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Youth Service as Strong Policy

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Youth Service as Strong Policy

By the words *strong policy* I mean policy that has many positive impacts and provides an exceptional return on investment. Most people would agree that such a policy, if it can be identified, should be enacted and implemented.[1] But what are the characteristics of a strong policy? Is youth service a strong policy?

As an academic who has studied youth service, I am somewhat reluctant to admit that knowledge about youth service is lagging far behind public interest and political support. This is certainly true in the United States, and as far as I can tell, in many other countries as well. Unfortunately, theoretical understanding and empirical evidence to support youth service are only weakly developed. We have undertaken a number of studies over the years, but the thinking and research are still rudimentary. A great deal more knowledge about youth service will be necessary if we are to establish an adequate foundation to support major policy initiatives around the world. This paper offers suggestions for how knowledge building for application might be most productive. In order to do this, I must first step briefly into matters of inquiry structure in the applied social sciences, and I hope the reader will bear with me. As will become evident, my purposes are entirely practical, and speak directly to policy development in youth service. Below I attempt to specify what a strong policy is from the viewpoint of the applied social sciences. Next, building on previous research and papers at this meeting, I elaborate on what strong policy means vis-à-vis youth service. Finally, I suggest directions for youth service research and policy.

I. Foundations of Policy Innovation

What are the foundations of strong policy -- policy that is clearly worth public and legislative support? This is a big question, and I do not pretend to have a complete answer to it, but over many years I have developed some thinking that has been useful in guiding my work on the academic side of policy innovation. Based on this experience, allow me to suggest some principles.

Structure and action. The economist James Duesenberry once observed that "economics is about how people make choices, and sociology is about how people do not have any choices that they can make." This insightful comment captures the central tension in the social sciences -- between structure and action. Economics has focused on action by individuals (agency) and sociology has focused on structure (society). But this dichotomy misleadingly suggests that we must opt for either social structure or individual action. In fact, the most interesting questions in the applied social sciences are on that fertile ground where structure and action interact. The primary goal of social policy (a purposefully created structure) should be not to restrict or limit action, but to promote it. Along these lines, Adlai Stevenson once said of President Woodrow Wilson: "He taught us to distinguish between governmental action that takes over functions

[1] David Gillespie cautions: "Your idea of strong policy seems to be similar to those looking for big effects, dramatic cures, etc. This could blind us to the small, strategically placed interventions that in time make huge differences." This warning is well taken, but it is probably not an either/or issue. Applied social researchers can look for big effects and also for small effects.

formerly discharged by individuals, and governmental action that restores opportunity for individual action" (in Latham, 1958).[2] To complete this thought, governmental action should restore opportunities for action at all levels -- individuals, families, associations, organizations, communities, and society as a whole. Any policy innovation in the social arena should be put to this simple and fundamental test.

Ideas before programs. First, policy innovators must have well-developed ideas, not merely program proposals. Second, ideas must be specified as theoretical statements – in the best case, logical and relatively simple theory, with clear and testable hypotheses. For policy purposes, we need very simple models that are productive (Krugman, 1995). Third, the causal variable(s) in these hypotheses must be translated into policy and program applications. If these conditions are present, then the policy innovator will know what she is proposing, what the program is supposed to accomplish, and what to measure in evaluation. To sum up these points: theory matters. It is an unfortunate misconception that applied social research can be or should be atheoretical. There is a notion, too common in applied social research, that dozens or hundreds or even thousands of empirical studies that are not based in theory will add up to something. In the absence of specific ideas that are being tested, data tend not to add up to anything. We end up with piles of information but little understanding. If an idea is well specified theoretically, policy and program implications will follow, and research can be productive in building knowledge (Sherraden, 1998).[3]

Clear ideas. Ideas for policy and practice should be simple, clear, logically constructed, thoughtful, and almost intuitively sensible. A good test is whether the idea (distinct from the program description) can be communicated in a few sentences so that most people will understand it. If this is not the case, the thinking may not be clear enough to serve as a guide for action. To illustrate, in other work I have proposed that policy should promote asset accumulation among impoverished and excluded populations (Sherraden, 1991a). This would be a departure from the primary policy of income support in the "welfare states." Now, there are many complex questions regarding how assets are so unevenly distributed (e.g., Oliver and Shaprio, 1995), how people save (Beverly and Sherraden, 1999), and what the effects of asset accumulation might be (e.g., Yadama and Sherraden, 1996), but the basic notion of asset accumulation is remarkably simple, connecting directly with the experience and understanding of most people. Partly for this reason, asset building has in a relatively short period of time taken hold in the policy process (Sherraden, forthcoming).[4] I am wondering to what extent simplicity

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[2] I am grateful to Donald Eberly for finding this quote.

[3] Notwithstanding the current popularity of post-modern, non-positivist inquiry, the discussion in this paper assumes deductive positivism as the preferred epistemology for applied social research. In other words, the researcher should be aiming for theoretical statements that are testable. The tests can include many different types of research methods, both quantitative and qualitative, but the fundamental point is that theory is required. If the applied scholar does not know what the policy or other intervention is expected to accomplish (i.e., if there is no theory), there is no rationale for the intervention, and it is ethically very questionable (Sherraden 2000).

[4] The leadership of the Ford Foundation, and especially Melvin Oliver as Vice President for Asset Building and Community Development, has been a key factor in asset building policy and program development in the United States.

and clarity of ideas might be missing in many policy proposals that fail to engage the public's imagination.[5]

Consequential ideas. For the purposes of application, all ideas are not of equal value -- some have far greater potential in application than others.[6] How are we to know a consequential idea when we see one? This is a big question, and by no means do I have a complete answer to it, but I have come to view some inquiry structures as superior to others for the purposes of the applied social sciences. My point here is that the form of the inquiry matters, separate and apart from its theoretical specification or content.[7]

To approach this reasoning, allow me to begin with what I think is not very a good in inquiry structure for the applied social sciences. In unfortunate but very familiar cases, we find studies with a dozen or more potential causes (independent variables) looking for effects on a single outcome (dependent variable). What is wrong with this? Most studies that rely on this many-independent-variable-and-single-dependent-variable structure are of limited use in terms of action guidelines because, typically, no single independent variable accounts for enough of the variance in the dependent variable to make much of a difference, and therefore applied implications are few.[8] Even if a single independent variable accounted for 10 percent of the variance, which is not common in social research, seldom would a decision be made to invest in something that predicts only 10 percent of the outcome of interest. Interventions are expensive, and rarely would or should an intervention be undertaken to target only a small percentage of the variance in a dependent variable.[9]

A desirable alternative is to turn the structure around, wherein a theoretical statement has one independent variable and multiple dependent variables. I have come to think of this as working

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[5] Very often ideas that are not clear do not really have substance behind them. Also, unclear ideas and policy facilitate confusion and abuse -- in economic terms, rent seeking.

[6] This comment on the differential value of ideas does necessarily apply to the social sciences in general, because it may not be easy to know what a good basic research question is. However, the applied social sciences have a distinctive demand: application. In this context, if an idea is unlikely to have an impact, what is the point? Unfortunately, judgments regarding usefulness of ideas in the applied social sciences are too seldom made. Research tends to be evaluated more on methodological soundness than on whether the question is worth asking to start with.

