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SOCIAL INDICATORS FOR THE QUALITY OF INDIVIDUAL LIFE

America is both a rich society and a poor one, yet the dimensions of almost all social indicators do not reflect the emerging richness of the country. We are still phrasing our indicators in terms of more of the same, the "same" being defined by the problems of the thirties. I want to suggest some new dimensions for indicating the state of our society and thereby suggest new possibilities for social policy. The dimension I have chosen to discuss is the quality of individual life and an indicator for this is the quality of friendship.

Since this is a suggestion for a new emphasis for policy, I want to indicate why it seems to me to be an emerging one. I will try to do this in a historical context, looking at old goals. Then I will state what I consider to be the new goals. The measurement of the quality of life has many difficulties and I will look at several of them. Finally, I will discuss friendship as an indicator.

In looking into emergent goals, it seems worthwhile to investigate some of the past ones.¹ What have been the critical characteristics of past societies? These are the characteristics that tend to determine the goals of a society, as well as set a general tone for the life style of those who are living within the society. At one time divine right,

¹A good discussion of values and their measurement is to be found in Robin M. Williams, Jr., "Individual and Group Values," in Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 371, May 1967, p. 20.

religious meaning and faith were the sources of power. Subsequently, land, and those who controlled and possessed it, became the critical factor in society. Later came the pre-eminence of capital, with its ability to facilitate trade, manufacturing and industry. This era is called the industrial age. Subsequent to this age is the present post-industrial society. Post-industrialism is characterized by the importance of knowledge and the institutions of knowledge. These include the universities, the think tanks, certain large corporations, and the branches of government that have become powerful because of their utilization of specialized knowledge and their ability to deal effectively with some sets of problems. Increasingly, the economy of the country can be said to be run by a small set of very knowledgeable organizations.

What will the new crucial factors be? What will be the values that will succeed those of the present, that will be beyond post-industrialism? New values can be seen to arise out of old satisfactions. As we have satisfied old desires, new values, new sources of possible change emerge. After we are through with the question of food, we worry more seriously about our intellects. What can we do after we have knowledge and the technical ability to understand the phenomena around us? I want to suggest that a natural concern after knowledge, in the sense of understanding the world around us, will be knowledge of ourselves. We will want knowledge of ourselves in a deep fashion so that we can more fully realize what is within ourselves. We begin to do this largely because the problems of food and the problems of knowing how to "run" this society are becoming less and less important as we become more capable in solving them.²

²I realize the arbitrary nature of this hierarchy. A. Maslow in Toward a Psychology of Being, Van Nostrand, (Princeton, N. J., 1968), argues that there is a strong observational basis for it.

I call this concept, this knowledge of ourselves, empathy.

Empathy will be taken to mean the ability to understand others in such a way that you yourself understand how their minds are working and how their feelings are going. To act with empathy involves a process of dealing with other people's self-views as well as their external actions. I would like to suggest that the increase in empathy (the ability to understand others), which was once thought to be a personal problem, may well come under the purview of the society. We may decide that we want to have people who are more capable of being empathetic for societal reasons and that personal development as it is conceived here is socially valuable. We may come to realize that beyond money and knowledge comes empathy as an important component for a growing society.³

In this paper, I want to develop a context for appreciating this concept of empathy, suggest how we might measure some societal quality of empathy, and suggest what this might mean in terms of human satisfactions and possibilities for the good life.

Industrial and Post-Industrial Goals

What kinds of goals could be articulated in the context of an industrial society?⁴ We have heard them all and to repeat them almost sounds ludicrous, but let me do so anyway. We might call them happiness,

³I believe that individual development will be an appropriate value in a beyond-post-industrial society. In this paper I will deal specifically with interpersonal relationships as means for achieving some of this development; in subsequent papers I hope to deal more broadly with how a goal of individual development can be reflected in social policy and social indicators.

⁴See R. M. Williams, Jr., op. cit., p. 36.

individuality, diversity of choice, security, liberty, and freedom. This list may not be inclusive, but it is certainly representative. Let me suggest, first of all, that only a few of these goals were taken quite seriously in industrial society. The goals of individuality, diversity of choice, and security were meaningful in a society that was growing economically. I would suggest that these goals had meaning only in terms, in fact, of this economic value and that in terms of self-fulfillment their value was much weaker. The values of liberty and freedom were seen as being necessary for economic growth and the value of happiness was seen as a consequent of fulfilling the other values, not as one in itself.

