36, since 7 had had two children in the study. By 1964, 8 of these 93 couples as well as 10 fathers only and 10 mothers only were dead. Six widowers and two widows had remarried. Five couples were divorced, and five fathers and four mothers had remarried. Of the divorced couples, one couple and two mothers were dead by 1964.

Thus, of the 93 couples deemed "good risks" for adoption 59 (63 percent) were still intact families 30 years later. There had been 37 deaths over a 30-year period, 19 fathers and 18 mothers, 20.4 percent for males and 19.4 percent for females. The expectancy of deaths for a cohort of somewhat similar ages over a comparable period is 23.5 percent for males and 14.8 percent for females (4). It appears, therefore, that in this sample the death rate for males was somewhat lower than expected and for females somewhat higher. Age distributions, however, are not directly comparable, which may account for some of these variations.

Five couples had been divorced from 2 to 25 years after the placement of the child. However, this had little effect on the traceability of the children, since there were no changes in names. (Four were boys and remained in the custody of the fathers. The one girl remained with her mother, whose divorce occurred after about 30 years of marriage.)

In families where the father died, only 2 of the 10 widows remarried. Most of them remained in the family home or were easily contacted through neighbors. There was no change of name in families where the adopting mother died. The adopting father remained in the family home and maintained the role of pater familias. In five of the remarriages the adopted children were young adults, most of them established in homes of their own before the remarriage occurred.

It would appear, therefore, that in populations of the type represented in this study, within a 30-year span the disruption of homes through death or separation is not a serious obstacle in the location of the subjects.

The more frequent remarriage of widowers than widows and the remarriage of divorced men and divorced women is interesting though not relevant to this study. In the Skeels-Dye study, of the 11 children from the experimental group placed in adoptive homes, there were two instances in which both adoptive parents were deceased, and one instance where the adoptive parents were divorced, with the adoptive mother, remarried, maintaining contact with the child.

Mobility. Another matter of concern arises from the mobility of the American population. At the beginning of the study all members were resident in Iowa or in a metropolitan area generally regarded as attached to it (cities of Rock Island, Moline, and East Moline). With such factors as the ending of World War II, the postwar urbanization, and the possibility of retirement in a more salubrious climate, many changes were anticipated.

By 1961-64, of the 85 remaining adoptive parent or parents, 64 were living in their original home or the immediate vicinity, 7 were in a new location in Iowa, and 13 were out-of-state (4, Illinois; 3, Arkansas; 2, California; 1, Wisconsin; 1, Missouri; 1, South Carolina; and 1, Florida).

Of the remaining 97 children (Skodak-Skeels study) by 1961-64, 6 were living with their parents; 20, in the same community as parents (Iowa); 16, within 50 miles, but not same community as parents; 14, in Iowa, but more than 50 miles from parents; and 41 were outside Iowa (13, California; 5, Illinois; 3 each in Colorado, Ohio, and Texas; 2 each in Michigan, Nebraska, and New York; and 1 each in Arizona, Arkansas, Indiana, Minnesota, Missouri, South Dakota, Virginia, and Wisconsin).

It is not known precisely how this compares with the general population movement, but the high rate of emigration to California suggests that it may follow the typical pattern. The six who were living with their parents were unmarried. Three were men who had never married, were vocationally unstable, and used the parental home as a base for job excursions as truckers or fliers. One unmarried girl lived with relatives who took on the parental role when her adoptive parents died. Two divorced young women, who had been identified as severely maladjusted in childhood, had returned home after unsuccessful marriages.

It would therefore seem that, except for subjects who may have adjustment problems, the majority of the children grown to adulthood will have addresses different from those of their parents. About one-third will be living in the near vicinity, one-third within the State, and one-third at a considerable distance.

Nature of Interviews

The initial contacts with the adoptive parents, often including the initial interview, were made with no prior notice. The basic information on both child and parents was obtained in this way. Although effort was then made to arrange visits with each of the children, in instances where the parents were reluctant to arrange contacts, their wishes were respected. Of the 11 children in the Skeels-Dye group, two parents refused such permission and the children were not interviewed. However, it was possible to verify the information given by the parents and, except for the added value of the more personal interview, the data were adequate for the purposes of the study.

for the purposes of the study. In the Skodak-Skeels group of 100, 2 mothers, each with 2 daughters, requested that no contact be made. Although the fathers felt there would be no harm, in fact they thought that the daughters would be pleased to be visited, the mothers' wishes were respected and the daughters were not contacted. One mother refused permission to contact a son, and both parents asked that still another young man not be contacted.