[6] That the form of the inquiry structure is influential apart from specification and content perhaps has something in common with Marshall McLuan's (1994) famous phrase regarding the communications media: "The medium is the message."

[8] David Gillepsie raises the possibility that my discussion of inquiry structures may confuse statistical theory with substantive theory. Outcomes of statistical theory are only one way to inform the value of substantive theory, and the amount of variance explained cannot be taken as the actual strength of the substantive relationship. While this is technically accurate, substantive theory is very often tested statistically, and the statistical test is usually the best information we have. Certainly it is common in policy research and decision-making to treat statistical tests as if they have direct substantive implications and that is my approach here.

[9] This may be overstated. Mark Schreiner suggests that there may be cases where a policy investment should be made even if it affected only a few percentage points of the outcome of interest. In my view these situations are likely to be uncommon.

with a "strong independent variable," one that has many positive effects. If a single independent variable can be shown to have desirable effects across a broad range of dependent variables, even if each effect is quite modest, then it would sometimes make sense to "intervene" by altering this single variable.[10] For example, if an independent variable accounted for an average of four percent of the variance of eight different dependent variables, all in a desirable direction, then this independent variable might be a good candidate for policy innovation.[11] For example, this is the inquiry structure for propositions on multiple effects of tangible assets mentioned above (Sherraden, 1991a). This would seem to be a constructive way for applied social researchers and policy innovators to think, because changing one variable can potentially have many positive impacts.[12]

Structures of Inquiry in the Applied Social Sciences

Let us put this suggestion in a somewhat larger context. To greatly oversimplify, we can identify four types of inquiry structures in the applied social sciences. These are illustrated in their simplest form in Figure 1 and described below. The types are intended, in the simplified way, to capture main characteristics, on which there can be many, many variations. I do not intend this to be an exhaustive classification – there are other possibilities – but these four inquiry forms can represent the vast majority of applied social research. Two dimensions are employed in sorting out types of inquiry structure: focus on a negative vs. focus on a positive, and explanation vs. impact (Figure 1).

First, I distinguish between constructs that are typically considered to be negative vs. constructs that are typically considered to be positive ("problems" vs. "successes") because this is in fact how most work in the applied social sciences is formulated. In the best social science, constructs are continuous and would range from the very positive to the very negative, so this idea of "problems" vs. "successes" would not be relevant, and indeed would often represent sloppy thinking (Hage, 1972). But as a practical matter, applied social science is not this pristine and scholars most often are dealing with something that they think of as a problem or, alternatively, something that they think of as a success. Problem-oriented studies account for most inquiry in the applied social sciences. As rough estimates, I would guess that problem-oriented theories, implicit or explicit, represent 90-95 percent of applied psychological research, 80-90 percent of public health research, 80-90 percent of social work research, 60-80 percent of applied sociological research, and 50-75 percent of applied economics research. The general assumption

[10] It is likely that if an independent variable has many positive effects, it also has some negative effects. Theorists and researchers should of course search for all relevant effects, positive and negative.

[11] Melvin Oliver, in introducing this presentation at the Costa Rica meeting, emphasized that the variance explained on a given dependent variable is likely to be quite modest. The strength of this reasoning is that there might be multiple effects, even if all quite modest, which together might represent a meaningful impact. As a caveat, the multiple dependent variables would have to be statistically independent, i.e., have low inter-correlations, in order to claim multiple effects from the independent variable.

[12] This discussion assumes direct effects models that are typical in social research. In dynamic models it may that a different type of conceptual device is the key to theory for application. Positive feedback loops are a likely candidate. David Gillespie suggests that applied social research should move in this direction. This suggestion is intriguing, but it is a large and complex topic that must wait for another day.

is that if we better understand a problem (either its explanation or its impact) we will be able to do something about it. This assumption sounds quite reasonable, but unfortunately it is often misplaced. Most problem-oriented research does not result in clear policy or practice implications. If I had to point to a single factor that most limits the applied social sciences it would be the pervasive focus on problems.

Much less common is a focus on positive constructs or "successes." This distribution of prevalence of types of inquiry seems odd when one stands back and thinks about it. Why are the applied social sciences so preoccupied with problems? Perhaps because it is easier to detect influences on problems than to identify solutions. It might be helpful to ask more often, in the explanatory mode, "how do people succeed?" instead of the usual question, "how do people fail?" In the impact mode, theory and research might examine not so much the effects of problems as the effects of positive interventions: What can be done that will make a difference?[13]

The second dimension, explanation vs. impact, separates studies that employ many independent variables to explain one dependent variable from studies that attempt to show the impact of one independent variable upon many dependent variables. This is not to say that inquiry can prove causality, which is extraordinarily difficult to do, but only that causality is implied in theoretical statements. Explanation comes in many forms, the most common represented by multiple regression statistical methodology wherein the explanatory power of numerous independent variables can be sorted out. As a rough estimate, I would say that 80-90 percent of applied social research is in the explanation form.[14] On the other hand, the impact form represents the typical "problem analysis" or "policy analysis," wherein a construct of interest is assessed in terms of its effects or impacts on multiple dependent outcomes.

If we put these simple classifications into a table of possible types, we have four different inquiry structures (illustrated in Figure 1). Applied social researchers tend to operate in one of these modes or another.

[Figure 1 here]

Type I. Explanation of a negative: multiple causes and a single/negative effect. Well over half of all applied social research is carried out in this inquiry structure. We have journals full of articles that try to explain delinquency, or mental illness, or low birth weight, or poverty, or some other problematic condition. This structure of inquiry focuses on problems via the lens of complex causality. This is the typical "multivariate" theory, though often it is a list of independent variables rather than a logically constructed theory. In its best form, a problem is

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[13] This is not an original viewpoint; many others have questioned the excessive focus on problems. For example, in the area of youth policy, the movement toward "positive youth development" is a well-justified reaction to decades of problem-oriented youth research and policy. More broadly, one can point to the "strengths perspective" in social work practice, which has arisen in recent years in response to a perceived excessive focus on problems (e.g., Weick et al., 1989; Saleeby, 1997). While there is not space here for an extended critique, a major shortcoming of these more positive approaches is lack of theory. As they stand, "positive youth development" and the "strengths perspective" are more ideological statements than guides to inquiry.

[14] One cannot help but wonder to what extent the preponderance of explanatory studies is due to readily available statistical methodologies – regression, analysis of variance, path analysis -- that assume this inquiry form.

explained in such a way that it might possibly be solved, but this is not usually the case. For applied purposes, one of the main flaws in this inquiry structure, as indicated above, is that no single independent variable is likely to be robust enough to warrant investment of resources. Another flaw is that, contrary to the main assumption in this theoretical logic, whatever causes a problem might not be the best way to un-cause it. It is often impractical or ineffectual to try to fix past or intractable circumstances, and resources might be better spent on something else.

