THE CHICAGO AREA PROJECT REVISITED

Steven Schlossman, Michael Sedlak

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A RAND NOTE

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This Note analyzes the implementation and the operations of one of the pioneering ventures in delinquency prevention in the early 20th century, the Chicago Area Project. It focuses particularly on the Project's work in the Russell Square neighborhood of South Chicago in the 1930s and early 1940s. The analysis forms part of a larger study, sponsored by the National Institute of Education, of innovative approaches to delinquency prevention, past and present.

For readers who may not be familiar with the basic philosophy of the Chicago Area Project, the following summary should provide an adequate orientation (excerpted from Ernest Burgess, Joseph Lohman, and Clifford Shaw, "The Chicago Area Project," National Probation Association, Yearbook, 1937, pp. 8-10):

The Chicago Area Project is a program which seeks to discover by actual demonstration and measurement a procedure for the treatment of delinquents and the prevention of delinquency.... the distinctive emphasis in the Project is to achieve the fullest possible neighborhood participation.... All of the activities in the program are carried on with a view to making the neighborhood conscious of the problems of delinquency, collectively interested in the welfare of its children, and active in promoting programs for such improvements of the community environment as will develop in the children interests and habits of a constructive and socially desirable character.... [contrasted with the methods employed by traditional, casework-oriented social agencies] the Area Project emphasizes the development of a program for the neighborhood as a whole, as against a circumscribed institutional setup; (2) the Area Project stresses the autonomy of the actual residents of the neighborhood in planning and operating the program as contrasted with the traditional organizations in which control is vested in lay and professional persons who reside in or represent the interests of the more privileged communities; (3) the Area Project places great emphasis upon the training and utilization of neighborhood leaders as contrasted with the
general practice in which dependence is largely placed upon professionally trained leaders recruited from sources outside of the local neighborhood; (4) the Area Project seeks to utilize to the maximum established neighborhood institutions, particularly such natural social groupings as churches, societies, and clubs, rather than to create new institutions which embody the morale and sentiments of the more conventional communities; (5) the activities program in the Area Project is regarded primarily as a device for enlisting the active participation of local residents in a constructive community enterprise and creating and crystallizing neighborhood sentiment with regard to the task of promoting the welfare of children and the social and physical improvement of the community as a whole; (6) and, finally, an essential aspect of the Area Project is the emphasis which it places upon the task of evaluating the effectiveness of its procedure in constructively modifying the pattern of community life and thus effecting a reduction in delinquency and other related problems.
SUMMARY

This Note selectively examines a legendary experiment in community-based delinquency prevention during the 1930s and 1940s, the Chicago Area Project (CAP). The CAP embodied the first systematic challenge by sociologists to the dominance of psychology and psychiatry in public and private programs for the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency in the early 20th century. While scholars generally recognize the CAP as a pioneer effort in delinquency prevention, we know remarkably little about its operational schema and day-to-day activities in individual Chicago communities. Prior studies have examined the CAP primarily as an episode in the history of changing ideas about crime causation, and as an important skirmish in ongoing ideological battles between sociologists and psychologists on the proper focus of correctional treatment. By contrast, this Note provides the first systematic, empirical study of the CAP in action in its early years.

We focus on the very first and, it would appear, the most successful of the three pioneer "community committees" the CAP organized to launch its novel approach to "social treatment," that in the Russell Square neighborhood of South Chicago. Our analysis derives primarily from two bountiful sets of previously unused archival records which detail the work of the Russell Square Community Committee (RSCC): the Chicago Area Project Records, located in the Chicago Historical Society, and the Stephen S. Bubacz Papers, located in the Special Collections Department, University of Illinois at Chicago.
We develop our arguments in four separate, interrelated sections, preceded by a brief introduction (Section I).

In Section II, we trace the origins and early evolution of the RSCC. Despite the self-evident failure of informal social controls to contain juvenile crime in Russell Square (the neighborhood had one of the highest delinquency rates in Chicago), Clifford Shaw, the founder and director of the CAP, considered it an excellent locale for testing his innovative ideas on community-based delinquency prevention. Russell Square possessed sufficient territorial identity and ethnic (Polish) cohesiveness, Shaw believed, to serve as a building block for communal self-renewal with only minimal guidance from the CAP. We analyze the painstaking process by which Shaw and his associates convinced Russell Square residents to organize and sponsor a series of new institutional programs for neighborhood youth. We focus particularly on two developments: first, the links Shaw considered it imperative to secure between the CAP and Russell Square's main religious institution, St. Michael's Catholic Church; and second, the creation of an elaborate boys' club, sponsored jointly by the Church and the RSCC, to house organized recreational activity and symbolically embody the community's determination to fight juvenile crime.

Section III provides a brief graphic overview of the characteristic forms of delinquency in Russell Square in the 1930s and 1940s. Approximately fifteen well-established youth gangs were active in the community, and all were involved in crime. It is important, however, not to confuse gang-related juvenile crime in this period with the crimes of the more violent youth gangs that achieved notoriety in the
1950s. Gangs in Russell Square were persistent nuisances more than agents of serious crime or violence. Their crimes consisted principally of petty larceny, vandalism, and lewdness. Gangs were the scourge of Russell Square and a danger to those who failed to defer to their territorial prerogatives, but they rarely posed a threat to life or limb. At least in Russell Square, the CAP was not trying to rehabilitate many "violent predators."

Section IV examines the day-to-day programs the RSCC sponsored to forestall juvenile delinquency. We isolate three discrete kinds of activities: (a) recreation; (b) vigilance and communal self-renewal; and (c) mediation.

Clifford Shaw always insisted that recreational programs were means to more ambitious ends, and not, as in the recreational activities of social settlements, churches, schools, and parks, ends in themselves. This was certainly true in Russell Square. The fact remained, however, that in Russell Square the boys' club absorbed the great bulk of the RSCC's energies and elicited the greatest community enthusiasm. To most children and parents, the RSCC and the boys' club were virtually synonymous.

Because the boys' club became such a popular local institution, it presented in classic form a dilemma Shaw faced in each of the Chicago communities he entered: namely, how could momentum for realizing all of the CAP's objectives be sustained after the community sentiment had been rallied behind a new and elaborate recreational facility? The most distinguishing feature of the CAP's philosophy of delinquency prevention, Shaw stressed, was its community rather than institutional focus. To fulfill Shaw's objectives, the boys' club had to serve as a
catalyst for building a new, confident, well-organized community spirit in Russell Square, and as a springboard for diverse "mediative" activities that would neutralize the attractions of delinquency for gang youth and smooth their relations with educational and social control institutions.

The entire CAP program in South Chicago was administered and coordinated by the RSCC, an indigenous organization that was the structural embodiment of Shaw's communal self-help philosophy. While it supervised programmatic details and advised on treatment of individual youth, its chief role and goal was to upbuild a new sense of potency among law-abiding residents to transform their neighborhood so that it would no longer tolerate conditions that fostered juvenile crime.

The RSCC pursued diverse strategies of "vigilantism" in order to change social conditions it considered responsible for delinquency, and to enhance the neighborhood's self-image in the eyes of both youth and adults. Perhaps the most basic step toward communal self-renewal, concluded the RSCC, was the improvement of the neighborhood's dilapidated physical appearance, which was a source of considerable shame and self-denigration. The RSCC's "vigilantism" was, however, generally aimed at social conditions more directly linked to juvenile delinquency. The RSCC cooperated with the aggressive Juvenile Protective Association to restrict access of minors to taverns, to close down houses of prostitution, and to drive out "fences" from the community. More subtle forms of persuasion were employed to deal with private and public social agencies that provided valuable social services to needy children and their families (especially during the Depression). The RSCC also devoted much attention to the improvement of
the local public parks, and to providing an array of services to help immigrants adjust to their new country and city.

But the achievement that perhaps best symbolized growing communal solidarity was the establishment of Camp Lange (named after Father John Lange of St. Michael's Church). Russell Square was the first CAP neighborhood to develop an extensive camping program. While the activities offered children at Camp Lange differed little from those at most camps, the RSCC insisted that Camp Lange was unique in that it represented a legitimate extension of the CAP philosophy. It was not simply that Camp Lange courted, instead of rejected, seriously delinquent youth, or even that residents from Russell Square had built and largely staffed the camp on a volunteer basis. At a deeper level, in the RSCC's view, "the camp represents a living symbol of concerted community action, and stands as a rebuke to sociologic paternalism, to the disuse of natural qualities, to the despair of dependency, and to unconstructive charity. It will ever stand as a refutation of the idea that the socially disorganized area, the slum which has been characterized as the breeding ground of predatory crime, the area in which delinquency is found, cannot actually and literally pull itself up by its bootstraps and become a community organized on the basis that self-direction comes from self-discipline."

The RSCC engaged in a variety of innovative efforts at delinquency prevention which we group under the rubric of "mediation." Perhaps "interpretation" conveys the concept as well as "mediation." On the one hand, staff and volunteers sought at every opportunity to explain to representatives of formal social agencies without indigenous roots--such as schools, police, and probation departments--why troublesome
children from Russell Square behaved as they did, and what they were like as individual human beings. On the other hand, the RSCC workers tried to persuade local youth—in a low-keyed, tolerant, nonabusive manner—that it was both morally right and, ultimately, in their best interest to conform to the values and expectations of conventional society.

The best-publicized and best-documented form of mediation was the one-to-one interaction between street workers and youth gang members that became popularly known as "curbstone counseling." In playgrounds, parks, city streets, schools, courts, police stations, places of employment, camps, beaches—wherever—RSCC staff and volunteers served as concerned, knowledgeable older brothers and close friends to children who were already in trouble with the law, or who were committing delinquent acts that would invariably lead them into legal difficulties. Curbstone counselors were, ideally, young adults from Russell Square with whom delinquent youth could identify relatively easily—either those who had somehow internalized and acted upon conventional values despite their upbringing in the neighborhood, or those who had once been active criminals but who, after punishment or simply maturation, had changed radically and become law-abiding citizens. Curbstone counselors advised boys on appropriate language and manners, tried to dissuade them from serious criminal behavior, suggested alternative courses of action that would prove equally stimulating and rewarding in the long run, stood by them when they got into trouble, and, above all, tried to be with them as much as possible. They served as both model and translator of conventional social values with which youth from Russell Square had had little previous contact or awareness (or so the counselors assumed).
In sum, curbstone counseling was not a "technique" of intervention, but a philosophy, a style, an individual moral presence. It was less social work per se than aggressive, omnipresent caring and monitoring of "youth at risk" in their natural, criminogenic habitats.

The RSCC supplemented curbstone counseling with another set of equally important mediation activities which received less publicity at the time and are more difficult to document in retrospect. These activities bore a close resemblance to what would probably be called child advocacy and/or diversion today. By interceding with officials in schools, police stations, and juvenile courts, RSCC staff and volunteers attempted both to humanize the operation of educational and social control institutions and to convince those institutions that the community (i.e., the Russell Square Community Committee) possessed the will and ability to rehabilitate juvenile delinquents without the need for official, punitive intervention.

The RSCC was aggressively against institutional treatment and in favor of community treatment in cases of juvenile misconduct and crime. No work was considered more important than convincing a truant officer or school counselor not to recommend a juvenile court hearing for a child; a policeman not to arrest or detain in jail a child caught committing petty thievery; a probation officer or judge not to give up on a youngster and send him to reform school; a parole officer not to recommit a minor offender to prison. These efforts at mediation doubtless played an important role--though one that cannot be precisely measured--in diverting youth from the juvenile justice system and, perforce, in lowering official crime rates in South Chicago.
The RSCC's most systematic efforts at institutional mediation in South Chicago were directed toward the schools and parole—the beginning and the end of the prevention process, in Shaw's eyes. Mediation in the schools (both public and parochial) centered on the issue of truancy, which the conventional scholarly wisdom of the period held to be one of the most accurate predictors of delinquency.

Street workers in Russell Square sought regularly to convince youth that school loyalty was the key to personal advancement. They complemented personal exhortation, however, with vigorous efforts to make schools more appealing and responsive to children's individual needs, so that the students would not have easy excuses for playing truant or dropping out. Via discussions with school administrators and teachers, they tried to modify inappropriate curricula, to have children transferred from one school to another where the program or personnel were more suitable, to mainstream children inappropriately placed in classes for incorrigible or backward students (and, vice versa, to have children who required special treatment transferred to appropriate school programs), and to have children reinstated who had been expelled for minor delinquencies. On a more mundane level, they provided carfare for poor children who lived far from school and eyeglasses for students who could not obtain them elsewhere.

One of the most important features that distinguished the CAP from other social agencies, Shaw stressed, was its willingness to work with persistently difficult and delinquent youth. Ideally, the CAP intervened early enough into children's lives to disrupt patterns of misconduct before they led to serious confrontation with social control
authorities. But the CAP did not turn its back on youth who, for one reason or another, ignored the advice of staff and volunteers and persisted in criminal conduct to the point where they were committed to reform schools, jails, or prisons. The logic of the CAP actually required it to make special efforts to incorporate the ex-convict into CAP programs, for he, as a potential spokesperson for mature criminal values, could easily subvert whatever staff and volunteers had accomplished in weaning juveniles (particularly members of his former gang) to more conventional conduct. Thus, in effect, the CAP had no choice but to extend its prevention program to parolees.

The most innovative feature of the RSCC's parole project was the relationship it developed with a public agency, the Illinois State Parole Board. By establishing close communication with the Parole Board, the RSCC exerted substantial control over conditions for release from prison of young men whose homes were in the neighborhood. Whenever an inmate became eligible for parole, the RSCC was asked to develop a program of rehabilitation specifically designed to reintegrate that individual into the community. The RSCC's staff and volunteers tried to smooth a parolee's reintroduction to the neighborhood in a variety of ways. They encouraged and helped parolees to make "new and worthwhile" friendships with "conventional groups" with whom they shared common interests. To help parolees gain status and recognition, they arranged for nearly all of them to participate in one or another CAP-sponsored project for community improvement. Finally, to the extent possible in a Depression economy, the RSCC attempted to find each parolee a job "suited to his skills, and sufficiently remunerative to care for his financial needs."
Section V reviews the diverse informal and formal evaluations made of the CAP experiment in Russell Square in the 1930s and 1940s. The CAP received a wide range of both praise and criticism, but one point seems incontrovertible: The CAP was a reign largely unto itself. Its philosophy and method were different; its sponsors and participants were enormously proud of that fact, and they demanded the opportunity to realize and demonstrate their potential for rebuilding community in Chicago's most dangerous urban neighborhoods. The populist ideology that suffused the CAP was a source of enormous inspiration, but it also set sharp limits on the degree to which the CAP could cooperate with other devoted social reformers who refused to kneel before the philosophy of Clifford Shaw.

For his part, Shaw never claimed more for the success of the CAP in reducing crime and upbuilding community than "objective evidence" allowed. Indeed, he often had to temper the enthusiasm and extravagant claims of community spokespersons whose sense of accomplishment outpaced the accumulation of verifiable empirical data. Above all, Shaw insisted that the CAP be understood as a "social experiment" subject to the principles and procedures of scientific evaluation.

Shaw's most systematic appraisal of the CAP came in 1944 and was highly favorable. When given the chance, Shaw argued, residents in high-crime areas had demonstrated that they could "organize themselves into effective working units for the promotion of welfare programs," that they could uncover and effectively utilize previously untapped talent and leadership, that their organizations were stable and evidenced increasing solidarity over time, and that they were remarkably efficient
in both raising and expending funds locally. Moreover, because of their
greater knowledge of immigrant languages, cultural traditions, and
neighborhood social processes, the community committees had been able to
elicit interest and participation from individuals and institutions that
were previously indifferent or hostile to the appeals of professional
social workers.

The two accomplishments that Shaw elaborated at length in his 1944
evaluation were both identified principally with the RSCC. First was
the parole program, which had been "unusually successful" in Russell
Square and which promised to "yield facts which may have far-reaching
significance for probation and parole officers throughout the country."
Second, and the point to which he devoted greatest attention, was the
substantial decline in official rates of delinquency in two of the three
pioneer CAP communities (South Chicago and the near west side). The
decline in South Chicago was especially sharp. Between 1932 and 1942,
police contacts of juveniles between the ages of 2 and 16 in Russell
Square dropped from approximately 60 per 1000 to 20 per 1000, a decline
of two-thirds.

These downward trends first became evident to Shaw in the mid-
1930s. He was then inclined to believe that they provided conclusive
proof of the CAP's direct impact on crime. He was especially confident
of the statistical results because, he asserted, in a comparable South
Chicago neighborhood which the CAP did not serve, juvenile delinquency
(as measured by police arrests) did not decline at all, whereas in
Russell Square the rate was more than halved between 1932 and 1937. As
time went on, however, Shaw became more and more reluctant to cite
statistical data on delinquency rates to demonstrate the wisdom and
effectiveness of the CAP. He never even bothered to publish the 
statistics he collected on crime in individual Project communities after 
1942. In fact, as he wrote in 1953 to Helen Witmer (who was preparing a 
national evaluation of delinquency prevention programs), he doubted that 
it would ever be possible to demonstrate statistically a causal link 
between the CAP and downward delinquency rates in Russell Square or 
elsewhere.

If Shaw was no longer willing to trumpet the RSCC's success in 
measurably reducing crime within its neighborhood domain, certainly no 
one else in the scholarly community would be willing to do so either. 
Nearly all commentators on the CAP during the past 40 years have viewed 
the pioneer communities as a more or less indistinguishable group, none 
of which demonstrated statistically verifiable effects on local crime 
rates. Russell Square's early claim to special fame was casually 
forgotten.

The bulk of Clifford Shaw's public utterances on the CAP further 
contributed to the tendency of scholars to view the several pioneer 
communities en masse rather than individually. Shaw stressed how all 
community committees subscribed to a common philosophy of delinquency 
prevention, rather than the particularities of practice. Promised case 
studies of individual communities (though apparently in preparation in 
the late 1930s) never materialized. Shaw seemed most interested in 
demonstrating the workability of general organizational principles--
particularly the self-help principle in coping with urban social 
disorganization--and in emphasizing that the CAP was a genuine 
scientific experiment based upon specific theories of crime causation. 
Like most commentators on the Area Project, Shaw usually interpreted the
CAP's significance in highly ideological terms, as a battle of philosophies of social amelioration.

In our judgment, however, to portray the CAP mainly in ideological terms is to invite serious distortion. Most important, it encourages neglect of the process of implementation, obscures the CAP as an operational reality, and directs attention away from Shaw's own strong pragmatic, adaptive strain in his relations with individual community committees. All of these elements, as recent evaluation research indicates, are critical for understanding success or failure in a wide range of social innovations. By failing to examine these facets of his own "social experiment," Shaw may well have missed an opportunity to explain systematically why the CAP was more successful in some communities than in others.

Dare we conclude, then, that the CAP actually "worked" and resulted in a two-thirds reduction in rates of delinquency in Russell Square? Of course not. However, we do feel justified in concluding that until scholars and policy analysts develop more imaginative means to assess performance in the field, it is premature to generalize that "nothing works." History never provides incontrovertible "lessons" for current application, but it can suggest possibilities for social invention to which we might otherwise be indifferent or unaware. The CAP, we believe, embodies one such possibility. In light of our case study, it seems prudent not to dismiss out of hand the initial statistical picture that Shaw presented of unique achievement in Russell Square; that picture may well have captured social reality to some degree. In a field where a quest for perfect knowledge has proved so frustrating, and where there is no consensus on appropriate designs for research or
evaluation, the numerous distinctive features that separated the CAP from virtually all other experiments in delinquency prevention would appear to warrant serious study and reconsideration.
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I. INTRODUCTION

The Chicago Area Project (CAP) has assumed legendary status in the annals of American sociology, criminology, and social work. This is hardly surprising. The CAP embodied the first systematic challenge by sociologists to the dominance of psychology and psychiatry in public and private programs for the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency in the early 20th century. The CAP drew conspicuously on the theoretical premises derived directly from the work of the country's most famous sociologists, the so-called Chicago School: Robert Park, W. I. Thomas, George H. Mead, Ernest Burgess, Louis Wirth, Harvey Zorbaugh, Frederic Thrasher, and, of course, the principal spirits behind the Area Project, Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay. Sociologically speaking, the CAP was where the action was in the 1930s.

The CAP's history, to use Daniel Boorstin's apt phrase, appears to suffer from being "well-known for its well-knownness." That is, despite the deference accorded to the CAP as a pioneer in delinquency prevention, we know remarkably little about it as an operational reality. To be sure,

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dozens of scholars and laymen have written about the early days of the CAP, often in heroic terms. By and large, however, they have examined the project primarily as an episode in the history of changing ideas about crime causation, and as an important skirmish in ongoing ideological battles between sociologists and psychologists on the proper focus of correctional treatment. There has been virtually no empirical assessment of the CAP's particular operational schema and day-to-day activities in individual locations.²

This Note seeks to provide the first systematic study of the CAP in action in its early years. We focus on the very first and, it would appear, the most successful of the three pioneer "community committees" Clifford Shaw organized to launch his novel experiment in "social treatment," that in the Russell Square neighborhood of South Chicago. (The other two pioneer community committees operated on the city's near west and near north sides.)