Admittedly, happiness is an unclear word, but if we define it in terms of some sort of well-being, a sort of appreciation of one's internal affective qualities, then it is clear that it was not a critical value for industrial society. Nor has it become very important in our post-industrial society. Post-industrialism has seen a change in the characteristics of our external work, but not in our internal lives. Until now, at least, we have asserted that if a man is to achieve within the society he needs to be an individual, have a diversity of choice, have security, liberty and freedom and be happy also.

Individual development, however, is not seen as an intrinsic goal in itself. The industrial goals are seen almost exclusively in terms of the growth of the society, and then the growth of the individual. Well, what is to happen to these values when society stops growing in the economic sense? I think these goals then become less meaningful. They must be restated in the context of individuals per se.

The Quality of Individual Development

I want to suggest some of the dimensions that people have seen as the nature or the quality of a good personal life and of good mental health, and in this context to suggest why I think the affective qualities of man need a special emphasis in beyond-post-industrial society.⁵ In other words, I shall try to give some justification for suggesting that empathy will be an important quality of our lives in the future.

We like to divide our faculties into cognitive and affective ones (or instrumental and expressive). The cognitive faculties are pretty useful ones nowadays. They get you a good job, they are the reason why you go to school, and for the most part they are useful in impressing others with how smart you are. It is true that there are some who are not of this ilk -- we tend to call them poets and artists. There are others who don't have such professional titles, who are similarly disabled, and are not quite so strong in their cognitive faculties, but somewhat more developed in their affective faculties. They are in the minority at the moment.

We know how to measure our cognitive faculties or at least we think we do. We have tests of perception; we have tests of IQ. The important thing about these tests is that they are quite universally accepted: they have made an important impress on the social quality of our lives.⁶ This is not true for the measure of the affective quality of

⁵N. Dalkey of RAND Corporation is doing a Delphi study of this. Most interestingly, he finds in youth a value corresponding to "Christian" Love, while in adults, he sees a value that might be sociability or status. See "Quality of Life," RAND Corporation, P-3805.

⁶The recent article by Arthur Jensen on IQ (Harvard Educational Review, Winter 1969) and the reaction to the article is indicative.

our life. We don't know how to measure feeling, or love in such a way that a measurement would have impact on the societal level. A small group of people go to psychiatrists; but it is a small and very select group, both in ethnic quality and in background. The psychiatric profession is going through a great deal of difficulty in readjusting, so as to deal with new ethnic groups and the poor in this country.⁷

We may want to have measures of the affective quality of our lives in the same sense that we measure our IQ, so that we might test the performance of the social system, in improving the quality of our life.

Another perspective on analyzing the quality of internal personal life is that of mental health. If we articulate several of the criteria derived from the mental health field, we can see how some of them relate to some of our old goals. Some of them are more broad than those goals and can be translated into goals for the quality of personal life.

Jahoda gives a list of these, let me briefly summarize them.⁸ Our measure of mental health could be (1) the attitude of the individual toward himself, his ability to perceive reality, to accept the good and the bad within himself, (2) the realization of his potential through action, the concept of self-actualization as developed by Maslow,⁹ (3) the degree of integration of the person with his society, how capable he is of changing, of flexing, of being within the system rather than constantly fighting it, (4) the degree of independence of the individual: is he constantly dependent on others, or can he handle problems himself? (5) the individual's

⁷F. Riessman, Mental Health of the Poor, Free Press, (Glencoe, 1964).

⁸M. Jahoda, Current Concepts of Positive Mental Health, Basic Books, (N.Y., 1958).

⁹op. cit.

view of the world, his degree of empathy, his quality and sensitivity towards the social system and others, (6) the ability to cope with problems: how capable is he of handling crisis and change? Jahoda summarizes all this by saying that Americans demand that a person be able to stand on his own two feet and handle problems quite independently.

This set of standards may be unduly influenced by the demands of industrial society, but I think that we might fruitfully use it as a basis for evaluation of the quality of our personal lives.¹⁰ If we begin with the dimensions listed above as both positive and possibly negative indicators of the quality of mental health, we can go on to incorporate changing conceptions of the good life. In her book, Jahoda gives possible ways of measuring each of these six values. Unfortunately, there is a great deal of disagreement within the professions of mental health and psychiatry as to what constitutes good mental health and which of these values are most important. So it seems quite difficult to find a value, a measurement or maybe even a few which are comprehensive enough. In fact, as I will suggest later, we ought to find things to measure which are more comprehensive, which are less theory dependent, and which seem to satisfy an almost intuitive conception of the quality of mental health and of good personal life.