Type II. Impact of a negative: single/negative cause and multiple effects. This inquiry structure is "one bad thing leads to others." Sometimes I think of this as *very bad for people* theory and research, as in "dropping out of school is very bad for people" or "using drugs is very bad for people" or "unemployment is very bad for people" and so on. In its best form, this inquiry structure can help document the extraordinarily high price that is paid for certain social problems. Some of the most striking examples are racial prejudice, sexual abuse, physical violence, undernourishment, illiteracy, and unemployment. A focus on multiple negative outcomes has been discussed in several areas of study, e.g., Cassel (1976), who examines the effects of stress on disease and points out that stress makes individuals vulnerable not to a specific stress-related disease, but to a wide array of diseases. If a health researcher assesses the effects of stress on a particular disease, the results may appear small or even insignificant, but this may miss other, perhaps multiple, effects of the stress that are very important to overall health status (Aneshensal et al., 1991). The implication of these studies is that the problem should be resolved, although this inquiry structure does not provide guidance on how to do that.

Type III. Explanation of a positive: multiple causes and a single/positive effect. Usually, the explanation of a positive is theoretically complex, e.g., many factors may contribute to higher income, including parent's status, family structure, psychological characteristics of the individual, and so on. As in Type I above, implications for action can be quite limited because so many factors are identified as contributing to the outcome of interest. Nonetheless, for applied purposes, this inquiry form may often be preferable to Type I because direct theoretical statements can be made about how people, families, groups, communities, and societies might do better, which may have immediate applied implications. Also, cumulative research might provide the building blocks that lead to explanation of a positive that has multiple effects (as in Type IV below), and in the long term this may be a productive strategy. For example, in other work we attend to multiple variables that might lead to savings and asset accumulation (Beverly and Sherraden, 1999), because it is likely that asset holding has multiple positive effects (Page-Adams and Sherraden, 1996).

Type IV. Impact of a positive: single/positive cause and multiple effects. This inquiry structure can be described as "one good thing leads to others." It is a structure that explicitly looks for "more bang for the buck," i.e., variance explained in more constructs that matter.[15] As indicated above, I believe that this is the best structure for intervention research and should be the backbone of the applied social sciences because it has the potential to identify what I call "strong independent variables" which, when transformed into application, can become "strong

[15] I do not mean to imply here that explained variance on different dependent variables can in fact be numerically added up.

policies."[16] As a caveat, it may be that only a few independent constructs can be supported in this inquiry structure, and this is perhaps why it is infrequently used in the applied social sciences. Some examples of single/positive causes that have multiple effects (usually positive) might be: early childhood education, two-parent families, employment, and asset accumulation. In less developed countries, one can point to public sanitation, clear property rights, and education of girls.[17] If indeed there are only a small number of such constructs, a primary mission of the applied social sciences should be to identify and focus on them.

II. Applications to Youth Service

What Is Youth Service?

It will be important to define youth service as an idea. Before we can get very far in building a knowledge base for youth service we will have to say what it is and what it is not. A definition might be *a period of service to community, society, or world, institutionalized as part of an opportunity structure for young people, with no or minimal financial compensation, but recognized and honored by society and the state.* But does this meet the test of a clear idea? Can most people easily understand it? At present, there is a great deal of work to do in stating and communicating youth service as an idea. The term can mean anything from informal voluntary activity to a centralized national service; military service is sometimes included; and youth service by youth is sometimes confused with social services provided *to* youth. A major challenge for this field is to articulate a simple and coherent public image of youth service that is readily communicable.

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[16] The emphasis here is on general inquiry form for applied purposes. It is a 'big picture" view that does not address the theoretical specification that would be required for each of the multiple outcomes. Quite likely each hypothesized impact would have a different theory with mechanisms specified. This would require a multifaceted theory and research agenda. On the other hand, Vicente Espinoza raises the possibility and concern that the theory might not be specified in advance:

> You made clear that a strong policy is not an explanation, OK. It's neither a model of intervention as planners define it. I would compare your definition of strong policy to the start of a billiard game: the white ball would be your strong policy and the 15 colored balls in the triangle the system where you apply the policy. Billiards is an interesting game at the beginning because you never know-how the balls will scatter on the table. Although you can control the direction, strength, and rotation of the white ball, the outcome will always be different. In my understanding, the results cannot be defined as an "impact." One can only make general assumptions about the consequences the white ball might have on the system, like yours that positive outcomes will be larger than negative. This looks to me like an *ex-post* definition, which is rather risky in social planning. Lacking an adequate definition of goals, we are equally likely to identify strong policies and gross mistakes only after policies have been implemented.

This is a clear and very useful analogy, and I share this concern. In applied social science, theoretical statements should be specified in advance. This paper is that it is at the more abstract level of inquiry structure, however I do not mean to suggest that specific theory is not required.

[17] Espinoza is skeptical about "one fits all" explanations, warning that in trying to explain too much, one can end up explaining nothing at all. His reasoning again relates to theoretical specificity, which he calls identifying the channels. Again, I agree with this point, but I do not agree that multiple explanations from a single construct do not exist. Indeed, it seems apparent that they do exist, probably in abundance. However, only a small number are likely to be overwhelmingly positive, and the challenge of public policy is to find these.

Similarly, regarding specification for inquiry, youth service is not a single experience, but rather a bundle of experiences, including becoming part of a new organization, mentoring or supervision, responsibility for tasks, working with others, skill development, and so on. This may be a problem for research – how are we to know which aspect(s) of youth service have the most important impacts? But in fact youth service is probably no larger a bundle than other institutionalized roles such as education, marriage, employment, or membership in any organization. These constructs are often and usefully treated as integrated wholes for research purposes. Similarly, I suspect that a key to development of knowledge regarding youth service will be to achieve widespread institutional structures that define and promote it. If and when this is the case, service can be treated as a single construct in research the same way education is often treated as a single construct. Of course, there will always be important research questions that relate to aspects of youth service, but knowledge for policy purposes is unlikely to advance far until youth service is understood as an integrated whole.[18]

What Are the Multiple Effects of Youth Service?

As indicated above, theory to guide research on youth service will ideally be constructed in the form of what is labeled above the "impact of a positive." Along these lines, Donald Eberly has pointed out the multi-dimensional potential impacts of youth service:

> A sociologist views national service as a rite of passage from adolescence to adulthood. A patriot sees it as a training ground for building good citizens and national unity. An anti-poverty worker considers national service primarily as a service delivery program to the poor and needy. A manpower expert looks at national service as a way to facilitate the transition of young people from school to work. An inner-city resident hopes national service will reduce the incidence of neighborhood crime, poverty, drug abuse and unemployment. An educator believes national service will provide the experiential education needed to counter balance the years of largely passive education received by students in the classroom. An employer welcomes national service as an initiative that will yield good work habits, thereby reducing the risk of hiring young employees. A conservationist views national service as a source of labour that can restore the forests and wilderness areas to their condition of a century ago (Eberly, 1986).

Fortunately, we have a few examples of research that begin to identify multiple impacts.