² An exception, although for a later time period than interests us in this Note, is Harold Finestone, "The Chicago Area Project in Theory and Practice," in Irving Spergel (ed.), Community Organization: Studies in Constraint, Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1972, pp. 149-186. Unique in their own way, too, are several lively books by Anthony Sorrentino which include invaluable information and insight on the early years of the Area Project, and the retrospective account of the first black Area Project community, Southside Community Committee, Bright Shadows in Bronzetown: The Story of the Southside Community Committee, Chicago, 1949.
II. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE PROJECT IN SOUTH CHICAGO

Using an elaborate plotting of the home addresses of over 100,000 juvenile delinquents processed by the Juvenile Court of Cook County between 1900 and 1927, Clifford Shaw and his colleagues at the Illinois Institute for Juvenile Research (IJR) determined that several Chicago neighborhoods produced vastly disproportionate numbers of criminals. Delinquency was concentrated in four areas: the predominantly Italian near west and near north sides, the black ghetto on the south side, and the overwhelmingly Polish sections of South Chicago that surrounded Russell Square Park and were known colloquially as the "Bush" (because of the plentiful wild shrubs in the neighborhood). Bordered on the west side by the Illinois Central railyards, on the north by 79th Street, on the east by the Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corporation, and on the south by 86th Street, Russell Square was geographically isolated and "hemmed in," as one analyst noted, by the sprawling mills and dangerous surface railway tracks.¹

Russell Square in 1930 was a working-class, Catholic neighborhood largely dependent on the adjacent steel mills for its economic life. Nearly 70 percent of the men worked in the mills as semiskilled and unskilled laborers. During the Depression, slack demand for steel and occasional strikes periodically closed the mills. When that happened, as one investigator reported, "the pall of gloom descended not only upon

the worker but upon all the small businesses operated in the neighborhood."²

The majority of the commercial establishments in the community appear to have been taverns. Except on one or two main streets, there were few conventional businesses; residents purchased their food primarily from roving open-air markets. But taverns were everywhere. One observer counted 75 in the immediate vicinity of the mills alone, and it was not uncommon to find a dozen on a single block. In South Chicago, as in many ethnic urban communities, taverns served many purposes beyond dispensing alcohol. The "omnipresent taverns...were as much banks and clubhouses as drinking places," observed a resident. The position of tavernkeeper "ranked with that of priest and millworker as a vocational choice that ambitious parents made for their children."³

The mills influenced family relations just as they shaped the social and economic life of the community. The mills' shift structure disrupted family life by keeping men away from home for different hours each week. Families rarely had the opportunity to eat together. After a grueling 60-hour work week, moreover, fathers could not be relied on to participate in social or educational activities with their children. Because their lives were tied so closely to the mills, men rarely left the Russell Square area. Nor did women venture often to other parts of the city. In addition to the constraints of custom and family

responsibility, fewer immigrant women than men spoke English. A number of younger, unmarried women did work outside of South Chicago, however, in lower-level positions in light industry on the city's north and west sides.  

Housing in South Chicago had never been very good, but by 1930 the original stock, built quickly and cheaply between 1895 and 1920, had deteriorated badly. Most dwellings in the Bush were wooden frame houses, with the exception of several blocks along South Shore Drive which were dominated by brick structures and inhabited by "the bourgeois, shopkeepers, and professional persons." One assessment concluded that there were not "two dozen bathtubs in the buildings located between 83rd Street and 86th Street," and that nearly every home had only a stove for heating. Few of the wooden structures had been painted since their construction decades earlier. "Indeed the smoke and grime of the steel works seem to be the only covering for the majority of the homes and shops.... The drab and gloomy condition of the area gives the community the appearance of being broken in spirit."  

The lots in Russell Square were originally platted narrowly. Most buildings occupied a space only 25 feet wide by 125 feet deep, which prevented cross-ventilation. One survey revealed that 90 percent of the dwellings housed at least two families. There were few single-family cottages or bungalows, and it was not uncommon for economically distressed households to take in boarders, despite the relatively large

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numbers of children in most families. Absentee landlords and crowded, dilapidated homes inevitably bred sanitation and health problems. These led, in turn, to "redlining" by insurance and financial institutions and a consequent vicious circle of neglect and decay. When the Depression caused work slowdowns and layoffs in the mills, there was a steep rise in the foreclosure rate in Russell Square.⁶

The overwhelming majority of the residents in the Bush were immigrants or children of immigrants. Because census data cover the entire South Chicago area rather than Russell Square in particular (which comprised approximately half of the census tract), they somewhat exaggerate the degree of ethnic diversity in the neighborhood that was of special concern to the CAP. Probably three-quarters of the residents in the Bush were Polish; the remainder were of Austrian, German, Scandinavian, and Russian origin. Substantial numbers of Mexicans also began to settle in the neighborhood after national immigration restriction laws in the 1920s virtually eliminated further infusions from southeastern Europe.⁷

Observers estimated that fully 80 percent of Russell Square's citizenry were practicing Catholics who belonged to St. Michael's Church. All Catholics, but the Poles especially, preferred to send their children to parochial schools, even though the financial sacrifice (particularly during the Depression) was considerable. Twice as many Russell Square children under the age of sixteen attended Catholic grammar schools as public elementary schools. For Poles, "to have their

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⁷ Demographic, religious, and other community profile information derive from the federal censuses for 1920, 1930, and 1940.
children attend a public school is regarded as a distinct loss of caste," commented one investigator. "So long as a family can afford the cost of the parochial school or the children avoid being expelled, they are sent to the parochial school." Polish was often the language of instruction in these schools, and the nuns and priests were widely reported to have used corporal punishment regularly to discipline disruptive students. The Catholic schools accepted no student beyond the age of fifteen. The relatively few Russell Square children who remained in school beyond the elementary grades consequently went either to Bowen High School (about a half-mile southeast of the Bush) or to a vocational school located outside of South Chicago. Polish peasant customs and the low wage rates of mill employees encouraged parents to pressure their children to withdraw from school after they had completed the elementary grades, or as soon as they could drop out legally at sixteen in order to supplement the family income.¹

Despite the self-evident failure of informal social controls to contain juvenile crime in the Russell Square neighborhood, Clifford Shaw considered it an excellent locale for testing his innovative ideas on delinquency prevention and community organization. Russell Square possessed sufficient territorial identity and ethnic cohesiveness, he believed, to serve as a building block for communal self-renewal with only minimal guidance from the CAP. Shaw's first step was to determine which local institutions were most critical for the CAP to link up with in order to gain entree to the social life of the community and, most important, to gain direct access to juveniles via their play groups or

¹ "Introduction" (the preliminary section of an incomplete, unpublished manuscript, claiming to be "an empirical inductive study of certain phenomena of delinquency"), n.d., c. 1935, p. 18, located in CAP Records, section XII, box 16.
gangs. Shaw, it would appear, expected initially to ally the CAP with the two social settlements in Russell Square: the nonsectarian Common Ground, founded in 1930, and, especially because of its long-established roots, the Baptist-controlled Neighborhood House, founded in 1911. Fairly soon, however, Shaw recognized that Neighborhood House was of only marginal significance to the Polish community in Russell Square. Few local youth attended its programs, and they derided its motivations by labeling it "Sunday school." Shaw eventually shifted his search for local sponsorship to the one institution that evoked universal allegiance, St. Michael's Church. In the beginning, though, he channeled his efforts through the settlements, hoping to build upon their prior organizational experience in recreational activities to sponsor an athletic league of his own as the single best means to attract neighborhood male youth to the CAP.9

To achieve this limited goal, Shaw dispatched E. A. Conover, an IJR staff member with prior recreational experience and easy rapport with traditional social agencies, to Russell Square in the fall of 1931. With help from several social settlement personnel, Conover soon became acquainted with the "natural" leaders of numerous local juvenile groups and persuaded eight of them to field teams for a winter basketball league (to be housed in the small gymnasium in Russell Square Park). The league was under way before year's end. The gangs' favorable response to Conover's appeal prompted Shaw to assign additional staff--so-called "detached workers" or "street workers"--to Russell Square early in 1932. Their goal was to develop more intimate friendships with gang members than formal recreational programs alone permitted. They

were literally to "hang out" with youth in the customary gang haunts—
to spend as much time as possible with them during after-school and
evening hours, when their potential for mischief was considered to be
the greatest. Shaw asked these pioneer detached workers to prepare
diaries and to file reports on their encounters with local gangs
(ordinarily one worker per gang). The street workers were to be alert
to the presence of boys with serious emotional and/or mental problems
who might require formal psychological counseling and referral to the
IJR. They were expected primarily, however, to provide additional
structure for the boys' recreational activities, to be readily available
for practical counseling and personal problem-solving, and to embody for
emulation by local youth a model of "conventional" moral and social
values.\footnote{E. A. Conover, "South Chicago Area Project," unpublished
manuscript, n.d., c. January 1932, p. 3, located in Bubacz Papers,
folder 16.}

In the spring of 1932, Shaw decided both to expand the athletic
program substantially and to begin building contacts with
representatives of St. Michael's. Although Conover remained on the
scene, Shaw reassigned principal organizational responsibility to
another IJR staff member, James McDonald. McDonald worked slowly and
cautiously to recruit youth for a summer baseball league. He spent
several weeks mingling and playing "pick-up" games in Russell Square
Park while talking informally with as many youths as possible. The boys
were ripe for organized play, McDonald concluded. Since the onset of
the Depression, the Park had become badly run down. It was a center of
mischief more than of purposive recreation. After getting to know the
Park's regular play groups fairly well, McDonald called a meeting in
Sullivan School (across the street from the Park) of their "natural leaders," none of whom, he emphasized, had been elected. Each had "assumed natural leadership, appointing themselves. The leaders just declared themselves captains and managers." The outcome of the meeting was the formation of the Bush Conference. The name carried considerable symbolic value, McDonald noted. "Seeing that the word 'Bush' had a lot of meaning to these kids, it indicated a neighborhood that was tough and the kids that live there seem to get some prestige by saying that they lived in the 'Bush.'" Eventually, 20 teams were organized.11

Much more than Conover, McDonald was an apostle of Shaw's philosophy of delinquency prevention and community organization. He viewed recreation mainly as a means to facilitate adult involvement in the day-to-day social activities of the youth and thereby, gradually, to build up a sense of neighborhood responsibility for monitoring youth conduct. The task for McDonald, then, was to utilize his recreational contacts to gain access to adults in Russell Square who might eventually lead a campaign to exercise communal responsibility for juvenile behavior. It took several weeks, in McDonald's judgment, before a suitable opportunity for realizing this goal arose. While "hanging out" at the Park, McDonald chanced to meet the two sons of Dr. A. S. Mioduski, a neighborhood chiropodist. The two boys were not part of the Bush Conference but had come to the Park, as befit their higher social status, to play tennis. After conversing with the Mioduski brothers, McDonald asked others in the neighborhood about Dr. Mioduski. Not only

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11 James McDonald [?], "History of the Russell Square Community Committee," unpublished manuscript, n.d., c. 1939, pp. 1-4, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 84. Internal evidence suggests that this extensive reconstruction of the earliest contact between Area Project staff and representatives of Russell Square was prepared by McDonald; it remains the best introduction to the origins of the Project.
was the doctor one of the area's most prominent residents, McDonald learned, but as a trustee of St. Michael's he also "exercised more influence over the pastor, Father John Lange, than any other person in the community." McDonald recognized Mioduski as precisely the kind of "natural" indigenous leader that Shaw's philosophy of delinquency prevention required in a neighborhood where the church represented the dominant moral authority and reservoir of communal loyalties. What McDonald needed now was an occasion and, he felt, a special inducement to enlist Mioduski and St. Michael's in the Area Project's cause.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 3-5.}

The perfect opportunity arose a few weeks later, when McDonald acquired several hundred free tickets to a Chicago White Sox game. With the help of one of the Mioduski sons, McDonald arranged a meeting between himself and Dr. Mioduski to discuss the distribution of the tickets. Events went as McDonald doubtless hoped they would:

I explained the purpose of my visit, telling him that we had some 300 tickets for a big league baseball game and were interested in distributing them throughout the neighborhood. I asked him if he could use any of the tickets in the church and school, as the schools were closed at the time because of vacation. He thought that he could use quite a number of them and that the nuns could get in touch with the children to give them out, and said he would talk to Father Lange about it. He questioned me about who I represented and I told him the story and idea of the Chicago Area Project, indicating that we were interested in developing a neighborhood committee to sponsor activities for the children. I explained that the Institute for Juvenile Research was not interested in setting up another recreational agency in the community and that we were there to help the local residents to organize and promote the activities they thought were necessary in dealing with the problems of child welfare. He became very much interested in the idea, but thought that before any action could be taken, the whole matter should be thrown open to the pastor of the church. He said that the little neighborhood in which I described that we were interested in working represented the larger share of the St. Michael's Parish and that better than 90 per cent of the people were members of the Parish.
Furthermore, he said that Polish people in general would be very slow to warm up to the plan I had presented unless it had the approval of the pastor. He indicated that the church in no little way ruled the minds and actions of the parishioners.\footnote{13}

As promised, Dr. Mioduski spoke to Father Lange about McDonald's proposition and arranged a meeting between himself, McDonald, Father Lange, and Clifford Shaw. During that meeting, Shaw, like McDonald, emphasized that the CAP was not interested in establishing another traditional social agency in Russell Square. Rather, their object was to assist local residents to sponsor their own social activities for youth, especially gang youth. Shaw conspicuously deferred to Lange throughout the conversation. He fully recognized that no social program in the Polish community could succeed unless it "operate[d] through the church, because of its importance in the lives of the people." The Area Project, Shaw frankly stated, intended to "capitalize on the relationship between the church and the people."\footnote{14}

While Father Lange approved of Shaw's general ideas, he opposed efforts to raise money locally. Due to employment cutbacks in the steel mills, the Church was itself experiencing serious financial problems and wanted no additional competition for funds. Furthermore, Lange wanted guarantees that the Area Project was nonsectarian. He bitterly attacked Neighborhood House as a Protestant missionary organization which sought to proselytize unsuspecting Polish youth by using recreation as bait.\footnote{15}
From experiences during the previous year, Shaw had surely become aware of how contentious E. A. Conover's close connections to Neighborhood House could become. Conover's skilled recreational leadership was still essential to the CAP program in Russell Square, however, so Shaw could not repudiate his efforts in order to save face with Father Lange. Shaw instead emphasized the philosophic differences which distinguished the CAP from all social settlements. The latter, he charged, "were superimposed upon the community by individuals residing in communities of higher economic level, who were quite strange to the neighborhood and its problems. These people decided what was wrong with the neighborhood and prescribed the treatment of it." The Area Project, on the other hand, would embody "a democratic approach": Neighborhood residents would analyze community problems, sponsor appropriate programs, and manage the entire enterprise through an elected or appointed Board of Directors. Shaw's response apparently satisfied Lange--as well it might. The CAP was, in effect, proposing to subsidize at St. Michael's a recreational program which the Church could not afford on its own, and which would give it leverage against its local Protestant competitors, particularly Neighborhood House and the YMCA.16

Before meeting with Father Lange, Shaw and McDonald had been given a tour of several unused rooms in the Church basement. One room contained some old game equipment from a boys' club which the Church had tried unsuccessfully to operate a few years earlier, while the other rooms were being used for storage. The rooms were unheated and in abysmal condition. Father Lange gladly offered the rooms to the CAP,

16 Ibid., p. 7.
provided that Shaw bore the full expense of their rehabilitation. Shaw readily agreed. He hired a young, unemployed, former athletic star from the neighborhood to renovate the rooms, purchase game tables for ping-pong, checkers, chess, etc., and construct a boxing ring. At a cost of approximately $350, they recreated the St. Michael's Boys' Club anew under joint Church and CAP auspices. The facility opened with much fanfare early in 1933, with some 500 neighborhood people in attendance. Dr. Mioduski chaired the proceedings, Shaw and McDonald (though not Conover) gave speeches, and Father Lange--talking first in English and then in Polish-- gave the enterprise his blessing. More than 600 boys registered for membership on opening day, and 400 more joined them over the following weeks.\textsuperscript{17}

The gala opening of the St. Michael's Boys' Club provided welcome relief from several instances of grassroots resistance to the CAP's intrusion into South Chicago. Following the meeting with Father Lange, McDonald pressed Mioduski for the names of local residents who might constitute a Russell Square Community Committee to plan and supervise the entire delinquency prevention effort. Now that the Church had been won over, McDonald was anxious to maintain momentum and build an organizational structure to implement the Area Project philosophy \textit{in toto}. But Mioduski strongly urged McDonald to continue to move slowly and cautiously in attempting to recruit South Chicagoans to the CAP's cause. Even with his recommendation, Mioduski admonished, it would take time to identify likely recruits and to persuade them to serve.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., pp. 8-10.
\textsuperscript{18} Additional corroborating and supplementary accounts of the establishment of the Russell Square Area Project include E. A. Conover [?], "Historical Material Concerning the Development of the South Chicago Community Project," unpublished manuscript, n.d., apparently March 18, 1932, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 84; "Neighborhood Description," unpublished manuscript, n.d., 1947 [?], located in Bubacz
Mioduski's advice was no personal whim. It reflected his first-hand sensitivity to the lingering resentment and distrust which many Poles in South Chicago felt in the aftermath of previous social scientific investigations of their community. Ever since the publication of William I. Thomas and Florian Znaiecki's multivolume classic, *The Polish Peasant in America (1918-1920)*, South Chicago had become a favorite site for study by budding and established sociologists. This research particularly stressed the incessant conflicts between first- and second-generation immigrants, which allegedly resulted in disproportionately high rates of juvenile crime. The intensely religious, family-oriented, conservative Polish immigrants were understandably sensitive to the poor public image these studies had conveyed of their unstable home and communal life.

Clifford Shaw's proposed "experiment" in delinquency prevention and community organization inevitably brought this skepticism to the surface. Shaw's classic analysis of a Polish juvenile delinquent from Chicago, *The Jack-Roller*, had been published just a couple of years earlier to great scholarly and popular acclaim. *The Jack-Roller* could be interpreted, not unreasonably, as a lament over the inability of Polish immigrant families in industrial neighborhoods to socialize their children in conventional American values and behavior. It was thus not entirely surprising that Father Lange, after agreeing to sponsor Shaw's

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enterprise, began to receive anonymous letters charging that the
institutions that supported Shaw's research were now attempting to
develop a "crime school" in the community, and that they were "primarily
interested in getting material to show the amount of crime among the
Polish people."

Shaw's close personal and intellectual ties to the University of
Chicago created additional problems for the acceptance of the CAP within
Russell Square. Indeed the University's most famous sociologists--
Shaw's mentors--were precisely the prime objects of distrust. Most
recently, a research study completed by Ernest Burgess on social and
educational conditions in South Chicago (for the 1930 White House
Conference on Children and Youth) had raised considerable community
concern. Several parents recalled with alarm the experience of a young
woman from the neighborhood whom Burgess had interviewed and given a
personality test. The interview apparently revived the girl's vivid
memories of unpleasant sexual encounters which, it was alleged, "caused
her to go through some sort of undesirable emotional experience."\(^{19}\)

The most pointed controversy, though, centered on another "social
experiment," supported by the Russell Sage Foundation and supervised by
University of Chicago professors, which was soon to begin at Sullivan
School. A broadside attacking "The Sullivan School Experiment" was
widely circulated throughout the community, with inevitable harmful
repercussions for the Area Project's plans in Russell Square. The
broadside purported "to warn the Polish people of the great danger to
their future reputation as a consequence of what will be done with all

\(^{19}\) McDonald [?], "History of the Russell Square Community Com-
mittee," p. 10; "Historical Material Concerning...The South Chicago...Project," p. 3.
the information thus obtained, chiefly through the children. It takes a long time to live down insinuations or records obtained from a superficial study of such a vital thing as a reputation of a social group. This is damaged badly enough before the experiment is begun, by the false inference that most juvenile criminals in the city are found among the Polish people." Among other suggestions, the broadside asked why researchers of similar religion and culture could not conduct the study, and why all aspects of the study could not be made public and submitted to the community for advance scrutiny and approval. "Let children out-grow their petty misdemeanors without so much ado," it admonished. The social scientists "ought to get after the conditions behind the scenes that foster delinquency. The experts might also get after the selfish industrialists who squeeze the life blood out of a people, and then endow universities or Foundations that waste their time on futile research, which throws such a smoke screen on the real issues."²⁰

If nothing else, the broadside attacking "The Sullivan School Experiment" provided an occasion for Shaw to explain to local residents what the CAP was not. Dr. Mioduski convened an open meeting at which all South Chicagoans could air their grievances concerning the Area Project philosophy or program. Representatives of several Polish nationalist organizations were conspicuously in attendance. Shaw and Burgess represented the Area Project. Because Shaw anticipated that discussion would be heated, he asked his chief representative in South Chicago, James McDonald, to absent himself "in order to hold what relationships had been built up in the community."²¹

²¹ McDonald [?], "History of the Russell Square Community Committee," p. 11.
Community spokespersons did indeed ask hard questions, but their concern centered more on Shaw's and Burgess' motives and methods in conducting past research than on the intentions or design of the Area Project per se. The community apparently wanted to judge for itself the character of these "friendly intruders,"22 rather than to challenge a program which already enjoyed the blessing of Father Lange and Dr. Mioduski. Thus, Burgess had to explain why, during his earlier White House Conference study, he had circulated questionnaires to students at Sullivan School. He also had to assure the community that the data gathered were "not to be used for publication either lauding or criticizing local residents." Shaw had to defend *The Jack-Roller* for its alleged emphasis on Stanley's Polish nationality. In fact, as Shaw could doubtless have demonstrated, the entire thrust of *The Jack-Roller* was to downplay nationality as a causal factor in juvenile crime. He did not have to do so, however, because Dr. Mioduski rose to his defense and assured his fellow Poles that he had read the book, and "personally did not think that Mr. Shaw meant to cast any reflection upon the Polish people." Even after several others joined Mioduski in praise of *The Jack-Roller*, Shaw felt obliged to leave several copies for local residents to scrutinize for themselves.23

The open forum that Dr. Mioduski had scheduled resulted in no formal approval or disapproval, but a period of "watchful waiting" regarding the future of the CAP in Russell Square. In retrospect, however, the forum seems to have played a crucial role in calming the

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23 McDonald [?], "History of the Russell Square Community Committee," p. 11.
diffuse fears which "The Sullivan School Experiment" broadside had raised, in explaining the Area Project philosophy to a broad segment of influential South Chicagoans, and in demonstrating by example Shaw's openness and responsiveness to community opinion. Equally important for the CAP's survival, the forum provided an occasion for Dr. Mioduski to practice precisely the brand of community-based leadership on which the moral authority of the Russell Square Community Committee would ultimately depend.²⁴

It took approximately fifteen months for the Area Project to become fully operational in South Chicago, but the slow pace probably contributed to the strong degree of community support the CAP enjoyed in Russell Square from the time the St. Michael's Boys' Club opened in January 1933. Indeed, the CAP philosophy more or less required a slow, cautious start, a time to feel one's way amidst new environs and familiarize oneself with local turf. As Shaw reiterated time and again, it was not his purpose to impose the Area Project on communities, willing or not, in order to do them good. This was the style of the professional social agency or social settlement. Rather, Shaw insisted, the CAP had to emerge as much from "the bottom up" as from "the top down." It had to take shape "naturally" in order to serve as both symbol and catalyst of a profound shift in community sentiments.

