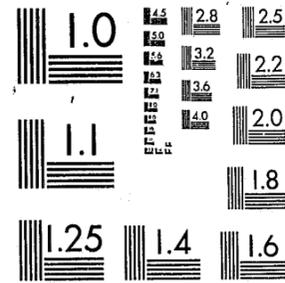


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# Federal Probation

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## This Issue in Brief

### ACQUISITIONS

**Guideposts for Community Work in Police-Social Work Diversion.**—Significant steps in community work involved in the development of police-social work diversion programs are described and analyzed by Professor Harvey Treger of the University of Illinois. Techniques and methods of work are suggested for practitioners interested in the planning, implementation, and operation of community-based programs. The effects of change on a system(s) are discussed emphasizing sensitivity to interpersonal, inter-professional, and interagency relationships, as well as client needs and issues of power and control.

**Issues in VIP Management: A National Synthesis.**—This article by Dr. Chris W. Eskridge of the University of Nebraska deals with a number of critical issues involving the management and organization of Volunteer-in-Probation (VIP) programs. While it is difficult to specifically identify why some projects fail and others succeed, it appears that management variables may well be the most powerful factors. This research effort was undertaken to provide an assessment of where we are now in regards to VIP program organization and management, and to identify areas of concern which suggest the need for future research.

**An Analysis of Contemporary Indian Justice and Correctional Treatment.**—Dr. Laurence French of the University of Nebraska states there is little doubt that the U.S. criminal justice system has a narrow, ethno-centric biased perspective that tends to view American Indians as "outsiders" to the dominant normative structure. He then proceeds to describe significant changes which have been effected with regard to treatment of the Indian offender—changes brought about

principally by efforts of the Native American Rights Fund.

**New Amsterdam's Jail Regulations of 1657.**—After the Dutch West India Company established a trading post at the tip of Manhattan in 1626, reports Professor Thorsten Sellin, the community of New Amsterdam grew as its population increased and within three decades the Company was compelled to grant the settlers substantial rights of self-government. Among the institutions developed was a jail and, in 1657, fairly detailed regulations were adopted for its management. It comes as no surprise that the regulations were practically copies from those of the old jail in Amsterdam.

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## Issues in VIP Management: A National Synthesis\*

BY CHRIS W. ESKRIDGE, PH.D.  
Department of Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska, Lincoln

PROBATION in the United States began with volunteers. Now, after many years of avoidance, our system seems to have embraced them once again. From the early 1900's until 1960 one would have been hard pressed to find a volunteer-in-probation (VIP) type program op-

erating anywhere in the United States. In 1960, Judge Keith Leenhouts of the Royal Oak, Michigan, Municipal Court resurrected the concept, and the idea has grown rapidly since. Recent estimates report that some 300,000 volunteers now serve 2,000 jurisdictions while contributing over 20,000,000 hours of service per year.<sup>1</sup> Others place the figure at 500,000 volunteers serving 3,000 jurisdictions.<sup>2</sup> While the exact data are

\* This research effort was supported, in part, by grant No. 77NI-99-0001 from the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, U.S. Department of Justice, Harry E. Allen, principal investigator, Eric W. Carlson, project director. Such support does not necessarily indicate concurrence with the contents of this article.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Ellenbogen and Beverly DiGregorio, "Volunteers in Probation: Exploring New Dimensions," *Judicature* (January 1975), p. 281.  
<sup>2</sup> National Council on Crime and Delinquency, *Volunteers in Prevention* (Royal Oak, Michigan: National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 1977).

not available, the evidence does indicate that the past 15 or more years have seen a marked revitalization of the volunteer concept.

Volunteer projects operate on the premise that certain types of probationers can be helped effectively by the services a volunteer can offer, and that such services can be provided at a minimal direct tax dollar cost. In general, the principal function of the volunteer is to supplement, not replace, probation officer efforts by providing individual specialized services to probationers.<sup>3</sup>

At the outset, it should be noted that volunteer projects seem to present an amalgamation of advantage and disadvantage to the community. A previous research effort undertaken by the author found that volunteer projects in general seem to be able to offer an increased quality in probation services at a reduced cost.<sup>4</sup> Scioli and Cook came to a similar conclusion in their review of 250 volunteer projects.<sup>5</sup> While it is difficult to specifically identify why some projects fail and others succeed, it appears that management variables may well be the most powerful factors. This research effort was undertaken to provide an assessment of where we are now in regards to volunteer project organization and management, and to identify areas of concern which suggest the need for future research.

#### Scope of Services

What can the community expect to derive from a volunteer-in-probation type project? Its proponents consider it to be one of the more promising innovations in the field, claiming that it can help alleviate the problem of excessive caseloads and contribute to rehabilitation and reintegration goals for the probationer. Volunteers' activities have been broken down into three areas of structural impacts: (1) Volunteer projects offer an amplification of probation services, (2) volunteer projects offer a diversification of probation services, and (3) volunteer projects offer additional support services.<sup>6</sup>

#### Amplification of Services

Scheier has suggested that one consider the probation officer who has 1 hour per month to spend with each client. The officer can either spend it directly with the probationer, where 1 hour of input leads to 1 hour of output, or supervise a volunteer who will spend 10 to 15 hours with the probationer, where 1 hour of input leads to 10 to 15 hours of output. A combination of the two systems seems to be the most logical, where the probation officer spends part of the time supervising the volunteer and part of the time in direct contact with the probationers. But these calculations do indicate an amplification factor, where for each hour of probation time invested, 10 to 15 hours of volunteer services are contributed to the probation system.<sup>7</sup>

#### Diversification of Services

By drawing upon the time, talents, and abilities of volunteers to assist in probation services, the probation officer can serve to broaden the nature of the services offered. Scheier, director of the National Center of Volunteers in Courts, has reported that some 155 volunteer roles have actually been filled by volunteers in one court or another. The community then contains a diverse supply of skills and can serve as a manpower resource.