Affective Qualities of Life -- New Goals

I have stated that it is important that we measure qualities of life other than the cognitive ones, and that the affective qualities of

¹⁰It is not clear to me that Americans in the future will demand that a person should stand on his own two feet. It may be more important that we be able to stand on our own ten feet. It may turn out that larger groups, rather than individuals, are more viable in complex societies.

life will become more important. Let me suggest some external manifestations of the affective quality of life. The affective qualities of our life will be the environmental ones, whether it be the quality of the natural environment or the quality of our man-made environment. The distinction between these, nowadays, is becoming weaker and weaker. Another determinant of affective qualities will certainly be the nature of family life. Is it satisfactory? Is it overly stressed? Is it properly structured?

Another quality that will be important is the quality of interpersonal relations. Do we have adult primary groups? Alexander, in his study of the connection between human needs and architectural structures, suggests that adult primary groups are not alive any more and that we should develop new modes of maintaining interpersonal relationships.¹¹ Independently of whether the adult primary group is alive and kicking, we will certainly want to have good interpersonal relationships. We might ask, "What is the quality of the art we see every day?" This is very much related to the environmental influences but somehow we still make a distinction between our environment and art. But contemporary artists are trying very hard to convince us that this is not an appropriate distinction. All these affective qualities are very different from the qualities we usually measure. They are not qualities of molding the environment; they are not the qualities of changing the world. They are the qualities of our internal well-being.

It seems to me that we are suffering from a new kind of poverty. Those of us who are rich materially are still poverty stricken in the

¹¹C. Alexander, The City as a Mechanism for Sustaining Human Contact, Center for Planning and Development Research, University of California, Berkeley, 1966.

affective aspects of our life. This is not necessarily the case, but it is frequently so. It is not that our lives are empty, but that some of our most vital needs seem to be ignored, seem to be less provided for than they should be. In some sense, we shall have to begin a new war on poverty when the current one becomes less urgent.¹² I think we ought to set new goals of happiness, of good affective quality of our lives. We are going to have to say that we must make explicit provisions for good environment, good family life, good interpersonal relationships, and good art. We have a complex set of regulations on our society which get more complex and more varied every year. The untold consequences of these regulations in the quality of our personal lives is tremendous. It seems that in order to avoid "Big Brother" by indirection, we will somehow have to be "little brother" by direction.

A Methodological Note

I want to look briefly at some problems in the measurement of the quality of life.

The first problem is an obvious one. We have a number of theories with a large number of prescriptions which tell us what are the important qualities in good internal personal life. Each of these qualities seems important. None of them overlap too much. In fact, the kinds of measures one can do are very different. Because there is lack of agreement as to what is the true prescription, we will have to develop quantities which are more aggregative. We will have to develop quantities which seem to be

¹²The conventional kind of university knowledge does not seem to be an adequate source of happiness as we well know, but it does not seem to be enough in any sense of the word. Salvation after death does not seem to be an answer for the current generation.

reasonable from the point of view of several theories, although they may be interpreted somewhat differently. By doing so we will avoid the problem of etiology. We will not wonder what is the source of health, but stick more strictly to its manifestations; we will thus be more phenomenological. In the early stages of measurement, this is fine. If we can discover some connection between good health and some other quantity, such that that relation is not well connected by theory but is just empirical, it can still be useful in policy making.

These conceptions are very much like the notion of primary prevention of mental illness.¹³ Primary prevention is the process by which we deal with the possible sources for mental illness without understanding how in the world the mental illness evolves. For example, the idea of a "behavioral sink" tells us something about crowding as a source for mental illness even though it does not give us a mechanism. It is pretty obvious that we want to prevent crowding, so as to avoid certain kinds of pathological behavior.

We shall be interested in measures which do not necessarily require a large number of psychiatrists to do the measuring. There are not many psychiatrists in the country and most people who are trained in the psychiatric profession are too busy helping individuals. We need more objective measures. They may not be objective in the strictest sense, but they may be able to be done by para-professionals, if not by the people being examined themselves.

Finally, it is not clear that any single indicator will be of great value. I would recommend a set of indicators, which is not likely

¹³G. Caplan, Principles of Preventive Psychiatry, Basic Books (N. Y., 1964).

to be an orthogonal set. The changing of one will most likely correlate with a change in another. However, I think that the value of these indicators will turn out to be that they give us a feeling, a good temperature reading, of the quality of personal health in our country.