A study of state and local youth corps in the United States finds positive impacts on employment, earnings, personal and social responsibility, voting, and education, with larger impacts on African-American young men (Abt Associates, 1996). Another study finds that pregnancy is less likely for girls in community service, and school success is greater for both

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[18] Both scholars and practitioners in youth service have raised important questions regarding context of youth service, especially the characteristics of the community and nation-state in which service occurs. In this regard, "service as an integrated whole" may be technically the same in two different places but very different in meaning and impact due to the nature of the community and/or the state. In this paper, I handle context as potential impacts of youth service, i.e., outcomes in social development and for the political state. This provides one kind of contextual information, but it is not the whole story.

boys and girls. Looking at a randomly-assigned 283 girls who took part in the national Teen Outreach Program, mostly community service, throughout high school, researchers report a pregnancy rate of 4.2 percent, compared to a rate of 9.8 percent for 287 girls who took regular health and sex-education classes, but did not perform community service. The study also found that 27 percent of the Teen Outreach group, both girls and boys, failed courses during the five year study period, compared to 47 percent of the control group (Allen et al., 1997).

In a rudimentary application of this general approach, we have compared systems of non-military service in nine countries across eleven outcomes in five categories (Sherraden, Sherraden, and Eberly, 1990). The findings in this study are that "the commonweal" and "productivity" rank highest; "peace" and "state interests" rank lowest; and "benefits to participants" rank in the middle. These findings are based on simple ordinal ratings of outcomes of the programs, derived from documentary information and fieldwork in each of the countries. I summarize these categories because they emerged from prior research and field work and therefore may be a good starting place for thinking about multiple outcomes of youth service.[19]

[Table 1 here]

The commonweal. In the 1990 study, commonweal outcomes of youth service was the highest ranked category overall. The commonweal refers to the public good, the general welfare, and the needs of the community as opposed to those of the individual. As Tocqueville observed long ago, in an individualistic, democratic nation, the ability of the society to work together is essential: "In democratic countries knowledge of how to combine is the mother of all other forms of knowledge; on its progress depends that of all others" (Tocqueville, 1969, p. 517). This thinking stands somewhat in contrast to the dominant individualistic form of liberal democracy in the United States, but it represents a strong undercurrent in America, exemplified by the work of John Dewey who observed, "The public has no hands except those of individual human beings" (1927, p. 82). More recently in this tradition, Benjamin Barber (1984) has emphasized a community-oriented democracy. In sociological theory, commonweal issues are addressed under several headings, but historically one of the most prominent has been "social control." Social control in its classical meaning refers to attempts by society to self-regulate though social institutions and processes. It is explicitly oriented toward problem solving, expressed in concerns with community, commitment, citizenship, cooperation among diverse groups, and conflict resolution (Park and Burgess, 1921; Janowitz, 1975; Turner, 1976). Today the term social control has fallen into misuse, often understood in a negative sense as state control. The corruption of this term is unfortunate because no equally useful term has yet replaced it.

Another promising idea is social capital, which has recently become prominent (Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 1993, 1995, 2000).[20] At this stage of its development, social capital is a somewhat amorphous concept. As it is refined and perhaps specified into several forms, social capital may have the potential to guide intellectual and applied advancements related to youth service. What

[19] This section summarizes and extends Sherraden, Sherraden, and Eberly (1990).

[20] Putnam undertook the empirical research in Italy that led to today's prominence of social capital in sociology, political science, public policy, and community development. It is rare that a single study launches a concept into such prominence, with wide-ranging debate and inquiry, in this case both academic and applied.

is needed is the identification of constructs that represent social capital, or various aspects of social capital, and development of measures for these constructs that might be used to assess impacts of youth service or other Type IV interventions.

Cultural integration and political tolerance. Margaret Mead (1967) observed that "the poor and rich, the highly technologically gifted and those with obsolescent skills, the white collar and the blue collar, are each reared in almost total ignorance of one another." Mead suggested that a universal national service would compensate for the increasing "fragmentation, ignorance, and lack of knowledge of their fellow citizens." For example, youth service in programs such as the National Youth Service of Nigeria (Enemuo, 2000) and Katimavik in Canada (Ninacs and Toye, 2000) have adopted cultural integration and political tolerance as the primary theme.

Citizenship. One of the most prominent viewpoints in discussions of youth service is the sociology of citizenship, represented by the work of T.H. Marshall (1950, 1977) and Morris Janowitz (1980, 1983). Essentially, this perspective focuses on the evolution and balance of citizenship rights vs. obligations, and on institutional structures that facilitate or impede expression of citizenship responsibilities. From this viewpoint, a program of youth service facilitates individual contributions to the nation and the building of national bonds (Etzioni, 1983; Sherraden and Eberly, 1984; Moskos, 1988). Moskos, for example, rejects the artificial split between "tough minded" military service and "high minded" civilian service. Both, he suggests, should be tied together with the theme of civic commitment. In practice, many variations of the citizenship theme exist. In some nations, citizenship is embodied in mandatory service obligations, while in other nations it is entirely voluntary but supported by social institutions. Using youth service as an expression of citizenship may provide a new basis for policy-making in the youth sector (Espinoza, 2000).

Productivity. Also ranked high in terms of impacts of youth service in our 1990 study was productivity, or the value of the service projects given the input. Somewhat arbitrarily, this discussion occurs under two headings -- social development and economic development.

Social development. The concept of social development was first used in the context of developing nations to call attention to the human/social side of development.[21] Originally it was a reaction to rigid economic thinking about development (Ul Haq and Streeten, 1995). The initial emphasis was on basic living conditions and social protections, but in recent years it has become more and more clear that the greatest economic resource in any nation is its people, as both human capital and social capital. With this realization, interest in social development has grown. A United Nations sponsored world summit for social development was held in 1995 and this term is now in greater use and has spread to advanced economies (e.g., Midgley, 1995). Youth service is often seen as a tool for solving social problems and promoting social development. The emphasis is on assisting particular individuals and groups -- such as the illiterate, the disabled, the elderly, and children -- primarily through activities that could be broadly classified as human services (Eberly, 1970). Yarmolinsky (1977) and Danzig and Szanton (1986) take this perspective on non-military service almost exclusively. In general, these studies show large unmet human needs that are not likely to be addressed in the private

[21] Social development and social capital have something in common. It may be useful to think of social capital as relational capacities, and social development as actions using those capacities as resources.

marketplace, and therefore some type of institutionalized service may have a positive impact on social development.

Economic development. A related perspective views youth service as a mechanism for economic development. Emphasis on economic development typically concentrates on use of available resources, in this case youth labor, and the value of the service product. In the United States, the historical example of the Civilian Conservation Corps stands out as being enormously productive in tree planting and building of state and national park facilities (Salmond, 1967; Sherraden, 1979). The viewpoint of economic productivity is often taken explicitly in developing countries, where more than half of the population can be under 18 years of age. As we enter the twenty-first century, 80 to 85 percent of the youth population lives in the developing world, much of it in the informal labor market. In the year 2010 the population of the world will reach 6.8 billion, with 1.7 billion young people between the ages of 15 and 24, and 86 percent of these in developing counties. In most developing nations, a large portion of the youth population is either unemployed or employed in the informal labor market (Ruiz, 2000). The economic development perspective on youth service views the large youth population as an underutilized resource. Ruiz (2000) takes this a step further and suggests that youth service can be the foundation of a new “economics of solidarity” in which the economy serves the people, rather than the other way around, and “people interact to formulate solutions other than those offered by either the market or the state.” Major issues in the economic development impacts of youth service include the degree to which young people working on a short-term basis can actually be productive, the danger of exploiting young people in this process, bridges from service to formal labor markets, and the potential to disrupt employment of adults.