#### Additional Support Services

In addition to the direct probation services offered, volunteers often assist the volunteer project in an administrative capacity. For example, the well-known Royal Oak, Michigan, program has been supervised by a full-time volunteer for quite some time.<sup>8</sup> The VISTO program in Los Angeles County (California) utilized volunteers to fill some of its clerical needs, such as handling supplies, Xeroxing, answering recruitment correspondence, and routine office contacts, as well as participating in project research projects.<sup>9</sup> There can be little doubt that volunteers in a probation framework can serve as a means of amplifying time, attention, and type of services given to the probationer by the system.

#### Project Personnel Roles

The role of the chief administrator, who is often a volunteer, is relatively constant from program to program. The chief administrator is responsible for implementing policy, fiscal management, coordination of volunteer program activities with the court and the probation de-

<sup>3</sup> Richard P. Seiter, Sue A. Howard, and Harry E. Allen. *Effectiveness of Volunteers in Court: An Evaluation of the Franklin County Volunteers in Probation Program*. (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University, Program for the Study of Crime and Delinquency, 1974), p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Chris W. Eskridge, "The Use of Volunteers in Probation: A National Synthesis," *Offender Rehabilitation*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1980).

<sup>5</sup> Frank P. Scioli and Thomas J. Cook, "How Effective Are Volunteers," *Crime and Delinquency* (April 1976), pp. 192-200.

<sup>6</sup> Ivan H. Scheier, "The Professional and the Volunteer in Probation: An Emerging Relationship," *FEDERAL PROBATION*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (1970), pp. 8-12.

<sup>7</sup> Seiter, *et al.*, *ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>8</sup> Keith J. Leenhouts, "Royal Oak's Experience With Professionals and Volunteers in Probation," *FEDERAL PROBATION*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (1970), pp. 45-51.

<sup>9</sup> David P. MacPherson, *VISTO* (Los Angeles, California: Los Angeles County Probation Department, 1975).

partment, and generally overseeing the daily administration of the program. In some programs however, the chief administrator answers the role of fund raiser, program liaison, and public relations director and delegates authority to the administrative assistants.

The role of administrative assistant differs widely from program to program. They may function as de facto chief administrators, or may serve merely as coordinators of operations, or as information dispensers. The latter may be more prevalent due to the fact that administrative assistants are often volunteers with special administrative or public relations skills.

The role of the line level volunteer is a relatively complex issue, and one that will be articulated more carefully in other sections of this article. Suffice it to say at this point, that the volunteer's relationship roles with the probationer can be classified into four categories:

(1) *The 1:1 Model*, where the volunteer, on a one-to-one basis seeks to obtain the trust and confidence of the probationer and helps him to maintain his existence, clarify his role in society, and plan for the future.

(2) *The Supervision Model*, where the volunteer who works as a case aide to a probation officer, provides services to a number of probationers.

(3) *The Professional Model*, where the volunteer, who is a professional or semiprofessional in his field, provides special services to a number of probationers.

(4) *The Administrative Model*, where the volunteer assists with the project administrative functions and interacts only indirectly with the probationers.

**Funding**

While the very title "volunteer project" may imply that few costs are involved, this is not the case. Although the volunteers themselves receive little or no remuneration for their efforts, nevertheless, recruiting, screening, training, matching, and supervising all involve a cost. To raise necessary funds, volunteer projects utilize four sources: (1) State government, (2) local government, (3) Federal grants, (4) private donations. Most projects seek funds from single sources, however, the trend may be combinations of

sources in order to assure their continued existence.

While 21 projects were reviewed in terms of funding sources, it was difficult to determine if the documents examined revealed the entire source of income. Twelve were apparently funded by the Federal Government, two received local dollars, nine received state dollars, and three obtained private donations. Some 25 percent of the projects examined have sought financial support from combinations of sources, while 75 percent seem to look to one source for their sustenance.

A problem facing all projects is survival. When the grant expires or the private donations dry up, so does the project, unless the project administrators can obtain or renew financial support on the part of the government (be it Federal, state, or local) and the private donators.

