PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION OF WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE OF PEACE AND FREEDOM

Katie Leigh Reuter
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A Project

by

Katie Leigh Reuter

Approved by:

Dr. Joyce Bedris, Ph.D., M.S.W.

Date

H-28-2011

Committee Chair

ii
Student: Katie Leigh Reuter

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Dr. Teahesha Bankhead, Ph.D., LCSW
Graduate Coordinator

Division of Social Work

May 4, 2011
Abstract

of

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION OF WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE OF PEACE AND FREEDOM

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Social work has often been accused of reinforcing the status quo, and to an extent, this statement contains some truth. Social work, as a profession, is rooted in opposing oppression and fighting for social justice and economic equity. On the other hand, social work has tried to maintain a sense of professionalism and assist clients in dealing with the systems they encounter. The challenge, or problem, for current day social workers is whether there is a place for politics, or radical social work. Can social workers be effective without engaging in the systems that currently affect and challenge their clients?

The research project design for this project was participant observation and data for this project was collected during the researcher's observation of and participation in the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom, as well as archival information available to the researcher from the national and local websites. Participant observation research uses a variety of methods and techniques to collect data. Some of these methods include observation, document analysis, and participation with self-analysis. By directly participating in the organization, this researcher was able to decrease the extent in which the natural setting was disturbed and it allowed the researcher to observe the organization's norms and organizational tactics and strategies. Research of the archival
information led this researcher to conclude that while the agency does engage in radical social work tactics and strategies, it needs to focus on its organizational structure and membership in order to be truly effective. Conclusions from this project are that social workers can and should engage in a radical social work practice and to a certain extent that all social work is radical. Lastly, the research showed that the organization utilized a multitude of radical social work tactics and strategies in order to engage with local governments, as well as its local community.

Committee Chair

Dr. Joyce Burris, Ph.D., M.S.W.

4-28-2011

Date
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Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

In fact, all social work is already political, because it deals either with consciousness or the allocation of resources... A real difference exists between alleviating personal problems and addressing their roots in unequal and unjust social conditions.

- Mimi Abramovitz

Social work has often been accused of reinforcing the status quo, and to an extent, this statement contains some truth. Social work, as a profession, is rooted in opposing oppression and fighting for social justice and economic equity. On the other hand, social work has tried to maintain a sense of professionalism and assist clients in dealing with the systems they encounter. It has been established that radical social work is the term for practitioners who disagree with maintaining the status quo and wish to empower their clients to change the systems they encounter and work against the negative power dynamics that dominate their lives. The challenge, or problem, for current day social workers is whether there is a place for politics, or radical social work in the current day profession. Can social workers be effective without engaging in the systems that currently affect and challenge their clients?

Background of the Problem

The definition and meaning of radical social work has changed over time and has been restructured since it’s beginning, almost one hundred years ago. The definition has been changed depending on the political ideology of the time and people utilizing its strategies and techniques (Reisch and Andrews, 2002). According to David Wagner in
his article, "Radical Movements in the Social Services: A Theoretical Framework", there were three different stages of development for the emerging identity of radicalism within the United States; the first being social unrest and client-led work, the second militant professionalism and the third, absorbed radical professionalism (Wagner, 1989). He, like others, felt that the political climate of the era defined both radical social work and also, whom radical social workers were. The first development of radical social work was during the Progressive Era with the emergence of the Settlement House Movement and labor rights struggles. It was during this time when most social workers experienced and saw devastating poverty and other consequences of mass immigration. During this stage social workers did not see themselves as separate from their clients and mobilized with them to combat the effects of poverty. The second development of radicalism was during the 1960s when the movement was connected closely with the Rank and File Movement and Socialism. During this time social workers felt they could use their positions of power to change the systems that impacted their clients. They felt that by empowering clients to unite together they could raise people’s awareness of their own personal power and change the systems from within (Wagner, 1989). The third development was different then the above and has continued into current day practice because it maintains that social workers can and should be involved in professional leadership and professional associations. It was at this point in time that the movement began to be identified with the leftist movement versus the radical movement (Wagner, 1989).

**Statement of the Research Problem**

This participant observation research project seeks information about the role of
social work in a radical organization. The personal experience of being a part of the organization will be explored to gain information about the positives and negatives of a radical social work organization. More information is sought for social work regarding the strengths and challenges of a radical practice as it interfaces with the social work’s struggle to define itself.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the role of social work within a radical social work organization. The organization observed will be Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom, specifically the local branches including the Sacramento Valley Branch and the San Francisco Branch. This project will contribute to the profession of social work by bringing forth the benefits and challenges of maintaining a radical social work practice including strategies, suggestions, and information that others can utilize in their own social work journey.

**Personal Interest in the Problem**

This researcher’s personal interest in the problem arose from concern that social work is being rendered ineffective by its movement towards professionalization and psychotherapy. Up til this point, this researcher believes social work’s main contribution to society has been it’s application of person-within-systems approach and the belief that people cannot create change without the support of the communities that surround them. This researcher has concerns that the fear of job credibility and security has been more influential on the social work profession than its historic roots assisting clients to radically alter the systems they are a part of.
Theoretical Frameworks

The theories used for this project are the Ecological Systems Theory and Radical Theory. Ecological Systems theory enables the researcher to view the organization within a certain framework, mainly as a system that is in constant flux and that the elements within the system interact with other elements outside the system (reference). This researcher will use the Ecological Systems Theory as a framework for observing Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom. The researcher will also use Radical Theory presented by Saul Alinsky and James Galper as a framework for comparison and contrast with the above organization. The Radical Theory presented by Saul Alinsky and James Galper is an organizational theory that focuses on power, conflict, political framework and context within a given organization.

Justification

This project will benefit the profession of social work by providing an operational definition of radical social work and providing more knowledge about a radical social work organization and the strategies it uses. According to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics, assisting clients to overcome social problems should be held above the social worker’s self-interest (NASW, 2006). Having a radical practice, or incorporating radical strategies within one’s practice, may assist social worker’s to meet this ethical standard.

Delimitations

In the scope of this project the researcher will be participating and observing Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom, Sacramento Valley Branch. The
The researcher will not be focusing on other radical social work organizations, nor other organizations that may utilize radical social work strategies. Literature will be cited from other organizations, but only for contrast and comparison purposes. The sample is therefore limited and is not able to be generalized to all radical social work organizations.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to examine a radical social work organization to gain information about the role of social work. The data will be collected by this researcher observing and participating within the organization. The researcher will then organize the observations and include suggestions, strategies, and tactics that arise from this qualitative study. The data collected will be presented in Chapter 4 and the conclusions, emergent themes, and recommendations will be presented in Chapter 5.
"The great American dream that reached out to the stars has been lost to the stripes. We have forgotten where we came from, we don't know where we are, and we fear where we may be going. Afraid, we turn from the glorious adventure of the pursuit of happiness to a pursuit of an illusionary security in an ordered, stratified, striped society... When Americans can no longer see the stars, the times are tragic. We must believe that it is the darkness before the dawn of a beautiful new world; we will see it when we believe it."

-Saul Alinsky, 1971

Introduction

Saul Alinsky (1971) was a radical community organizer who expressed concern about the loss of motivation within the community to structurally change society. As seen in the quote above, Alinsky feared radicals were being coerced by the need for job security and stability. He felt this fear was irrational and exaggerated since only in an unjust society would job security be a concern. There is an internal debate within the social work profession between joining the other human service professions in moving toward increased professionalization, or staying with the historical roots opposing oppression and fighting for social justice and economic equity. Within the social work profession there is a huge commitment to radically altering our current social system and yet people's choices on how to alter this system vary.