Benefits to participants. In our 1990 study we found benefits to participants to rank as medium in terms of outcomes of youth service. In this sense, programs of youth service are policy instruments in the tradition of the modern welfare state, wherein the state takes responsibility for assisting individual citizens. Less developed nations have systems of state-provided services as well, though typically less encompassing. In different countries, benefits to individuals may different forms in the areas of education, housing, health care, food, employment, disability protection, family supports, and retirement security. The focus in this paper is not the entire array of social welfare services, but rather the extent to which programs of youth service are used to provide such benefits. For the sake of brevity, only three of the most important types of benefits of youth service are discussed here -- personal development, education and training, and employment opportunities.

Personal development, connections to adulthood. In addition to the moral equivalent of war, William James (1910) expressed a vision of personal development through service. He said that participants would have the "childishness knocked out of them." Social scientists and policy makers have sometimes turned to youth service to counter negative trends among young people (e.g., Mead, 1967; Erikson, 1967). The focus is typically on psychological development and maturation. In this regard, proponents may speak of a system of youth service as a "rite of passage" for young people in moving from adolescence to adulthood. Mead suggested that a system of youth service might prevent some young people from going into early marriages "as a device to reach pseudo-adult status." She believed that service might provide an opportunity to establish an identity and sense of self-respect before making career choices or establishing

homes, and she saw this as quite valuable, especially for many young women. Erikson suggested a period of "moratorium" from the relentless pressures of deciding on a career. James Coleman (1972) and his colleagues on the Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Committee concluded that the transition to adulthood is impeded in modern industrial society, and dependency is prolonged. According to Coleman, modern youth are "education rich" but "action poor," the reverse of the situation a century earlier. Under these circumstances, a youth culture has taken shape that is inward looking, consumption-oriented, and largely segregated from adult responsibilities and values. As a response to this situation, Coleman recommended deliberate creation of new institutions for public service.

Education and training. Another developmental perspective is education and training. In this case, service is viewed as an opportunity for learning, work experience, or career exploration, and is defined as study-service, service learning, or learning through practice. Youth service along these dimensions has been proposed by Coleman (1972), the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (1973), Wirtz (1975), and White (1978). During the 1980s and 1990s service learning has been in the ascendancy in the United States. A growing number of secondary schools and universities require and/or actively promote community service, which is often accompanied by a structured service learning component. For example, Campus Compact was created in 1985 to promote service by university students in the United States and today has 570 member institutions and 20 state compacts, promoting service learning requirements. As a result, service learning is growing as an accepted component of higher education (Jacoby et al., 1996).

Employment opportunities. Unemployment as an issue for young people is not only a cyclical problem, but a long-term historical trend. The trend in industrial economies has been for young people to be pushed out of the labor market (Osterman, 1980; Sherraden, 1987, 1991b). It may be that, with the advent of the information age, this trend will reverse because young people may adapt to information technology and the "new economy" more readily than adults (Krauskopf, 2000). In some nations, goals of youth service focus on employment of the youth population, and indeed, youth employment has been a major consideration in youth service proposals in the United States. A prominent issue in these policies is whether the work genuinely needs to be done. In the United States, some youth employment policies, for example, the Summer Youth Employment Program, have been little more than a make-work, keep-them-off-the-streets programs (Sherraden, 1980; Sherraden and Adamek, 1984). On the other hand, many youth service programs may not emphasize employment but still have positive impacts on work experience, skill development, and exploration of different career paths.

State interests. National programs of youth service may serve at least some interests of the political state, though we did not find this to be a common impact of youth service in our 1990 study. State interests do not have to be detrimental to society, but they sometimes are. To some pro-market, anti-government critics, organized service is viewed as a misuse of state power. For example, Milton Friedman (1979) once called organized non-military service a "monstrosity utterly inconsistent with a free society." A similar orientation is sometimes voiced on the progressive Left. There is reason for this concern. The Hitler Youth of Nazi Germany and the Red Guard of the Cultural Revolution period in China cannot be forgotten as youth "service" organizations that were turned to evil purposes of the state. These horrific historical examples

should not be downplayed or dismissed, but they do not represent the vast majority of youth service policies and programs around the globe.

Incorporation and control. An important viewpoint in understanding youth service is as centralized control, often discussed in terms of incorporation or corporatist state theory, which focuses on the role of state policy in integrating, sometimes co-opting, individuals and groups into the state political apparatus. From this point of view, youth service (in this case national service) would be seen as a mechanism to enhance loyalty of individuals and interest groups to the state, and accordingly, might serve narrow interests of the political elite. A great deal of policy research, particularly in developing nations, has concluded that policy may be guided by efforts of the federal government to link population groups to the state (Stepan, 1978; Schmitter and Lehmbruch, 1980). This occurs to some extent in youth service, sometimes under the banner of "cultural integration" (reaching out and incorporating marginal population groups), but we have not found it to be a prominent theme.

Support for the military. Proposals for non-military national service almost inevitably lead to a discussion of one particular state interest -- support of the military. In the United States, a frequent reaction from the progressive left to proposals for non-military service is that such proposals are, or might be, covers for a return to a military draft. In nations where there is a respected non-military service option, e.g., Germany, the non-military service option in an important sense legitimizes the military and makes it acceptable. Also, in those countries where the military itself actually performs significant non-military activities, these activities may be used by the state to gain support for the military. Thus, there are a number of ways in which the political state can use youth service, particularly national service, to gain support for the military. However, we have not found this to be a common theme. For example, AmeriCorps in the United States has virtually no interaction or influence on military service.[22]

Peace. Peace, defined as reduction of international conflict or promotion of international understanding, was found to be a very minor impact of youth service in our 1990 study. There are relatively few examples of cross-border, international elements of youth service.

Conflict reduction. William James's (1910) essay, "The Moral Equivalent of War," provides a starting point in many discussions of non-military youth service in the United States. James believed that militarism had to be re-channeled. In the interests of international peace, he proposed an institutional equivalent of war, in his words, "an army against Nature." His proposal was based on a psychodynamic perspective of innate aggression as a part of human nature. But does an individual, psychological view make sense at the level of social institutions? In this regard, can non-military service re-channel innate aggression, and replace war, in the sense that William James suggested? It is possible to conceive of an institutional restructuring of militarism -- nations might send "armies of peace" as a moral equivalent of war. Conflict might be resolved according to who could build the best highway, dam, or oil pipeline in the opposing nation, rather than who could destroy the same, but this is a long way from reality. At one time, there was a small and hopeful body of scholarship under the heading of "peaceful uses of military forces" (Glick, 1967; Hanning, 1967), and there are modern examples of armies used for

[22] If AmeriCorps were significantly larger, it would likely have an impact on military recruitment.

civilian purposes, but as appealing as this swords-into-plowshares theme might sound at first glance, it is in fact risky and problematic. The risk is that non-military functions and operations will become militarized, rather than the other way around.