**Organization**

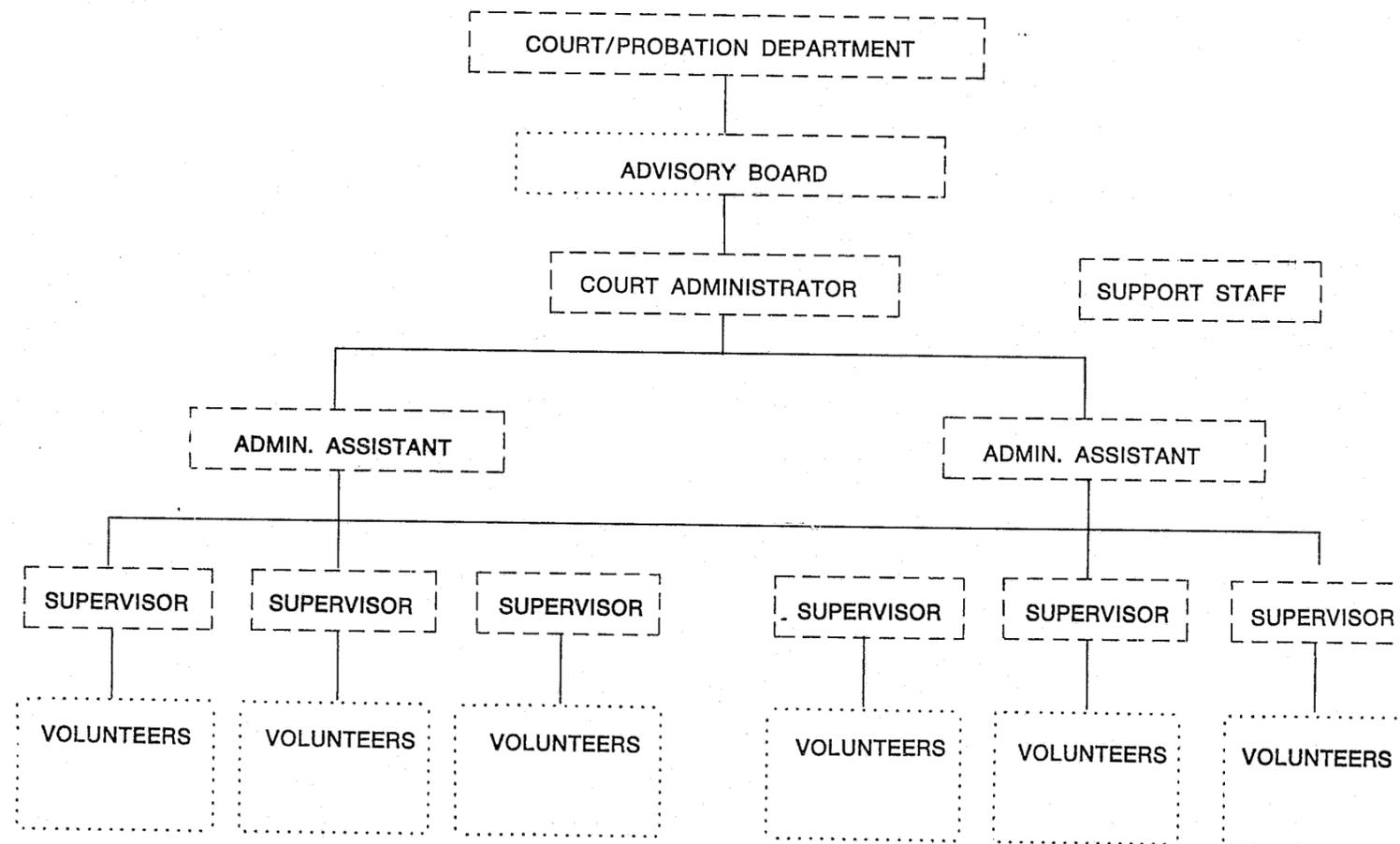
Most, though not all, volunteer projects are administered either through the local court or the probation department, even though they may be administratively staffed entirely with volunteers. The important fact is, however, that ultimate control is usually maintained by either the local court or the probation department. One notable exception to this generality is the State of Florida, where the volunteer project has been organized on a statewide, coordinated basis since 1968.<sup>10</sup> Generally speaking, however, volunteer projects can be categorized into one of three basic formats. The three figures presented on the following pages graphically illustrate these organizational styles. The differences are not so much within the structure of the organization, but rather in who fills the positions within the structure.

Figure 1 illustrates projects which are administered and controlled by a government unit, while figure 3 illustrates a project which has little or no immediate formal administrative ties to a government unit. Figure 2 represents a close relative of the latter cases, with project positions being staffed by both volunteers and professionals, although the project itself has few formal government ties.

Of the volunteer projects reviewed, 19 could be categorized in terms of organizational arrangement, and were distributed into the following classifications:

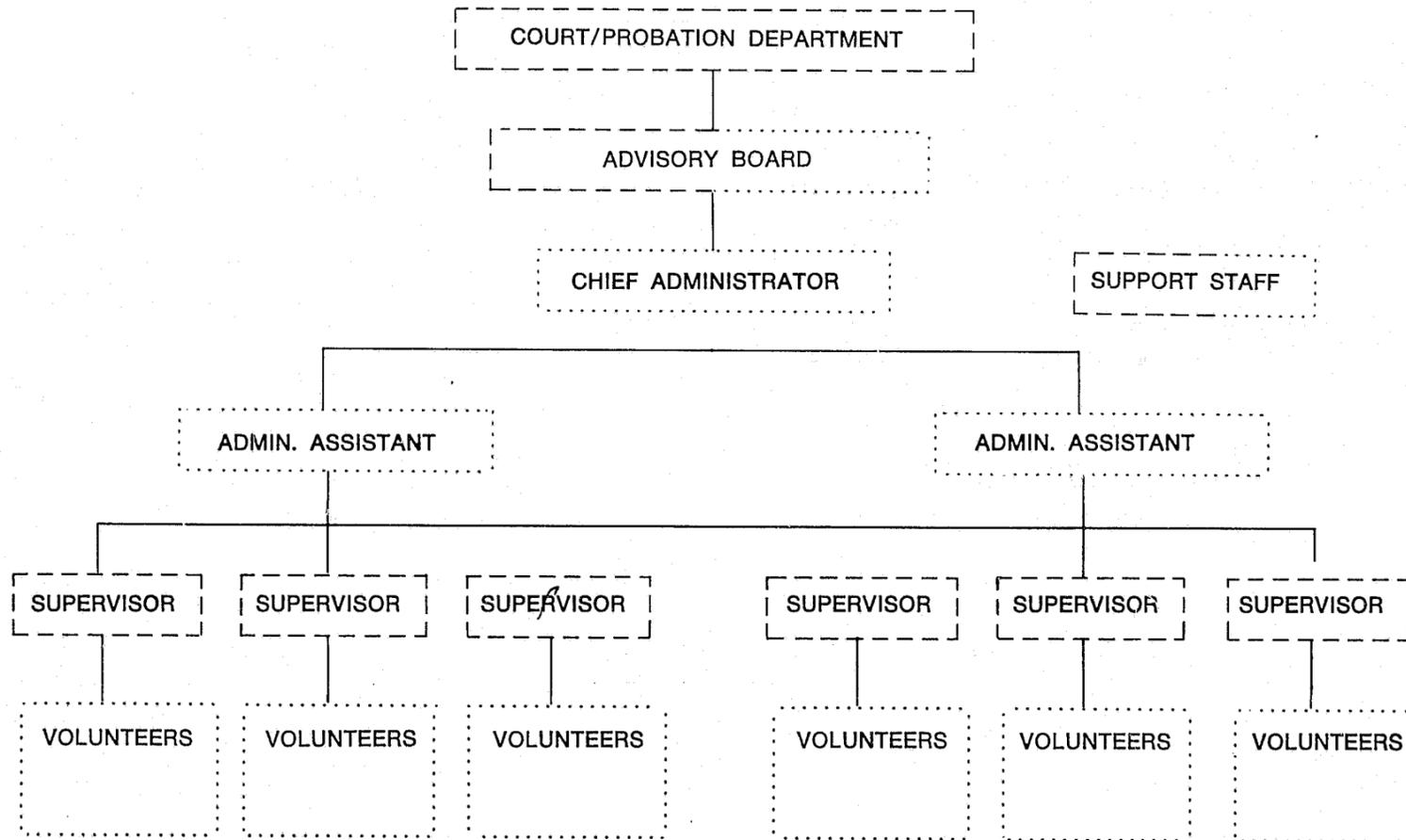
<sup>10</sup> Charles E. Unkovic and Jean R. Davis, "Volunteers in Probation and Parole," *FEDERAL PROBATION*, Vol. 33 (1969), pp. 41-45.