This chapter will present the literature on the many definitions of radical social work, as well as provide a historical description of key figures within the field of radical
social work. The purpose of this chapter is to demystify the term radical, as it relates to social work, and clarify what the literature says about how effective social workers can be with, or without, engaging in radical social action. This chapter is organized by subtopics including the historical background of radicalism within the United States, the definition of radical social work, and lastly, a review of organizational theories used by radical social workers.

**Historical Background**

Radical social work arose from divergent ideas that were held among social workers about the importance of treating the whole community versus treating the individual. Rosenberg and Rosenberg (2006) attribute the formation of radical work to this, as well as to the changing political and ideological climate of the 1880s. Social work, as a profession, has been vacillating between collaboration and conflict with social and union activists since the 1880s and the debate continues today. Many authors such as, Rosenberg, Reisch and others link Jane Addams and the settlement movement to the beginning of radical social work. While the focus of the settlement movement workers was wide-ranging, they made great strides in the improvement of wages, working conditions for all people, and community building.

According to Michael Reisch and Janice Andrews (2002) in their book, *The Road Not Taken: a History of Radical Social Work in the United States*, radical social work originated with Jane Addams. They, like others, attached radical social work with the progressive and socialist movements of the early nineteenth century. Like Rosenberg and Rosenberg (2006) these authors saw a shift in ideology in the United States at the time
that made radical work possible. This shift was the threat to capitalism by poor people who sought social reform as a way to remedy their intolerable conditions. For these authors, radical social work was at its strongest during this period and has never been able to regain the prestige and influence it had during this point in history. In the beginning, radical social work focused on issues such as poverty, unions, worker’s rights, and unemployment. From these issues “...radical social workers developed a multilayered analysis of social inequality and the breakdown of the community, in which economic, cultural, and social causes played an important role” (Reisch & Andrews, 2001, p14).

Again the idea appeared that treating the individual was futile if people’s communities were in disarray. The connection between socialism and radical social work has been linked to Florence Kelley. Florence Kelley was committed to fighting the effects of industrialization and believed that structural change was the only way to achieve a more equalized society. She worked with Jane Addams at Hull House and within the settlement movement, feeling that her work would be more beneficial within this arena than working for the socialist party. While she continued her membership with the party throughout her life, she rarely, if ever, identified with their causes again.

Reisch and Andrews (2002) noted that radical social work would not have taken root if the times had not necessitated the ideas. They, like Jessica Rosenberg and Samuel Rosenberg (2006) wrote that the political and economic challenges of the 1890s set the stage for radical ideas. The new grouping, individuals who lived together due to similar experiences, of poor people that grew because of industrialization brought a new
realization that social services were in great need. It was during this time that people like Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, and Lillian Wald came together to create and form these social services. Despite many challenges these women, and many others, worked towards changing society to fit their utopian vision (Reisch & Andrews, 2002).

Reisch and Andrews (2002) contended that the connection between progressivism and radical social work arose because of the groups’ similar goals to reconcile class conflict and change the structure of society. What made radical social workers stand out at this time was the idea of working with clients versus working for clients. The idea was radical during this time because practitioners believed clients needed to be case managed and directed. This perspective was originally seen in the charity organizations and only began changing once the settlement movement occurred and more working class people became involved in the planning process. The belief in client self-determination and capability was just taking form and this practice was something the majority of workers had not embraced yet.

In line with Reisch and Andrews, Allison Murdach (2010) reported that Progressivism during the early 20th century was the beginning of radical social work. She agreed that issues such as poverty, welfare, and unemployment were issues tackled by radical social workers. For Murdach (2010) this activist and liberal approach is what separated social work from other disciplines of the times. Although being a progressive was not synonymous with being a radical social worker, the belief in settlements, community organizing and social reform brought progressives and radical social workers together. Murdach (2010) argued that radicals became radical once it became apparent
that social workers such as Mary Richmond, founder of modern day case management, had a difference in belief about the role of government in social reform and the idea that social workers could create better societies for all. Richmond felt that only through case management could individuals change their lives for the better. Rosenberg and Rosenberg (2006) agreed with Murdach stating that the history of social work branched into different paths when casework and social reform became different types of practice. Murdach (2010) claimed that radical social workers focused on more macro-level practice versus individualistic micro practice.

A major shift in the composition of social work happened during the time of the New Deal with the appearance of the Social Security Act of the 1930s. More unskilled and ethnically diverse people were added to the profession and a renewed interest in social activism appeared within the profession (Rosenberg & Rosenberg, 2006). It was during this time that a social worker, Mary Van Kleek, emerged with the plea for social workers and those in organized labor to join together to fight unemployment and poor working conditions. Despite the internal disputes between the caseworkers and the activists, people like Mary Van Kleek and Bertha Cappen Reynolds fought to unite social workers around different social reforms.

Radical social workers have been exposed to societal harassment many times through their history, but maybe never as directly as after World War II. At that time, union activists and social workers were called out as communists by the government and forced to identify their political background (Rosenberg & Rosenberg, 2006). After these attacks, social work, as a profession, began to focus on identifying itself within the
scientific community, trying to assert itself as a legitimate profession. It was not until the 1960s, with the rise of anti-racism and anti-poverty movements that radical social workers again appeared in the public eye. During the 1960s, social workers joined with other social reformers, those working in the feminist and civil rights movements, to create a practice involving community organizing.

Currently, social workers are still defining themselves individually and as part of a whole profession. Not having a clear definition of what social work is, or is not, seems to illicit a challenge for current day social workers.

**Definitions of Radical Social Work**

According to the *Social Work Reference* (2010), the purpose of having a political ideology is that it provides a framework for understanding social ills, helps to create solutions to these ills, and provides a plan of action. Radical social work has been redefined many times to suit the people who have continued to claim it as their own political ideology. Some have said this vagueness and ambiguity of terms has made radical social work vulnerable to organizations and people who dislike the values and objectives of social work (Ferguson & Lavalette, 2007). Jeffry Galper has said that by having these vague definitions, confusion and multiple interpretations have arisen making it harder to have a solidified group. He felt that social workers should work to define the terms without becoming dogmatic in the process (Galper, 1975). In line with this, Saul Alinsky, said that society, at large, is at fault for the inability to define this terminology. He says society has given us few ideas, if any, on how to truly illicit change in our communities (Alinsky, 1971). There is some debate that the political climate throughout
history has had influence on how the term, radical, has been defined and if the term, radical, was even used (Murdach, 2010). Other terms associated with radical social work include; critical social work, progressive social work, and structural social work (Ferguson & Lavalette, 2007). Radical social work has been linked with different political traditions such as the socialist movement, the progressive tradition of the early 20th century, and the far-left movement of the 1960s (Murdach, 2010).