To be sure, there was nothing "natural" about the way the CAP came to South Chicago. Shaw's was a carefully conceived strategy of implementation—a subtle and flexible strategy, but a strategy nonetheless. Shaw moved astutely from the familiar to the unfamiliar: from the relatively easily achievable goal of inaugurating a recreation

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²⁴ Ibid.
program to the more uncertain tasks of gaining Church support and organizing Russell Square residents to plan and operate their own program of delinquency prevention. The first staff member Shaw sent to South Chicago, E. A. Conover, worked well with established social agencies and was adept at launching traditional recreational programs. But Conover shared little of Shaw's enthusiasm for working intimately with youth, especially delinquent youth, on a day-to-day basis via their gangs. Shaw therefore supplemented Conover with other new, pioneer street workers, who were more attuned to his philosophy and whose personalities were better suited to establishing genuine rapport with gang members. He replaced Conover as chief CAP representative with James McDonald, whose style of operation and interaction with youth and adults in Russell Square epitomized what the Area Project philosophy was all about. McDonald began by simply "hanging out" in the local park and participating in "natural" play groups. He then proceeded to add structure to their recreation and to solidify his place as a "natural," everyday member of the Park community. By this means, McDonald was able to develop additional contacts that, eventually, helped him identify the "natural" adult leaders of the community.

McDonald was cautious not to be impatient or to rush the process through which he was learning to gain leverage on the social life of Russell Square. He learned relatively quickly that the participation of St. Michael's Church would be essential to the realization of the CAP's goals. The best way to gain influence over its pastor, Father Lange, he determined, was through the Church's most distinguished lay leader, Dr. Mioduski, whose sons he had met at the Park. McDonald waited several weeks until he had suitable "bait" to attract Dr. Mioduski's attention
(i.e., free baseball tickets). Only after this did he explain his (and Shaw's) larger purpose in South Chicago. Mioduski did everything McDonald and Shaw could conceivably have wanted from a "natural" community leader. He mediated initially between the CAP and St. Michael's Church (no mean task), advised on how to build maximum community participation, and defended Shaw's motives and methods before skeptical, less-well-educated fellow Poles. McDonald might well, in due course, have been able to locate someone else besides Mioduski through whom to gain access to Father Lange; he could also have approached Lange himself. But the slow, "natural" unfolding of the implementation process reinforced McDonald's own confidence in the principles that guided the Area Project. There was good reason for optimism, he believed, that the CAP would soon transcend the confines of its formal home in the St. Michael's Boys' Club and become a powerful agent of social change in Russell Square.
III. RUSSELL SQUARE: A NEIGHBORHOOD AND ITS DELINQUENT YOUTH

Russell Square's relatively homogeneous ethnic character and its geographic isolation and insulation from the rest of Chicago imparted a deep sense of place to all its residents, especially the children. The children's attitudes toward their community, however, were highly ambivalent. Among themselves, according to CAP street workers, they took pride in living in a community with as tough a citywide reputation as the Bush. They expressed their loyalty by adopting athletic team names that represented their neighborhood, such as the "Bush Tigers" and the "Bushwackers." Several youth workers concluded, however, that most adolescents were "ashamed of the neighborhood in which they live...they hated the 'bush' and the stigma attached to living there." Many were "also ashamed of the fact that they [were] Polaks."¹

One observer poignantly captured the children's mixed feelings by recounting the story of a young man from the Bush who became friendly with a girl whose family he helped move to South Shore, a relatively affluent community north of Russell Square. In explaining to her who he was and where he lived, he was careful to deny both that he was Polish and that he lived in the Bush: "Do you think I would have told her that I was a 'Pollak' and lived in the 'bush'? Like Hell I would. She would never have had anything to do with me. I told her I was Irish, that my name was Murphy and that I lived over in Englewood. I look kind of Irish, don't I? Why I would not even telephone her from out of the 'bush.' She might trace the call and then where would I be? I get on

¹ McDonald [?], "History of the Russell Square Community Committee," p. 2; "Introduction," pp. 48-49.
the street car and go into South Shore any time I want to call her up."
The observer added that "this feeling of social inadequacy evidences itself very markedly whenever these boys are removed from their immediate neighborhood environment." Whenever the boys went outside the neighborhood, they self-consciously attempted to abandon their customary habits and language.\(^2\)

Clifford Shaw chose Russell Square as the site of his initial CAP experiment in part because he felt he could build on and redirect the neighborhood's sense of place to help it function more effectively as a vehicle of social control. Juvenile delinquency was rampant in the Bush. Only the west and north side Italian neighborhoods, and perhaps the core of the spreading southside black ghetto, posted higher rates.\(^3\)

Approximately fifteen well-established youth gangs were in operation in the Bush, and all were actively involved in crime. It is important, however, not to confuse gang-related crime in the 1920s and 1930s with the crimes of the more violent youth gangs that achieved notoriety in the 1950s. There was little gang violence in the Bush, nor did organized crime gain a foothold in South Chicago as it did on Chicago's west side. Armed robberies were rare. Gangs occasionally battled with one another, but not with weapons that usually led to serious injuries. The most common form of juvenile crime was theft. Petty thefts dominated: raiding fruitstands, snatching purses, siphoning gasoline, stripping cars, and raiding businesses for materials to "fence" or "junk." There was also occasional grand theft, especially auto stealing, and theft with potential for doing bodily harm, notably "jack-

\(^2\) "Introduction," pp. 48-49.
\(^3\) McDonald, "A Study in Community Organization," esp. pp. 2-3.
rolling." The next most common form of deviant acts fell under the label of "incorrigibility." This included a hodgepodge of antisocial behavior: truancy, running away from home, lewdness, gambling, sneaking into movies and athletic events, hitching rides on streetcars, vandalism and "malicious mischief," harassing shopkeepers, drinking, smoking, fighting, and various kinds of sexual misconduct.  

The characteristic patterns of delinquency in Russell Square should be kept in mind as we examine the methods by which the CAP attempted to contain gangs and enhance communal ability to exercise informal social control over youth. Gangs in Russell Square were persistent nuisances more than they were agents of serious crime or violence. True, youth in the Bush almost always committed crimes in groups; the gang structure moved adolescents to perform criminal acts that as individuals they would probably never commit. Even when gangs went on a rampage that lasted several weeks, however, their crimes consisted principally of petty larceny, vandalism, and lewdness. Gangs served adolescents in the Bush largely as block organizations or territorial entities that circumscribed their members' contacts with youth living across the alley or down the street. Their names reflected their geographic base: Houston Herrings, Brandon Street Speedboys, Brandon Lions, and Burley Lions, for example. Gangs were the scourge of Russell Square and a danger to those who failed to defer to their territorial prerogatives, but they rarely posed a threat to life or limb. At least in the Bush, the Area Project was not trying to rehabilitate many 'violent predators.'

One of the signal contributions of the CAP was to give gang behavior a human face. CAP street workers intermingled with gang youth on a day-to-day basis, recorded their activities, and elicited their evidence (p. 13, note 41) suggests that he lived on the near west side. If so, this is the only non-South Chicago document from which we quote in the text. All of the experiences Jimmy describes were also common in South Chicago.

On violent predators, see Jan Chaiken and Marcia Chaiken, Varieties of Criminal Behavior, Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, R-2814/1-NIJ, October 1982.
"oral histories" or "life stories." Selections from their voluminous accounts suggest something of the flavor of juvenile delinquency in the Bush, beyond what one can gather from official statistical data on the nature and incidence of crime.⁶

The oral histories indicate clearly that petty theft was commonplace among Russell Square youth and that the crimes were generally committed by small groups of boys. The picture may be somewhat overdrawn, but one gets the impression that youth were a threat to everything that was not carefully guarded. Even at the annual handicrafts exhibit held at St. Michael's, "it was necessary to put wire netting over such exhibits as were not too heavy or bulky to move or as in the case of the leather products, to nail them to the tables on which they were exhibited. Otherwise everything of any value would have been stolen."⁷ It was customary for boys to steal from swimmers who naively thought that their clothes and possessions would be safe in a locker or on the beach. One youth's "own story" illustrates how he became involved in such thefts, how older boys eased younger children into crime, and how parents were often indifferent or unwilling to punish children for obvious delinquencies:

One day while swimming in S-Park, I happened to see two of these older fellows going through the lockers. Of course, right away I knew they were stealing. So to make sure at the end of the swim I got very close to them and overheard one say to the other, "Well, not bad, we got about ten dollars, a gold watch and a ring."

I was so excited at seeing how easy it was to steal that I told Smiley about it. The next time it was boy's swimming we

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⁶ For an idiosyncratic and generally incisive analysis of the "oral history" tradition in criminological research, see Bennett, Oral History and Delinquency.
were going to try the same thing. Smiley and I would stay in
our lockers till everybody went swimming, and then we would go
into the other lockers and take anything of value. Many times
we would be caught by the lifeguard and he would ask us, "What
are you doing in this locker?" We would say, "Why this is our
locker." The lifeguard would say, "What number is your
locker?" Then we would say, "Well, we made a mistake, and got
in the wrong locker." I was wondering why we always got
cought. One night I happened to catch these two older fellows
talking to the lifeguard, and I seen they were handing the
lifeguard money. Right away I figured the lifeguard was in
with these guys. That's why they were never bothered.

I told Smiley about it, and Smiley said, "Well, we can't do
anything about it; if he's in we can't say anything about it." One
day the lifeguard at the park caught me in a locker, and
he had me pinched. However, they didn't find anything on me.
He said he saw me coming out of a locker, and they sent me to
U-Park where the West Parks had a police station at that time.
They had me there for about two hours when my father came and
they let me go home. That night the gang heard I was pinched
and they asked me, "Did the lifeguard catch you stealing
anything?" I said, "No," in a way that said, "Who's afraid of
the lifeguard." I then told them that I would go through the
lockers again tomorrow. One day while going through the
lockers I got a check for forty-five dollars out of a man's
pants. I knew I couldn't cash it, so I gave the check to the
two older boys which I mentioned before. They asked me,"Where did you get it?" and I told them. They said, "You're
OK, Jimmy, and if we can cash the check we will give you
something."  

Soon after, Jimmy and his friends traveled to one of Chicago's
numerous lakefront beaches to steal from an unsuspecting swimmer.

Of course we didn't have any carfare and that meant we had to
jump on the back bumpers of automobiles. It didn't take us
long to get there. After taking one dip we decided to go
through the clothes out on the beach. Of course, we just
wouldn't pick on anybody's clothes because you would not know
where their party was at. We would play it the smart way. We
would watch a couple of men when they first came in, and one
of the boys would follow them when they took their clothes
off. We knew what they looked like and so would wait until
they got into the water. Then two of the boys would walk over
and pick up their clothes as if they belonged to them, take
them in the bushes and we would go through the pockets. Most
of the times the pants and shoes were pretty good and we would

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take them home. We would walk home from the beach but we
would have to wait until it was dark because we had all the
pants we had stolen during the day hidden in the bushes and we
would have to take them home. Many nights when we were going
home we would see the fellows we had stolen the clothes from
talking to the policeman at the police stand. Of course, we
just got a kick out of it.

The stuff I had stolen I sneaked in the house. The next day
when my mother would find the stuff she would ask me, "Where
did you get it?" I would tell her that I had been junking and
that a man said, "Here's some clothes for you, take them
home." Then my mother would say, "But these pants look kind
of new and the shoes are new, too." I'd say, "Well, the man
gave them to me, so what are you going to do about it." It
just happened that day when I was arguing about the clothes to
my mother, my father happened to walk in feeling good and a
little wind in him. So my mother started to tell him about
the story I had told her. I was beginning to worry because I
was cornered in the house because there was only one way out
and my father was standing at it. To my surprise, my father
just laughed and said, "Well, Jim is a good boy. Go ahead, go
outside." I had many chances to bring stolen stuff home, but
my mother never did want anything that was stolen in the
house.  

Another incident illustrates how children could get pulled along
with their peers in the commission of delinquent acts, and how
delinquency was often of the "thrills and frills" variety rather than to
satisfy survival needs:

I was in the fifth grade at school when a new fellow moved
into the neighborhood. He had red hair so we gave him the
nickname of Red. He was short, stocky, kid and could use his
fists pretty good so we let him come along with us. It was
getting to be near winter time and we used to build fires in
front of my house. While we were going looking for wood one
day, we decided to break into a basement and steal some coal.
We would steal a few bushels of coal, use some of it, and sell
the rest for a quarter a bushel. Then we would go out and
steal sweet potatoes. At first we would steal just one or two
sweet potatoes, but then we decided to go out and steal a
whole bushel of them.

We did this. We would make our marks on the potatoes so we
could tell which one they belonged to. When we couldn't get

9 Ibid.
coal for the fire we would go into alleys and start breaking fences for fuel. About five o'clock in the afternoon a truck would come around which delivered Italian sausage to a nearby grocery. We would wait for the truck driver to go into the grocery store, and then we would open the door of the truck and steal about four or five pounds of Italian sausage. We would roast the sausage on the fire. Then the ones who didn't help steal the sausage would have to go and steal the bread and we would have our sandwiches. My mother really fed us good but I guess it was just the idea of eating stolen stuff that appealed to us. One day Birdman who had a few pennies in his pocket said, "Come on, I'm going to buy some candy." So when he came out with the candy he tried to give everyone a piece. When he came to me I told him that I didn't want any candy and pulled a box of it out of my shirt which I had stolen when I was in the store. Somehow or other I didn't go much for Birdman because he had everything he wanted and felt kind of big. At this time, my brother introduced me to Jerry and Midget. He said they were good kids. Jerry was a kind of nice kid with wavy hair and Midget was very small. That is how we gave him the name of Midget the Cat. After a few days we used to go on R-Avenue to steal boxes of fruit off trucks or anything else that we could sell. This is where I noticed that the Cat was a good crook. He was always the first one on the truck and would throw the stuff off to Ted and me. I noticed that Jerry was a little afraid at that time as was my brother Joe. There we gave Jerry his nickname of Larry, which means that he was afraid to steal. Jerry would always stay behind with my brother Joe who was also afraid at this time.10

Shoplifting from department and grocery stores was a regular pastime of youth in Russell Square. Against a larger chain store like Goldblatt's, they conducted "raids" during which several boys held the clerk's attention while their friends removed items from the counters. The boys then passed the goods off to colleagues so that if observed by a store detective, the young men actually responsible for the theft would not be in possession of the items when apprehended. The boys regularly stole from the local schools, most often from the staff, but occasionally from other students as well. One investigator from the CAP "observed on many occasions pupils returning from high school with shop

10 Ibid., pp. 11-12.
tools under their belts," including "planes, chisels, hammers, and items from the machine shop," which they quickly sold to older acquaintances in Russell Square. Mail theft was quite common in the neighborhood. Purse-snatching and burglary, with their potential for violent confrontations, were relatively rare, although one or two youths were adept at knocking the wind out of women so that their screams for help would be delayed and the purse snatcher would have time to escape.\footnote{"Introduction," pp. 96-100, 101-113.}

Vandalism and random property damage were also frequent. "It was not uncommon for the boys in the 'bush' area to break into schools and desecrate them," one observer commented. Often they stole nothing, but they delighted in recounting to Area Project workers "the amount of damage which they or their associates had succeeded in causing the property of the Board of Education." They threw ink on the walls and ceilings, smashed furniture, carved desk tops, broke windows, tore books apart, and emptied desks. If they were able to break into the school lunchroom and get at the food, "the boys would take a special delight in throwing the eggs, smearing the butter and urinating in the milk and on other food supplies. In some cases the desecration included even such acts as defecation on the teachers' desks."\footnote{Ibid., p. 27.} Jimmy recalled such an incident when his gang broke into their public school:

I seen the Cat and Thomas that evening and told them what I had seen. So that night we went into the school yard and climbed up on the roof of the engine room. There we broke a window latch and we got in. We went to the Principal's desk and the Cat started to Jimmy it. We didn't find anything there. It just happened at this time that I had to take a shit. Now there was a clean washroom in the Principal's office but instead I took a shit on Mr. H's desk. Of course, we all got a big kick out of that. So I wiped my ass with the
Principal's face towels and threw them all over the office with shit on them. Then Thomas decided we should go down to the cooking room and start eating. While in the cooking room the Cat and Thomas took a shit there. They did it all over the desk. It was getting late so we all went home. Well, the next day we went back again to school. It was Sunday and we broke in the same way we did before. This time I took a shit in the Principal's drawers and did it smell in that room. We then started to ransack all the rooms. We took pencils and erasers and all that stuff that really wasn't worth a dime. Then we left there for after getting our bellies full we didn't feel like hanging around anymore.

Next morning when school opened we knew we were going to get a big laugh out of what we done. When I went into our room the first thing I noticed was a dirty look on our teacher because her room was all ransacked. That morning the Principal had everyone go into the assembly hall. There he made a speech. He said, "Them low down bums who done such things as come into the school and be so filthy should be in the nuthouse." While in the assembly hall, I seen the Cat, Jerry, and Thomas and we were just looking at each other and laughing under our breaths. Was Mr. H. mad. Just the thought of seeing that shit on his desk must have got him sick. He said, "If I should ever find out who these boys were, whoever it was, I would put them in an institution for the rest of their lives, such filthy things were done." Then we went back to our rooms. The teacher then started to talk about it. She said, "Whoever did that should be ashamed of themselves. Mr. H. is such a wonderful principal."13

While petty thievery, vandalism, and other minor criminal activities were the most worrisome kinds of gang behavior in the eyes of the community, the sexual conduct of boys and girls was also a major concern of the CAP staff. Probably never before had social investigators acquired such intimate detail on the varieties of lower-class adolescent sexual expression and, more generally, boy-girl relations. Their findings often revealed basic social patterns. They learned, for example, that many girls from the Bush preferred to associate with boys from other neighborhoods in order to improve their life chances; that boys and girls generally had nothing to do with one

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another in day-to-day social relations; that "love" played little role in marital expectations; and that a tendency to view women primarily for their reproductive capacities encouraged premarital intercourse.\textsuperscript{14}

Their findings were also often deeply disturbing, as when they discovered the frequency with which boys, with little or no sense of wrongdoing, resorted to prostitutes, practiced group masturbation, had homosexual relations with pliant "moon boys," and participated in "gang shags." To be sure, CAP street workers were anything but prudes. They attempted to deal with unconventional and/or illegal sexual conduct in the same low-keyed, tolerant manner in which (as we shall see) they dealt with other forms of gang-related antisocial behavior. The ideology of the Area Project, however, would not allow them to consider sexual deviance as beyond their purview. Their goal was to help the community purge itself of all entrenched traditions of deviance which undermined the socialization of Russell Square youth in conventional values and behavior. Upgrading the relations between the sexes thus became an integral part of delinquency prevention in the Bush (although boys were much more the object of concern than girls).\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{14} A fascinating examination of family relationships and sexuality among Poles in South Chicago is given in "Introduction," pp. 48-60.
\textsuperscript{15} For examples, see "The Story of My Life," pp. 25-26, 43-44; "Introduction," pp. 53-57.
IV. THE CHICAGO AREA PROJECT IN ACTION IN SOUTH CHICAGO

The CAP's program in delinquency prevention can best be described under three rubrics: recreation, communal self-renewal, and mediation.

RECREATION

Clifford Shaw always insisted that recreational programs sponsored by the Area Project were means to more ambitious ends, and not, as in the recreational activities of social settlements, churches, schools, and parks, ends in themselves. This was certainly true in Russell Square. The fact remained, however, that in Russell Square the St. Michael's Boys' Club absorbed the great bulk of CAP energies and enlisted the greatest community enthusiasm. To most children and parents in the Bush, the Area Project and the Boys' Club were virtually synonymous. The CAP was certainly not hostage to its recreational program but equally certain, it had little independent identity apart from the Boys' Club.

That recreation would, from first to last, remain the focal point of CAP efforts in Russell Square was perhaps inevitable. Recreation, after all, was the phase of the Area Project program that best served the institutional interests of Shaw's key neighborhood ally, the Catholic Church. To be sure, Father Lange and Dr. Mioduski were highly supportive of Shaw's overall philosophy of delinquency prevention. But their primary allegiance was, understandably, to the Church and to expanding its influence among the next generation of Polish Catholics--most of whom, they could safely predict, would continue to live in South Chicago as adults. In sponsoring the Boys' Club, the
Church gained a valuable social service it could neither afford nor operate on its own, and which, under control by a competing social agency like Neighborhood House, might have threatened its hegemony over Polish youth. Shaw undoubtedly recognized dangers inherent in this dependent relationship--particularly after Father Lange insisted that the Boys' Club bear the name of his Church rather than that of the Area Project. But Shaw simply saw no alternative if he wanted to gain a foothold in the sympathies of Chicago's Polish Americans. He therefore ignored the constraints that Church affiliation imposed, to get the undeniable benefit of Father Lange's imprimatur.