Friendship as a Social Indicator

I am going to suggest that a measure of the quality of friendship, of interpersonal relations, will turn out to be a good measure of many aspects of the quality of personal, positive mental health and individual development. Certainly, it will not be all-inclusive, but it may suggest a quantity that is not too difficult to measure, that has deep societal importance, as well as deep personal importance, and which might turn out to be something that is very much related to the kinds of policies that we have to deal with today.

For the moment, let me define friendship as that interpersonal relationship which is not purely based on the exchange of material goods. It is not of necessity kin relationship, although not exclusive of the kinship relationship.

Why should we measure friendship? As I have suggested previously, the quality of interpersonal life may turn out to be very important when we are beyond post-industrialism. Our relationship to the hard facts of the world may become less important and more formalized by then, while our relationship to our fellow human beings will not necessarily have benefited. Because, in fact, our relationships with other people will probably remain undeveloped compared to our relationships with other objects on the earth, we may want to turn our attention to such problems.

N. Bradburn has done a study on the sources of happiness.¹⁴ In this survey, the participant's evaluation of his state of happiness is correlated with socio-economic variables as well as with statements about how he feels. Bradburn distinguished dimensions -- positive feelings and negative feelings -- that correlate well with statements of happiness or unhappiness. However, they do not anticorrelate well. A decrease in unhappiness does not result in an increase in happiness. He finds that experiences related to anxiety, marital adjustment, and job adjustment correlate with the negative feelings. Social interactions, however, correlate with positive feelings. Also the intensity of these feelings can be used as a measure of affectivity. To summarize, a most likely source of happiness lies in social interaction.

A follow up study concluded, ". . . contacts with friends tend to increase positive feelings to a greater extent than do either of the other two types (neighbors, organizations) of social participation."¹⁵

There are several things that I do not wish to convey by the use of the term happiness. August Hecksher wishes that the public happiness have injected into it a component of play and is reminiscent of the classical style of life of the elites.¹⁶ Others are concerned less our happiness spell contentment and we do not deal with many problems that still face the society.¹⁷ Neither of these views are intended here.

¹⁴N. M. Bradburn, D. Caplowitz: Reports on Happiness, Aldine, (Chicago, 1965).

¹⁵D. L. Phillips, "Social Participation and Happiness," American Journal of Sociology, 72, March, 1967, p. 479.

¹⁶August Hecksher, Public Happiness, Athenium, (New York, 1962).

¹⁷Richard E. Farson, "How Could Anything That Feels So Bad Be So Good?" Saturday Review, September 6, 1969, p. 20.

Happiness is meant to refer to some sense of well-being on an inner personal level. This is not equivalent to contentment with the state of the world, and a major concern for our society, if we are to solve problems of the less well-off parts of the world, is to show how happiness as I conceive it is not equivalent to decay and selfishness.

Another reason for such a measurement is that interpersonal competence is clearly, even now, a very important quality of internal life. N. Foote and L. Cottrell in their book, Identity and Interpersonal Competence, relate major conceptions of self-identity to the problem of dealing with others.

The point of view towards societal behavior suggested by symbolic interactionism gives further support for this kind of measurement.¹⁸ The value of individual interaction for defining the social context and the importance of the ability to understand others' actions, motivations, and internal states (empathy) are emphasized in the approach. If one is concerned about social change, then measures of the quality of interpersonal relations gives one a handle on the state of the social system.

But why go out and measure the friendship relationship, as a measure of interpersonal relationships? Our ability to make, keep and have satisfying friendship relationships will probably become more important as we have more discretionary time in the future. Also, friendship may turn out to be an important resource in complex societies with large amounts of external relationships. Friendship may assume some of the importance now taken by family life. Friendship is also a means by which we can deal with crises. In mental health circles, the problem of crisis

¹⁸ H. Blumer, Symbolic Interactionism: Perspectives and Method. Prentice-Hall, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1969).

plays an important role. It seems likely that our ability to deal with our problems through our friends may turn out to be an important way of resolving crisis in a positive way.

Finally, as I mentioned before, friendship is observable to a very large extent. We can observe who sees whom and perhaps even derive, with a good deal of objectivity, what is exchanged and what is going on.