Thus, 4 of the 100 children were not seen because of parental refusal. Also, one man and two women preferred not to be contacted. Three men (all living at home) had such irregular work arrangements that several efforts to reach them failed. Since they lived off the usual travel routes, pursuing them further would have resulted in high costs and probably little information to add to that which was already available.

In enumerating the exceptions, however, the focus is still on the fact that firsthand interview information was obtained for each subject. In the instances where adoptive parents were dead, the children were seen. When it was not possible to interview the subjects themselves, the adoptive parents were generous in supplying information about the children. In the single case of the unadopted subject who had died, interviews with staff members who had known her supplemented data from institutional records. In the overwhelming majority of cases, both children and parents were interviewed. The possibilities for obtaining complete information through personal contact in contrast to followup by mail are quite obvious.

The warmth and congeniality of the interviews can hardly be overemphasized. It is true that the investigators were associated with deeply meaningful, emotionally charged periods in the lives of the participants. It is also true that there are few occasions in the life of the average citizen when he can talk about either himself or, more significantly, his children and the vicissitudes and triumphs of their lives, without fear of either boring the listener or being interrupted. Repeatedly an interviewee would say "I've wanted to talk to someone about that, but where can one turn" or "I haven't had such fun in years, it's so seldom I can tell about the boys without fear people will think I'm bragging." Seldom was it necessary to resort to direct questioning to elicit the information desired for the study. The fact that both examiners were experienced clinical interviewers no doubt was important in the conduct of the sessions.

Travel Scheduling

Planning the travel necessary to contact the participants in a study of this kind varies with the staff and time available. In this instance, both investigators were able to devote substantial blocks of time, occasionally as much as 3 or 4 weeks, to the study at the beginning of the project. This, and the fact that all subjects were still available, made possible economical scheduling of trips, time, and transportation. Later, as the distances between calls increased (the "easy" ones obviously having been arranged first) and the number of people to be seen in any one community decreased, scheduling problems mounted. In addition, the investigators' continuing commitments increased, tending to limit the field visits to weekends. This had advantages, particularly in interviewing the men in the study who could not be reached during daytime hours and had few evenings available. Every effort was made to group trips, and rarely did a single trip result in only one interview.

Planning this kind of field investigation should take into account the need for time to make the necessary arrangements. (Hours are often needed to work out complex airline connections, for example, only to have to begin again when it develops that the prospective interviewee's children have the measles and a visitor would not be welcome.) Time also must be allocated for dictation, recordkeeping, and occasional cross-checking. Additional material (for example, from guidance clinics or school records) may sometimes be obtained only at specific hours, thus disrupting a previously well-articulated schedule. The need for flexibility, ingenuity, and tenacity continues, even after the addresses are verified.

Costs

With all 250 interviews completed, the actual cost in time and money was substantially less than anticipated before initiating the followup studies. Total travel and per diem expenses for both investigators amounted to \$12,583. In terms of time, the investigators spent a total of 309 man-days on 55 separate trips.

The investigators visited 208 different communities in 24 States. Repeated visits were made to several of the larger communities. The estimated salary cost based on percentage of time spent in the field was \$18,150. The total cost was \$30,733, in contrast to the original estimate of \$50,000-\$75,000. These costs, of course, do not include subsequent analysis of data, writing, and publishing, inasmuch as these would be substantially the same as similar costs related to any research study.

Summary and Conclusions

A long-term followup study of 125 children, 111 of whom had been adopted, was undertaken by two investigators after a lapse of 16 to 21 years. All the children and their families were located. This success was undoubtedly influenced by the fact that the adoptive parents were substantial, law-abiding citizens, who were well known in their communities and who had no need to attempt to disappear.

Results of the investigation indicated that with the use of proper logistics and sound planning, such studies are not only possible, but they are economically feasible and they can provide rich sources of information.

Many resources were found for locating people. Changes of address and family status were not as disrupting to the continuity of residence as expected. To undertake this kind of study, however, there are three indispensable requirements: flexibility, ingenuity, and tenacity.

AUTHORS' NOTE: All names of people and of many towns and hamlets have been changed to insure confidentiality of possible identifying information.