The CAP's recreational program was centered at St. Michael's, but it also encompassed a variety of activities at two other neighborhood social centers and at the local public parks, whose formal programs for youth were essentially placed under CAP control. Athletic contests remained the most important recreational activities that the CAP sponsored. Football was particularly encouraged because it (allegedly) channeled sustained aggression while discouraging blatant brutality, and it siphoned energies that might otherwise go into fighting and stealing. Leagues were formed in basketball, baseball, volleyball, and tennis. To accommodate these programs, CAP workers obtained permission to convert approximately ten vacant lots into playgrounds, where they also sponsored competitions in badminton, horseshoe pitching, archery, and track and field events. Boxing and wrestling events were also strongly encouraged, both for the opportunities they provided for strenuous exercise, and as a means for settling disputes between individuals and gangs with minimal bloodshed. In the summers, the CAP sponsored swimming instruction in public parks and transported youth to nearby
lakes. In the winters, on a smaller scale, they introduced youth to skiing, tobogganing, and ice skating. Considered *in toto*, the CAP offered Russell Square youth organized opportunities for athletic participation equal to, or more extensive than, those available to youth in more economically advantaged neighborhoods.¹

Unlike the initial experience in the Bush Conference, when arguments and fights were regular occurrences during baseball games, the later CAP-sponsored athletic contests were generally fair and free of rule violations. The young men were good sports, even gracious losers. They played hard to win but felt embarrassed if one of their teammates played unfairly to gain competitive advantage. Even when the youth workers were unavailable to coach a team or officiate a game, the boys enforced the rules themselves. The change in decorum from the

roughhouse forms of recreation that had preceded CAP intervention was, in the view of neighborhood residents, nothing short of revolutionary.²

In addition to sponsoring organized athletics, the St. Michael's Boys' Club contained several game rooms where boys could play billiards, pool, checkers, shuffleboard, cards, Monopoly, and other board games. Eventually, parental pressure opened up the game rooms and gymnasium facilities to girls on a limited schedule. After young women began to participate, the recreation program was expanded to include classes in sewing, leathercraft, beadcraft, woodshop, carving, photography, metal work, and handicrafts. The CAP held annual fairs to display the children's various handicrafts, and also produced talent shows which drew audiences of more than 1,000 people to watch the neighborhood children perform.³

A professional social worker who investigated the recreational and social program in the mid-1930s indicated that the Club was surprisingly active. Even though she visited during the dinner hour, she found at least 200 boys participating in one or another event, all of whom, she felt, were enjoying themselves. In one room, 50 or more were playing billiards, table tennis, or other table games. In each of the three game rooms, which were "teeming with activity and interest," she found a supervisor in charge, a man, she noted, "selected from the local area because of his special ability with boys." The supervisors were not present to discipline the boys, she added, since the Area Project workers believed that "disciplinary problems are dispelled by the supervisors playing with rather than supervising the boys." In the wood

² "Rough Riders," November 20 and 21, 1931.
³ Russell Square Community Committee, unpublished Annual Reports, 1936-1940.
shop she found several boys building end tables, bookcases, sewing cabinets, knick-knack shelves, and bow and arrow sets, cooperatively using the electric saws, plane, and lathe. In an adjoining room a number of younger boys, ages eight to fourteen, were constructing model airplanes, "a popular pastime" for children in the area. A CAP worker funded by the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) and several neighborhood volunteers directed the shop work. Other young men were holding a special-interest club meeting of some undisclosed sort. She also visited the girls' rooms, where she found a dozen young women involved in "artcraft" projects of various kinds, creating both useful and ornamental objects. Other girls were playing pool and table tennis. Although the young women appeared to be "very much at home" in the Club, she observed, "there was not the life and enthusiasm exhibited in the girls' rooms that was so prevalent in the boys' club rooms."

The St. Michael's Boys' Club, unlike many other boys' clubs, was no mere after-school or weekend recreational center. It was ordinarily open every evening until 10 p.m., although younger children were routinely sent home an hour or so before closing time. While precise daily attendance data are no longer available, the Club's directors claimed that at least three-quarters of Russell Square's eligible boys, and one-half of the eligible girls, were regular participants in one or another program. Club staff and volunteers all took their responsibilities to children and parents most seriously. They kept detailed activity cards on each youngster, covering the total time spent at the Club and the activities pursued, so that parents could find out

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In addition, Club staff went to great pains to establish ties with virtually every youth from Russell Square who had formal contact with the police, whether or not the youngster was officially charged. The object was to involve delinquent youth in as many structured recreational activities as possible; indeed, this was probably a condition of (and an incentive to grant) unofficial police probation. CAP staff and volunteers assumed responsibility for knowing where such boys were after school and during early evening hours. If the boys failed to attend Club activities, CAP workers generally knew where to locate them in their favorite haunts.

Recalcitrant youth were frequently the focus of discussion in regularly scheduled meetings of paid and volunteer Club staff. These meetings stressed the need to develop individualized, flexible programs of treatment in order to help nonconformists "plan their own activities," and to develop alternative strategies "whenever the boys show signs of losing interest." This flexible, "hang-loose" attitude toward delinquency and blatant nonconformity sometimes startled professional social workers. With evident dismay, one described the typical CAP youth workers' attitude that "only by accompanying the boys at all times and not being critical of them even when their behavior is
antisocial, can they really understand them and succeed in interesting them to participate in socially acceptable group activities under leaders." While CAP staff encouraged gang members to participate in formal athletic events, they seemed equally content to "just bum around" or "go down behind Steel Mills and throw rocks" with the boys, hoping that their presence would at least keep the youth "out of real mischief." 6

Rounding out the recreational program of the St. Michael's Boys' Club was a "Study Club" which the Church financed for the intellectual stimulation of older adolescents and younger adults. The Study Club regularly attracted between 150 and 200 youth to hear lectures on social problems by professors and politicians, to read in the club's 1,000 volume library, and to work on a newspaper designed to publicize the philosophy and programs of the Area Project. Aspiring young journalists wrote articles on local events and social and economic issues (including labor turmoil and political impotence) and offered suggestions for citizen involvement in diverse community improvement projects. 7

Perhaps the most important feature of the newspaper was the regular column on "Community Problems" written by Shaw's chief representative in Russell Square after 1935, Stephen Bubacz (who grew up in Russell Square and succeeded James McDonald). Bubacz called attention to numerous specific trouble spots--truancy, "Junkyard Delinquency," late-night carousing, shoeshine boys who worked in taverns, for example--but he returned always to two central themes: the damage done by parents who

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7 Ibid., p. 55; Russell Square Community Committee, "Annual Report," unpublished manuscript, n.d., c. 1939, pp. 3-4, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 84.
were insufficiently vigilant of their children's leisure-time activities, and the role local residents could play in preventing and containing delinquency. Following Shaw, Bubacz insisted that most delinquents were not feebleminded, as an earlier generation had thought. "The delinquent is a person like you and I. He wants intimate relationships, response, new adventure, recognition just as all people. He has the same interests, urges, desires as we have. However the manner in which he satisfies these desires, sometimes takes the form of socially unapproved behavior." The traditional parental and societal response to juvenile deviance--punishment and segregation from conventional society--only compounded the child's difficulties, Bubacz argued. "His parents resort to physical punishment, his neighbors, his teachers look down upon him and warn their friends and children not to play or associate with the offender." Usually private and public social agencies "indicate to the offender that he is not wanted and tell him he can not use the club facilities." These negative societal responses, lamented Bubacz, drove delinquents "back to the only place where they can get the sort of relationships that we all want. We are driving them back to the delinquent and criminal groups from where they got their start." Bubacz concluded by urging youths and adults in South Chicago to play with delinquents, to take them on trips, and to invite them to dinner in order to introduce them "into a new social world of new friends and socially approved codes." He would be glad to introduce local residents "to some one of your neighborhood who needs your help."*8

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In the breadth of its institutional program, the St. Michael's Boys' Club was probably as wide-ranging as any privately sponsored youth agency in Chicago (or any other American city). Yet the relatively traditional format of the Boys' Club inevitably made CAP spokespersons nervous. From the first, they attempted to place its activities in perspective. It was, they insisted, only one component of the overall CAP philosophy and mission. At the ceremony inaugurating the Boys' Club, for example, they emphasized that recreation itself was not the key to delinquency prevention. Recreation was merely a means of "associating youngsters with constructive activities that would relate them to the conventional life of their community." An hour's ping-pong would obviously not "inspire" a boy to abandon delinquent activities, "but it would bring him into contact with people he might learn to regard as his friends. In turn, these new friends might help him understand another standard of behavior." However impressive the Boys' Club appeared, it "should not be regarded as the completion of a goal, but...it should inspire the entire community to give serious thought to its other problems."\(^9\)

Because the St. Michael's Boys' Club became such a popular local institution, it presented in classic form a dilemma Shaw faced in each of the communities he entered: how to sustain momentum for realizing all of the CAP's objectives after rallying the community sentiment behind a new and elaborate recreational facility?\(^{10}\) The most


\(^{10}\) This dilemma remains real for CAP community organizations today, as indicated to us in discussions with Peter Hunt, the Project's current Director.
distinguishing feature of the Area Project philosophy, Shaw stressed, was its community rather than institutional focus. The truly innovative work was to go on "out there," in the community, rather than, as in the traditional boys' club, social settlement, or YMCA, inside four walls, however attractively designed to appeal to youth. To fulfill Shaw's objectives, the St. Michael's Boys' Club had to serve as a catalyst for building a new, confident, well-organized community spirit in Russell Square, and as a springboard for sundry "mediative" activities that would neutralize the attractions of delinquency for gang youth and smooth their relations with educational and social control institutions. The following two sections suggest the ways in which the CAP attempted to realize these goals in practice.

VIGILANCE AND COMMUNAL SELF-RENEWAL

The entire Area Project program in South Chicago was administered and coordinated by an indigenous organization, the Russell Square Community Committee (RSCC). The RSCC was the structural embodiment of the CAP's communal self-help philosophy. While it supervised programmatic details and advised on treatment of individual youths, its chief role and goal was to upbuild a new sense of potency among law-abiding residents to transform their neighborhood so it would no longer tolerate conditions that fostered juvenile crime.

Clifford Shaw believed that, like the residents in most high-crime urban areas, the denizens of Russell Square tended to assume that they could not effect meaningful change in the processes of their communal life. This attitude only bred further apathy and reinforced their powerlessness. The RSCC's most basic purpose, thus, was to change this
feeling of impotence—to teach local residents how to think about, and
to provide a structure for them to act upon, the sundry problems that
undermined the allegiance of youth to conventional moral and social
values. As one spokesperson put it, the RSCC was a "stimulating and
organizing force in the community.... interested in crystallizing public
opinion with regard to many issues which range from attitudes toward
youthful misbehavior to keeping clean the streets and alleys." To rid
the community of delinquency, it had to "develop a consciousness of the
problems of child welfare and a unanimity of opinion with regard to
them." It sought not only to eliminate "the attitudes of indifference,"
but to create "a single standard of behavior expectation among the
adults and children." Stephen Bubacz put the point boldly: The RSCC
was nothing less than a "vigilante organization."

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"Chicago Area Project Federation," unpublished manuscript, n.d.,
c. 1943, n.p., section on "Russell Square Community Committee," located
in Bubacz Papers, folder 17; Russell Square Community Committee, "Annual
Report," March 12, 1940, p. 3. See also more generally on the community
renewal and organization effort: "Results and Evaluation," unpublished
manuscript, n.d., c. late 1930s, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 85;
Russell Square Community Committee, "March Program," unpublished
manuscript, n.d., late 1930s, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 84;
Russell Square Community Committee, "Annual Report," 1941, pp. 5, 8, 16;
"Annual Report," 1938, pp. 3-4; "Other Community Problems," pp. 1-7;
"Description of Major Accomplishments of the Chicago Area Project
Programs," unpublished manuscript, September, 1941, p. 2, located in CAP
Records, section VI, box 1; "Brief Preliminary Report of...the Chicago
Area Project," March 1939, p. 34; Chicago Area Project, "Annual Report,"
August 1, 1940, p. 9; "Resume of the Activities of the Russell Square
Community Committee for the Year 1945," unpublished manuscript, 1945,
located in CAP Records, section XII, box 16; "Service Report of the
Russell Square Community Committee Submitted to the Chicago Association
of Commerce," unpublished manuscript, 1945, pp. 3-4, located in CAP
Records, section XII, box 16; "Service Report of the Russell Square
Committee...," 1946, pp. 5-9, located in CAP Records, section XII, box
16; "Russell Square," unpublished manuscript probably prepared by
Bubacz, apparently for the Council of Social Agencies, n.d., c. early
1940s, p. 4, located in CAP Records, section XII, box 16; "The South
Chicago Area Project," 1940, pp. 8-10; Council of Social Agencies,
The RSCC was composed of a Board of Directors responsible for setting policy and for fund raising; program staff (full-time and part-time) paid by either the Committee itself, CAP headquarters (Shaw), the IJR, or the federally funded W.P.A.; and numerous unpaid volunteers, all of whom came from the community. During most years, the RSCC employed the equivalent of approximately five or six full-time staff. In the 1930s, however, W.P.A. funds were periodically available to expand the staff—especially those involved in recreation—considerably. In addition, the Area Project controlled certain city funds enabling it to place its own personnel in special project positions as probation officers, truant officers, and park supervisors. St. Michael's Church also contributed the time of at least one of its priests to serve the CAP as a youth counselor.

While the Board of Directors and the two key staff supervisors during the 1930s and 1940s, James McDonald and Stephen Bubacz, exerted great influence on all CAP activities, concrete planning and program implementation was mainly in the hands of several subcommittees staffed largely by community volunteers. These subcommittees covered such areas as education, family counseling, juvenile delinquency, and camping, and were the prime avenue through which the CAP recruited new members. It was mainly through the subcommittees, moreover, that concerned adults gained direct access to youth, whether by pleading a delinquent's case before juvenile court, visiting children's homes to discuss problems with them and their parents, managing an athletic team, or supervising construction and repair of recreational facilities. The sundry subcommittees engaged the services of between 150 and 200 Russell Square adults each year.12

12 "Report of the Group Work Reviewing Committee Regarding Review
Unfortunately, we know very little about the backgrounds of the numerous individuals who devoted great time and energy to making the RSCC a vital force of communal self-renewal. We cannot identify the volunteers in a systematic manner, and we have only sketchy information regarding the paid staff, including McDonald and Bubacz. We have identified the occupations of twelve central members of the Board of Directors in the 1930s and 1940s, all of whom were of higher status and income than the bulk of Bush residents (two physicians, two grocers, two foremen in the local mills, one mortician, a druggist, a realtor, an attorney, a city deputy coroner, and the president of a roofing business). The dearth of systematic information on volunteers is particularly unfortunate. Without these volunteers, the extraordinary array of services that the RSCC offered would have been impossible. The volunteers served as supervisors, team captains and coaches, counselors and street workers, group leaders, custodians, builders of facilities, and, most important, as fund-raisers.\(^{13}\)

Along with the CAP's self-help ethos went self-financing.\(^{14}\)

Although Clifford Shaw provided the RSCC with initial financial as well
as organizational assistance and continued to offer small amounts of money throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the RSCC raised the great bulk of its funds in the community. This was no mean task, of course, considering the low income of Russell Square residents, the irregular employment occasioned by the Depression, and the mandatory sums which residents contributed to St. Michael's Church. Hundreds of men and women collected money door to door, held bazaars, fairs, talent contests, tag days, and handicraft exhibits, and sponsored smokers and innumerable athletic events. Although women in the community were important in supervising the Boys' Club programs for girls and in serving occasionally as street workers for female gangs, their most significant contribution lay in fund-raising, where they drew extensively on their experience in raising money for their Church. (They apparently did not draw Father Lange's ire for the simple reason that most monies helped sustain the St. Michael's Boys' Club.)

The RSCC pursued diverse strategies of "vigilantism" in its efforts to change social conditions it considered responsible for delinquency and to upbuild the Bush's self-image in the eyes of both youth and adults. Perhaps the most basic step toward communal self-renewal, concluded the RSCC, was the improvement of the neighborhood's dilapidated physical appearance, which was a source of considerable shame and self-denigration. "Let us be honest with ourselves," read a broadside which the Committee distributed throughout Russell Square.

third of an annual operating budget of between $12,000 and $15,000. From this point onward, contributions from CAP headquarters were minimal. The RSCC also received small donations from nonlocal private agencies and trusts, the largest of which was a $500 yearly contribution from the Chicago Community Trust.
"Are we proud of our community? Do we hesitate to tell a stranger where we live? You fellows and girls who work downtown or go to dances can answer that one."\textsuperscript{15}

In the accommodative spirit of the Area Project, the RSCC did not primarily blame unresponsive city service departments for the community's miserable appearance. Instead, they called attention to how local residents unthinkingly contributed to the slovenly look of the area's streets, yards, and homes. In the mid-1930s, a group of residents--both children and adults--approached the Committee to ask "why [their] community can't look as nice and clean as other neighborhoods in [the] ward." The adults blamed the children who, they argued, "take particular joy in maliciously damaging property, they value nothing. They tear, they mark with pencils and chalk, they break anything that comes along." Many of the boys and girls in attendance agreed with these remarks, but they added that adults also were responsible. "How many parents really have stirred up a feeling of community pride in their children?" several adolescents asked. "Many parents are guilty of throwing the rubbish in the alleys. They think it is the proper thing to do. Maybe they don't know that it is against the law to throw refuse and ashes in the alley," another youth stated. "They don't know that you are supposed to have ash cans."\textsuperscript{16}

To improve sanitation in the neighborhood, the RSCC acquired large refuse and ash cans in bulk which it sold at cost to every resident who needed (or at least wanted) one. The Committee also put to rest any lingering excuses that poor sanitation in the Bush resulted from

\textsuperscript{15} "Our Community and What We Can Do About It," unpublished manuscript, n.d., c. 1936, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 84, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
inadequate city services by investigating the matter itself. "We are getting the same service as the rest of the ward," it concluded. The difference between Russell Square and other communities in the ward was that "our residents use the alley as one great ash can while residents in the other neighborhoods are equipped [sic] with the proper receptacles." The Committee organized the community block by block, demanding that each block representative take orders for the needed refuse cans. After the sanitation project was completed, the RSCC arranged to distribute more than 6,000 shrubs that it secured through donations.17

While the RSCC spearheaded myriad additional projects to rehabilitate the physical appearance of the Bush, its "vigilantism" was generally aimed at social conditions which, in its view, were directly linked to juvenile delinquency. So the RSCC cooperated closely with Jessie Binford's aggressive Juvenile Protective Association (JPA), on whose Board of Directors Clifford Shaw actively served. With the JPA, the Committee worked diligently to restrict access of minors to taverns, to close down houses of prostitution, and to drive out "fences" from the community.18 The extraordinarily large number of taverns in the Bush inevitably attracted minors, the RSCC complained:

For one thing, the taverns represented to the youngsters a place of adult pleasure ordinarily forbidden to those under 21. This in itself had a great deal of drawing power for teenagers. What counted for more, perhaps, was the fact that the taverns were places where boys could earn money without much difficulty. The boys ventured into these places in pairs, tossing a coin to see which of them would carry the shoe-shine kit, which would be allowed to shine the women's

17 Ibid., pp. 2ff.
shoes. For an extra five cents, the boys would sing any song that the customer requested. Even if the boys had not been sold drinks in the taverns, the fact that they wandered from place to place, indifferently shining shoes, singing songs, until the small hours, interfered with their school work and was enough to disturb the Committee.\(^{19}\)

To counteract these customs, the RSCC approached the local association of saloonkeepers and asked them to prohibit shoeshine boys from entering their establishments. They gauged the appeal "to the tavern-owners' better nature," on the one hand, and "to their pocketbooks," on the other, "for it was tacitly understood that those taverns refusing to comply with the Committee's request would find themselves lacking customers." The pressure tactics apparently worked: Each saloon had to display a placard warning away minors, and members of the saloonkeepers' association who refused to cooperate with the RSCC were closed down. Taverns owned by individuals who lived outside the Bush continued to allow shoeshine boys onto the premises, but the RSCC concluded that "the community, at any rate, was demonstrating its willingness to cooperate in preventing delinquency."\(^{20}\)

The omnipresence of "fences" in Russell Square resulted from the widespread practice of "junking." The RSCC concisely explained the links between "fences" and local youth:

For years it had been an accepted practice for youngsters to make extra money by selling plumbing fixtures and other metal scraps to local junkmen and other adults, with no questions asked. It was understood that most of these transactions with teen-agers were of questionable legality, but since no one had ever disturbed his conscience about this point, local boys became enthusiastic junkers. Lacking the price of a movie ticket, many Russell Square youngsters went to the dime store,

\(^{19}\) "Russell Square," p. 19.
\(^{20}\) Ibid., pp. 19-21.
the local Goldblatt's or an I.C. station lavatory, and lifted whatever metal they could lay their hands on. After bending or jumping on it for a quick aging process, they would hie themselves to the nearest junk dealer and earn the price of an afternoon's entertainment. Although willing buyers of undamaged goods could be found, the junkman was the easiest person to deal with if a boy happened to be in a hurry.\textsuperscript{21}

The Committee attacked the "junking" problem in two ways. First, it secured space in local newspapers and air time on the radio to argue against the practice of receiving stolen goods from children. "There is no use in spending the money to fight delinquency if people turn right around and encourage it by buying goods of dubious origins," the Committee insisted. Such practices only prepared youngsters "for more serious crimes." Only one "fence" in Russell Square refused to cooperate with the Committee after its media campaign, but this abstention forced the Committee to more drastic measures. "Concealing themselves near the man's junkyard, a few of the board members took pictures of him doing business with teenagers. The Committee was able to prove that some of the goods had been stolen, and with this evidence to clinch the argument, the man agreed to cooperate. After that, he called the Committee whenever he suspected that he was being invited to receive stolen goods, and they would send over a man to inspect and photograph the junk." The RSNC held no illusions that it had eliminated "junking" from the Bush, but it was confident that its actions had substantially reduced the practice. As the Committee emphasized, to accomplish its goals in this as in all other major efforts to prevent delinquency, "the cooperation of as many as possible of the local residents" was essential.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., p. 20.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., p. 21.
Sometimes, successful "vigilantism" created unanticipated residual problems. While there were relatively few pool halls in the Bush compared to other high-crime areas in Chicago, the RSCC considered one very popular establishment "a source of trouble and hoodlumism."