International understanding. Youth service might promote peace in other ways, and one prominent theme is international understanding. From this perspective, youth service would be international service, designed to improve mutual understanding and appreciation, promote tolerance, and develop interpersonal and inter-institutional bonds. One of the books most associated with this viewpoint is Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy's *Planetary Service* (1978). Rosenstock-Huessy's vision is a supra-national service. In his view, peace is not absence of war, but rather active involvement and participation across borders. This is likely to be a much more fruitful approach to the theme of peace in youth service. A current example is the plan for a cross-border Arab-Israeli service as outlined in Gal's (2000) paper on youth service in Israel. Recently, the North American Institute at Stanford and the Ford Foundation sponsored a symposium on the possibility of youth service in North America, and issues regarding integration of youth service in the three nations of Canada, the United States, and Mexico were presented (Sherraden and Sherraden, 1999).

As a summary thought, William James's essay on the moral equivalent of war has served important political and public awareness purposes, but as a way of understanding the impacts of youth service in our time, it is of limited value. The outcomes of youth service are far more diverse and complex, and the greatest outcomes are in areas of the commonweal, productivity, and benefits to participants.

III. Directions for Research and Policy

Worldwide, there is a large body of experience regarding youth service and a great deal has been learned. For example, in the United States, we have a policy legacy that suggests strongly that we know how to undertake a youth service policy. Eberly (1986) has pointed to four major lessons from previous or existing US programs. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) taught us that the government could organize and manage a large, residential, and effective youth service program. The GI Bill for Education revealed the value of a service in providing a foundation for further education among all classes of young people. The Peace Corps has demonstrated that young people can be trusted to do important international work other than in the Armed Forces. VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) has demonstrated that young people can serve effectively at home as well as overseas, and that even impoverished young people are willing to serve as volunteers on subsistence stipends. To these we might add important lessons from many other programs, such as the National Youth Administration of the 1930s, Job Corps from the 1960s to the present, numerous state and local conservation and service corps since the 1980s, and AmeriCorps, the US youth service that was created in 1993. In addition to this practical experience, the United States has always had a bipartisan and political consensus in general support of youth service programs. The CCC was among the most popular of New Deal programs; VISTA and the Peace Corps have been supported by the Congress, even when the White House has been opposed. AmeriCorps has been politically troubled not so much because politicians are against the concept, but because AmeriCorps was

President Clinton's signature program during a very partisan political period. Overall, the practical challenges to large-scale youth service do not appear to be formidable. Many of us have long had the sense that it could happen in the United States, if things were to fall into place.[23] But things have not fallen into place, and it is incumbent on us to ask why.

Knowledge Building

In my view, we do not know enough. Both the concept of service and its impacts are unclear. We have not yet built a sufficient base of theory and empirical research to support youth service, and in the absence of a strong knowledge base we cannot sustain the idea in the political process. Advocates of youth service have operated mostly in the realm of well-intentioned value statements and beliefs, with historical and anecdotal examples, but without a convincing way to understand youth service and support it with empirical evidence. The field of youth service is in need of stronger and multi-faceted theory that can capture the public's imagination, serve as a framework for collecting and understanding empirical evidence, and guide policy innovation. As indicated in this paper, I believe that the structure of inquiry to guide research should be to look for "impact of a positive" (Type IV above). In this formulation, youth service would be tested as a "strong independent variable" that is likely to have multiple positive impacts. In the policy arena, application could be thought of as "strong policy" because impacts would be multiple and returns on public investment would potentially be high. To move in this direction, a number of conceptual and analytical tools can be brought to bear. Below I point to three tools that "fit" the Type IV inquiry structure and may be promising.

Theoretical approach: neo-functionalism or something like it. Functionalism is a major sociological tradition, with roots in the work of Compte, Spencer, and Durkheim. In modern sociology, functionalism was revived by Parsons (1951) and others. The essence of functional analysis is that social structures have their particular characteristics because they serve particular functions in society. In essence, function determines structure. Therefore, the search is for functional requisites of particular social structures. During the 1960s, functionalism was much debated and criticized, and remains controversial. The central criticisms of functionalist theory have been that it is essentially conservative because it is ahistorical and provides an implicit rationale for the status quo, and it does not incorporate conflict perspectives. However, these shortcomings are probably not inherent features of functional analysis, but rather may have more to do with the subject matter of the early functionalist theorists. The recognition that critiques of functionalism may not be well founded has led to somewhat of a revival of functional theory among neo-functionalists (Alexander, 1985).

A neo-functional approach has particular value during early phases of inquiry in the categorization of social systems, which is where the study of youth service is at present. Turner and Maryanski (1988) observe that much neo-functionalist analysis is macro, comparative, and essentially taxonomic, and it is through this usage that neo-functionalism is making its greatest contribution. The goal of neo-functional study of youth service would be to identify, categorize, and give relative weight to the various functions (or outcomes) of service. The tapestry of

[23] In this section I have used US examples because I know them better than others, though I would guess that this level of experience and practical "know how" with youth exists in many other countries, and much more in some.

functions and outcomes that emerges within countries and across countries may yield a rich and complex, yet patterned and meaningful interpretations. It is in this sense that neo-functionalism, or some similar approach, can make a contribution in studies of youth service. Within this framework, multiple research methods, from case studies to large-scaled comparative surveys, can contribute to knowledge building.[24]

Statistical analysis: simultaneous explanation. In the past, a severe limitation on studying multiple dependent variables has been the lack of technical ability to estimate multiple equations simultaneously. But with increasing statistical power, these limitations are eased. Structural equation modeling (SEM) is one example of an analytical tool that can handle multiple dependent variables in simultaneous statistical tests (Bollen, 1989; Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993). As such, it is well suited to the Type IV inquiry structure described above. To illustrate, we have used SEM to test another type of "strong policy" – asset building (mentioned above). Using the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), a large, longitudinal data set, we were able to test a number of these hypothesized effects, and at the same time test two main alternative explanations (Yadama and Sherraden, 1996). The ability to ask all of these questions simultaneously of the same set of longitudinal data is nearly as close to causal explanation as the social sciences can reach at present. The potential for such tools in studies of youth service and its impacts is great. But in order to reach this potential, youth service will have to be included in future survey waves of PSID and other on-going social research data sets. Looking ahead, the creation and incorporation of youth service measures in major survey instruments should be a high priority of scholars in this field.