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- (4) U.S. Public Health Service: Abridged generation life tables for white males and white females: cohort born in United States, 1930. Division of Health Records Statistics, National Center for Health Statistics.



Selection of Program Notes

In selecting items for this page, preference is given to reports of deeds rather than of plans, of completed rather than projected programs, and of innovations rather than routine procedures.

More source material, particularly from the south and areas west of the Mississippi, would contribute to a wider exchange of program ideas on this page. (See invitation at bottom of page.)

Staff Quits Smoking at School

Faculty of a Cambridge, Md., school have given up smoking on school grounds as an example to their students. E. T. Myers, principal of the 800-pupil St. Clair Elementary School, says the vote of the 31 faculty members to give up tobacco on campus was unanimous and voluntary. The move came after a discussion session in which teachers and other school personnel explored what images pupils held of them.—Washington Post, Dec. 11, 1964.

New Spirit in D.C. Neighborhood

A new spirit lights one neighborhood in Washington, D.C., that 6 months ago was "the despair of the housing inspector and the child welfare worker." Some of the most miserably overcrowded quarters in the city were there and some of the most hapless families, according to J. Allen Young, executive director of the University Neighborhoods Council.

His organization sent in a counselor, who talked with the people. One enthusiastic listener, a domestic worker with two children, started to gather people on Saturdays for cleanup campaigns. "Regardless whose yard it was, if it was a mess we'd go in and clean it up," she said. "Then all of a sudden everybody got real interested." Residents got together and started a drill team with 50 boys and a teenage club. The neighborhood boys played basketball while the girls gathered at a neighborhood church to sew. Adults began to talk to one another about common problems. They started to fix up their houses. They organized into a club with the domestic worker as president and put out a newspaper. Through a fair and a chicken dinner they raised money for drill-team uniforms.

Said Young, "Physically things are a little better now. But spiritually they are a whole lot improved."—Washington Post, Dec. 22, 1964.

Education for TB Patients

At the bedside or in classrooms providing separation of the teacher and pupil by glass panels when necessary, adult patients in Arizona's new State Tuberculosis Sanatorium at Tempe are given an opportunity for training in skills necessary for suitable employment upon release. Child patients can continue their schooling. Arizona still ranks near the top of all States in tuberculosis death rates and has nearly twice the rate for the nation. (Arizona Public Health News, No. 6, 1963.)

Firsts in Water Pollution Control

With the approval of a \$46,300 sewage treatment project at Hagerman in 1964, New Mexico laid claim to being the first State to reach the goal of 100 percent for sewage treatment in every community which has sewers.

Among other States recently publicizing their progress in water pollution control, Pennsylvania reported it ranked first for 1963 in the number of contracts awarded for sewage treatment, in the number of contracts awarded for new sewage treatment plants, and in the value of bonds sold to finance all sewage facilities.

Oklahoma claims it has completed more projects to control water pollution than any other State since the beginning of the Federal grant program under U.S. Public Law 660. Illinois said it is the first State in the Ohio River basin to provide treatment for all sewage wastes being discharged from municipalities into the Ohio River.

Infant Hearing Tests by Volunteers

Infant auditory screening clinics, set up by the Baltimore Health Department in October 1963 with volunteers as testers, have made possible the early discovery and treatment of conditions such as ear infection. deafness, brain damage, and mental retardation. In the first 6 months of operation, volunteers performed 544 tests: 66 infants failed tests: 15 thus far on retesting have been referred for diagnosis and treatment. The health department planned to open several more infant auditory screening clinics in 1964 with volunteers as testers.

Mining Safer Than Football

Boys on a high school football team may sustain disabling accidents during competition up to 14,000 times more frequently, man-hour per manhour, than workers engaged in America's most hazardous industry-underground coal mining. Dr. Frank L. Tabrah of Kohala, Hawaii, found that the disabling injury frequency rates for football teams of two Hawaii high schools in 1962, "an average year," reached 490,060 per million man-hours of competition play; for underground coal mining, the rate was 35.86 per million manhours of exposure. Sixty-nine of the 92 football accidents occurred during games; 23 during practice. (Hawaii Medical Journal, November-December 1963.)

Items for this page: Health departments, health agencies, and others are invited to share their program successes with others by contributing items for brief mention on this page. Flag them for "Program Notes" and address as indicated in masthead.