The Committee tried, with little effect, to convince the owner to keep younger boys out of the pool hall; with equally poor results, the Committee attempted to convince youngsters not to go there. Refusing to admit failure, the RSCC then attempted to persuade the owner to leave the Bush. Somewhat to their surprise, he agreed, but only if the Committee would reimburse him for his equipment. In the pragmatic manner that characterized all CAP affairs, the RSCC decided that it had to agree to the owner's terms in order to be fair. The Committee purchased the equipment and moved it into the club rooms at St. Michael's, aided by "several boys who had been among the regular habitues of the pool-room. If the boys would not quit the pool-hall, the Committee could, at least, transport the hall to healthier surroundings."23

In the next subsection, we shall examine the RSCC's work in directing the counseling of gang youth. For now, it can simply be noted that the Committee provided counselors with back-up in particularly difficult cases, seeking to bring to bear on recalcitrant individual youth and entire gangs the collective conscience and ostracism of the community as a whole. For example, one gang was clearly beyond the influence of the street worker whom the Committee had assigned to deal with it. The gang's activities were the bane of everyone's existence, as the Committee vividly described:

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23 Ibid., pp. 19-20.
The Aces always looked for, and managed to discover, excitement in anything that devilled someone else. They pulled trolleys off the wires routinely; snatched purses in broad daylight; were so adept at lifting fruit from peddlers' wagons that on one adventure they succeeded in running off with three bushels of apples, tossing fruit back at the storming peddler. The Aces shinnied up trees in the park, reached into the nests of sleeping sparrows, and popped them into paper bags before the birds could escape. Then they took the sparrows into St. Michael's gym where a basketball game was in progress and released the birds, one by one. They delighted in burning home-made stink bombs at social gatherings. Their vandalism made the park director's life miserable. In turn, he did his best to keep the boys out of the park.²⁴

Months of frustrated effort went into the RSCC's attempt to negotiate a settlement. The gang refused even to enter St. Michael's, insisting that it be dealt with on its own turf. Finally, however, an RSCC representative persuaded the boys to organize as an athletic team, and after they had practiced diligently, the Committee convinced a local merchant to sponsor them and provide appropriate uniforms and equipment. To facilitate their practice, the RSCC also interceded with the park director to ask him not to chase the boys away or to call them hoodlums any longer. The upshot of this persistent effort, reported the Committee, was a complete victory for civility: "The team stayed together and utilized time after school and during vacation that might otherwise have been dissipated in petty thievery and annoyance to others."²⁵

As these various examples make clear, the RSCC symbolized and provided a structure for the exercise of a new form of blunt, quasi-political power in the Bush. More subtle forms of persuasion were

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 22-23.
²⁵ Ibid.
necessary to deal with private and public social agencies that provided valuable social services to needy children and their families. During the Depression, the RSCC assumed an aggressive, albeit defensive posture in trying to retain services or to get agencies to deliver on promised services. For example, when both the Infant Welfare Society and the Visiting Nurses' Association announced their intention to "abandon" their Russell Square branches, the RSCC "marshalled community support in protest of this move," and the two agencies agreed to continue in operation. A subcommittee on public health was particularly successful on numerous occasions in getting action, whether having the city finally tear down condemned housing or obtaining medical and dental services in local parochial schools equivalent to that offered in public schools.  

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Given the CAP's strong commitment to organized recreation as an antidote to adolescents' misuse of leisure, it was not surprising that the RSCC devoted much attention to the public parks, which were in dismal condition and among the city's smallest. In 1935, the RSCC convened a general meeting to assess the neighborhood's public recreational facilities. This led to formation of a Citizens' Committee, consisting of representatives of all of the community's lodges, societies, and ethnic associations. The Citizens' Committee drafted resolutions and protested to the Chicago Park District about inadequate provisions in Russell Square. Other local groups and

26 "The South Chicago Area Project," 1940, p. 8. Examples of the Committee's role in the community are evident in its cooperation with other local institutions: See James F. McDonald to United Charities, January 18, 1937, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 123; Jesse F. Binford to Clifford Shaw, December 29, 1943, in Bubacz Papers, Folder 123; Binford to Shaw, July 28, 1939, on the Area Project's westside program, located in CAP Records, section III, box 2; McDonald to Binford, March 31, 1941, and Binford to McDonald, April 21, 1941, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 126.
newspapers had voiced similar complaints in previous years, but without results. This time, however, the city responded to the appeal, and in short order, park buildings were remodeled, gymnasium and showers were repaired, and a decrepit assembly hall was rehabilitated.  

In addition to these forms of social activities, the RSCC also provided basic services to help immigrants adjust to their new country and city. Doubtless, Neighborhood House provided comparable services, but the Committee felt more comfortable offering them under more secular (i.e., non-Protestant) auspices. The RSCC encouraged immigrants to prepare to become U.S. citizens as soon as possible, and sponsored English language and naturalization classes three times weekly to assist them. Average enrollment ranged between 30 and 45 students. The teacher of the classes received high marks in the community. "Very seldom a person does not pass" after Miss Anders declares him ready to take the test, the Committee proudly announced. Moreover, the language training often provided inspiration to immigrants to continue their schooling at RSCC-sponsored adult education classes, to attend regularly scheduled group forums on local social problems, or even to write for the Russell Square Community News, which, as noted earlier, the Committee instituted in 1934 to help build community cohesion and pride, and to inform residents of important political and social events which affected the Bush as a whole.  

These concrete accomplishments and ongoing activities provide some indication of how the RSCC conceived the task of developing a sense of potency and confidence in Bush residents to inspire them toward the goal of communal self-renewal. But the achievement that perhaps best symbolized growing communal solidarity and purposefulness was the establishment of Camp Lange. Russell Square was the first CAP neighborhood to develop an extensive camping program. The initiative for it, interestingly enough, appears to have come from the community rather than from CAP headquarters. Clifford Shaw identified the whole notion of camping with the offerings of traditional social agency programs. The rural sentimentality and escapism associated with the camp movement in the early 20th century was indeed at odds with the unique, distinctively pro-urban sensibility with which Shaw and the Chicago School of Sociology were widely identified. Nonetheless, as with his courting of St. Michael's Church, Shaw was responsive to local preferences. After some initial hesitation, he encouraged the RSCC to pursue the idea of a camp program as far as it could, and he provided a small subsidy for the venture.

A demand for overnight hiking and camping experiences had surfaced soon after the Area Project workers first made contact with adolescents in Russell Square. E. A. Conover remarked during the summer of 1933 that his boys "repeatedly asked for trips for camping experiences, of a week or more duration." If such opportunities were provided, he concluded, "it would considerably facilitate the conduct of our work." He proposed a number of overnight hikes in forest preserves in the Chicago metropolitan area. The RSCC regularly sponsored expeditions to
rural areas and forest preserves accessible by public transportation or automobile. The young men seemed to enjoy these trips immensely, and many stubbornly hid from the Area Project workers when it was time to return to Russell Square.29

As demand for these pastoral experiences increased, the Committee began to explore opportunities for a more systematic outdoor program. Their arguments for camping were consistent with those of the larger nationwide camping movement. "The camp is...another useful tool which can be used to mold the character of the youngster along those channels which are believed to be socially desirable," maintained one spokesperson. "A unique experience is afforded both for the child and for the adult in camp, where the city, its streets, its corners, its litter-strewn alleys, the booming noise of the rolling mills, the blasting echo of slag dynamite and the ever present pall of smoke from the open hearth and blast furnaces are forgotten." In camp, while city youth are enjoying the countryside, "the eternal green of nature works a gradual transformation. City attitudes, city complexes, all the myriad defenses and escape manifestations of hardy urbanized living are sloughed off and the boy or girl gives a truer picture of himself or herself." After nature has eroded old habits and patterns, "new attitudes are imposed, new ideas inculcated, new principles formed, and, in many instances, permanent changes can be made in the character of the young people by camp work of this type."30


Working together with CAP headquarters, the RSCC leased a small camp for weekend use on the Lake Michigan sand dunes near New Buffalo, Michigan. To adapt the camp to their needs, the Committee purchased and transported a portable school building to the site and constructed several small bunkhouses for sleeping quarters. Capacity was only 25, not counting the "army of sand fleas and mosquitoes who in no small measure contributed to camp activities."\textsuperscript{21}

Although children used the camp regularly between 1935 and 1938, parents complained that facilities were inadequate to satisfy a pent-up demand for organized outdoor adventure. They asked the RSCC to locate a suitable piece of land in the countryside upon which Bush residents could, by pooling their time and skills, build a permanent campsite of their own. The RSCC organized a feverish campaign to garner funds early in 1939 and within a short time raised nearly $5,000 from some 600 local contributors. This was sufficient to purchase 27 acres adjacent to a lake in Michigan City, Indiana, a used bus for transportation, and building materials (which were supplemented by contributions from The Pullman Car Company and other South Chicago businesses). Working whenever they were free, volunteers with skills in carpentry, plumbing, masonry, and roofing built essential equipment and furniture for the camp in Russell Square machine shops. They also traveled to Michigan City to build a kitchen, underground storage cellar, mess hall (seating 60), eight bunkhouses (each sleeping five), a hospital tent, a director's tent, and a garden (which was expected both to cut food costs and to instill respect for nature). The dedication

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., p. 2.
ceremonies for Camp Lange, named for the patriarch of St. Michael's Church, were attended by fully one-fifth of the residents of the Bush, an "inspiring sight," as one observer remarked.\textsuperscript{32}

Staffed almost entirely by Russell Square volunteers, Camp Lange annually served approximately 350 children, each of whom participated in a seven-day program. More than 100 other children were ordinarily turned away for lack of space. Parents were charged $3.75 per child, although the Committee and other civic societies subsidized the cost of many campers. The Committee was particularly concerned that seriously delinquent boys be allowed to attend the camp, and consequently it made scholarships available to many of them. "These boys enjoyed their stay in camp," reflected an RS CC spokesperson, "and a good relationship was developed with them which helped in making the Committee's work with them more effective in the future."\textsuperscript{33}

The boys and girls who attended Camp Lange participated in an elaborate program of recreational activities, character-building projects, homecraft skill development classes, and numerous structured experiences to encourage personal hygiene, toleration, loyalty to rules and regulations, friendliness, "creative self-expression, spiritual growth, [and] social and group adjustment." Because of the camp's popularity during the summer months, the Committee eventually established a year-round weekend program for juvenile delinquents. With financial assistance from the Franklin P. Dunbaugh Memorial Fund, small groups of older adolescents "who spend much of their leisure-time foot loose, and hanging around street corners" became regular visitors to Camp Lange during the fall, winter, and spring.\textsuperscript{34}

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., pp. 6-8.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., p. 8.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., p. 14; "A Summary Report of the Use of the Franklin P.
While the activities offered children at Camp Lange differed little from those at most camps, the RSCC insisted that Camp Lange was nonetheless unique in that it represented a legitimate extension of the Area Project philosophy. It was not simply that Camp Lange courted, instead of rejected, seriously delinquent youth, or even that residents from the Bush had built and largely staffed the camp on a volunteer basis. At a deeper level, in the Committee's view, "the camp represents a living symbol of concerted community action, and stands as a rebuke to sociologic paternalism, to the disuse of natural qualities, to the despair of dependency, and to unconstructive charity. It will ever stand as a refutation of the idea that the socially disorganized area, the slum which has been characterized as the breeding ground of predatory crime, the area in which delinquency is found, cannot actually and literally pull itself up by its bootstraps and become a community organized on the basis that self-direction comes from self-discipline." The Camp's creation and operation, furthermore, could "be pointed out as the exemplification of the principles that permeate the work of the Chicago Area Project in these fields, the results of which the eye cannot always see, the ear cannot always hear, the hands cannot always touch, the statistician cannot always measure, but only the human heart of the persons affected can understand." 


Clifford Shaw would certainly never have predicted that the two most visible monuments to the CAP's influence in South Chicago would be a boys' club located in a Catholic church and a lakeside camp in Indiana named after the church's patriarch. But this very unpredictability exemplified what Shaw never tired of repeating to skeptics—-that the Area Project was not a blueprint for reform but simply a conceptual framework meant to encourage and facilitate indigenous social invention.  

MEDIATION AS DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

The Area Project engaged in a variety of innovative efforts at delinquency prevention which we group under the rubric of "mediation." Perhaps "interpretation" conveys the concept as well as "mediation." On the one hand, CAP staff and volunteers sought at every opportunity to explain to representatives of formal social agencies without indigenous roots—-such as schools, police, and probation departments—-why troublesome children from the Bush behaved as they did, and what they were like as individual human beings. On the other hand, CAP workers tried to persuade local youth—-in a low-keyed, tolerant, nonabusive manner—-why it was both morally right and, ultimately, in their best interest to conform to the values and expectations of conventional society.

The best-publicized and best-documented form of CAP mediation was the one-to-one interaction between street workers and youth gang

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We borrow the notion of "social inventions for youth" from enlightening discussions with Robert Rapoport, who is currently serving as Vice President for Program at the W. T. Grant Foundation.
members, an activity that became popularly known as "curbstone counseling." The process hardly lends itself to easy description or analysis. Typical was the following "definition": "Sometimes the most important thing to an individual is just to sit on a curbstone and talk to someone he can trust. It's hard to explain, but I guess the biggest thing we do is to make ourselves available for whatever help a youngster would expect of a close friend. And if we can't be that friend to him, we'll try to find someone who can." 37

So it was. In playgrounds, parks, city streets, schools, courts, police stations, places of employment, camps, beaches--wherever--CAP staff and volunteers served as concerned, knowledgeable older brothers and close friends to children who were already in trouble with the law, or who were committing delinquent acts that would invariably lead them into legal difficulties. Curbstone counselors were, ideally, young adults from Russell Square with whom delinquent youth could identify relatively easily--either those who had somehow internalized and acted upon conventional values despite their upbringing in the Bush, or those who had once been active criminals but who, after punishment or simply maturation, had changed radically and become law-abiding citizens. These indigenous street workers were supplemented, especially at the beginning stages of community organization, by energetic, idealistic, highly educated young men from CAP headquarters who would attempt in their own way to develop close rapport with delinquent youth.

Curbstone counselors advised boys on appropriate language and manners, tried to dissuade them from serious criminal behavior, suggested alternative courses of action that would prove equally

stimulating and rewarding in the long run, stood by them when they got into trouble, and, above all, tried to be with them as much as possible. They served as both model and translator of conventional social values with which youth from the Bush had had little previous contact or awareness (or so the counselors assumed). To the chagrin of professional social workers who came to observe, the Area Project street workers did indeed appear to accept the boys' deviant attitudes, values, and behavior as "normal" within the cultural matrix of Russell Square. Convinced that formal contact with the police or the juvenile justice system only reinforced children's allegiance to a deviant code of conduct, CAP staff and volunteers made every effort to keep lawbreakers at home and to rehabilitate them in the Bush. In sum, curbstone counseling was not a "technique" of intervention, but a philosophy, a style, an individual moral presence. It was less social work per se than aggressive, omnipresent caring and monitoring of "youth at risk" in their natural, crimogenic habitats.

While the methods of curbstone counseling were informal, they did not lack a basic strategy. That strategy was predicated on two key assumptions: first, that gangs were pervasive in high crime areas and were directly responsible for most delinquent behavior (i.e., delinquent conduct was a group rather than an individual phenomenon), and second, that all gangs generated "natural" leaders who wielded extraordinary influence and whose authority gang members generally dared not question. These propositions were basic to the many studies on urban youth published by the Chicago School of Sociology. Their importance to the Area Project, though, derived as much from necessity as from theory. Unless CAP street workers believed, as an article of faith, that the
rehabilitation of a few "natural" gang leaders would ramify and transform the behavior of other gang members who looked to them for guidance, the CAP could not possibly--given its finite numbers of staff and volunteers--exert much influence on crime rates in Russell Square.\footnote{Informative discussions of the group work programs and the utility of "natural leaders" appear in Russell Square Community Committee, "Annual Report," 1938, pp. 1-2; "Proposal for the Development of Community Programs for the Treatment and Prevention of Delinquency in the Delinquency Areas of Chicago," unpublished manuscript, n.d., c. 1938, located in CAP Records, section VI, box 1; "Chicago Area Project," March 1939; Chicago Area Project, "Annual Report," August 1, 1940, p. 5; "Resume of the Activities...for...1945," p. 3; "Service Report...to the Chicago Association of Commerce," 1945, p. 2; Russell Square," p. 3; "The South Chicago Area Project," 1940, p. 6; Council of Social Agencies, "Chicago Area Project," 1936, pp. 50-51; "Plan for Employment of Delinquents in Connection with the South Chicago Area Project," unpublished manuscript, by E. A. Conover, July 6, 1933, pp. 1-3, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 16.}

CAP staff advanced these points time and again. For example, one street worker argued that the most efficient way to get children from the Bush to join the Boys' Club was to convince the leader of their gang to do so:

The natural leader rises to that position in his own gang because he can do something better than the other members, whether it is hitting home runs or stealing bakery goods. Because the boys want to be as much like their leader as possible, what he says and does matters a great deal to them. He has prestige, and they will seek it much as he does. If he proclaims school "sissy stuff," his gang is likely to decide the same. If the leader thinks it important to play basketball, his friends usually agree... If a staff member can make friends with a leader and, through that friendship, persuade him that the...program is worthwhile, going to the Boys' Club will often become the thing to do, as far as his gang is concerned. Similarly, if a staff member or employed leader has established a good relationship with a gang leader, he is able to relay constructive suggestions to the other boys through his young friend.\footnote{"Russell Square," p. 12.}
The street workers in Russell Square were nothing if not pragmatic. If this strategy failed, or if they could not immediately recognize a gang's "natural" leader, they would meet with gangs en masse in their natural habitats in order to try to persuade them as a unit to adopt conventional, law-abiding behavior. The style of interaction meant everything to CAP street workers:

His is not a militant campaign of reform, but a gradual one of altering standards and changing goals through casual conversation and day-to-day contact. Often the employed leader does nothing but hang around with the teenagers for weeks at a time—idling around street corners, drifting to the candy store with them, or to the movies on Saturday nights. As he becomes a trusted ally of the young gang, he is able to suggest more constructive excursions: baseball practice as an organized team, basketball at St. Michael's gym, woodworking in its crafts shop. Growing in the esteem of the boy gang that he has associated with almost daily, the leader is eventually privileged to make suggestions that at first would have ostracized him or drawn derisive jeers. He is able to guide their behavior into more legitimate channels. Gradually, going to school, respecting park property, buying fruit instead of stealing it, become as much the thing to do as were their opposites several months before. 40

Following Shaw's method of "life history" research, several street workers kept elaborate records of their interactions with gang youth. Their object was in large part simply to record intimate data for Shaw's enlightenment on subjects about which social scientists at the time knew little. But they were also to provide a common base of information—similar in intent if not in style to a social work case file—from which CAP staff and volunteers could devise appropriate intervention strategies in cases that were proving unusually difficult to resolve. John L. Brown, a recent college graduate, kept the most complete diary

40 Ibid., p. 13.
of any CAP street worker in Russell Square. The diary richly describes his relationship with a single gang for nearly four years during the mid-1930s. Several other diaries, while not as complete as Brown's, provide additional examples of how curbside counseling worked in practice.\footnote{John L. Brown, "Diary of a Community Worker," and the other personal observations cited in note 4 on p. 24.}

The diaries demonstrate vividly the patterns of persistent antisocial and criminal conduct which characterized youth gangs in the Bush. Few gang youth showed the least compunction about stealing from grocers, vendors, retail merchants, utility companies, movie theaters, mailboxes, parents, unsuspecting swimmers at the beach, or elderly women with purses. They stole anything, anywhere, anytime. Usually they stole to secure funds for entertainment, primarily movies (which they attended as often as four times a week), but they also stole for the excitement and danger involved, often discarding much of their loot in garbage cans. CAP youth workers spent an inordinate amount of time advising the boys to return stolen goods, to disclose the names of their fences, and to give up the habit.

The "technique" used by the Area Project workers is more readily illustrated than analyzed. Typical was a conversation between Brown and a gang member accused of stealing:

\begin{verbatim}
JLB: Who thought up the job?
Fat: Big Bill asked Little Bill and me to go in with him on it.
JLB: When did you pull the job?
Fat: About 11:30 p.m., we broke a window in the basement and got in that way.
JLB: Where did you put the typewriters?
\end{verbatim}
Fat: First we put them in Billa's shed, then when they got too hot we moved them.

JLB: Who discovered them?

Fat: The Priest grabbed Billa and made him confess. He squealed on "Little" Billa and me.

JLB: What did the Priest have to say to you?

Fat: He gave us the devil. He even socked Big Billa. We have to go to confession every week. He isn't going to tell the police though, he promised us that.

JLB: What did your parents say?

Fat: Not much. My mother just got sore and won't let me go any place. Last week I was supposed to go camping with you, but she wouldn't let me go. My brother Walter goes to the show 2 or 3 times a week, but I'm lucky if I go once a month. So I don't care what happens to me.

JLB: Are you going to play baby just because you can't get everything you want. You're only hurting yourself when you steal. Fat, you're slowly building up a bad reputation that's going to land you in jail for a long stretch unless you buck up and go straight. You haven't been around the Club or with me lately, how about seeing a great deal more of you?

Fat: O.K., you know my mother thought the Club was responsible for my stealing.

JLB: Do I encourage you to steal? Does Mac [James McDonald] or anyone else working here encourage you?

Fat: Oh no, I told my mother she was wrong.

JLB: Say Fat, how did you get started in this crooked business?

Fat: Why I guess Barney first took me out. He came over after school one day and asked me to go stealing with him. We visited the dime stores, got some things and wasn't caught; so we tried it again.

JLB: And you've been at it ever since, eh what?

Fat: No, not a great deal.

JLB: Will you accept help over these rough spots?

Fat: Sure, if you can help, it's all right with me.
JLB: Remember when we used to have such a good time ice skating, boxing, swimming, etc. Well, come around and we'll get going again.

Fat: How about the leaders' club, am I still in it?

JLB: Well, Fat, you can see the comment you have brought against our Leaders' Club. We're having a meeting tonight at which time the boys will decide your case. Do you really care to belong?

Fat: Yes, I do.

JLB: What have people said to you?

Fat: Some have called me a crook, others just stare at me.

JLB: How does that affect you?

Fat: I don't like it and so I keep back out of sight as far as possible.

JLB: Are you going to try real hard to go straight?

Fat: Yes.

JLB: Then I'm sure you and I will get along swell again.\textsuperscript{42}

The boys in Russell Square gangs were preoccupied with sex. Their views were so distorted, the street workers believed, that they would cause long-term personal maladjustments that could undermine the CAP's overall effort. Hence CAP staff and volunteers frequently engaged boys in discussions of sex; or, perhaps more accurately, they did not shy away from the subject when it invariably came up in the course of "hanging out" on street corners and playgrounds.