FIGURE 1—Organization of VIP Programs I



.... Position held by Volunteers  
 — Position held by Professionals

FIGURE 2—Organization of VIP Programs II



.... Position held by Volunteers  
-- Position held by Professionals

FIGURE 3—Organization of VIP Programs III

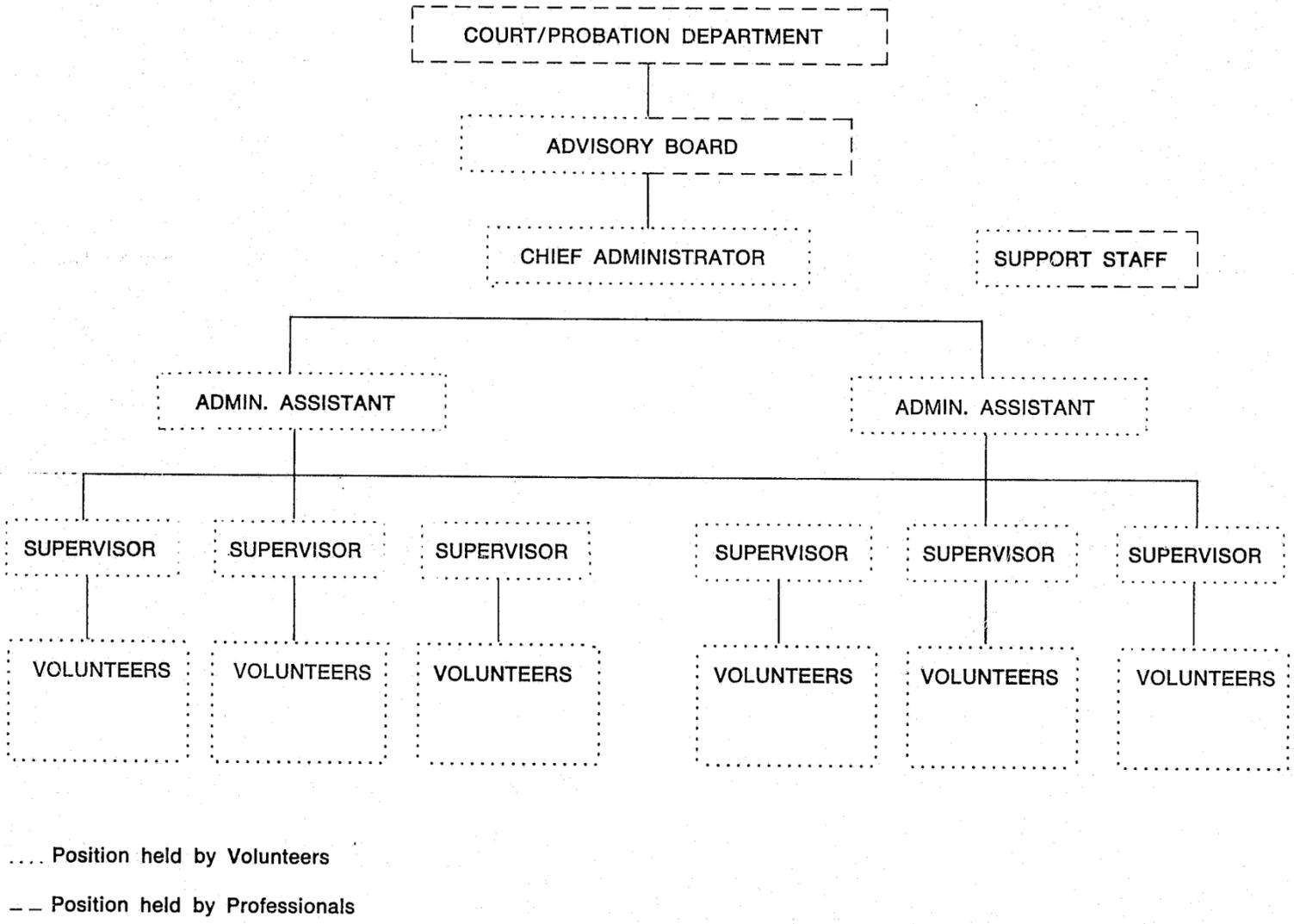


TABLE 1—Organizational Arrangements

Figure	No. of Cases Observed	Relative Frequency
1	14	73.7%
2	2	10.5
3	3	15.8
TOTAL	19	100.0%

**Summary Table**

The table below summarizes 22 project operations and organizational constructions. Refer to the charts on pages 11 to 13 as the key to the organizational construction categories and to the table on page 10 as the key to the operational combination category.

TABLE 2

Projects	Operational Combinations	Organization Construction
Colorado	1 4	2
Royal Oak, Michigan	1 3 4	3
New Hampshire	1	1
San Francisco	1 2 3	1
Macomb County, Michigan	1 3	1
Lansing, Michigan	1	1
Nebraska	1	1
Lincoln, Nebraska	1 3 4	Unknown
Indiana	3	2
Macomb County, Michigan	1	1
Fairbanks and Anchorage	1 2 4	1
Alaska	3	1
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma	3	1
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania	1	Unknown
Franklin County, Ohio	1	3
Alameda County, California	1 2 3 4	1
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	3	1
Wilmington, Delaware	1 4	3
Delaware County, Pennsylvania	1	1
Toronto, Canada	1	Unknown
Denver County, Colorado	1 2 3	1
Santa Barbara, California	1 2 3 4	1
Cleveland, Ohio	1	1

**Management**

Lack of success in any given volunteer project may well be a function of management operation rather than the volunteer concept. This observation surfaced again and again in the literature. For example, the 1975 Southfield, Michigan,

<sup>11</sup> City of Southfield, 46th District Court, *Probation Improvement Program—Subgrant Final Evaluation Report* (Southfield, Michigan: City of Southfield, 1976), p. 15.  
<sup>12</sup> Rex D. Hume, et al., *Evaluation of Probation Services and Volunteers in Probation Programs: Final Report* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University, School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Institute for Research in Public Safety, 1976).  
<sup>13</sup> Santa Barbara County Probation Department, *Santa Barbara County Probation Department Volunteer Coordinator Grant Program: An Evaluation of Its Effectiveness* (Santa Barbara, California: Santa Barbara County Probation Department, 1973).  
<sup>14</sup> National Council on Crime and Delinquency, *So You Want to Start a Community Corrections Project?* (Washington, D.C.: National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 1974).  
<sup>15</sup> Scheier, *ibid.*, p. 16.  
<sup>16</sup> Richard Ku, *The Volunteer Probation Counselor Program, Lincoln, Nebraska, An Exemplary Project* (Washington, D.C.: Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, 1976).

study<sup>11</sup> reported an abundance of potential volunteers and probationers, but the actual match rate was quite low due to operational inadequacies. The 1976 Indiana University study of 14 volunteer projects in the State of Indiana concluded "the universal problem of the projects reviewed was a lack of good basic design."<sup>12</sup> The greatest problem being experienced was the lack of communication between probation officers and volunteers and subsequent coordination of efforts. The summary of the Santa Barbara, California, project reported a lack of communication between volunteers and probation officers and the lack of general managerial support as major drawbacks to the project operations.<sup>13</sup> These drawbacks were viewed in the context of managerial problems and not as disparagement of the volunteer concept. The following sections will review the essential components of an effective project.

**Community Support**

To operate as a viable entity, a volunteer project must obtain and maintain the support of the public at large, the media, local political officials, the local court, and the probation department.<sup>14</sup> Lack of support from any one of these components will jeopardize the existence of any volunteer project. Engaging in activities that serve to alleviate friction and promote cooperation and understanding is essential to the establishment and continued well-being of a volunteer project. It is not the purpose of this article to delve into the political ramifications of developing and maintaining a volunteer project in a community. Note however, that complex political realities do exist, and must be dealt with in order to facilitate continued program stability. This activity is the very foundation of successful operations and continued project stability.