The Nature of Friendship

Friendship is a specific relationship. R. S. Weiss in a study on the theory of social relationships suggests that the kinds of relationships we have are quite specific.¹⁹ Friendships don't supply what is provided for by marriage and vice-versa. He suggests several dimensions for the relationship. They are: emotional integration (marriage specific), social integration (friend specific), nurturance (parental roles), reassurance of worth (work), and assistance (kin relationships). Clearly, when we measure friendship we do not have the whole story. But it is a good part of it. The dimensions I shall later discuss for a measurement of friendship will have to be mapped onto the list of functional aspects of interpersonal relations given above.

There are a large number of possible ways of measuring the quality and quantity of friendship. These include the degree of connectivity, the quality of the friendship, the sources, the constraints, the dynamics and the perceptions of what we need and what we want. Let me go into these in some detail.

¹⁹See Robert S. Weiss, "Fund of Sociability," Trans-action, July, 1969, p. 36. See Appendix II for further discussion.

The kinds of connections involved in friendship are well studied problems. We can measure kinship circles as well as pseudo-kinship. We can also measure the quality of the hierarchical nature of friendship. Do we have friends of equal status? Do we have friends with unequal status? Is the kind of friendship we have dependent on relative status and what kinds of status are important (age, occupation or kinship, for example)? We can study the topology of the relationships, counting relationships, and counting non-relationships.²⁰

We can measure the quality of friendship by asking, "What is exchanged in the friendship relationship?" Let me suggest a possible scheme for doing this. We can say that a friendship is derived due to common aims, as in the case where we are both doing the same job, or where we have common political or religious interests. Another dimension might be that we have common previous experiences: we fought in the war together, we went to college together, we were friends in 1905. A third dimension would be affectivity, whether it be sexuality or sensibility. It is something that is communicated in the friendship relationship. Friendships can be based on any one of these three qualities or a mixture of them. A measure of how much a friendship is based on each of these would be quite interesting.

Another kind of measurement is the quantity or intensity of the friendship. We can measure the quantity or intensity of friendship by looking at time budgets. How much time do you spend with your friends? We may even look at questions of energy budgets. How intense is the relationship? After you see someone, are you tired out? Perhaps a basis

²⁰ Works in sociometry and family sociology elaborate these points.

of priority might be useful. Do you see this friend more readily than you see that friend, if you have an equal opportunity? Finally, we should measure the sheer quantity of friendships, the number. This is very much related to the problem of connectivity. The connectivity sets a limit, it looks at the possible numbers, while quantity just counts.

We could also look at the possible sources of a friendship. Is it based in work or in play, for example? This is really very much related to a measure of the quality of friendship in the sense that we measure the importance of previous common experiences as a source of friendship. The emphasis here is in trying to see the possible sources within the activities of everyday life that determine friendship.

Another important possibility is to measure the constraints of friendships -- the legal ones as well as the taboos. These include problems of marriage and divorce laws, problems of settling close to someone, problems of how easy it is to move. These are the societal constraints that are reasonably well articulated in the friendship process. Who can be your friend?

We can also study the dynamics of friendships, how they grow and change, how the qualities alter in time. Lazarsfield and Merton give a good outline of a possible way of studying such processes in terms of value homophily and status homophily.²¹

Finally, a very useful way of measuring friendship may be our perception of the difference between our current state and our desired state. In other words, we can measure the possibility of friendship. Do

²¹In M. Berger et al, Freedom and Control in Modern Society, Van Nostrand (Princeton, N. J., 1954).

we have enough friends? Do we have the kind we want? Do we want different kinds of people for friends?

I think that I would like to distinguish these possible ways of measuring the style of friendship into two classes -- the sociological ones and the non-sociological ones. The sociological ones tend to be measures not of what is interchanged within the relationship, but how the interpersonal relationship interacts with the rest of the society. I'm not especially interested at the moment in trying to measure these. Such sociological relationships are measures of connectivity, the sources of friendship, some of the constraints, and sometimes the dynamics of such relationships. But these measures may not be good ways of measuring how satisfactory friendship is as a means of improving the quality of personal well-being. Although they may be decent measures of how friendship facilitates some of society's processes, my interest in friendship is more in seeing how it improves the quality of personal life and, thereby, improves the quality of the society. I will concentrate further discussion on the qualitative, the quantitative and perhaps the perceived difference in the possibility of friendship as measures of the quality of friendship in the social indicator sense.