The youth workers were less intent on changing boys' sexual conduct among themselves, particularly their avid practice of group masturbation and occasional homosexuality, than on altering their attitudes and

\textsuperscript{42} Brown, "Diary of a Community Worker," pp. 290-292.
behavior toward young women, with whom their relations were customarily abusive, tension-ridden, and sometimes violent. So, for example, John Brown felt obliged to respond to the verbal taunts his gang directed toward his girlfriend, Louise. On one occasion, Johnny N. told Brown that he wanted to accompany him next time he visited Louise. The episode provided Brown an opportunity to counsel Johnny about socially appropriate male-female behavior.

"Why do you want to go with me next time, Johnny?" Brown asked. "I want to fuck her, don't you?" was the reply. "No Johnny, I don't," Brown told him. "I like girls and therefore treat them kindly. Would you want someone to do that to your sister?" "Hell, no, and they couldn't," said Johnny. Brown replied, "Well, why don't you treat other girls as if they were your sister?" "Aw, some are no good," Johnny answered, ending the brief exchange by walking away.43

A couple of months later, Brown learned that one young man's decision to quit the gang resulted from the abuse his girlfriend received from other members. He interceded in the hope of generally reshaping the boys' attitudes toward girls and providing some basic knowledge about sex.

Fat: Lulu's going to quit the gang.

JLB: Why?

Fat: Because we have been razzing him about his girl.

JLB: Why I have heard him say worse things about his girl than any of you have ever said.

Fat: That's true, one time he calls her a whore, then he makes up and says she's all right. He showed her the safety he had and she made him throw it in the sewer,

43 Brown, "Diary of a Community Worker," p. 63.
and then put the box on the railroad track to be squashed by a car. She said she didn't want any babies.

JLB: Why safeties (cundrums) are for the prevention of birth, aren't they?

Fat: I don't know; maybe then she wanted some babies.

JLB: That's a terrible way to treat one's girl friend, don't you think?

Fat: Aw, I don't know, a guy likes to have a piece of ass once in a while.

JLB: I have a couple of books I'd like to have you read about sex, will you read them if I bring them out?

"Sure," was Fat's reply. 44

On another afternoon, Brown, Fat, and Chink were sitting around and discussing the virtues of motorcycles when Brown decided to ask Fat how he had been getting along with women.

Fat: Fine, but they won't fuck.

[JLB]: "Wait a minute, Fat," I said, "women, what kind of women are you running after?"

Chink: Oh we'll lay them.

JLB: Not if they're decent and if you do catch up with filthy girls, you're liable to get hurt. What would you do, Fat, or you, Chink, if you got a venereal disease, what would you do? If you knocked up (made pregnant) a girl, what would you do? Do you want to get married at 16 years of age? Can you afford a wife and family? What would your parents say about this? Don't you think about these things when you get hot and bothered?

Fat: No, I never did.

JLB: Well, you'd better start thinking about these things now or you're going to get in trouble. I'll loan you a couple of books and you can discuss this with me anytime you wish.

44 Ibid., pp. 169-170.
Fat: All right Brownie. Gosh you're smart about this, aren't you?\(^{45}\)

On another occasion, Kunda D. was accompanying Brown to pick up a motorcycle. As they passed a grocery store on the corner of 83rd and Brandon, they heard several young men hurling crude insults at two women walking ahead of them. After one girl turned and said, "Shut your dirty mouth," one of the boys hollered, "Suck my ass you bitch." Noticing how uneasy Brown was, Kunda reminded him, "Don't get excited, Brownie, that's the Bush." "I hate to see girls used so abusively Kunda," Brown stated. "Well, everybody out here is that way except the B---s and us." "If you two families are so good among such, you really deserve a lot of credit, Kunda," Brown added.\(^{46}\)

A final example of Brown's efforts to uplift and elevate his gang members on sex occurred on a camping trip, when Brown was napping in a small pup tent with three boys, Louie, Bronco, and Johnny N. As usual, the boys began to "get dirty":

Johnny: No fucking in the ass.

Louie: That reminds me, Johnny, we were supposed to get a piece of ass at 79th beach tonight, God-damn it.

Johnny: We'll get it some other time.

JLB: What do you do for prevention, Johnny?

Johnny: I use a rubber, if I can't find one, a fellow can tell when he's coming and just pull it out.

Louie: Let it dry off and start in again.

JLB: Pretty dangerous stuff boys. If the girls allow you such freedom, think how many others take the same advantage.

\(^{45}\) Ibid., pp. 226-27.
\(^{46}\) Ibid., p. 241.
One of these days you're going to pick up a disease that's going to ruin you for life. Then you'll wake up. I've told you before about these things, believe me it's your own fault if you do.\footnote{Ibid., p. 251; see also Alice Smith, "Report," for October 12, 1934, and Dorothy Benson, "Leader's Report," for May 5, 1936.}

CAP staff and volunteers attempted often to get gang members to discuss their aspirations for the future. Most often, it would appear, they had little success. Nearly all young men from the Bush intended, with their parents' encouragement, to leave school as soon as they were of age to work in the mills. Their attitudes toward work further undermined serious consideration of occupational choices. They seemed less interested in finding personally fulfilling work than in getting away with the least possible effort on whatever job they happened to have. Consider the following dialogue among members of the Mackinaw gang.

Ed: I really fucked the W.P.A. boss today. I work near a school house near Sox park. I took a sneak and slept when I should have been working, now I'll get paid for doing nothing. That W.P.A. job sure is a snap.

Pee Wee: You lazy son of a bitch you never did work.

Dillenger: That's the kind of job I would like to have, get paid for sitting on my ass.

Group Leader: I asked Dillenger what he wanted to be.

Dillinger: I don't know and I don't care. Anyway I'm too young to be thinking about that. I've got to get my share of liquor and girls before I get old, so why should I worry about work.

L.: My ambition is to drive one of those big cranes in the steel mills. But I can't get into the fucking mill.

Mike: I don't know what I'm going to be, but I've got a lot of
time to think about that anyway. I might be sitting in the penitentiary by then, who knows.48

Without directly challenging the wishes of the boys' parents, the street workers tried discreetly to "implant the desire for higher education" and convince gang members of the advantages of completing high school and even attending college.49 They counseled boys vigorously against truancy, and discouraged them from withdrawing from school at the legally permissible age of sixteen. (Many Russell Square youth first entered the public neighborhood high school at this age or were still in St. Michael's elementary school.) The youth workers were well aware that children or parents frequently used ink eradicator to alter birth certificates in order to appear older. Consider the case of Doc, a member of John Brown's gang:

JLB: So you say you're all through with school, Doc?
Doc: Yep!
JLB: What does your mother say about it?
Doc: It's O.K. by her, then maybe I can get a job.
JLB: You're too young to quit school.
Doc: No, I'm fifteen, that's why I can't stay in St. Michael's. I have to get out so they say. I'm not as old as the records, my mother told me she gave my age one year older when I started school. They say I have to go to Continuation School, one day each week.
JLB: How do you feel about quitting school?
Doc: I don't care, I have to help my parents.

48 "Mackinaws," unpublished memorandum, filed for March 11, 1936, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 77.
49 "Russell Square," p. 16.
JLB: What are you going to do?
Doc: I don't know.

JLB: You're peddling papers, that helps some. Suppose you can't find anything to do by September; you'd better go back to school. Doc, schooling never hurt anyone; no one can get too much. Your parents are still on relief, and probably will be for sometime, so you'll be able to get along.

Doc: Well, I don't know for sure, but they say I can't go there anymore.

JLB: We'll have an investigation of this, and then talk things over again. 

Of the pioneer street workers in Russell Square, Saul Alinsky (who had recently graduated from the University of Chicago, where he had taken several courses from Ernest Burgess) was the most avidly committed to higher education as the means for uplifting gang youth. Alinsky tagged his gang the University Juniors. He took them often to Hyde Park, where they visited classes at the university and explored libraries and museums. Before returning to Russell Square, Alinsky often invited the boys to dinner at his Hyde Park home.

With Alinsky's encouragement, the University Juniors agreed to enforce strict anti-truancy rules on members and to prohibit stealing. This latter agreement, rather humorously, required the gang to lower its weekly dues by 150 percent. In order to further prime the boys' educational ambition and self-confidence, Alinsky arranged to have gang members take a true-or-false standardized test. The boys 'exhibited

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50 Brown, "Diary of a Community Worker," pp. 238-239.
51 Saul Alinsky, "University Juniors," unpublished log for the period November 2, 1932, through May 5, 1933, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 69.
great enthusiasm over the questions" and "a keen rivalry in the grading," Alinsky reported. He followed the examination with a series of puzzles and games, which the boys also enjoyed. Precisely how successful Alinsky and his co-workers were in instilling new ambition for higher education in Russell Square youth is impossible to assess. Approximately ten years after the Area Project arrived in Russell Square, however, several hundred local youth were enrolled in college, as compared to only a handful previously.\textsuperscript{52}

The Alinsky example does, however, appear to be the exception rather than the rule. By and large, CAP staff and volunteers experienced great frustration in trying to get gang members to think very hard or long about schooling as the path to alternative futures. Discussions on schooling generally soon drifted toward the matters that the boys believed gave meaning to adolescent life in the Bush: crime and sex. To intervene effectively without appearing intrusive, the street workers had to follow the flow of conversation and suggest good counsel as opportunities arose. The limits of their influence were often readily apparent, as the following typically meandering and inconclusive conversation attests:

Casey: I will go to school until I am sixteen years old and then I will stay home until I can get a job in the mill.

Tedd: I will go to school until I am through with high school and then I will try to get a good job some place else besides the mill because you have to work too hard for your money.

Geo.S.: I will go to school until they throw me out and then I will be a bandit like the guys in the 42 gang [a notorious band of westside hoods].

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., for November 29, 1932; "Russell Square," pp. 16-17.
Worker: If you have that in your mind you will land in jail for the rest of your life.

Geo.S.: Listen, big shot, I get away with it now and I can get away with it when I am in a gang.

Worker: What makes you think you get away with it now?

Geo.S.: I cop a lot of stuff now and I sell it, that is why I think so. If you show me your house I will rob all the stuff that I can sell and you can't do nothing about it.

Worker: Suppose I shot at you when you were robbing my house and wounded you so that they had to take you to the hospital?

Geo.S.: If you wounded me and they had to take me to the hospital I would wait until I could escape and then would go to another city.

Tedd: He thinks it is so easy to do those things, but wait until he is caught and then he will have another story to tell.

Geo.S.: Is that so, my brother was in a lot of tight spots and got out of them, the time he got caught someone told the cops on him.

Worker: Well you will learn when it is too late to be a good fellow. Well, Casey, are you going to be a burglar like George?

Casey: No, I am going to go in business for myself. If I ever get caught trying any funny stuff my sister and brother would kill me.

Worker: Does your brother and sister keep a good watch over you?

Chester: Oh boy! You should hear the way they beat Casey when they find out he chews snuff.

Worker: Does your sister and brother beat you very much?

Casey: Only when I don't behave myself.

Worker: What are you going to do, Chester?

Chester: I have no choice, I have to do what my father tells me to do.

Harry: If your father told you to fuck a dog, would you do it?

Chester: My father don't talk like that when us kids are around.
Geo.M.: My father don't swear at home, only when he gets mad.

Harry: Aw, go on, all you do is piss in the bed, that's all that you know.

Geo.M.: I don't do it every day no more because my mother took me to a doctor and got some medicine, you know I have weak kidneys and I can't help what I do when I am in bed sleeping.

Tedd: Hey, did you guys hear about the raid they made on the cat house on Burley Avenue?

Worker: Yes, I heard about that and I hope none of you boys were ever in there.

William G.: I don't think any of us kids were ever over over there, but I know one of the girls that was in the house, she was a girl scout in the Neighborhood House.

Worker: I do not think that a girl who would do a thing like that is worth very much.

Joe: That is nothing, there is a girl on the next block that waits for the cops to come around because they take her to a saloon and then she gives them a fuck.

Worker: How do you know this?

Joe: Some guy told me about it.

Worker: I would not put any stock in what everyone says.

Tedd: This neighborhood is full of all kinds of whores.

Worker: How do you know?

Tedd: When we play in the evening we see them fucking the girls on door-steps.

Worker: Where is all this happening?

Geo.S.: Well if you ever go on the corner over here you can see it.

Worker: What corner?

Geo.S.: The corner on 84th and Buffalo by the old shabby house with all the boards on the windows.

Worker: Do the people ever report it?

Geo.S.: When the cops come they can't find the girls and guys because they are upstairs in the house and if any of the
small kids come around they tell them that the place is haunted so they can't come in or hang around.

Worker: Well, what do the police do about it?

Tedd: When the cops come I suppose they get a fuck if they find them because I see the same ones in there all the time.

Worker: What do you mean, the police or the girls and boys that you see?

Tedd, Casey, Geo.S.: We mean the gang that hangs around the corner.

Worker: Do you kids ever go down to that corner and try to get in the house.

Casey, Geo.S., Chester: No! because if we were ever caught by the guys there they would kill us because they are a bunch of tough boys.

Worker: I think that if the people in this neighborhood would report to the right people and tell them just what goes on there, I think the place would be cleaned out properly.

Joe: The people around here are afraid to report it to the big shots because they are afraid of the big shots from downtown and if they get caught by the small cops around here they can always bribe him and get away with it.\(^53\)

In addition to providing all variety of counsel, CAP staff and volunteers did what they could in a slack economy to secure jobs for children under their supervision. The more serious forms of theft, they believed, occurred because some boys did not adapt readily to organized recreation and lacked money for the mass entertainments (especially the movies) which reached new heights of popularity in the Depression. A CAP staff member prepared a policy memorandum in 1933 which outlined a proposal to expand employment opportunities for delinquent boys. His main rationale was clear: "In many, if not the majority of cases of boys who have repeatedly stolen, the families are either too poor to afford spending money for their children or else the parents do not have

\(^53\) "Conversation of February 16, 1935."
the social point of view which causes them to make the necessary arrangements for spending money for their boys. Very often both the finances and the social point of view are lacking." An employment plan which productively occupied the boys' time and supplied sufficient spending money would, he argued, "reduce the amount of stealing carried on by these boys." He recommended that the CAP or the public parks employ 20 delinquents (with a subsidy from the Illinois Relief Commission) to clean up vacant lots, serve as errand boys and clerks, and supervise recreational programs. It is unclear whether this proposed employment plan was ever implemented. Co-opting gang members through CAP employment, nevertheless, proved to be one of Shaw's most innovative prevention strategies, and the one which perhaps gained the Area Project its greatest notoriety, both pro and con.86

In addition to providing employment for select gang members, CAP staff and volunteers were regularly called upon to help desperate families by finding jobs for unemployed fathers or by providing money out of their own pockets. The scene when Barney P. handed John Brown a note from his mother as he entered a game room at St. Michael's Boys' Club was typical:

Mr. Brown:

I'm very sorry for bothering you again, but I have some bad news for you. My uncle down in Westville, Illinois died and I have to be there so will you please be so kind and borrow me 5 dollars or 3 until the 24th of this month. Mr. Brown if you think you can help me I'll appreciate it. Why don't you come and see us, I didn't see you for months.

Thank you,
Mrs. P.

P.S. If you could borrow please try tonight or tomorrow morning. Thank you.

86 "Plan for Employment of Delinquents."
Brown provided the funds necessary for the trip. Soon after he received a second note, which read:

Mr. Brown:

Will you please be so kind and borrow me 3 dollars for food, because I spent the money for the trip and now we haven't anything to eat. Mr. Brown please don't get angry that I'm borrowing the money from you, you're just like a son to me so I'm asking you to help me. Mr. Brown you don't have to be afraid that I won't return the money to you. You be here the 24th and you'll get your money back with a million thanks.

Thank you,
Mrs. P.

He again lent the money. Both loans were repaid on time, he later noted in his diary.\(^{55}\)

The Area Project supplemented curbstone counseling with another set of equally important mediation activities which received less publicity at the time and are more difficult to document in retrospect. These activities bore a close resemblance to what would probably be called child advocacy and/or diversion today. By interceding with officials in schools, police stations, and juvenile courts, CAP staff and volunteers attempted both to humanize the operation of educational and social control institutions and to convince those institutions that the community (i.e., the Russell Square Community Committee) possessed the

\(^{55}\) Brown, "Diary of a Community Worker," p. 271.
will and ability to rehabilitate juvenile delinquents without the need for official, punitive intervention. The Area Project was aggressively against institutional treatment and in favor of community treatment in cases of juvenile misconduct and crime. No work was more important to McDonald, Bubacz, and their colleagues than convincing a truant officer or school counselor not to recommend a juvenile court hearing for a child; a policeman not to arrest or detain in jail a child caught committing petty thievery; a probation officer or judge not to give up on a youngster and send him to reform school; a parole officer not to recommit a minor offender to prison. These efforts at mediation doubtless played an important role—though one that cannot be precisely measured—in diverting youth from the juvenile justice system and, perforce, in lowering official crime rates in South Chicago. Unfortunately, few of these diversion activities were carefully documented. There is little doubt, however, that they were as much part of the day-to-day delinquency prevention venture as the Boys' Club or curbstone counseling.

The Area Project's most systematic efforts at institutional mediation in South Chicago were directed toward the schools and parole—the beginning and the end of the prevention process, in Shaw's eyes. Mediation in the schools (both public and parochial) centered on the issue of truancy, which the conventional scholarly wisdom of the period held to be one of the most accurate predictors of delinquency. The distinguished director of Boston's Judge Baker Clinic, Dr. William Healy, called truancy "the kindergarten of crime," while the widely cited report of the 1930 New York Crime Commission termed chronic
truancy "in a disquieting number of cases, the first step in a criminal career." Clifford Shaw's own research in Chicago had corroborated these findings. "In areas having high rates of truants and delinquents, the largest proportion of truants become delinquent. In turn, the truant delinquents produce the greatest number of recidivists, and appear in court more often than non-truant delinquents, and, in this cumulative series, the truant delinquents are more often committed to correctional institutions."56

As we have already seen, street workers in Russell Square sought regularly to convince youth that school loyalty was the key to personal advancement. They complemented personal exhortation, however, with vigorous efforts to make schools more appealing and responsive to children's individual needs, so that the students would not have easy excuses for playing truant or dropping out. Via discussions with school administrators and teachers, they tried to modify inappropriate curricula, to have children transferred from one school to another where the program or personnel were more suitable, to mainstream children inappropriately placed in classes for incorrigible or backward students (and, vice versa, to have children who required special treatment transferred to appropriate school programs), and to have children reinstated who had been expelled for minor delinquencies. On a more mundane level, they provided carfare for poor children who lived far from school and eyeglasses for students who could not obtain them elsewhere.

One concrete example of CAP intervention occurred with a 14-year-old high school student who had suddenly become a chronic truant. The boy told a CAP volunteer that "my French is too hard, and I don't like it." When asked if he would attend school regularly "if he could take Polish, instead of French," he replied, "Sure I would. That's what I wanted to do in the first place, but they wouldn't let me." The volunteer called the boy's principal, explained the situation, and recommended an immediate transfer to a Polish class. The request was granted, and the young man returned to school. After only one week, however, he again became truant. When asked why, he responded, "I'm too tired." During a "long and patient probing," the volunteer learned that the boy had been selling newspapers until 2:00 a.m. in order "to have a good time--go to shows and buy stuff to eat." After the volunteer finally convinced the boy that remaining in school would ultimately "net him a better time," he accepted a job at the St. Michael's Boys' Club "for a couple of dollars a week, and had no more difficulty at school."57

While the Area Project intervened as the need arose in individual cases, it also worked behind the scenes to obtain better compliance by school officers with laws regulating attendance. For example, in May 1936, James McDonald and John Brown noticed that as the weather improved, large numbers of children were playing truant and spending their days on the 79th Street beach. McDonald and Brown arranged a meeting with the local truant officer to determine why the children were so easily able to break the law:

Mr. McDonald: Mr. Brown has been checking on the kids truanting and we find it's running rather high, and nothing is being done about it. Brown here has a list of the kids he found truanting yesterday.

Mrs. Selzer: After examining the list she said, "I visited the schools yesterday and none of those names were turned over to me."

J.L.B.: I discussed this problem some time ago with Mr. Davis, Principal of Sullivan Grammar School, and he said that truancy was handled very slowly because the teachers were slow in turning in the names to the principal.

Mr. McDonald: I think Mrs. Selzer that you should take the initiative in presenting this situation to the teachers. Call a teachers' meeting and point out to them just what results their lax methods are assuming. We believe that truancy is one of the early stages of a delinquent career, hence our desire to curb it.

Mrs. Selzer: Mr. Davis and the Sister Superior you'll find very cooperative.

Mr. McDonald: We want to help you check on these boys, but we don't want it known that we are playing that part as this will make the kids antagonistic toward us. Let's go to the Sister Superior and check on these boys who truanted yesterday.58

As time went on, the Area Project's relationship with the schools became increasingly important in Clifford Shaw's thinking on delinquency prevention. In order for a school to become accepted in its community, he argued in 1940, it must be active in convincing local residents that it "belongs" to them, that the school is an integral part of the community rather than "a self-sufficient institution within it."

Schools had to recognize, further, that antisocial behavior which easily offended school authorities was normative in many lower-class, heavily immigrant urban neighborhoods. Unless teachers and principals adopted less decorous standards of conventional, school-appropriate behavior,

58 Brown, "Diary of a Community Worker," p. 338.
they would never be able to redirect the attitudes and behavior of youth in communities like Russell Square.\textsuperscript{59}

In 1939, Shaw managed to institutionalize this viewpoint when he convinced the Chicago Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools to appoint six individuals of his choosing as special truant officers in CAP neighborhoods. Chosen from the communities in which they served, these individuals would be in an excellent position, Shaw believed, to help the schools' purposes become better understood by local residents and to mediate between home, peer groups, and school. Four of the six truant officers were to be located in three neighborhoods already served by the Area Project, and the other two were to be placed in communities that the CAP was just beginning to organize. The officers would work like other members of the force, under the supervision of the Department of Compulsory Education, but also in cooperation with Area Project staff in their neighborhoods. Shaw emphasized to the Board of Education that this arrangement was not unique, since the Park District, the IJR, the State Department of Parole Supervision, and other public and private agencies "have already assigned persons in a similar manner" to the Area Project.\textsuperscript{60}

All six appointees had worked previously with the CAP in other capacities. In South Chicago, John Brown served as the initial special truant officer. After Shaw transferred Brown to Hegeswich, he was replaced by Sylvester Lulinski, the son of a member of the RSCC's Board of Directors. The first objective of the special truant officers was to overcome their traditional image as a punitive arm of the state.