There has been as much debate about what radical social is, as what it is not. In 1929 Porter Lee spoke with social work leaders stating social work should cease being involved with causes and movements and redefine itself as a regular social welfare organization (Murdach, 2008). Lee felt that radical social work was not able to appeal to the entire community and was therefore, detrimental. By ostracizing the majority of people, social work had the potential of ruining its' reputation, which rendered itself useless. According to Jeffry Galper (1975), the definition of radical social work has been synonymous with the liberal left and other militant groups, which has watered down the meaning of the word radical, or instilled fear in potential radical social workers. The liberal left often associated radical social work with reformist social work, which Galper felt was incorrect since he believed the current structure could not be reformed. He also agreed with others that the definition of radical should derive from the debate about whether social work should come from a cause standpoint, or a functional standpoint (Galper, 1975). His idea that radical means change instead of adjustment allowed him to rule out many other definitions of this term. After talking to many people, Galper found that people saw radical social work as a contradictory term, on one hand being the
desirable ideology, but on the other, an unrealistic way of practice (Galper, 1980). Saul Alinsky, in his book, *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals*, said the association between revolution, radical social work, and communism was where the process of defining radical process had stopped. He stated that the inability to see things as dual pairs, or opposing parts, has led people into confusion, rather than starting the creative process. Alinsky (1989) said most social workers are stuck in a middle land that speaks about justice and creates a more equitable society and yet, discourages any type of effective social change. For him this is the reason we have been unable to securely define radical social work (Alinsky, 1971).

For some, depending on their definition, the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and Values support the idea of radical social work. The value of increasing the choice and life opportunities for all people and the responsibility to contribute unpaid time to activities that promote the welfare of society has been cited as representative of radical concepts. This is something that most social workers are not doing in their regular practice. The Code of Ethics states that social work involves the private lives of social workers and they should work towards service to others above their own self-interest (Gibelman, 2008).

Allison Murdach (2008), in her article about the Americanization movement, said radical social work was defined as a unifying effort to fight for social justice, with interventions such as a plan for national service, industrial mobilization and military preparedness. In an article based on the Temperance movement, Murdach (2009) states that radical social work is a moral mission and that social workers should create a more
just and equitable society. She feels that social work is the “conscience of the community,” and it should be focused on humanitarian values (Murdach, 2009, p.10). Murdach seems to think that use of government should be included in radical social work and that social workers should focus on mass betterment, rather than increasing the lives of a few. She states we should go back to the origins of social work, focusing on larger social issues versus falling so closely with the psychology disciplines (Murdach, 2009).

Andrews and Reisch (2002) state in their article that the main focus of radical social work should be on economic redistribution and social workers should fight against the government with the people. These people should include workers, women, people of color and all other vulnerable populations. These authors feel social workers have been taught to be agents of social control and that radical social workers need to challenge the status quo within their profession and out. They say the unifying theme for radical social workers should be to fight on behalf of those oppressed populations (Andrews & Reisch, 2010).

In an article about Anarcha-feminism, an ideology often associated with radical social work, trade unions, collectives, and neighborhood associations should be included in the definition of organizations that radical social workers help to create. For this author, creating culture and changing structure seems to be the main definition of actions suitable to radicalism (Anarcha-Feminism).

The Social Work Reference points out that the main goal of social work should be to help in the creation of a society where people are able to achieve their full human potential and be able to receive resources according to their need. This book defines
radical social work as helping people overcome the government through social movements and through other elements of class struggle. The writers think that social problems are created within societies and reflect the unequal power and resource distribution within society, which is where radical social workers should step in (Social Work Reference, 2009).

Another author in the social work reference states that radical social work is modeled after the black power movements and should focus on "collectivist orientations to power," as well as a "politicized approach to alternative power." This writer thinks consciousness-raising activities should be the goal of radical social workers (Mizrahi, 2008).

While it seems that most definitions of radical social work have strayed away from the connection between militant groups and radical social work, the author Denise Dreikasen, states that radical social work requires "guerilla advocacy." She has found that when oppressed populations are caught within the rules set by government, playing by the rules is not effective in creating change. She believes that planning together to fight government agencies is the definition of radical social work (Dreikasen, 2009).

David Wagner (2009) in his article, "Radical Social Work as Conceit", agrees with Dreikasen in that there needs to be "revolutionary transformation" and that this entails oppressed people taking on these systems that oppress.

The difference between Dreikasen and Wagner is that Wagner believes the job of a radical social worker is to empower communities to fight their own battles versus taking on the system themselves as social workers. His main definition is for social
workers to train and educate people so they can make change (Wagner, 2009). The authors Ian Ferguson and Michael Lavalette defined radical social work as having the ability to “overcome individualism and social fragmentation” by helping to rediscover “collective, community development traditions” (Ferguson & Lavalette, 2007).

Other authors, Patrick Selmi and Richard Hunter, believe Mary Van Kleek, a radical social worker, was correct in assuming that radical social work meant increasing standards of living for all by establishing strong community coalitions and encouraging political dissent (Selmi & Hunter, 2001). In Jeffry Galper’s book on radical social work, a comparison of radical social work to the Marxist social visions made and the author believes that radical social work equals socialist social work. He felt that by defining radical social work as such, it becomes easy to identify the political ideology behind the idea and that it also provides a specific game plan. Although he delineated between being radical and being a social worker, he stated one cannot exist without the other. He felt it was important that social worker was the job title, while the political stance was socialist. Like others, Galper felt that we needed change instead of an adjustment in society (Galper, 1975). In his second book titled, *The Politics of Social Services*, Jeffry Galper defines radical social work as the ability to create a society in which “every person is afforded maximum opportunity to enrich his/her spiritual, psychological, physical, and intellectual well-being” (Galper, 1971). The common themes presented in this literature, with regards to radical social work, are the need for social change to enhance social justice, assisting oppressed population to achieve the highest possible life standards, and the need to create a world focused on small collective-type organizations.
versus large government agencies. The tactics and strategies used to achieve these goals are as varied as the definitions.

Organizational Theories

A person’s choice about which organizing theory, tactic, or strategy to use often depends on what political and/or ethical ideology they come from. Some authors focus on power dynamics, some on community building and others form their opinions based on years of experience as community organizers.

Power Dynamics

For Saul Alinsky (1985), organizing is all about reorganizing power structures so they work for the majority, rather than the small, wealthy minority. He says the main goal of an organizer is to build a strong group of people who are disenchanted with their situation enough to create conflict and illicit change. Alinsky states, “change comes from power, and power comes from organization. In order to act, people must get together” (Alinsky, 1985, p. 74). This idea informs the rest of his organizing tactics and strategies around empowering people to believe they have power in numbers and can change a multitude of issues in their respective communities. Like others, Saul Alinsky believes it is difficult to tackle only one issue. He has found that most issues, or challenges within communities are intertwined and one cannot be fixed without the other. In his book, Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals, he writes about specific tactics organizations can use to overcome challenges within their communities (1989).
First and foremost, Alinsky states the organizations have to do what they can with what they have. This means if the organization has a lot of people and no money, one would create an intervention that needs a lot of people and no money. Secondly, he warns that an organizer should never go beyond the experience of the people s/he is working for, but should always go beyond the expectations of the opponent. He felt that people would never be invested in an intervention they could not understand due to lack of experience and that in order to shock the opponent, new and creative tactics must be implemented. Third, he says people should enjoy what they are working on and to ensure this, individuals should be organizing around multiple issues. Lastly, Alinsky said people must be trained when to put pressure on and when to take it off. He thought this was essential if the goal of the organizer was long-term change (Alinsky, 1971).

Community Building

Whereas Saul Alinsky focused on power and conflicts, Jeffry Galper (1980) came from a socialist perspective. He believed people and their challenges needed to be looked at within their larger political framework and context. He said a person’s radical practice should be informed by their radical theory. The socialist theory, or radical theory, is similar to the humanitarian liberal techniques in terms of beliefs about inspiring confidence in members and assisting people in dealing with oppressive situations.