Past Efforts at Measurement

Friendship, under different names, has received a good deal of study in the past. People have studied how we use our leisure time. De Grazia, in Of Time, Work and Leisure, reports on how we spend our time.²² Very little of it, according to studies discussed in that volume, is spent visiting friends and relatives. But the possibility of using a time budget

²² Twentieth Century, (N. Y., 1962).

as a way of studying how we spend our friendship time is not to be ignored.²³ Another possibility are the sociometric studies. These are studies of connectivity, i.e. who is a friend of whom. We would look for certain status orientations within relationships. Coleman, in The Adolescent Society, uses a sociometric technique in measuring friendship, in trying to ascertain pivotal figures in the social system and thereby to identify the important values for the society.²⁴

As for the quality of friendship, there has been some work on determining whether friendships are good, less good or best friendships. A technical study was done in the city and in the country in Melbourne, Australia. There, a list of 50 or 60 qualities was given to the various respondents. They were to characterize their friendships with others based on this list. The same list was given to a set of psychologists and psychiatrists and they were able to categorize a friendship whether it be an acquaintance, a friendship, a good friendship based on the possible answers to these questions. One then could study the quality of friendship in this single dimensional sense as a function of location within the city or within the country.²⁵

Studies have been done of the sources of friendship. Are friendships sourced in work or in play? With whom do you spend your time after work? What kinds of work tend to foster what kinds of friendships?

²³S. Chapin, in H. Perloff, Quality of the Urban Environment, Johns Hopkins (Baltimore, Md., 1969).

²⁴Free Press, (Glencoe, 1961).

²⁵J. P. Sutcliffe, B. D. Crabbe, "Incidence and Degrees of Friendship in Urban and Rural Areas," Social Forces, October, 1963, p. 60.

In the field of mental health and group dynamics, there has been a good deal of study of friendship. This has been especially valuable for those who are worried about how groups of workers deal with each other or how groups deal with each other in developing conforming behavior. One can measure the bonds that are involved in friendship in terms of economic factors, measure the number of transactions, and see perhaps if there are other sources of friendship.

My major criticism of previous efforts in measuring the quality of friendship is that they probably do not measure well enough the quality of interpersonal exchange as well as the intensity of the interchange between friends. Our standards of friendship may well be very different if you are black and poor, or black and rich, if you are white and rich, or white and poor.

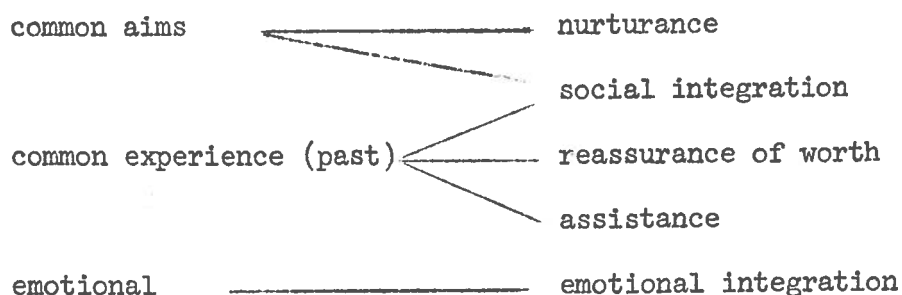
Some Possible Techniques

Let me suggest some possible new ways of measuring the quality of friendship which would be useful in measuring the quality of interpersonal relationships and how satisfying the relationships are for those who are participating in them.

Following my previous description of a possible qualitative measure of friendship in terms of common experiences, common aims, and sensual pleasures, we might develop a triangle diagram-type description. We can ask a participant to rate each of his friends, assigning, say, a total of ten points to the three qualities of common experience, common aims, and sensual experiences.

This should be done such that the points assigned for each quality are related to how important the quality seems to him in the relationship. We can also ask him to tell us how much time he spends with someone.

In a triangle diagram, which is perfect for indicating the relationship of three qualities whose sum is constant, plot a point whose darkness is dependent on the intensity of the relationship at an appropriate place in the diagram. What we will be able to do in such a simple measure is to see the quality of the relationship of a single person or group of people at a single glance. The total darkness of the diagram indicates the amount of friendship, the orientation of the points indicates the quality of the friendship. There is some overlap between the dimensions of this measure and those suggested in Weiss's research. We might draw a diagram:



Another possibility is to do more extensive work on time budgets. We can do time budget studies which look at how much time people spend with their friends as compared with other activities for all age groups at a single time. We could do cohort studies which try to see how the time we spend with our friends as well as other activities alters as time goes on. This can have important predictive values indicating, for example, that perhaps too much pressure is placed on us by other activities, giving us insufficient time to spend with our friends and family.²⁶

²⁶It is now reported that we are so busy that we don't have time to make love.