\textsuperscript{59} "Truancy Program of the Chicago Area Project," pp. 34-40.
\textsuperscript{60} Jesse A. Jacobs to Bertram J. Cahn, September 8, 1939, located in CAP Records, section VI, box 4.
Children and parents in South Chicago, where families depended upon the extra income that adolescents could earn, resented, feared, and routinely defied compulsory education edicts and enforcers. Teachers commonly reinforced the image of truant officers as ogres by encouraging them to scare and threaten recalcitrant youth. Teachers in Russell Square, for example, told their students, "You can't get away with anything. That's what the truant officer is here for. It is his job to find out everything you do." One specially appointed truant officer complained to his supervisor that the teachers relied primarily upon threats concerning them and the ungraded classrooms for subnormal children to exact proper behavior from their students. "The teachers call it [the ungraded room] the dummy room in the presence of the children," he was informed. "They refer to it and use it as a threat the same as they use the truant officer." 61

Truant officers apparently deserved their reputations as law enforcers. Although members of the special force did what they could to get along with their colleagues, problems surfaced repeatedly. "I have had several talks with the other truant officers and it seems that most of them are of the old type--policeman type--kids spot him on the street and run away," remarked one special officer to his peers in a grievance session. "There are a number of things that these truant officers don't know about.... Most of them have no conception of what social work means. They are constantly threatening the kids by saying: 'We'll send you to Parental School.' They don't try to find out what the trouble is with the child. They don't try to help out the child to adjust himself to

either surroundings or readjustment to whatever the grievances the child may have or what causes of his truancy are."

Each special officer kept a daily diary of his activities, observations, and conversations. Shaw wanted detailed entries regarding the home conditions of truants, believing that the project provided an unprecedented opportunity to examine the causes of adolescent deviance. He asked a supervisor of the new truant officers to tell them that "we want you to get the real picture of the teachers, parents, and children in the community, community problems and what happens to the kids--be a sort of a participant observer, the thing that other sociologists have been doing--living in the community." In addition to conducting "research" on the problems contributing to truancy, the special officers were also "to create a better understanding between the school and the community," taking maximum advantage of their language skills to interpret the problems of the schools to residents, and vice versa. In Shaw's vision, the publicly supported truant officer could become a vital link between neighborhood youth and all social service institutions, but only if that individual was indigenous to the community and could deal with its residents in a language and style they could easily comprehend.

Did the special truant officers realize Shaw's hopes and become "vital instrument[s]" of communal uplift? No reliable empirical data are available, but testimonials from several individuals do suggest that, at the least, the new truant officers succeeded in changing their

\[62\] "Meeting of Truant Officers," p. 2.

\[63\] Ibid., p. 1; "Truancy Program of the Chicago Area Project," p. 26; Clifford Shaw and Jesse Jacobs to Major Frank L. Beals, August 16, 1939, located in CAP Records, section VI, box 4.
public image in South Chicago. For the first time, parents began to speak freely and confidentially to the truant officers about their children's problems. Students also appeared to respond more favorably. At one school, two pupils actually bragged before a teacher that they were on friendly terms with their truant officer after having played informally with him at the Boys' Club. Another child confided that he and his friends were skeptical of the true identity of the truant officer because "they never saw a truant officer talk to kids." In fact, some school officials expressed concern that the new truant officers were creating a false impression by being overly friendly with children who disobeyed school authorities.

Obviously, serious assessment of the performance of Shaw's hand-selected truant officers is problematic. The key point now is simply the extent to which the school became a focal point of Shaw's philosophy of delinquency prevention, and the creative means by which he was able to gain public monies to further his cause.64

One of the most important features that distinguished the Area Project from other social agencies, Shaw stressed, was its willingness

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to work with persistently difficult and delinquent youth. Ideally, the CAP intervened early enough into children's lives to disrupt patterns of misconduct before they led to serious confrontation with social control authorities. But the CAP did not turn its back on youth who, for one reason or another, ignored the advice of staff and volunteers and persisted in criminal conduct to the point where they were committed to reform schools, jails, or prisons. The logic of the Area Project actually required it to make special efforts to incorporate the ex-convict into CAP programs, for he, as a potential spokesperson for mature criminal values, could easily subvert whatever staff and volunteers had accomplished in weaning juveniles to more conventional conduct (particularly members of his former gang). Thus, in effect, the Area Project had no choice but to extend its prevention program to parolees.

As in the monitoring of truants from school, the most innovative feature of the CAP's parole project in Russell Square was the relationship it developed with a public agency, in this case, the Illinois State Parole Board. By establishing close communication with the Parole Board, the CAP exerted substantial control over conditions for release from prison of young men whose homes were in Russell Square. Whenever an inmate became eligible for parole, the RSOC was asked to develop a program of rehabilitation specifically designed to reintegrate that individual into the community. The Area Project kept careful files on each youngster sent to a correctional institution, covering his family life, school, and employment record, level of participation in community activities, and history of delinquent conduct. These personal and social profiles were generally more illuminating than those compiled
by professional social workers who worked for the Parole Board, mainly because they were written by "men and women who speak the language of the residents, and who have access to information from a large number of people in the community by reason of their close associations through the Russell Square Community Committee."  

CAP staff and volunteers tried to smooth a parolee's reintroduction to the Bush in a variety of ways. They encouraged and helped parolees to make "new and worthwhile" friendships in the neighborhood with "conventional groups" with whom they shared common interests. To help parolees "gain status and recognition," they arranged for nearly all of them to participate in one or another CAP-sponsored project for community improvement. Finally, to the extent possible in a Depression economy, the CAP attempted to find each parolee a job "suited to his skills, and sufficiently remunerative to care for his financial needs." On occasion, parolees were assigned to do rehabilitative work with gang members on W.P.A. positions that the CAP controlled.

Case files of the CAP's work with parolees suggest just how much energy the staff devoted to this phase of the prevention program. James McDonald and especially Stephen Bubacz carried most of the burden, which lasted many years and involved many disappointments. Consider, for example, McDonald's interaction with Chink, whom he had known and liked well enough as a Boys' Club participant to appoint him to a W.P.A. job as a group leader of recreational activities. In 1936, Chink and several friends were arrested for stealing automobiles, stripping parked

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65 Casimir B. Gwizdalski for the Russell Square Community Committee, to T.P. Sullivan of the Department of Public Safety, August 26, 1941, located in CAP Records, section XII, box 16.
66 Ibid.
cars, burglary, and armed robbery. As was customary whenever a boy affiliated with the CAP was arrested, the police chief called McDonald to participate in the formal interrogation. McDonald asked Chink why he had reverted to serious crime. "I got in with the wrong gang, Mac," he replied, "I'm awfully sorry." When the police captain told Chink that he would be held fully responsible for the crimes, he began to cry and pleaded with McDonald to care for his ailing mother. McDonald admonished Chink to "take his medicine like a man" and promised that he would help him in any way he could. McDonald remained to talk with the captain after Chink was led to his jail cell. "You've done a great piece of work up there at the Club," the captain observed, "but I suppose this one gives you a kick in the eye." McDonald replied that it was particularly distressing to have a staff member, and a W.P.A. appointee at that, implicated in a serious crime wave in the community. He expressed his appreciation to the captain "for keeping the Club's name out of the paper. That has helped a lot. You know we work for the most part with these rough tough kids that most institutions kick out." The Area Project was trying its best, McDonald assured the officer, to compensate for parental indifference and to monitor carefully the lives of neighborhood youth so that formal police intervention and arrest could be avoided.67

Chink received an indeterminate sentence of one to twenty years at the state prison in Pontiac. Following an examination by prison psychologists, who called him a "typical delinquent boy of the streets" after reviewing his history of severe family disorganization, poverty, and violence, Chink was classified as "improvable" but given a

67 These and subsequent quotations have been drawn from the restricted case files included in the Bubacz Papers, folder 150.
"problematic prognosis." The psychologists recommended that Chink finish eighth grade and receive vocational instruction while at Pontiac. McDonald kept abreast via mail of these and sundry other developments in Chink's attitudes and experiences, serving as his one remaining link to conventional society. Chink thanked McDonald profusely for the attention that everyone at the Club had lavished on him as a boy and for the opportunity to work as a CAP staff member. Often he asked about his former friends, some of whom were also in prison for the same crimes.

Shortly after arriving at Pontiac, Chink wrote McDonald a particularly passionate and revealing letter:

Mac, take my brother in hand and...explain everything to him keep him busy around the club.... Mac I heard he don't want to go to school. Tell him school will do him good. That [is] one mistake I made. I don't like to see anyone out of my family make the same. Mac remember when you and O--- use to chase me around and [pressed] me to go to school[?] Well I should of listen to you[.] But that sure was fun.... I am sorry to hear that you are not running the camp this year because that camp kept lot of kids out of trouble you know that Mac.... Mac I had to[o] much girls out there and didn't have enough of money[,] thats why I'm in here. Well Mac they all like me so I couldn't pass em up. You wouldn't pass em up if you was me. But not one of em think of me now[,] I don't blame them.... Say Mac is Dr. Shaw going to be at the parole board. I always did like that guy.  

The State Parole Board's decision to release Chink on parole after less than three years in prison may well have been due to the intervention of Shaw or McDonald. In any case, McDonald worked closely with Chink for three more years and succeeded in having him removed from parole status in 1942 so that he could join the National Guard. After completing Guard duty, Chink returned to live in Russell Square and apparently had no major additional confrontations with social control authorities.

68 Joseph J. _____ to McDonald, June 20, 1937, in Bubacz Papers, folder 150.
Stephen Bubacz worked with the majority of young men released by the Parole Board. Like McDonald, he maintained a deep involvement in their personal lives over a number of years. In several instances, Bubacz worked with individual delinquent boys from their first contact with the CAP at age ten through their mid-twenties. The State Parole Board appears to have been more willing to consider early release for an offender on indeterminate sentence when someone like Bubacz could shed unusually revealing (and usually exculpatory) light on the boy's background.

Bubacz's work with parolees revealed extraordinary conscientiousness and inventive pragmatism in meeting individual needs. For example, after interceding to get Lawrence C. released from a federal prison in Ohio and returned to South Chicago (under supervision of a Chicago area federal parole officer), he devoted a tremendous amount of time to monitoring Lawrence's daily activities and to locating a job for him. Bubacz would not accept just any job for Lawrence. He therefore found himself in an awkward position when a CAP volunteer found a position for Lawrence in a local metal shop, and Bubacz had to persuade the parole officer that the job was inappropriate, given Lawrence's individual needs and personal dispositions. "Too many hoods" worked there, Bubacz claimed. The salary was too low and there were few opportunities for advancement which a boy like Lawrence needed in order to feel personally rewarded. Finally, an imminent steel strike would probably result in a layoff, which would undo the CAP's overall rehabilitation effort. This solicitous, personalized care for young parolees, however serious their crimes, characterized all of Bubacz's
mediation activities in Russell Square and accounts for the near-legendary stature his name evokes in South Chicago today.\textsuperscript{69}

Bubacz’s work with ex-convicts often required him to be a stark realist in devising solutions to the special kinds of problems they faced. Consider, for example, the case of Eugene G., a boy with whom Bubacz had initially become acquainted long before Eugene got into serious trouble. In twice-weekly talks at his own home, Bubacz had learned of the turmoil, violence, and paternal indifference that plagued the boy’s life and had done what he could to steer Eugene toward law-abiding behavior. On one occasion, Bubacz purchased tickets for the circus and roller derby and gave them to Eugene’s father, “so that he can take the family out and get a closer relationship.” After finding Eugene forlorn when his father failed to attend ceremonies celebrating his graduation from grammar school, Bubacz bought him a present and took photographs to commemorate the occasion. But Bubacz held no illusions that such minimal intervention would calm the abiding anger in Eugene. He was hardly surprised when Eugene was arrested and placed in the St. Charles reform school for assaulting a woman. After Eugene had served his sentence, Bubacz attempted to help him again. But when the husband of Eugene’s victim threatened to “even up the score,” Bubacz concluded that the boy would be better off leaving the Bush for good. With Bubacz’s help, Eugene was enlisted in the Army—hardly an optimal solution, from the CAP’s or the Parole Board’s standpoint, but perhaps the most practical one under the circumstances.\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{69} These quotations have been drawn from the restricted case files included in the Bubacz Papers, folder 89.  
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid.
Overall (as we shall see shortly), the parole program was one of the CAP's most oft-cited successes, but Bubacz had failures which periodically tested his commitment to the Area Project philosophy. One of these was the case of Robert K., a young man who was incarcerated in a New York prison when Bubacz met him. After studying Robert's background, Bubacz intervened and helped secure Robert's early release by convincing prison authorities of his potential for rehabilitation under the Area Project umbrella. "When I get home," Robert wrote Bubacz, "you will be the first person outside of my family I will see right away. If it wasn't for your help, I don't know when I would get out of here and back home again."

After Robert's return to Russell Square, Bubacz kept close watch over him and, among other things, facilitated his entry into a Golden Gloves boxing tournament. Robert obtained a steady job as a truck driver and met a young woman whom he planned to marry—"the main factor that helped Bob reform," in Bubacz's view. Like many parolees, Robert brought his fiance to meet Bubacz and asked for advice regarding his impending marriage. Unfortunately, the fiance's family turned against Robert because he was an ex-convict. After his wedding plans were destroyed, he became involved with an older woman, apparently as a pimp, and was convicted in federal court in Georgia for transporting her across state lines for immoral purposes. He served two years in Atlanta Federal Prison on this charge and after release was recommitted to the New York prison from which he had previously been paroled.\footnote{Ibid.}
The Area Project's parole program lent itself to easier statistical evaluation than other mediation activities. The most systematic of several evaluations covered the years 1935 to 1944 and compared the subsequent violation records of Russell Square youth released on parole under CAP recognizance with the records of a similar group released on parole in another area of South Chicago outside of Area Project jurisdiction. The results should be viewed as suggestive only, in light of the relatively small number of parolees involved and the rudimentary evaluation design.

The data indicate that at the time of the evaluation, significantly fewer CAP parolees (46 percent versus 63 percent) had acquired subsequent criminal records during or after parole. Most of the crimes of the Russell Square parolees appear to have been fairly minor violations of parole regulations. During their period of parole, only 10.8 percent of the Russell Square parolees were formally arrested, and none was returned to prison on a new charge. In the control area, by contrast, 19 percent were arrested and 11.4 percent were returned to prison. Further, in Russell Square, only 2.7 percent of the parolees were returned to prison for technical violation of parole as compared to 17.2 percent of the control group. It thus seems likely that the CAP, as in its work with preadjudicated delinquents, exerted influence on the criminal justice system to keep parolees in the neighborhood and out of institutions. The statistics thus reinforce what more qualitative data reveal more poignantly: The CAP did not abandon persistent juvenile offenders before, during, or after conflict with social control authorities. For both child and community, the CAP was an advocate for all time.72

72 Gwizdalski to Sullivan, August 26, 1941; "Russell Square Parole
One final mediation effort sponsored by the Area Project in Russell Square warrants brief mention, not for what it achieved, but for the additional light it sheds on the distinctive ethos which animated the CAP. As part of the CAP's initial entry into Russell Square in 1932, the IJR established a branch child guidance clinic in Sullivan School, staffed by a social worker, a psychologist, and a psychiatrist. The prime object was to serve young adolescents with behavior problems, as well as a few youngsters whose poor behavior was aggravated by mental retardation. Referrals came from various public and private agencies in South Chicago, in addition to the schools.\textsuperscript{73}

The IJR staff hoped that the branch clinic "might function not only as an examining service but as an integrating factor in the community." Toward this objective, they attempted to design appropriate programs for each youth, utilizing the resources of all of the neighborhood's social agencies. A number of moderately delinquent boys, for example, were referred to those who administered the Area Project's recreation program for proper placement. The IJR also hoped to "provide a clearing house for ideas and experiments in treatment undertaken by the various

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\textsuperscript{73} "Historical Material Concerning the Development of the South Chicago Community Project," pp. 1-3.
established agencies." By holding frequent interagency case conferences, the IJR staff believed that "a more complete understanding could be obtained of the social forces at work in the community and the individual's reactions to these." Such conferences were held regularly and, it would appear, enhanced the clinic's ability to understand and serve the more complex cases it encountered.\(^7^4\)

From the start, however, the IJR staff experienced problems in gaining school and community acceptance. The Sullivan School administration, in particular, was uncooperative. The principal refused to allow her staff to participate in conferences of any kind with the IJR clinic professionals unless she could attend. This constraint delayed or curtailed many of the clinic's most important activities. In addition, the principal would not allow children to leave school in order to be served by the IJR's main clinic on the city's near west side. She also declined staff offers to locate or provide remedial reading assistance.

While the principal claimed that her adverse decisions regarding the clinic were due to a severe financial crisis, IJR staff felt that she went out of her way to impede their effort. Limited space and inadequate privacy thoroughly stymied the clinic's diagnostic work. The cold, small, unheated storeroom the principal provided for psychiatric examinations was functionally useless because of distractions from a nearby auditorium that was always filled with at least three regular classes; test results were consequently invalid. Another room later secured in the basement proved equally unsatisfactory. It had two glass

\(^7^4\) "Report of the Recreation Department in South Chicago," p. 4; see also "An Account of the South Chicago Area Project Program, March 1933," pp. 1-3.
doors opening onto the boys' basement, which tempted the young men visiting the lavatory or drinking fountains "to peer in or open the doors to call to the patient." Students, moreover, came quickly to recognize that the psychologist was a person you saw when "you've been bad." Clinic staff consequently were deeply frustrated when remarks such as, "He has to do that because he ditched school," "Steve's gettin' it," and "Chink, is that your sister?" greeted students throughout the diagnostic examinations. "Test after test was considered unreliable in results and consequent rating because of these distractions," stated one social worker. A number of the children whom the clinic served had "obvious defects and one can only guess what a complete examination might have revealed."  

In the end, however, it was less the Sullivan School principal in particular than the Russell Square community in general that was the clinic's nemesis. One evaluator concluded "that there is no demand for this type of service from any group in the community." This, of course, contrasted sharply with the welcome reception the CAP's recreation program received at the same time and with the support that Father Lange and Dr. Mioduski provided for the Area Project philosophy in toto. The evaluator recommended discontinuing the clinic until local groups demanded it.  

The abortive effort to establish a professionally run, psychiatrically oriented child guidance clinic in Russell Square doubtless reinforced Clifford Shaw's confidence in the wisdom of a slower, more "natural," sociologically grounded, bottom-up approach to

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76 Ibid., pp. 8-9, emphasis in original.
innovation in delinquency prevention. Local residents were ready to sponsor social experimentation if it built upon indigenous resources and personnel and sanctioned the doctrine of self-help. The clinic, on the other hand, stigmatized individual children as "sick" and tried to provide help via professional, therapeutic remedies. The Area Project was not only a more effective method of delinquency prevention, Shaw believed, but the only one that lower-class, immigrant communities could ever come to genuinely trust and embrace as their own.
V. EVALUATION

The Area Project experiment in South Chicago received sporadic criticism from a wide range of individuals, including some of its most ardent community supporters. There were times, for example, when Father Lange and other priests at St. Michael's concluded that the CAP's generous tolerance of youth's antisocial conduct and its readiness to mediate on behalf of delinquent youths before social control agents were undermining efforts by schools, churches, and upright parents to establish behavioral standards and wield disciplinary authority over children in the Bush. In 1935, for example, several members of John Brown's gang were implicated in a series of crimes. In a conference that the CAP convened to discuss the matter, McDonald was advising that the CAP attempt to get the boys released from jail when Father Handzel of St. Michael's protested. "Mac," he cautioned, "don't you intervene. Let these boys get their punishment. It'll teach them a lesson as well as the rest of the boys in the community. They've been expecting too much, banking on your getting them out of the jams."¹

Even Father Lange could become disgusted by the lack of decorum that the CAP's nurturing, tolerant attitude toward adolescent indiscretion encouraged and often appeared to reward:

Fr. Lange: Who is supposed to take care of this place? Why aren't those girls chased out? The dirty fouled mouthed beings! I would have given them a good swift kick but I didn't get to them fast enough. That Gertrude S--- is no good. She is a bad egg and she gets all these other girls into trouble.

¹ Brown, "Diary of a Community Worker," p. 282.
Pearl: But, Father, Gertie is behaving very nicely; she comes to our classes and has taken up art and sewing.

Fr. Lange: Ah, that's all humbug. That's not doing her any good. She still lays around here with her gang smoking and swearing all the time. One Sunday I caught her in the women's toilet smoking. I said, 'Get out of your pig pen, you dirty pig.' Some day I'll wring her neck. She is not good for anything. I am getting tired of this whole business. These leaders aren't out here for any good. They want these kids to misbehave so that they can have records against them. It's just a big scheme, but I am wise to the whole business. One of these days I am going to lock the place and kick out the whole bunch. What these kids need is a good hard, swift kick in the rear. The commotion and fuss these kids cause is too much, something ought to be done about it.  

After this outburst, Father Lange cooled down somewhat, James Brown noted. There seems little doubt, however, that the misgivings Lange expressed captured the sentiments of a disbelieving segment of the Russell Square community that the CAP was coddling criminals and encouraging their disdain for legal authority.

A very different line of criticism emerged among CAP staff in South Chicago. The internal dispute that received the greatest publicity was that between Clifford Shaw and one of his most aggressive young street workers, Saul Alinsky. Alinsky's experiences with delinquent youth and their families in Russell Square were crucial in persuading him (as articulated most boldly in *Reveille for Radicals*) that community organizations like the RSCC were grossly inadequate to effect significant social change in lower-class, immigrant, industrial neighborhoods. Confrontational tactics, Alinsky insisted, were the only viable means of alleviating the "social disorganization" which Shaw and the Chicago School of Sociology so eloquently described.