Radical Tactics

Jeffry Galper’s specific tactics include finding a small group to discuss needed change, followed by bringing their ideas to a larger audience to identify issue. The group would then mobilize the masses to make their own decisions, formulate strategies, and,
finally, monitor the results. In congruence with others, Galper discussed what the analysis of the problem would look like, saying organizers have to have an ecological perspective since people do not live in separation from their environments (Galper, 1980). In another book, Galper (1975) goes further, by saying that organizations need to create places that exemplify the future. People need to be inspired and the best way to achieve this is to have a working example of success in action. As said earlier, he believes society has to be transformed not just changed and the way to change is by using a bottom-up perspective, which requires facilitating change at the local level. Galper created a code of ethics similar to the NASW code of ethics, in order to help radical organizers synthesize their work. Some examples of this code include believing that the most important duty is to work for all people and carrying the belief that each person should help to any extent they can and that each person should receive everything they need for survival (Galper, 1975). Others include “...accept responsibility for working toward the creation and maintenance of conditions in society that enable all people to live by this code,” and “...contribute knowledge, skills and support to the accomplishment of a humanistic, democratic, communal socialist society” (Galper, 1975, p.68).

For Tony Brown, a union organizer, new organizing methods include education, creating community relationships, and developing new plans to influence politics (Brown, 2006). Like all above, Brown says in order for people to be invested in the intervention they have to be involved in the assessment and implementation. His tactics include mobilizing members, collective action and teaching assertiveness. Brown, who is from Australia, discussed past techniques and their lack of effectiveness and says he is
looking towards the United States for ideas about creating community unions. Community unions are organizations focused on "...giving political voice to low-wage workers on a range of issues, including housing, urban renewal, transport, employment generation and provision of social amenities" (Brown, 2006, p.3) Like Alinsky, Brown said organizations can no longer focus on only one issue. Brown linked the word fusion with this concept saying organizers need to fuse together issues for people from all background and cultures.

Unlike others, Brown (2006) outlined challenges that all organizations face including, how to recruit its' members, how to build confidence amongst them, and how to create a vision of the world that most people would be willing to sacrifice and work towards. He says by empowering people to make their own plans, organizers increase people's sense of personal and collective effectiveness. For Brown, effective organizers are trained organizers. He felt that people needed to be trained in techniques of protest, political and media work, as well as how to appropriately communicate with different stakeholders. If people were trained in these topics and shared a common belief, they would then come out as leaders and be able to direct their learning. Lastly, Brown said that there is a strong link between "organizing, educating, and articulating a vision" (Brown, 2006, p.7).

Ellen Ryan (2010) has been a community organizer for twenty plus years. She agrees with most other authors in the importance of creating leadership capacity within the people and have them build public relationships, develop strategies, and take action to achieve their goals. Ryan's most pressing strategy was the importance of face-to-face
communication. She disagreed with most current mobilizing tactics like mass emailing and generic cold calling. She felt that change had to happen within solid organizations. Ryan felt that in order to be an effective organizer a person has to research, participate in community and power analysis and identify potential issues with obtaining new membership.

Lastly, Keli Bryan, Dena Klein, and Maurice Elias (2007), co-authored an article applying organizational theories to action research. These authors felt that organizing was intricately linked to action research. They stressed the importance, like so many others, of interdependence amongst oppressed groups and those working for these groups. Another repeated theme was that change and social movement within an organization is vital to the overall health of an organization. These authors said that this constant change equals “dynamic equilibrium” within the groups (Bryan, Klein & Elias, 2007). They also discussed that collaboration can only occur once participation and partnerships have begun to form and that in order to do this, one has to distribute knowledge to the largest extent possible. This knowledge includes communicating with others about the current project and clarifying any misinformation. Like others, these authors spoke about client ownership of the change process and about each client population having a unique culture in which individual’s abilities need to be identified.

Theories

These authors found theories they felt should inform and organizers practices include the sociotechnical systems design theory and the generative theory. The sociotechnical systems design theory, or SSDT, is used in order to generate the most
perspectives possible. This follows that one person’s issue feeds in another person’s and so on. This theory focuses on fitting specific interventions to specific settings and they say this will result in an increase in commitment and investment in outcome. The generative theory’s main focus is on creating dialogue that challenges assumptions and leads to change.

**Positive Relationship Building**

Building positive relationships is imperative to success and transforming all organizations into places for safe learning is the goal. The organization process these authors brought forth included problem analysis, innovation design, field trial, and measuring effectiveness (Bryan, Klein & Elias, 2007). To define these more specifically problem analysis would cover the understanding of organization structure and resources, innovation design would be the organizational member’s specific approach to achieving goals and field trial would be training people in these goals. Lastly, innovation diffusion would be diffusing the information throughout the organization.

Common themes heard throughout the literature were the importance of understanding interdependence, not only of people, but also of organizations, the need to empower the people enough to create their own interventions and strategies, and organizer training.

**Summary**

The definition and meaning of radical social work has a long and tenuous history beginning over 100 years ago. Multitudes of practitioners and clients have redefined and restructured the meaning and this continues to be the case. Common themes associated
with radical social work include restructuring versus changing societal patterns, working towards social reform, and building small collectives within communities. Most authors agreed that certain organizational strategies are more effective than other strategies. Throughout the literature, the need for a specific plan coupled with community motivation seemed to be the key ingredients for success.

The gap in the literature is that current day research of radical organizations and the strategies they use are few and far between. With the current economic and social conditions, it would appear that the need for radical change is again present. People seem to be disenchanted with government and angry that inadequate social services exist to alleviate the pressures of unemployment and low wages. It seems the pattern of scarcity, need for security, anger, and activism continues to cycle and more research would benefit all.
Chapter 3

METHODS

The purpose of this chapter is to define and explain both the research design and data collection of this researcher’s project. This researcher outlines who participates and how these participants are protected, as well as what measurements are put into place to check for validity and reliability of this project.

Design

The research design chosen for this project is called participant observation. This project is a descriptive, qualitative study and the researcher’s association began with this organization in August of 2010. The researcher carries out participant observation by using a variety of methods and techniques to collect data. Some of these methods include observation, document analysis, and participation, with self-analysis of that experience. By directly participating in the organization, this researcher is able to decrease the extent to which the natural setting is disturbed by data gathering techniques that arrest ongoing activities in the organization. This process allows the researcher to experience and observe the organization’s norms and organizational tactics and strategies in nearly its natural state.

The method is appropriate for this particular project because participant observation helps the researcher learn the perspectives held by the study population and, more importantly, to learn about the organization, its goals and its strategies for maximizing those goals. This method enables the researcher to gain a greater understanding of the social, cultural, and economic contexts in which the organization is
involved, as well as to observe the relationships among contexts, ideas, and events. Participating in the organization provides an understanding that can only come from personal experience. Lastly, participant observation can assist the researcher in uncovering factors important for a thorough understanding of the problem that were unknown to the researcher when the study was designed.

**Research Questions**

This researcher is evaluating and observing an organization so it is not possible to control variables for testing. The topics that are explored using a qualitative method include; how is the organization engaged in radical social work and do the values of the organization follow with the values and ethics of a radical social work practice? What radical organizational tactics and strategies is this organization engaged in, if any?

**Participants**

The organization of interest is Women's International League of Peace and Freedom. The design includes observation of public activities and meetings that the organization participates in, archival information describing past organizational strategies and tactics and the organization’s website that details the organization’s mission and value statements.