Since the concept of crisis plays such an important role in mental health, we might ask people what they do in times of crisis. Do people go to their friends; are the friendship relationships functional at important moments? It could be argued that one should deal with problems alone; still, it would be of value to see what people do in times of crisis. An example of such a survey is one that I found in the magazine Cosmopolitan.²⁷ They asked a large number of movie stars, "What do you do when you are depressed?" Only a small percentage -- about 15% -- would go to their friends. Most of them did other things.

Another possibility is that of measuring the quality of marriages. How functional are they in the friendship sense? Marriage and divorce rates are inadequate measures and it is not clear to me what possible other measures one could have. It would be very interesting if we could develop some new measures for the quality of marriage. Should a spouse also be a friend?

We must still ask what we are going to do with some measure of friendship. First of all we may have to correlate the quantitative measures with some psychological dimensions. Or, as is more likely, we will have to sensitize people to what the meaning of the friendship index is in terms of how they feel.

We want to develop a calculus which translates the cost of social programs into changes in the friendship index. Perhaps the best we will be able to do is to give the roughest estimates of the effectiveness of programs for improving the friendship index and, hopefully, how good

²⁷"65 (Depressed) Celebrities Tell: How I Fight the Blues," by George Christy, April, 1969.

people feel. What I expect to be more significant is sensitizing of the policy maker to new values. In a subsequent paper, as I mentioned previously, I try to give a more comprehensive framework for doing this sensitizing.²⁸

Some Problems With These Conceptions

There is no lack of problems in the measurement of the quality of friendship. Let me suggest some of these problems and indicate some possible avenues for research or ways out.

On the conceptual level, there are several difficulties. I have ignored in my discussion the possibility that perhaps three-person relationships are as important for friendship as two-person ones. In two-person relationships, the number of connections is one; in three-person relationships, the number of connections is three; in four-person relationships, the number of connections is six.

Another problem is that people say, "Not everybody wants friendship." Many people do not want lots of friends. We might make a normative statement and say that this is pathological. A more useful approach might be that we have to see what people do perceive as being missing in their lives. If they do not have to admit that they might be wrong in their current situation, they may be quite honest. Is it true that we need intimacy, that we all need friends, intimate friends? It is not clear. It may turn out that variations in friendship needs are so much greater than our ability to measure friendship in a delicate way

²⁸Martin H. Krieger, "The Life Cycle as a Basis for Social Policy and Social Indicators," Center for Planning and Development Research, University of California, Berkeley, California 1969.

that we will not be able to define friendship as a useful indicator. It may turn out that we need a multi-dimensional measure of friendship so that we will be sensitive to problems such as that not everybody wants friends.

How are we going to get reasonably objective evaluations of friendship? It is not easy to ask middle class psychiatrists to evaluate lower class friendships, and we would need a multi-dimensional measure just so that we could take into account values other than the middle class ones. I think that it will turn out to be useful to have people evaluate their friendships themselves, with whatever distortions they introduce. Even if these evaluations are distorted, they are probably more sensitive than the values that are attributed by outside people.

We also shall have problems of aggregation in making such a measurement of friendship. Sociometric techniques suggest possible ways, but I am not sure that they are sufficiently sensitive. Their counting emphasis may not be effective in pointing out the special cases. We could try to develop measures of pathology, but calling something pathological may be politically and psychologically unwise.

We could measure lack of friendship or loneliness. But we would meet difficulties. The existentialists tell us that loneliness is a good thing.²⁹ But their conception of loneliness is a very sophisticated one and I think that if we ask most people whether they want to be lonely they would not answer yes. We might measure suicide rates, as negative measures of friendship. It would be interesting to find out if people who have few friends have high rates of suicide.

²⁹Ignace Lepp, The Ways of Friendship, Macmillan, (N. Y., 1966).

Finally, we might ask the following question: what about those who have large amounts of inanimate involvement? They are intimate with nature, not with human beings. They are involved with their work of art, with their science. Are they to be given negative points for not having friends? It is not simple to know. The quality of their relationships with inanimate objects may be as important, or more important, than friendship.

It is not simple to measure friendship and it is not as clear that we can, but I think that efforts in this direction, despite the problems involved, could be worth it.