Policy tool: benefit-cost analysis. Benefit-cost analysis (BCA) and its cousin, cost effectiveness analysis (CEA), are of course well-established techniques for policy analysis. BCA asks about the ratio of benefits to costs in dollar value, while CEA asks about the cost to achieve a given impact that is not measured in dollars. In more complex applications, impacts in CEA are multiple and combined in an index. BCA is implicitly comparative because of the universal dollar measure. CEA is meaningful only when two or more alternative programs or policies are being compared. BCA and CEA tend to wax and wane in popularity, but they have bedrock qualities that are likely to keep them around as basic policy analysis tools (Brent, 1996) in both developed and developing nations (e.g., Schreiner, 1999). BCA is particularly well suited to Type IV inquiry structure because it asks explicitly about different types of benefits (multiple impacts) on different groups (e.g., individuals, organizations, society). In this regard, BCA has much in common with neo-functionalism and structural equation modeling because it can handle multiple impacts of a single construct or intervention. BCA is the policy analysis tool of choice for studying "strong policy." Fortunately, there have been several applications of BCA in youth service evaluations, and results are usually positive. For example, a study of the Conservation and Youth Service Corps in the United States reports a net benefit of $1.04 per hour (Abt Associates, 1996). The major challenge in using BCA in any context is that there is never a single "right" answer; a great deal depends on what is included as costs and benefits. This again points to the importance of theory. With sound theoretical specification, it is easier to identify benefits to be measured, and to defend research results. Where BCA is not possible due to inability to monetize benefits, CEA can be usefully applied to compare two or more forms of

[24] This comment builds on a footnote in Sherraden, Sherraden, and Eberly (1990).

youth service, or youth service vs. an alternative youth policy or policies, in terms of how efficiently they generate desirable impacts.

Policy Development

In this paper I have suggested that weakness in theory and empirical evidence is the major barrier to youth service policy development, but it is not the only barrier. Many factors will have to work in concert to move policy forward.

Vision. Not least of these is the articulation of a large and compelling vision of why youth service (or service across the life span) should be a new social institution that engages many people in the affairs of community and society, and recognizes these contributions. In the past, I have suggested that the historical retreat of the industrial labor market from young people makes a new social institution for the transition to adulthood a compelling need (Sherraden, 1991b). However, with the transition to the information age, this may not be as strong an argument in the future as it has been in the past. In the information economy and society, young people may engage in adult-like roles at much earlier ages (Krauskopf, 2000).

Another candidate for a vision for service is to turn to the opposite end of the age spectrum, where discussions of useful roles for older adults and "productive aging" is increasing (Morrow-Howell et al., forthcoming). With aging populations in most countries, it is possible that large new social institutions for service will first occur with seniors as the major constituency. Danzig and Szanton (1986) foresaw this possibility and suggested that service by older adults might develop more rapidly than service by youths. Emerging discussions of productive aging are an opening to promote service across the life span, with service opportunities available at all ages.

Another possible vision is service as a counter balance to the increasing dominance of capitalism and self-interest around the globe. For this vision to be convincing, it will have to be shown that people are indeed in retreat from community and social responsibility (Putnam, 1995), and that there is an unacceptable cost for this retreat because large positive impacts can result from social involvement (Woolcock, 1998). Many people in fact believe this, but this vision has not been adequately articulated. This may be a particular challenge in the United States because it runs counter to individualistic values, which are dominant.[25]

Whatever the substantive vision, the Type IV inquiry structure would seem to be promising in shaping and supporting the vision by asking about multiple positive impacts. If these can be articulated as part of the vision, and later specified and tested empirically, the vision is more likely to capture the public's imagination and garner support in the policy process.

[25] Many people have pointed out that not all impacts of social capital are likely to be positive (e.g., Woolcock, 1998; Durlauf, 1999). To be sure, this would be true of any concept or policy, including youth service. The challenge is to identify key concepts and strong policies whose impacts are mostly, perhaps even overwhelmingly, positive. The fact that some negative impacts are possible should not deter a search for strong policies. At the end of the day, the weight of evidence, not single contrary examples, should be the determining factor.

Engagement. Sociologists tend to talk about new policies and institutions as being created by "social forces" converging in a particular way at a particular time, and there is some truth to these types of explanations. But the other part of the truth is that new policies and institutions are conceived, enacted, implemented, and nurtured by creativity, capability, and commitment, usually by a small number of key individuals and organizations. In this sense, policies and institutions are not created by abstract social forces, but are *made to happen* by real people. For example, in youth service in the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt held the vision for the CCC; Hubert Humphrey kept the idea alive in the Congress; Donald Eberly and his National Service Secretariat led policy formation in Washington over several decades; Morris Janowitz provided intellectual leadership that is not yet fully recognized; Franklin Thomas of the Ford Foundation provided foundation vision and support; Howard Swearer and Susan Stroud initiated Campus Compact; Charles Moskos shaped the policy concept and the Democratic Leadership Council initiated the policy process that led to AmeriCorps;[26] Harris Wofford, director of AmeriCorps, has in recent years played a crucial role in working successfully with a very partisan Congress; and there are many others. Each country will have its individual and organizational exemplars of engagement for youth service.

However, the capacity to engage in this field, both in the United States and around the world, today seems inadequate. Youth service initiatives, following a period of development in the 1980s and early 1990s, in recent years appear to have settled on a plateau. To move to the next level, leadership and engagement will be required. Especially given increasing globalization, there is a need for capacity building that can support policy and program development around the

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[26] Susan Stroud, who was working in the White House during the passage of AmeriCorps, reminds me that the political process is a lot more complex and multi-faceted than this brief summary suggests, and many different political interests in fact shape the resulting policy so that it is not clear and simple, but multi-faceted. In Stroud's words:

> The group of us working in the White House in 1993 who put together AmeriCorps may have lacked a clear theoretical basis for what we did, but we had sound ideas generally. However, regardless of how good and theoretically-grounded they may or may not have been, they were modified by (1) the President, who had his own ideas and sense of what would sell politically, (2) presidential advisors such as Gene Sperling and the Democratic Leadership Council who were attempting to fit the program into the larger Clinton agenda, hence the emphasis on "reinventing government" in the design of the Corporation. . . , (3) other administration officials, e.g., the team of Education Secretary Riley, (4) various constituencies, e.g., we couldn't combine VISTA totally with AmeriCorps, and we kept the Points of Light Foundation, which Clinton Promised Bush he wouldn't eliminate, (5) members of Congress, e.g., we had to satisfy Sonny Montgomery regarding the size of AmeriCorps benefits vs. veterans benefits, and on and on. The resulting policy is a case study of sausage making, and a useful metaphor for AmeriCorps is a Swiss Army knife that has multiple functions (see Steve Waldman's book), rather like your "strong policy" idea (Stoud email to Sherraden, December 5, 1999, text altered slightly for clarity).

These comments remind us that many people work very hard and make numerous compromises before a concept is enacted as a major public policy. An important insight in these comments is that the policy process itself may yield (perhaps typically yields) a policy that is multi-faceted and *because of this* likely to have multiple impacts. This is quite a different view of how a "strong policy" might come about. In this paper, I have attempted to argue from a neat and tidy rational perspective – first the idea, then the application, and then the evidence. Stroud's brief example of AmeriCorps documents that the democratic process, messy and irrational as it is, may in fact be a generator of strong policy, but in unpredictable ways. As with most apparent opposites, this is not really an either/or choice. Both perspectives are important and necessary. If we are aiming to enact a strong policy, clear ideas and theory are a good beginning, and engaging in the policy process is always required.

world. Strategies for this increased capacity include not only specifying theory and doing more and better research, but also providing guidance and tools for research, creating a web-based information network, publishing key studies and reports, strengthening international ties and organizations, and supporting international meetings so that lessons can be transferred among countries.