There were no problems encountered in obtaining the data for analyses in the research because the organization is open to the public, as is all of their archival information. Information needed from the Sacramento Valley Branch of Women's International League, was obtained with permission from the gatekeeper of the local branch, who also works as the national treasurer of the organization. Permission to use
the organization for this researcher’s study was granted by Ellen Swartz, National Treasurer, in a letter she wrote to this researcher. A copy of the permission letter is attached in the appendix of this paper.

**Instrumentation**

The instrument used in gathering the data is the researcher herself and the researcher’s ability to objectively make observations. The researcher is observing events and meetings, then recording all accounts and observations as field notes in a field notebook. The researcher is also documenting information and messages communicated through mass media such as emails and website updates. This researcher selected this instrument because it seems there is no substitute for witnessing, or participating in activities and events.

**Validity/Reliability**

The researcher is the instrument in this project and therefore validity and reliability are only as good as she is. Reliability is quite low due to the fact that the study cannot be repeated. Each of the events on the organization’s calendar is unique. Because this is only a one-time study in a specific place, over a small point in time, the findings from the study cannot be generalized to other organizations, or other times of this same organization. This researcher tries to be objective and is doing her fact-checking, attending multiple activities, meetings, and discussions and therefore the project has face-validity.

**Data Gathering Procedures**

This researcher obtained permission to do the study from Women’s International
League of Peace and Freedom by enlisting the help of a gatekeeper within the organization. This person not only represents the Sacramento Valley branch, but is also the national treasurer of the organization. Other members were informed of this researcher’s intent to observe the organization for research purposes during an initial meeting the researcher attended. All core members were present at this meeting. The researcher did not inform members at subsequent meetings. The letter of cooperation is included within the appendices.

The specific steps taken to gather the data include observation and participation in a variety of events hosted by, or with, Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom, as well as monthly meetings that take place with the Sacramento Valley Branch. During these events and meetings, the researcher takes copious amounts of descriptive notes that pertain to the researcher’s research questions. These notes are then expanded after the events to ensure objectivity, as well as to include any observations that could not be documented while participating. Other data gathering procedures include researching the national and local website for archival information that pertains to the research questions including past trainings on organizational strategies and tactics, mission and philosophy of the organization, and any other pertinent information that are found.

**Protection of Human Subjects**

This research project does not involve any human subjects. The subject for this project is an organization and its organizational strategies and tactics, as it pertains to radical social work. As stated earlier, permission to observe and participate within this
organization was granted by a member of the organization and is attached in the appendix. The researcher and the project’s advisor rate the impact of this research on human subjects to be none since no human subjects will be involved. The request for review by the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects was submitted and approved by the University and the level of risk was “exempt.”

The efforts made to reduce any possible risk includes the researcher not voicing any views of the organization during observation and self-disclosure of the researcher’s intention within the organization to all members present. Although no human subjects are involved in this project, informed, voluntary participation is insured by the researcher’s self-disclosure to core participants in the Sacramento Valley Branch. Confidentiality is insured because this researcher emphasized observations of activities of the organization, rather than personalities of characters within the organization. There is no identifying information disclosed, or documented for this project. The information obtained for this project comes from the researcher’s observations of the organization, not the people participating in the organization.

**Data Analysis**

This is a qualitative study and this project is engaged in a description of the activities of the organization and will analyze those activities in terms of the literature on community organizations and radical social work strategies. The researcher is using information obtained from archival information, as well as field notes that are obtained from observing and participating in the organization. There is no data to analyze as there might be in an empirical study.
Summary

The purpose of this chapter is to describe and define the methods that are used in this project. The design used is a qualitative research method called a participant observation. The objects of study are the organization, Women's International League of Peace and Freedom and the archival information from the national and local websites. This chapter explained that while there are no human subjects in this project, precautions are put into place to insure that no harm could come from the information presented. This chapter also discussed the validity and reliability of the data collected in this project and defined the topics that were included in the instruments. Lastly, this chapter covered how the data collected is analyzed and what the final product of this project is expected to contain.
Chapter 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe what the researcher observed while participating in the organization, Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom. Participant observation is a research design involving direct participation of the researcher in the activities studied. The observations for this project are described in terms of radical social work strategies and tactics, using Saul Alinksy and Jeffry Galper’s models for comparison and contrast. This chapter is organized by the activities observed, archival information retrieved from the National website for the organization, as well as the history of the organization and organizational culture. Each activity is described, and then compared and contrasted to the radical social work tactics and strategies presented by Alinksy and Galper. The activities described in this chapter are attendance in the Advancing Women as Peacemakers workshop, five monthly planning meetings, the California Cluster Meeting, the presentation of a book by Ben Dangl, and participation in the Cost of War Art Project. The chapter will end with an overall critique of the organization.

History of WILPF

According to the National website, Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom was started in 1915 with Jane Addams as the first president. The organization was created during World War I, when a group of women discovered their shared belief that war should not be an answer to conflict. The small group brought together over 1000
women, from different Nations, to compose alternative ideas to prevent and end armed conflict. From this group, Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom (WILPF) was formed. WILPF’s first president was Jane Addams, founder of Hull House and first U.S. women to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. The founding women, as well as the organization today, believes that all conflict, domestic and foreign, is connected and needs to be solved collaboratively. Their vision includes world disarmament, equality for all, and sustainable development.

A few significant items, describing the radical perspectives and activities of the organization, pulled from the WILPF historical timeline include: 1922 a conference calling for a World Congress to create an agreement for genuine peace, 1931 Jane Addams was labeled the most “dangerous women in the world” by the FBI, 1969 sponsored an International conference to end chemical and biological warfare, 1982 brought one million signatures on a petition to the U.N. Disarmament Conference, and 1998 an International Conference on the effects of globalization on Women (WILPF United States Section). This, of course, is not an exhaustive list of WILPF’s activities. It is only to show the long history the organization has had within the international peace community. It is also to show that WILPF interacts on many different levels, from local to international. In a non-radical organizations there is the belief that communities cannot cope with their environment and therefore need help to adjust to it. In a radical organization, the belief is that the socio-economic structure of a community is inadequate and that communities need help to change the structures that are affecting them. WILPF
definitely functions under the assumption that communities have the power to change their situations and given the proper organizational tactics, could do so effectively.

The organizational structure is composed of a National Board including a president, secretary, treasurer, and a personnel and nominating committee. The Board endorses actions presented by aligned groups, as well as issues from the international and local branches. Most communication is emails sent out to members, in the form of positions WILPF has decided to take and the way a branch can take action. The U.S. Section by-laws are as follows,

"The League aims to bring together women of different political beliefs and philosophies united in their determination to study, make known and help abolish the causes and legitimization of war, and to work toward world peace.....The League sees as its ultimate goal the establishment of an international economic order founded on meeting the needs of all peoples and not those of profit and privilege. The work of the U.S. Section of the League is based on these aims and principles and on the statements and resolutions adopted by the International Congress and the International Board (WILPF United States Section).

These by-laws are used as a basis for all communication with international governments and any action that WILPF decides to take. WILPF is a nonprofit, as well as nonpartisan organization. Membership is open to all, but each member does have to pay dues that are established yearly by the National office. A member can work alone, or with a conventional branch. Branches are made up of at least ten due paying members.
The Branches must adhere to the National and International by-laws, as well as remain in good standing, to utilize the WILPF name in their work.