**Recruitment**

A successful volunteer program requires an adequate supply of volunteer workers. In general, it may be said that it is not difficult in most communities to attract a pool of qualified applications. Reports have generally shown today's volunteer to be successful, mature, and well educated.<sup>15</sup>

The 1976 Lincoln, Nebraska, project reported that the mean age of its volunteers was 27 years, with 60 percent married and about 60 percent male.<sup>16</sup> The average educational level was a little over 14 years. Over 90 percent of the volunteers expressed a religious affiliation. The project also

reported that they have used volunteers from all walks of life and socioeconomic levels in the community.

The 1974 Franklin County, Ohio, project<sup>17</sup> reported volunteerism to be generally a middle-class phenomenon. The mean age of the volunteers was found to be almost 32 years, with almost 70 percent of the volunteers being males and more than 65 percent married. The average education rested in the "some college" category. Two-thirds of the volunteers had had no prior experience in the criminal justice system.

The 1975 review of the Macomb County Michigan project<sup>18</sup> reported 60 percent of the volunteers were female, with the mean education level falling in the 13 to 15 years category and the mean age in the 26 to 28 years range.

The 1972 review of the Anchorage, Alaska, project<sup>19</sup> reported that 55 percent of the volunteers were males, 62 percent of the volunteers were married, and the average age was 30 years. The average education rested in the "some college" category. Sixty-four percent reported that they had done volunteer work before.

The 1976 Alameda County, California, project<sup>20</sup> reported that 63 percent of its volunteers were females, and 68 percent of the volunteers were nonwhite. More than 50 percent had at least a bachelor's degree.

Churches and religious organizations are a prime source of volunteers, as are graduates and undergraduate students of a local university or college. Community service groups and professional organizations representing occupations, such as teachers, accountants, businessmen, and social workers have often been recruited. Many volunteers have been referred by program staff and court and probation department personnel. In particular, judges have served as excellent recruiters.<sup>21</sup> The volunteers project in Eugene, Oregon, has found that most persons will volunteer their services if they are personally asked the question: "Will you please give the Juvenile Department a hand with a delinquent boy or girl who needs a friend?"<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Seiter, Howard, and Allen, *ibid.*, p. 264.  
<sup>18</sup> Donald J. Amboyer, *Volunteer Probation Aides Project Evaluation of 1974* (Mt. Clemens, Michigan: Macomb County Probation Department, 1976).  
<sup>19</sup> Marjorie Hill, *Project Evaluation: Partners—Community Volunteer and Probationer in a One-to-One Relationship* (Juneau, Alaska: Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Corrections, Systems and Research Unit, November 1972).  
<sup>20</sup> Robert O. Norris and Margaret B. Stricklin, *Volunteers in Probation Annual Report (December 1976)* (Oakland, California: Alameda County Probation Department, 1976).  
<sup>21</sup> Keith J. Leenhouts, "The Volunteer's Role in Municipal Court Probation," *Crime and Delinquency*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (January 1964), p. 31.  
<sup>22</sup> Robert J. Lee, "Volunteer's Role in Municipal Court Probation," *Crime and Delinquency*, Vol. 14 (1968) pp. 331-335.

Another widely used source of volunteers is volunteer bureaus. These bureaus act as clearing-houses to which interested persons can apply as volunteers by stating their interests and preferences for the type of program with which they would like to work. The volunteer program then approaches the bureau with its particular needs, and a volunteer is matched with the program most suitable for him.

As a supplement to each of these sources, individual word-of-mouth has been an indispensable means of recruiting. Communication about a program among friends and acquaintances has and will continue to assure a solid source of volunteer applicants.

Distribution of promotional materials by way of the mail, the press, radio, and television are other means often undertaken. While the above-described sources are recruiting techniques aimed at selected individuals, these latter methods are an attempt to inform a large, public audience of the program. Such mass approaches are then followed by more personal interviews for discussions of the program and more selective screening.

**Screening and Selection**

A key element in a successful volunteer project is the care the program takes in screening applicants, and the opportunity afforded the applicants to screen the project. There are basically six methods used in this two-way screening process: the application form, the personal interview, letters of reference, police checks, self-screening, and performance during training.

The application form itself can provide a wide variety of relevant information for administrative use. Nearly all volunteer programs personally interview potential volunteers. The interviews provide the applicant with more information about the program, while allowing the agency to determine if the applicant can work well in its particular program. Letters of reference provide an outsider's opinion of the applicant's ability to relate to and assist others.

Some projects require a preservice training exercise for potential volunteers. A volunteer's training exercise performance is often reviewed and compared to a minimum standard. Those who fall below the standards are often released. Self-screening, when the applicant himself examines the program and his own capabilities, resources, and motivation and decides whether to make the commitment to be a volunteer is a

vital element in the screening process. Applicants must be given the opportunity to screen a project also; then as Seiter points out, "he knows more precisely into what he is entering. Highly desirable persons can become disenchanted with a program that is not quite what they thought it would be, and become ineffective volunteers."<sup>23</sup> The screening and selection process, Seiter points out, then becomes a two-way street, as administrators seek information to make judgments on the selection of volunteers and as volunteers seek information to make a judgment on whether to become a volunteer in this specific program.