III. Summary and Conclusion

In summation, I would return to some basic observations about inquiry in the applied social sciences that have implications for youth service research and policy. First, there is a severe gap in knowledge about youth service. This includes a fuzziness of the concept, lack of theoretical specificity, and insufficient empirical evidence of impacts. Second, I have argued that selection of inquiry structure may be the foremost issue, often more important than other decisions of theory and research that follow. Third, the inquiry form that I have called "impact of a positive" (Type IV) is likely to be a productive structure for the applied social sciences because it has the potential to point to a "strong policy." Youth service may be among a perhaps small and select class of concepts that are ideally suited for public policy because impacts are likely to be multiple and positive. To date we have not harnessed this perspective to generate a body of evidence to support youth service. In the future this thinking may lead to more carefully specified theory and documentation of a full range of impacts of youth service. The weight of such evidence, when purposefully engaged in the policy process, would have the potential to tip the scale of policy formation.

As a closing thought, I would like to step back and offer a long-term observation. It seems likely that service is a slowly emerging social institution that one day could be as common and accepted as, for example, employment and education are today. During a lengthy institutional birthing process, when service sometimes seems like a fuzzy and poorly understood concept, and when the knowledge base is weak, it may be helpful to keep a historical perspective in mind. Labor markets and employment were at one time a fuzzy and disruptive innovation. Widespread public education, which we take for granted today, was in the late 19th century a fuzzy and controversial innovation. Those who are advocates of service should understand the nature of large-scale institutional change, and take some satisfaction in how far it has come already. In the latter half of the twentieth century, national non-military service programs have arisen and today number at least in the twenties. U.S. Presidents (Kennedy and Clinton) have made a particular point of calling for service. There are a wide range of service forms and activity in many countries. Service is now being discussed not only for youth, but also for elders and across the life span. Today, for the first time ever, there is a worldwide understanding that civil society and civic engagement are crucial for democratic governance. All of these suggest that service is emerging, in fits and starts, on a broad scale. Thoughtful inquiry in applied research can inform and enhance this policy development.

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Figure 1. Some Types of Inquiry Structures in the Applied Social Sciences

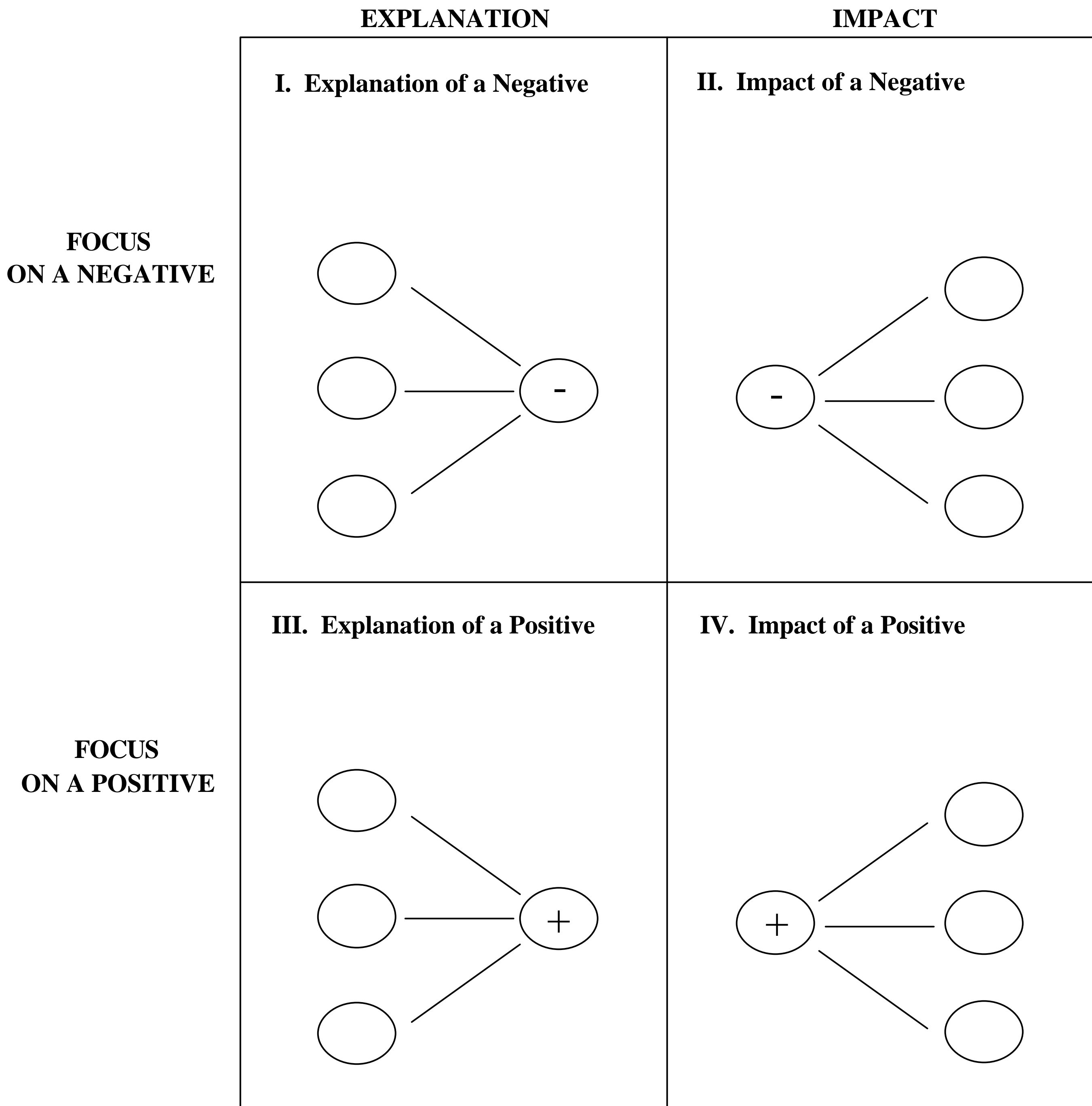

Table 1. Outcomes of Youth Service in Nine Nations, 1990

Outcomes of Youth Service	Ratings of Outcomes
The Commonweal	Highest (3.5)
Cultural Integration	
Citizenship	
Productivity	High (3.3)
Social Development	
Economic Development	
Benefits to Participants	Medium (2.2)
Personal Development	
Education and Training	
Employment Opportunities	
State Interests	Low (1.9)
Incorporation and Control	
Support for the Military	
Peace	Lowest (1.4)
Conflict reduction ("Moral equivalent of war")	
International understanding	

Source: Summarized from Sherraden, Sherraden, and Eberly (1990).

Notes: The nine countries are Canada, China, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Israel, Mexico, Nigeria, United States, and West Germany. The categories of outcomes emerged from the fieldwork. Ratings for categories are means across all nine countries, based on an ordinal scale ranging from one to five.