The Sacramento Valley Branch of WILPF has a sporadic history of activity and cohesion. They have a core group of members containing about seven people. The group stopped meeting in 2010 due to a lack of participation, but has since been restarted with some old and some new members. The branch is now meeting on a regular basis at different member’s houses, and has also created it's own website to update the local and national community. Following is a list of activities that this researcher participated in and observed during her time with the Sacramento Valley Branch of WILPF.

**Participant Observations**

Participant observation research uses a variety of methods and techniques to collect data. Some of these methods include observation, document analysis, and participation with self-analysis. By directly participating in the organization this researcher will be able to decrease the extent in which the natural setting is disturbed and it will allow the researcher to observe the organization’s norms and organizational tactics and strategies. Following is a description of this researcher’s observations.

**Advancing Women As Peacemakers Workshop**

The purpose of this resolution, SCR 1325 (Security Council Resolution 1325), was to increase awareness and develop activities and policies that would alleviate the crimes against women and children during wartime, as well as to increase the role of women in peacekeeping operations, field missions, and post-conflict reconstruction. The workshop was created due to WILPF’s interest in implementing the resolution SCR 1325.
The United Nations unanimously adopted this resolution in 2000. The hope, at that time, was that each nation would create its own action plan to implement the resolution and then report back to the United Nations on difficulties and successes. The United States has yet to create an action plan, eleven years after the resolution was adopted. The workshop had three goals including, building awareness of the efforts at the United Nations to strengthen women's rights around the world, to connect globally the history of women’s peacemaking, and to actively support present day struggles of women for a more just world. There were, and are, many other workshops presented by WILPF, but this was the only one this researcher was actively involved in.

The workshop was held at this researcher’s residence and included community members, as well as WILPF members. The two women who led the workshop were Marie Lyse Numuhoza and Dr. Sushma Pankule. Both women have been involved within international chapters of WILPF, including the UK WILPF and WILPF Nagpur Branch in India. The workshop was very informal including a small group of about twenty people. The workshop began with the speakers giving a history of women peacemakers, as well as their personal history and hands-on experience in conflict areas. They explained the importance of women as catalysts for demilitarizing U.S. International Relations and lastly, the importance of creating a new generation of women advocates.

This researcher’s role was to pass out flyers, flyer sample attached in Appendix B, to the community, as well as discuss the workshop in two different classes. This researcher, and the lead woman organizing the workshop, created the flyer that was to be
delivered to the community. As said earlier, this researcher also hosted this event, providing chairs and accommodations to the speakers and participants.

reaction of researcher. Jeffry Galper encouraged radical social workers to view their challenges within the larger, political framework. For this workshop, the speakers utilized information obtained by UNICEF and UNDP as their political framework:

It would cost $5.4 billion a year to insure that every child goes to school, $10 billion a year to provide decent water and sanitation for all (UNDP), $50 billion a year to end poverty worldwide (UNDP), and $80 billion a year to meet all basic needs of everyone on earth (UNICEF). Worldwide military spending is currently about $1 trillion a year.

For the speakers and WILPF, the idea that the world spends so much on military spending when the money could be used to clothe, house, and feed families around the world is an atrocity and unacceptable. This framework informed the organization and speakers to view the workshop as the beginning of a movement to involve women and men in the implementation of a resolution that aims to dismantle the pro-military philosophy of the world and implement strategies that offer alternative solutions.

Galper’s tactics, as stated in chapter two, are more aligned with community development ideas versus power dynamics. His tactics include inspiring confidence among members of an organization, having a working example of success in action and facilitating change at the local level (Galper, 1975 ). The speakers were able to inspire confidence within the members by giving the history of peacemakers that have created change within their communities. They informed the participants of their activities within their respective
countries including being the founder of Women Peacemakers for Great Lakes Region of Africa, and writing articles such as “Role of Women in Self Guarding the Environment.” The women also discussed their belief in changing people at the local level before taking action at a more macro level. This tactic is parallel with Jeffry Galper’s bottom-up-philosophy, which states that transformation cannot begin until those at the local level are invested in the change. The goal of the workshop was to inspire a small local group that would go on to work at different levels within their communities. The speakers gave recommendations for moving forward with the implementation of SCR 1325 including visiting embassies and state departments to ask how much they have done in regards to SCR 1325, putting on workshops to inform others within the community and organizing a trip to the state capital to discuss human security versus military security.

According to the WILPF national website, issues with the implementation of SCR 1325 within the U.S. are a generally low-level of understanding about the purposes and functioning of the United Nations and the reluctance of U.S. residents to think of their country as actively engaged in armed conflicts. This researcher was able to observe these issues within the participants of the workshop as it was reflected in their questions.

Once the workshop was completed, the Sacramento Valley Branch of WILPF was referred to the National Website to view the tool kit available for planning and convening women’s peace tables. According to the website, the peace tables had multiple purposes:

- Promoting the political rationale for bringing women together as a constituency and movement autonomous from party affiliation; modeling an inclusive, transparent process whereby interest and identity group issues can be harmonized
into a coordinated, synergistic women's agenda; creating capacity to steward a harmonized women's agenda and invest in its implementation with widespread grassroots buy-in; and linking the importance of protecting women's human rights with the prevention of armed conflict (WILPF United States Section).

These purposes directly reflect the organizations goal to create long-term forces of social change. The implementation of peace tables is discussed further within the monthly planning meetings, but up until the writing of this document, the Sacramento Valley Branch has not participated in a peace table.

**Monthly Planning Meetings**

The researcher attended five Sacramento Valley Branch monthly planning meetings. Each meeting was held at a different member's residence and there were, on average, seven people present. A team of two members planned each meeting and an agenda was sent out prior to the meeting. The researcher's main purpose for participating in the monthly planning meetings was to observe how the group functioned as a whole, as well as to discern how, and if, the group was able to implement radical social work strategies and tactics to meet their stated goals. The researcher fully participated in each meeting by either hosting the meeting, joining with another member to co-facilitate, or by actively participating in the discussions that took place.

The October meeting was slated to plan for the coming year, as well as to discuss how the group could obtain a higher, consistent membership. Before this researcher and another student had joined the Sacramento Valley Branch, the age make-up of the group was sixty plus years on average. The group found that the use of technology was not
being utilized to its' full advantage and that the group may not be attractive to the younger generation. In addition, due paying members had not been contacted in over a year and mail outs had stopped due to financial shortages. The group decided to host an inspirational core meeting that would allow members to express their wishes for the branch for the following year, as well as decide what issues the branch felt they could make the biggest impact.

The November meeting was the inspirational core meeting. Members brought all of their ideas together to plan for the following year. From this meeting the group discovered difficulties in defining the following year's activities. They had different definitions of the word inspirational and half the meeting entailed discussing what type of meeting the group was having. The researcher noted that if the group had a common belief system, or political ideology agreed upon, the meeting may have been more succinct. Jeffry Galper stated that he created the Code of Ethics for Radical Social Service Workers for this purpose (Galper, 1971). The ideas created during this meeting included:

- Calling all due paying members to update about current group activities, as well as to gather input about the following year's activities.
- Including group building activities within each meeting agenda in order to create a more unified group.
- Including strategies from the National organization in each activity, to ensure the group is being as effective as possible.
The December meeting entailed calling due-paying members that had not been participating within the group, except in monetary donations. This researcher noted that the members, as a whole, appreciated being informed of the group’s activities, but were not motivated enough to began having a physical presence at the meetings. The reasons behind this seemed to vary from health reasons, to being involved with other groups and not having time. The branch also discussed WILPF’s vision and mission statement, as they felt it might inspire a more cohesive group. The vision and mission statement of the organization are as follows:

WILPF envisions a transformed world at peace, where there is racial, social, and economic justice for all people everywhere—a world in which: The needs of all people are met in a fair and equitable manner, all people equally participate in making the decisions that affect them, the interconnected web of life is acknowledged and celebrated in diverse way and communities, and human societies are designed and organized for sustainable existence.