Some work has been done in an attempt to identify the most effective volunteer. A 1975 study conducted in Toronto, Canada, by Pirs found housewives to be the most successful occupation category. Young volunteers were found to be just as successful as older volunteers. The study concluded that a wide variety of volunteers could be used without lowering the success rate of the project.<sup>24</sup>

#### Training

A significant aspect of any volunteer program is training. More than a desire to serve is needed to be effective in volunteer service.

A multitude of training techniques are utilized from project to project. Slide shows, movies, large and small group discussions, role playing, one-to-one discussions and lectures represent a few of the techniques. Training can be conveniently categorized in a time sequence, namely: (1) training prior to a case assignment and (2) training subsequent to and concurrent with a case assignment.

The extensiveness of the training differs from project to project. The Macomb County, Michigan, project requires some 24 hours of pre-case assignment instruction.<sup>25</sup> The Partners project in Alaska offers training, but not all volunteers participate.<sup>26</sup> The Jackson, Indiana, Circuit Court projects reportedly offer no training at all to its volunteers.<sup>27</sup> Ninety percent of the studies reviewed offered at least some form of training to the volunteers. The remaining projects failed to discuss the training of their volunteers and thus, we are given no indication whether this is

<sup>23</sup> Seiter, Howard, and Allen, *ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>24</sup> Susan Pirs, *Assessment of Probation Programs in Metropolitan Toronto* (Toronto, Ontario: Ministry of Correctional Service, 1975).

<sup>25</sup> Macomb County Probation Department, *Final Evaluation Report: Volunteer Counseling* (Mt. Clemens, Michigan: Macomb County Probation Department, 1975).

<sup>26</sup> Hill, *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Hume, *et al.*, *ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Ku, *ibid.*

due to a lack of training or just a failure to mention its existence.

Volunteer program training sessions generally focus upon more general approaches in working with probationers rather than dealing with specific skill development. Emphasis is placed on what to expect from a relationship with a probationer and on an examination of volunteer reactions to certain situations. In addition, some time is usually spent in orienting the recruit to the program's purposes and procedures.

#### Matching

The basic principle of sound matching is to identify the important needs of the probationer and then to make a match with the volunteer who is most likely to make a significant contribution to meeting the needs of the probationer.

Most programs seem to have identified a set of matching criteria to effect this solid relationship. Elements generally considered are: sex, age, ethnic background, education, intelligence, occupation, community contacts, interests, socioeconomic level, and counseling skills. As can be expected, the relative importance of each characteristic varies from project to project. The significance also varies within projects as different types of match relationships are sought.

We should note that a relationship model (discussed above) must be chosen that will best fulfill the probationer's needs. Following the selection of a relationship model, a volunteer match is sought that will maximize the likelihood of a successful relationship. One project claims a 75 percent successful match-relationship rate based on a subjective scale,<sup>28</sup> while others have low success rates and may be purposely not reported.

Most projects have experienced difficulty in effecting good matches. It is rarely possible to achieve the "best" match for all probationers. When it is not possible to identify the best match, the decision must be made whether to delay assignment or assign the probationer to the best available match. The ability of a project to make effective best available matches is the cornerstone of successful operations and continued project stability, second only to the maintenance of solid community support. To facilitate solid "second best" matches, projects seek to maintain an adequate supply of volunteers with the skills necessary to meet the probationers' needs. Selective recruitment of volunteers at the presentence in-

vestigation stage and prompt reassignment of current volunteers to new cases can serve to increase the probability of effecting good matches.

Other matching problems have also arisen. Some projects are assessed by the gross number of relationships which are achieved. The result is an emphasis on the quantity of matchmaking, with little emphasis on the quality of the matches. Often the volunteer insists on being assigned to certain kinds of probationer, even though the matching rules indicate that the match would not be a good relationship. It appears that those projects which are short of volunteers will allow the match to take place, while those projects seeking to maintain high efficiency ratings will not.

At any given time, a certain percentage of the volunteers and the probationers are unassigned or are awaiting reassignment. The 1974 New Hampshire project<sup>29</sup> reported that almost 40 percent of their volunteers remained unassigned due to a lack of good project management. The 1975 Southfield Michigan project reported having received more volunteer applications than the staff could handle.<sup>30</sup> When a person seeks to become involved in a volunteer project, his interest can generally be expected to be high. The passage of time seems only to dampen that original enthusiasm. Some projects report a recruit to match time lag of only 30 days,<sup>31</sup> while others report as long as 11 months.<sup>32</sup> The 1975 Macomb County, Michigan, Project<sup>33</sup> even reported that some of their volunteers were never assigned a function at all.

The 1975 Wilmington, Delaware, project<sup>34</sup> reported that at times the delay was so extreme that the offender was already dismissed from probation before the volunteer was assigned to him. Needless to say, most projects attempt to minimize this time lapse.

#### Supervising the Match

Once a relationship model has been chosen and the match made, the supervision phase comes into prominence. The nature and degree of the

supervision varies from project to project. Volunteers, in most cases, are responsible either to the court, the probation department, or to the volunteer program. In general, we can classify the broad nature of probation officer supervision of volunteers techniques into five categories as follows:

- (1) No supervision.
- (2) Written reports after contact with assigned client.
- (3) Verbal reports after contact with assigned client.
- (4) Periodic meeting of volunteers administrative assistant and/or probation officer.
- (5) Feedback from client is solicited by administrative assistant.