Policy Implications

I believe that it is worth measuring the quality of friendship because our current policies affect interpersonal lives in very deep ways. Can we afford to have these policies affect our interpersonal lives in an indirect, poorly understood way? Our current policies on manpower and housing determine where people move, what we require them to have, the kinds of families that are considered acceptable for aid and so forth. This is very much related to our psychological conceptions of the quality of interpersonal life. It seems to me that our policies should reflect the quality of interpersonal life in an explicit way. We may need new kinds of policies in the future to deal with the problems of the quality of interpersonal life. Should we make it possible for there to be super-families in the future? Should there be families which are beyond the simple kinship families, so that friendship is fostered in an active way? Will our tax laws require revision? Will our estate laws require revision?

Similarly we ask: Is our environment a good one for fostering friendship? Social as well as physical environments are important. Our norms, as articulated by our laws, actually determine the nature of our social environments.

It also strikes me that such policies as the guaranteed income are going to cause a radical reorientation in our collectivities of people. The head of the household will seem much less clear especially if the guaranteed income is not specifically distributed (e.g., only to mothers). Friendship may well be a positive necessary aspect of a policy for maintaining family cohesiveness, as economic forces decrease in importance as the basis for marriage. In the appendix, there are more specific discussions of the policy consequences of a measurement of friendship.

Ethics

We are stepping on very delicate ground in discussing such problems as friendship. Perhaps they are too delicate for our society to handle. Perhaps we had better not make policies in a sphere where the negative consequences are so very important. We can ask: where will we stop with such policies? I am not sure, but the answer is that we have already started very strongly in this direction and I don't think that we can close our eyes to the consequences of our action. One of the values of developing indicators of friendship and the quality of interpersonal life -- the affective quality of life generally -- will be to sensitize us to the consequences of our policies. We must learn to deal with the negative consequences of our system's policies by techniques that will seem cogent to the system's people. Measures of the quality of interpersonal life seem to be a step in that direction.

APPENDIX I

I want to list a set of current or possible policies that could be affected by measures of the quality of interpersonal relationships. In each case, I have suggested a connection between a concern for friendship, the program involved, and the fostering of other goals of the programs.

1. Housing -- Although much of the ultimate justification for the design of housing is economic, measures of the effects on individual lives could change some of this policy. At least, it could get rid of some old myths.
2. Education -- If children learn from their peers,³⁰ we can ask if the educational system does anything to foster such relationships. What is a school?
3. Health -- Could a fostering of friendship and intimacy increase the effectiveness of health services by making communications more effective?
4. Manpower -- Are jobs defined in terms of individuals, groups of individuals, families or super-families? Do we want to have such group-assigned tasks, and different kinds of tasks for such groups?
5. Physical Environment -- It seems that goals of beauty, or ecological preservation have a less cogent and more shaky basis than a goal of individual development fostered by the physical environment.

³⁰J. S. Coleman et al, Equality of Educational Opportunity, Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, 1966.

APPENDIX II

In Bennis et al, Interpersonal Dynamics, there is a discussion of the nature of interpersonal relationships.³¹ A set of inputs and outputs for these relationships is given. In the text we discuss process. The figure below suggests a form for relating these.

<u>Input</u>	<u>Process</u>	<u>Output</u>
SOCIAL CONDITIONS:		
System Characteristics:	common aims	solidarity
open	common experience	reality - confirmation
interdependence	emotional	growth
consensus	or	competence output
clarity	nurturance	
reality - internal	social integration	
and external	reassurance of worth	
	assistance	
	emotional integration	
Value System:		
openness		
experimentalism		
threat-reduction		
integration reciprocity		
spirit of inquiry		
Goal Structure:		
intrinsic goals		
PERSONAL COMPETENCES:		
1. Capacity to receive and send information and feelings reliably		
2. Capacity to evoke the expression of feelings		
3. Capacity to process information and feelings reliably and creatively		
4. Capacity to implement a course of action		
5. Capacity to learn in each of the above areas		

³¹Dorsey Press, (Homewood, Ill., 1968), pp. 662-674.

APPENDIX III

For this reprinting of this working paper, I have made a few minor changes. Several useful literature references have appeared in the past year: Bradburn, N., Structure of Psychological Well Being, Chicago: Aldine, 1970. Gallup, G., "The Happiest People," San Francisco Chronicle, January 14, 1971, p. 1. Robinson, J. P., and Shaver, P. R., Measures of Psychological Attitude, Ann Arbor, Michigan: Survey Research Center, 1969.

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