WILPF members create the peaceful transformation they wish to see in the world by making connections that: Provide continuity with the past so that knowledge of historical events and patterns informs current activities for change; Create analysis and action that reflect and reinforce each other; Link and challenge root
causes of oppression, especially racism, sexism, heterosexism, militarism, economic disparity, and political disempowerment; and build and strengthen relationships and movements for justice, peace, and radical democracy (WILPF United States Section).

From this discussion the group was able to realign with each other and set certain priorities in regards to projects they were trying to agree upon. The group discussed the importance of working collectively and building cooperation and consciousness. Some stated that the group needed to focus on helping people to understand the social consequences of the market system and helping to deal collectively with social problems. Lastly, the group agreed upon the importance of making alliances with other organizations locally, as well as nationally.

In January, the group was given an update by members on different projects. The group decided how to incorporate strategies into each project, such as peace tables and involving the community’s ideas. Ideas similar to those presented by Saul Alinsky were brought up, such as ways to get the group’s voices heard in any pacifist way possible. Alinsky thought that the study of power was essential to success. This did not mean violence, but paying serious attention to the powers that be. The group talked about needing more alliances within the community, in order to have power in numbers. They talked about creating the next revolution and how movements are started.

The last meeting in March was held to discuss the results of the national elections, as well as to plan for the up-coming Cost Of War Project event and anti-war March in
San Francisco. The group seemed to be gaining momentum and had a strong sense of cohesion and foresight.

_reactions of the researcher_. This researcher found that while the education provided during the monthly meetings was beneficial, the group's inability to fully plan with and engage in their community rendered them ineffective. In comparison to the tactics and strategies of Saul Alinksy and Jeffry Galper, the group was unable to track membership, as well as work with a bottom-up perspective. This researcher did note that the participants were able to work on and discuss the complications of their group dynamic frequently, and this made it possible for the group to continue working together.

**Cost of War Art Project**

This project was a community interactive art project. The purpose was to educate the public about the cost of the Iraq and Afghanistan war, so that they would be able to decide what type of action they would be willing to take for, or against them. The project gathered art that represented the cost of war and the art was then exhibited at different public locations. After viewing the work, community members were able to fill out questionnaire cards that were then delivered to Congresswoman Matsui.

This researcher noted the enthusiasm that came with this project. More people attended these breakout meetings than others. In emails sent from members around the country, it was reported that people enjoyed art as the catalyst for discussion. Art is often controversial and therefore using art as a way to stir up dissatisfaction and discontent felt like a natural process for some. There was consistently ten to thirteen people represented. The topics of discussion included deciding where the art could be displayed and how to
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have WILPF members available in case community members wanted to discuss more than what they were able to put in the questionnaire/opinion cards.

**reactions of the researcher.** Saul Alinsky, in his book, *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals*, stated that it is the organizer’s job to ensure there is a clear action plan in place so that participants are not left feeling restless. He felt that people needed to know what the method of change was going to be; otherwise, they would utilize their energy elsewhere (Alinsky, 1971). This researcher observed the planning meetings where members who were especially enthusiastic, coming to every meeting and participating in all activities, continued to attend as long as the action plan remained clear. When the group became disjointed and unorganized members no longer attended meetings and those that stayed seemed agitated. Alinsky felt that only focusing on one issue could deter groups from functioning at their full potential (Alinsky, 1971). This researcher observed the deterioration of the group after a six-month period of participation, focusing on this one issue. Participants seemed to tire of the project and this researcher noted that some of the complaints were a lack of direction and leadership.

Saul Alinksy offered specific rules to follow when organizing within a community. His sixth and seventh rules were that an organizer should make the process enjoyable and it should be time sensitive (Alinksy, 1971). This researcher noted that once the participants no longer enjoyed the process they stopped attending and once the project went on longer than a few months, participants began to lose interest.

After a short hiatus, the project has begun to meet again, but only with half the number of participants. The core group of members reorganized their goals, put a short
time-line of activities together and added new information that may draw other WILPF members, as well as community members into the project. The art pieces are still being displayed within the community.

**CA Cluster Meeting**

The WILPF California Cluster meeting was hosted by the San Francisco Branch in San Francisco, California. The theme of the meeting was how could U.S. WILPF make the sum of their branches equal to more than their parts. The group was seeking information about how branches that are geographically close to each other could help support each other with different projects, as well as to gather a body of knowledge from all branches present that could then be compiled and sent to the National office. There were seven branches represented and fifty-six people in attendance. The majority of the group had been affiliated with WILPF for ten, or more years and many twenty, or more. This researcher participated in all break out groups, as well as presented what the Sacramento Valley Branch has been focusing on the last six months.

The beginning of the meeting entailed the hosting branch describing current issues that WILPF is interested in and what WILPF’s mission is in regards to each. Most branches are currently involved, in some capacity, with each of the five issues.

**Haiti.**

In 2005 WILPF formed the Haiti Issues Committee. According to the National Website, the committee was formed in response to the U.S.inspired coup d’etat in 2004 that resulted in the removal of Haiti’s democratically-elected president. The committee works to establish a relationship with Haitian grassroots women’s groups, visits
embassies of countries involved in the UN peacekeeping force, and lobbying Congress about the need for an investigation into the U.S. role in the occupation.

**Building the Beloved Community.**

The mission presented for this topic is to provide educational information about the history and nature of systemic racism, connections between oppressions, internalized oppressions, and racial justice. This topic was build with Dr. King’s global vision in mind, in which all people can participate in the wealth of the earth. The groups that participant on this issue work with local, national, and international groups to form communities where poverty, hunger, and homelessness are not tolerated.

**Disarm: Dismantling the War Economy.**

Much of the work WILPF does in regards to disarmament includes supporting international law. WILPF works closely with the United Nations, as a peace building organization, to educate and inform about conflict resolution. Most branches collaborate with other NGOs to lobby Congress, as well as meet with their own delegations in their home districts.

**Corporate Power: Assert the People’s Rights.**

This issue mainly focuses on education and informing local communities about how corporations use their constitutional rights and powers to define our laws, politics and communities. WILPF has begun doing studies on radical democracy and has begun to implement strategies to teach people about the right to self and mutual governance. This issue is most closely related to radical theory in that it seeks to start a movement.
According to the National website the goal is to radically alter the current power structure rather than react and adjust to the current situation.

The second part of the meeting was a dialogue between members about what does WILPF have to offer that is different from other organizations. Questions that were posed included:

- How can we institute a more democratic process at our national section level?
- How can we re-focus our activist roots and former focus in a coordinated way throughout the section?
- How can we work together (branches, as well as at-large), on primary issues of war, women, and militarization.

reactions of the researcher. From this discussion and meeting, the researcher observed many ideas that were congruent with radical tactics and strategies presented by Jeffry Galper. This cluster meeting explained how and why the organization functions at the capacity that it does. The education provided was paramount and this researcher was able to understand why and how the organization, as a whole, chooses certain tactics over others.