The degree or intensity of the individual supervision is a direct function of three variables:

- (1) Probationer attitudes and progress.
- (2) Volunteer attitude.
- (3) Probation officer—volunteer supervisor attitude.

A critical organizational issue concerning the trade-off between volunteer discretion and organizational control merits some discussion at this point. A 1976 Georgia study summarized this issue as follows:

How much procedure and control are necessary for effective functioning without unduly sacrificing the advantages of flexibility? Flexibility is considered essential to accommodate the individual personalities of the volunteer and probationer. The point is to accomplish a goal, rather than to prescribe how it will be accomplished. Some parameters should be set, but a broad philosophical framework can be sufficient.<sup>35</sup>

Horejsi, for example, describes a conceptual base from which the volunteer can plan his own intervention. His framework is called Motivation, Capacity, and Opportunity, or the M-C-O approach. The M-C-O approach helps the volunteer to view the probationer's problems within the context of three interrelated factors: motivation, capacity, opportunity. Motivation can be defined as what the probationer wants and how much he wants it. Capacity refers to various resources, skills, and abilities which a probationer possesses. Opportunity refers to opportunities in the probationer's social environment and those skills and services which the volunteer brings to the probationer's life situation. All three factors must co-exist before change is possible. As the volunteer works with the probationer, he needs to keep all three factors in mind and always relate them to that which the probationer defines as his problem.<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, adequate controls

<sup>29</sup> Ivette L. Gosselin, *An Evaluation of Coordinator of Volunteers* (Concord, New Hampshire: New Hampshire Probation Department, 1974), p. 5.

<sup>30</sup> City of Southfield, 46th District Court, *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Hill, *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Amboyer, *ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>34</sup> Harold W. Metz, *Volunteers in Probation: A Project Evaluation* (Wilmington, Delaware: Delaware Council on Crime and Justice, Delaware Department of Corrections, 1975).

<sup>35</sup> Jerry Banks, *et al. Issues Paper, Phase I Evaluation of Intensive Special Probation Projects* (Draft) (Atlanta, Georgia: Georgia Institute of Technology, School of Industrial and Systems Engineering, November 1976), p. 28.

<sup>36</sup> Charles R. Horejsi, "Training for the Direct-Service Volunteer in Probation," *FEDERAL PROBATION*, Vol. 37 (1973), pp. 38-41.

are necessary for organized functioning and as protective measures. Working with probationers is a sensitive area. Therefore, controls on the use of discretion by the volunteer are necessary, just as there are some controls on the use of discretion by law enforcement and probation officers.

#### Conclusions

While evaluations of volunteer projects have tended to support the concept and operational impact of VIP,<sup>37</sup> such projects must be undertaken with extreme caution, for they appear to be fraught with theoretical and operational pitfalls. There is some concern as to whether or not long term improvements in behavior can be brought about by involving an individual probationer in a volunteer program. Perhaps such involvement has only a short term cosmetic impact upon individuals' behavior patterns. Care should be taken in any attempt to obtain probation officers' support for a volunteers project and an effort made to insure their continued assistance. Operations must be streamlined in order to facilitate prompt processing and assignment of project applicants. An effort should be made to recruit volunteers with socioeconomic backgrounds similar to the probationer population and a special effort made to become more responsive to the female probationer. It appears that an attempt should also be made to screen out probationers who do not have the desire to truly participate in the project.

Mounsey has observed that while criticism of, and objection to, volunteer projects does have a basis, a more constructive approach would be to stress that these problems can be minimized through the coupling of a desire to succeed with a skillful administration of the project guidelines.<sup>38</sup>

#### Issues To Be Addressed

There remain many critical aspects of volunteer project operations which have not yet been resolved. Further consideration of these issues would certainly be in order. Such topics would include:

(1) What information should be used to determine which probationers participate?

(2) What information should be used to determine who should be accepted as a volunteer?

(3) What can be done to improve external communication lines between the court, the probation department, the probationer, and the volunteer project.

(4) What can be done to improve internal communication lines between the volunteer, the supervisor, the administrative assistants, and the chief administrator?

(5) What information should be used to determine which relationship model to utilize in order to achieve maximum individual benefit?

(6) What information should be used to determine who should be matched with whom in order to achieve maximum individual benefit for the volunteer, the probationers, and the system?

(7) What can be done to decrease the time lapse from volunteer or probationer selection to match?

(8) What can be done to improve recordkeeping capability and accuracy on the part of the project staff?

(9) What can be done to minimize friction between volunteer and probation department personnel?

(10) What can be done to more thoroughly communicate project purposes and procedures to participants?

(11) How much discretion should be given the volunteer in his dealings with his probationer? Should different volunteers be given different amounts of discretion? Should different relationship models be given different amounts of volunteer discretion? What information should be utilized to make this differentiation?

(12) What can be done with the volunteer to assist female probationers?

(13) What can be done to reduce the indirect coercion of the convicted offender to join a volunteer project?

(14) What can be done to maximize the amplification and diversification of volunteer services while minimizing societal risk and operational costs?

# END

<sup>37</sup> See Eskridge, *ibid.*, and Sciolli and Cook, *ibid.*  
<sup>38</sup> S.C. Moonsey, "Resistance to the Use of Volunteers in a Probation Setting: Some Practical Issues Discussed," *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Corrections*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (January 1973), pp. 50-58.