“Dancing with Dynomite” Presentation

This presentation was a discussion of the book, Dancing with Dynomite, by author Ben Dangl (March 2011). The presentation included an overview of the book, and ways radical organizations in the United States could organize for power by utilizing techniques from groups in Latin America. Dangl reported that because movements have been so successful the last decade in Latin America, the U.S. should apply the tactics and
strategies here because of the similar situations. This presentation included many topics similar to those written about by Saul Alinsky.

**reactions of the researcher.** The author talked about social movements that were won in the streets. Similar to Alinsky, this author found that without the support of local people, change cannot occur, due to lack of investment. Like Alinsky, he found that people have to be so disenfranchised and frustrated that they are able to let go of the past and work towards the future. Another similarity between the two, was their belief in social relationships. Dangle talked about the need to create social relationships within our own social systems that demonstrate the world we are trying to create. To give examples about U.S. social movements that have successfully adopted Latin American tactics and strategies to their own situations, he told of the Chicago factory sit in from 2008 and the Take Back the Land Movement in Miami, Florida. The Chicago group adopted techniques from protests done in Argentina and the movement in Florida got the idea from the Share Landless Movement in Brazil. Explaining the successes of these movements helped inspire the groups present, by not only giving them tangible examples, but by showing how powerful small groups of people can be when they mobilize together.

**Overall Critique of the Organization**

Women's International League of Peace and Freedom has been consistent in it's efforts to combat violence against women and militarism for the last one hundred years. It has continued to work, at every level, to provide education on the expenditures of war and compare this to what could have been used on peaceful alternative. They have put
forth documents on ways to prevent conflict, rather than intervene once the conflict has already started. The organization needs to continue to make itself more visible within local communities, as well as in the larger global community. It needs to continue to encourage and inspire women to participate in decision-making processes that effect women. Lastly, the organization needs to be able to communicate strategies and tactics to each level. It seems that while the international community is heavily involved with the United Nations and other governments, the local U.S. branches engage less with them.

The local branches need to align with non-WILPF community members to create change, versus taking on all of the work themselves. During this project, the researcher noted that community members were not actively involved in creating a plan about what they wanted to be changed in their communities. While community members were invited to participate in certain events, there was no way to follow up with these members to inquire about their wishes. The local branch also needs a better system to track dues paying members. Without a solid member base to pull from, this branch seemed isolated at times. Part of being an effective radical organizer is the ability to network with a multitude of people to create change. If the branch is unable to even network amongst itself, it seems it would have a difficult time networking within it’s community.
Chapter 5
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK

Any revolutionary change must be preceded by a passive, affirmative, non-challenging attitude toward change among the mass of our people. They must feel so frustrated, so defeated, so lost, so futureless in the prevailing system that they are willing to let go of the past and chance the future.

-Saul Alinsky, 1971

Within this chapter the researcher discusses the conclusions and relevance of the findings for current day social workers, as well as ideas for future research. This project is a descriptive study and therefore the findings pertain to information the researcher gained from observing and directly participating in the Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom.

Review of Findings and Relevance

The main findings from this descriptive study are that WILPF, as a radical organization, participates and utilizes different tactics depending on the intent of the group. From the National website, one can see trainings and information that deals with power dynamics, coupled with strategies that are more militant, such as infiltrating an organization, or actively protesting an event. On the other-hand, there are many strategies to invoke community building such as peace tables, or facilitating a discussion within the community. Using participant observation as a data collection method, it was found that social work can and should participate in changing client systems through
macro level work. Being a participant in this organization led the researcher to acknowledge that working from a bottom-up perspective, as Jeffry Galper and Saul Alinsky have said, could be the most effective way to change current systems that are oppressive and cruel to clients many social workers serve. The researcher also noted that utilizing a variety of philosophies and tactics seemed to be more effective, than utilizing only one set of techniques.

**Implications**

This project led to a greater understanding of a radical organization and the tactics and strategies they used in order to meet their goals. This project showed the discrepancies between the intent of the organization and their actual results. Social workers may utilize this study to evaluate their own individual practice and see if participating in a radical social work organization may enable them to meet certain requirements set in the values and ethics of social work.

The unexpected results of the study were that the agenda of individuals within the local branch, at times, worked against the mission and vision of the organization. It was also found that at times the group was unable to generate adequate participation from the community, which made them inefficient to a certain extent.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

Future research efforts should consider whether they choose to disclose their intent to observe and potentially decide to interview members of the organization for more thorough information. Interviewing participants may have led to more in-depth
information about the organizations intent and how the Sacramento Valley Branch differs
from that of other branches, as well as the National office.

Summary

In summary, by utilizing the methodology of participant observation the
researcher was able to grasp a fuller concept of how a radical organization may, or may
not, interact with the community, to inspire members to change the political and social
systems they work with. Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom has a
long history of building communities, working with political systems to end
militarization and trying to create a more peaceful, sustainable environment for all. The
collection of this project is a more thorough investigation of radical social work, as it
stands today, and where more research may be needed in the future.
APPENDIX A
Letter of Permission

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM
Sacramento Valley Branch
9629 Bradhugh Ct., Sacramento, CA 95827
Tel. (916) 369-5510

I, Ellen Schwartz, co-chair of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Sacramento Valley Branch, give permission to Katie Reuter to perform a participant observation as a student researcher. She will be observing the political action tactics and strategies of this organization by observing and analyzing policy records. She has permission to use owned agency data that is public record, as well as any information obtained from local WILPF meetings. This agency is willing to provide agency space and time to Katie in order to conduct research. The resources provided will be literature pertaining to certain political action tactics, computer access, as well as all information for the WILPF website. Katie should follow regular WILPF rules and regulations to obtain information, which includes observing during local meetings, utilizing archives from website and any archival information that the Sacramento Valley Branch keeps. In order to minimize and risk to confidentiality Katie will abstain from evaluating any participants in the organization and will strictly evaluate and observe the organization.

Ellen Schwartz
Nov. 29, 2010
WHO IS WILPF?

The Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom was founded in 1915 during World War I, with Jane Addams as its first president. WILPF works to achieve world disarmament, full rights for women, racial and economic justice, and an end to all forms of violence.

Internationally, WILPF has sections in 37 nations and headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

The U.S. Section is made up of 40 local branches, 10 action committees, and politically involved women working in all fifty states.

In partnership with the National Women’s Studies Association and Suffolk University’s Center for Women’s Health and Human Rights, U.S. WILPF offers a Practicum in Advocacy at the United Nations, for college women, during the Commission on the Status of Women meetings in New York. Application materials available at http://wilpf.org/practicum_un_2011

Please join! Annual membership is $35. For more information, contact:
APPENDIX C

Flyer Provided for Peacemaker’s Workshop

WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM
Sacramento Valley Branch
presents
Advancing Women as Peacemakers:
a workshop with
Marie Lyse Numuhoza (Rwanda)
Dr. Sushma Pankule (India)
who will share their experience building peace and addressing community violence under the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

Advance Your role as a Peacemaker in the domestic and international arenas and get connected with other women peacemakers in Your community!

Saturday, October 16, 2010, 1:30–4:30pm
6145 Silverton Way, Carmichael, CA 95608
Suggested Donation $5 (includes hors d’oeuvres)
For more information and to R.S.V.P. please contact Ellen Schwartz, 916-369-5510, email: ellen@nicetechnology.com. (Sacramento branch website: www.sacwilpf.org)

ES/cwa#1701/AFL-CO
REFERENCES


Ryan, Ellen. (2010). It needs to be done and not enough folks are doing it. *Social Policy, summer.*