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2 Ibid., pp. 322-323.
3 On the conflicts between Shaw and Alinsky, see Bennett, *Oral History and Delinquency*, p. 211-217. We hope to elaborate our treatment of Alinsky's early experience with the CAP in future work.
We doubt whether Alinsky's harsh opinion of Shaw was widespread among CAP staff who were less willing to speak out and jeopardize their employment and effectiveness as street workers and community organizers. Nonetheless, a somewhat similar disquiet appeared in a conversation in 1938 between Shaw's chief representative in Russell Square, James McDonald, and street worker John Brown. "You know in so far as achieving the fundamental aim of the Chicago Area Project we have completely failed," McDonald began. Asked to articulate that aim, he replied, "to get the people conscious of their existing conditions and have organizational action take place to better them." Brown countered that McDonald was too harsh and reminded him that the Area Project's method was experimental and would ultimately depend on the local residents' initiative in shaping the future of their community. If a problem surfaced or a "wrong method of approach is revealed," that did not mean the effort was entirely wasted. "That's what we did," McDonald responded, "we used a wrong method. We superimposed a Club upon them and they (people of the community) didn't know what it was all about, or why it was set up, etc. Why even today people don't know the reason why the Club exists." Brown disagreed. Several young adults who spoke Polish, he stated, were spreading the word about the CAP's ultimate purposes throughout the neighborhood. Public sentiment was, for the first time, beginning to organize against evil social conditions. "I feel that we are just beginning to move." "That's true," countered McDonald, "but we put the cart before the horse. Someone...should have been hired to go among the people of the community and discuss their problems with them. Then as sentiment grew, action could be suggested.
When the Club grew out of this early program the people would know what it was all about and cooperate without wondering what it was all about." Brown refused to be pessimistic. "The experiment has pointed out new methods of procedure. Also the people are slowly being brought into action. Therefore, I feel that the work to date has not been in vain."

It is not clear whether McDonald's growing doubts concerning the CAP's priorities in Russell Square had anything to do with the fact that Stephen Bubacz, an indigenous Shaw disciple, replaced him later that year.⁴

Of a different order still were the stringent criticisms leveled at the Area Project by professional social workers and/or representatives of traditional social agencies. We do not want to exaggerate the level of open conflict between the CAP and its competitors in the field of delinquency prevention. In Russell Square, the CAP worked amicably with other agencies to identify taverns that admitted adolescents, peddlers of pornography, unscrupulous pool-hall owners, fathers without jobs, families requiring medical assistance, and so forth. As noted earlier, the CAP developed a close relationship with the Juvenile Protective Association, which was very active in South Chicago. In addition, the Area Project was eventually integrated into the Community Fund, which after 1939 supplied one-third of the RSCC's budget. Thus, the conflicts were often more a matter of concealed hurts than open antagonisms, although they clearly rankled professionals in social work who refused to defer to the Area Project as a unique repository of virtue and insight in the pursuit of solutions to juvenile delinquency and community disorganization.⁵

⁴ Ibid., pp. 301-302.
⁵ The tensions between social welfare professionals and Area Project staff and volunteers appear in their starkest form in the
Much of the antagonism between the CAP and social workers in Russell Square derived from its close ties to St. Michael's Church. As noted earlier, the priests were suspicious of social agencies whose activities were subsidized by Protestant evangelical groups, and they regularly enjoined their parishioners to have nothing to do with them. As one of John Brown's gang said regarding his decision to stop attending a recreational program at the South Chicago YMCA, "The priest told us it was a sin to belong to the 'Y,' so I had to quit."6

The extent to which the CAP's dependency on St. Michael's shaped its relationship with private social agencies is best revealed by briefly elaborating the story of hostilities between the CAP and Neighborhood House. For a number of years, the CAP maintained cordial relations with Neighborhood House, mainly through the friendship and shared expertise in recreation of E. A. Conover and the head resident of Neighborhood House, Millard Collins. Neighborhood House co-sponsored the Bush Athletic Conference with the RSCC, and the settlement's activities received frequent mention in the CAP's local newspaper, The Russell Square Community News. The priests at St. Michael's, however, grew increasingly unhappy with the relationship and "warned their parishioners not to participate in the Neighborhood House program" because of Collins' alleged attempts to proselytize Catholic youth to the Baptist faith. Their warning was evidently effective. The settlement's clientele, according to one observer, was limited to "Jews, Slavs, Hungarians, Mexicans and the outcast and belligerent Poles."7

6 Brown, "Diary of a Community Worker," p. 295.

Conover became a particular object of the priests' scorn, and they placed pressure on Shaw and McDonald to remove him from the neighborhood. It "looks like we will have to throw this guy Conover out of here," confided one priest. Another priest mocked Conover's links to the Baptist settlement when he was asked whether he would supply Conover, like other nonindigenous CAP staff, with a primer on Polish grammar. "No, I will get him one of Zula [Zulu]," the priest replied, "and then have him learn it and send him out there to work." Finally Father Lange went directly to Clifford Shaw and asked him to remove Conover from Russell Square. Shaw had no choice but to agree, so he transferred Conover to another Chicago neighborhood served by the Area Project.8

Conover's transfer raised a number of difficult and sensitive questions regarding Shaw's commitment to community organization per se versus his narrower commitment to bolstering the power of the Polish Catholic Church in South Chicago. Street worker John Brown posed such questions to James McDonald when he heard rumors of Conover's impending transfer because of his friendship with Millard Collins. Brown asked McDonald, "Isn't one of the fundamental aims of the Area Project to bring about community organization?" "Yes," McDonald acknowledged, "that's all true." If Collins had operated an "open church program" everything would have been fine. "But he runs a recreational program

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8 E. A. Conover, "Comments on the Conflict Between St. Michael's (Roman Catholic) Church and the South Chicago Neighborhood House (Baptist)," unpublished memorandum, January-February 1935, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 153; "Historical Materials Concerning the Development of the South Chicago Community Project," p. 4; "Conversation Pertaining to Staff Relations," unpublished transcript, January 5, 1935, pp. 3-7, located in Bubacz Papers, folder 150.
and proselytes [sic] members. This is what causes all the trouble." Shaw and McDonald had approached Collins about this practice, but he refused to change his approach. "Thus there will always be trouble from him," McDonald candidly concluded, "so now we're trying to drive him out."9

Although Conover was removed from South Chicago, Neighborhood House remained and tension between it and the CAP continued throughout the 1930s. Indeed, by the end of the decade, Area Project staff and volunteers had begun to have strained relations with most private, professional social agencies in Chicago. To try to defuse the tension, especially after the CAP had gained control of many appointments to the city's W.P.A. positions, Chicago's Council of Social Agencies called a meeting of social agency representatives. Area Project representatives were pointedly excluded from this confidential session, although Millard Collins and the head of another South Chicago settlement house were among the invited agency participants.10

Nearly all in attendance shared the view that the Area Project was "becoming a Frankenstein on the scene." Few believed Shaw's prediction that the CAP community committees would eventually give up their service programs and serve primarily coordinating functions. In fact, the Area Project community committees in South Chicago, the near west side, and the near north side had shown no "evidence of a desire to cooperate for mutual planning." Furthermore, none of the agency professionals understood how Area Project workers conceived their mission. The CAP workers seemed to want to do anything and everything in the name of

9 Brown, "Diary of a Community Worker," p. 306.
10 "Meeting on the Chicago Area Project."
delinquency prevention and refused to recognize the superior expertise of other agencies in dealing with personal and social problems of individuals that had little to do with delinquency per se. "They resist a great deal," remarked one representative, "any suggestion that they are one group or have any specific function.... if they would address themselves to that specific job [delinquency prevention, very narrowly defined], it would be a great contribution to the community."\(^{11}\)

Communications between the private agencies and Clifford Shaw had been particularly frustrating. "In working with Dr. Shaw it has not been easy to get our point across," complained one of several individuals who had tried unsuccessfully to get Shaw to intervene in the affairs of local community committees whose programs conflicted with those of other organizations in the same neighborhood. The agency representatives suspected that Shaw could exert more direct influence if he wanted to do so. For him to continue to maintain that his sole object was to conduct research on delinquency and its control, they felt, was a dangerous ploy.\(^{12}\)

Conference participants also rejected Shaw's claim that CAP staff and volunteers were not intensely anti-professional in their approach to community self-renewal. In actuality, they asserted, Area Project workers believed "that any leadership, if local, is better than any leadership if it is from the outside." This holier-than-thou attitude grated on the professionals. Regardless of the topic under discussion, workers for the Area Project "immediately go off into a tirade on agencies versus local groups." This attitude made it "difficult to

\(^{11}\) Ibid., pp. 1, 2, 4-5.
\(^{12}\) Ibid., pp. 8-10.
discuss things with the workers as one professional worker would with another." CAP staff and volunteers considered themselves immune to criticism, charged one northside settlement leader, who added sarcastically, "anyone who makes a remark about the Area Project is talking about 'we, the people.'" A YMCA spokesman extended this viewpoint by claiming that the Area Project had assumed "the role of agitators--stirring up the community against private agencies." Not surprisingly, Millard Collins of Neighborhood House fully agreed with this charge. "In view of the fact that we are an agency supported by community funds, they have belittled us in the eyes of the community--as a denominational agency working in a Catholic community, although it has been illustrated that we have no objectives along that line." The RSCCC had publicly embarrassed Neighborhood House by asserting that the settlement's program ran contrary to the true needs of residents in the Bush. "That has brought about a feeling which has not been wholesome," Collins concluded.13

The private agencies readily agreed that it was a good idea to recruit indigenous leaders to foster communitywide delinquency prevention programs. But they also pointed out that the Area Project generated its own resources and utilized W.P.A. funds to pay many of its workers, whereas private agencies were wholly dependent on volunteers beyond their paid professional staff. In a nastier vein, agency representatives strongly implied that the Area Project philosophy

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rewarded delinquent behavior by "buying off" young criminals and placing them in positions of responsibility. As Millard Collins added sarcastically, the RSCC takes "a person who has been refused recognition by us--a gang leader. He is placed on the payroll. Here is a person who is placed on the staff as a leader--when he is removed from jail."\(^{14}\)

The sponsors of the CAP would probably have had little difficulty in responding to the criticism the private social agencies leveled at them in this closed session. Indeed, a Shaw or a Burgess could easily have turned many of the agencies' gripes on their heads and could have demonstrated why various points were strengths rather than weaknesses of the CAP's philosophy and practice. Yet the critics did reinforce one fact that other evidence makes abundantly clear: The Area Project was a reign largely unto itself. Its philosophy and method were different; its sponsors and participants were enormously proud of that fact, and they demanded the opportunity to realize and demonstrate their potential for rebuilding community in Chicago's most dangerous urban neighborhoods. The populist ideology which suffused the Area Project was a source of enormous inspiration, but it also set sharp limits on the degree to which the CAP could cooperate with other devoted social reformers who refused to kneel before the philosophy of Clifford Shaw.

The numerous encomiums that Shaw received from distinguished visitors who observed the CAP in action more than neutralized the divergent criticisms of social radicals like Alinsky and professional social workers like those assembled by the Council of Social Agencies. For example, the famed criminologist and former chief of police in Berkeley, California, August Vollmer, told Shaw, "You are making history

\(^{14}\) "Meeting on the Chicago Area Project," p. 12.
with your Area Project in Chicago, because, in my opinion, the principles you are using will be used in solving most of our social problems in the future." A key member of Chicago's Board of Education assured Shaw that the CAP was "on the cutting edge of thought," while a representative from San Francisco's public schools called the CAP "probably the most intelligent program of community organization in the country."  

For his part, Shaw never claimed more for the success of the Area Project in reducing crime and upbuilding community than "objective evidence" allowed. Indeed, he often had to temper the enthusiasm and extravagant claims of community spokespersons whose sense of accomplishment outpaced the accumulation of verifiable empirical data. Above all, Shaw insisted that the CAP be understood as a "social experiment" subject to the principles and procedures of scientific evaluation. "The essential spirit of the Project is one of inquiry, discovery, and experimentation," he wrote (with Ernest Burgess and Joseph Lohman) in 1937:

Its merits will be determined by the extent to which the leadership of the neighborhood can be constructively utilized in a welfare program and the volume of juvenile delinquency thus reduced. How far this objective can be achieved will be determined not by making claims but by an impartial measurement of results.... This means a critical and penetrating analysis of particular cases of crime and delinquency with a detailed account of treatment procedures, as well as timely statistical accounts of the relative amount of crime and delinquency which emanates from the particular problem situation. In this way it may be determined to what extent particular methods employed are of more or less value in the prevention and treatment of crime.  

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15 August Vollmer to "My dear Friend" [Clifford Shaw], June 30, 1939, and Cora G. Heineman to Jesse Jacobs, August 18, 1939, both in CAP Records, section II, box 11; Chicago Area Project, "Minutes of the Board of Directors," April 30, 1940, p. 3 (citing correspondence from Perry Kittredge).

Two years later Shaw specified more precisely the kinds of questions to which he felt the Area Project would provide scientifically verifiable answers:

(1) What has been the extent and character of the neighborhood's participation in the development and operation of the program? To what extent has there been actual assumption of responsibility on the part of the community for meeting its own needs?

(2) To what extent have community residents become increasingly aware of community problems? To what extent have they manifested a quickened interest in a fuller use of community resources to deal with these problems? What constructive changes have been demonstrated in attitudes of parents, community leaders, and others in the community toward the task of promoting the welfare of their children? To what extent have local leaders utilized their prestige and influence for constructive purposes? What evidence has there been of a new community morale for neighborhood improvement, reflected in a move toward better schools, playgrounds, parks, and a fuller use of churches, societies, athletic clubs, etc?

(3) To what extent do case records show that changes have been effected in the attitudes and conduct of truant and delinquent children during their participation in the program?

(4) What has been the trend in the volume of truancy, delinquency, and crime in each area since the inauguration of the program as compared to (1) the trend during previous years, and (2) the trend in adjoining areas in which similar community-wide programs have not been carried out?\(^\text{17}\)

Shaw offered periodic answers to some or all of these questions throughout the course of the Project. His most systematic appraisal came in 1944, to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the CAP'S formal incorporation (although its program in South Chicago had been in operation for over twelve years). Shaw pointed up a variety of "conditions which complicate delinquency prevention in low-income communities." He also singled out a number of factors--notably the conservatism of

\(^{17}\) "Chicago Area Project," March 1939, pp. 36-37.
professional social workers—which impeded the widespread application of "the self-help principle." Nonetheless, his overall assessment was decidedly optimistic. When given the chance, Shaw argued, residents in high-crime areas had demonstrated that they could "organize themselves into effective working units for the promotion of welfare programs," that they could uncover and effectively utilize previously untapped talent and leadership, that their organizations were stable and evidenced increasing solidarity over time, and that they were remarkably efficient in both raising and expending funds locally. Moreover, because of their greater knowledge of immigrant languages, cultural traditions, and neighborhood social processes, the community committees had been able to elicit interest and participation from individuals and institutions that were previously indifferent or hostile to the appeals of professional social workers. School-community relations had been vastly improved, the activities of junk dealers and tavern owners had been substantially curtailed, and a few communities had begun their own summer camp programs.¹⁸

The two accomplishments that Shaw elaborated at length in his 1944 evaluation were both identified principally with the RSICC. First was the parole program, which had been "unusually successful" in Russell Square and which promised to "yield facts which may have far-reaching significance for probation and parole officers throughout the country." Second, and the point to which he devoted greatest attention, was the substantial decline in official rates of delinquency in two of the three pioneer CAP communities (South Chicago and the near west side). The decline in South Chicago was especially sharp. Between 1932 and 1942,

police contacts of juveniles between the ages of two and sixteen in Russell Square dropped from approximately 60 per 1000 to 20 per 1000, a decline of two-thirds. On the near west side, police contacts dropped from approximately 39 per 1000 to 23 per 1000, a decline of less than two-fifths. Equally telling was the fact that for Russell Square, Shaw could not employ an additional statistical measure which he used to assess delinquency rates on the near west and north sides—petitions filed in juvenile court—"because the number of cases was too small to provide an adequate sample." Thus, the RSCC stood out as a brilliant success on the two measures that lent themselves most easily (in Shaw's view) to statistical evaluation. ¹⁹

These downward trends first became evident to Shaw in the mid-1930s. He was then inclined to believe that they provided conclusive proof of the CAP's direct impact on crime. He was especially confident of the statistical results because, he asserted, in a comparable South Chicago neighborhood which the CAP did not serve, juvenile delinquency (as measured by police arrests) did not decline at all, whereas in Russell Square the rate was more than halved between 1932 and 1937. Thus Shaw concluded: "This trend has been so consistent and

¹⁹ "Rates of Delinquents in Communities in Chicago in Which the Area Project Has Been Operating," pp. 5-7; "Police Cases: (Individuals) Rates per 1000 Corrected by Moving Average," unpublished table covering both Russell Square and another nonspecified South Chicago control area between 1929 and 1943, n.d., c. 1944, located in CAP Records, section I, box 11; Shaw, "Methods, Accomplishments, and Problems of the Chicago Area Project," pp. 9-14; Chicago Area Project, "Outline of the Annual Report," unpublished manuscript, 1938, n.p., appended material on "Preliminary Report of the Juvenile Court Follow-Up Study and Delinquency Rates in Area Project Areas," located in CAP Records, section VI, box 1. Many other Project documents, including most of the "Annual Reports," include summaries of the delinquency or police contact rate studies conducted during the late 1930s and early 1940s for the three principal Area Project communities; for example, see "Brief Preliminary Report of the Activities of the Chicago Area Project," pp. 2-3.
proportionately so great that it can be interpreted to represent a significant change in the community situation.... it seems reasonable to suppose that the application of the same program of community organization and integration in other areas of the city might eventually result in a similar downward trend in the number of delinquents."\(^{20}\)

By 1944, Shaw had doubtless been made aware of some of the statistical inadequacies of his measures and of more general difficulties in empirical assessment of delinquency prevention programs. His comments remained upbeat, but his language was more guarded. "The reader is cautioned against ascribing the marked decrease in delinquency in Russell Square and the West Side to the activities of the Area Project," he cautioned. "Less marked decreases have been observed in some areas in which no special program has been carried on. We believe there is valid reason for saying that the Area Project activities have been one of the influences which have contributed to the decreases in Russell Square and the West Side." And again: "While it is impossible to ascertain accurately the extent to which this trend is due to the work of these committees, it is not improbable that the heightened activity of the citizenry and the downward trend of delinquency are related phenomena."\(^{21}\)

As time went on, Shaw became more and more reluctant to cite statistical data on delinquency rates to demonstrate the wisdom and effectiveness of the Area Project. He never even bothered to publish the statistics he collected on crime in individual Project communities

\(^{20}\) "Rates of Delinquents in Communities in Chicago in Which the Area Project has been Operating," p. 7

after 1942. In fact, as he wrote in 1953 to Helen Witmer (who was preparing a national evaluation of delinquency prevention programs), he doubted that it would ever be possible to demonstrate statistically a causal link between the Area Project and downward delinquency rates in Russell Square or elsewhere:

Conclusive statistical proof to sustain any conclusion regarding the effectiveness of this work in reducing the volume of delinquency is difficult to secure for many reasons. Trends in rates of delinquents for small areas are affected by variations in the definition of what constitutes delinquent behavior, changes in the composition of the population, and changes in administrative procedures in law enforcement agencies. We know from our experiences in the inner city areas that there is no fixed volume of delinquency. We know that there are a large number of unofficial cases of unlawful behavior, and the extent to which these unofficial cases become apprehended and dealt with as official delinquents depends upon a wide variety of influences and pressures which vary from one community to another.\textsuperscript{22}

Shaw was no longer much interested in statistical trends on delinquency, Witmer stated. He had now turned his attention to developing means to assess the results of the CAP's intervention with individual, seriously delinquent youth.

If Shaw was no longer willing to trumpet the RSOC's success in measurably reducing crime within its neighborhood domain, certainly no one else in the scholarly community would be willing to do so either. Nearly all commentators on the Area Project during the past 40 years have viewed the pioneer communities as a more or less indistinguishable group, none of which demonstrated statistically verifiable effects on local crime rates. Russell Square's early claim to special fame was casually forgotten. Typical are Solomon Kobrin's remarks in his oft-

\textsuperscript{22} In Helen Witmer and Edith Tufts, \textit{The Effectiveness of Delinquency Prevention Programs}, Washington, D.C.: United States Children's Bureau, 1954, p. 16.
cited assessment of the CAP on its 25th anniversary in 1959. While delinquency rates had probably declined in the CAP communities, Kobrin wrote, "the extent of the reduction is not subject to precise measurement." Essentially reiterating what Shaw had said in his letter to Witmer, Kobrin continued: "The effects of improvement in the environment of children are diffuse, cumulative, and intertwined with trends and forces which have their origin outside of programs of this character. In the final analysis, therefore, the Area Project program must rest its case on logical and analytic grounds." Kobrin gives no indication that little more than a decade earlier, Shaw and his colleagues had considered it self-evident that the CAP was more successful in reducing crime in Russell Square than anywhere else.23

The bulk of Clifford Shaw's public utterances on the Area Project further contributed to the tendency of scholars to view the several pioneer communities en masse rather than individually. Shaw stressed how all community committees subscribed to a common philosophy of delinquency prevention, rather than the particularities of practice. Promised case studies of individual communities (though apparently in preparation in the late 1930s) never materialized. Shaw seemed most interested in demonstrating the workability of general organizational principles--particularly the self-help principle in coping with urban social disorganization--and in emphasizing that the CAP was a genuine scientific experiment based upon specific theories of crime causation. Like most commentators on the Area Project, Shaw usually interpreted the CAP's significance in highly ideological terms, as a battle of philosophies of social amelioration. Consider the following:

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23 Kobrin, "The Chicago Area Project...," p. 482.
Since the procedure of the Chicago Area Project embodies certain features which are not widely accepted and which indeed are in conflict with traditional practice, opposition to its development was anticipated. The history of man's efforts to extend the horizon of his knowledge of the physical world, of himself, and of his society has been marked by bitter conflict. In all fields of human endeavor the forces of precedent have opposed change and innovation. This is as true in the treatment of the problem of delinquency and crime as it has been in other fields where men have sought to discover more effective methods for coping with the problems which beset them.... A faithful pursuit of the roots of delinquency and crime will lead into dangerous and forbidden paths, for each of us in his own way, some perhaps more than others, has helped to create those conditions of life which cause some children, in their search for the satisfaction of their needs, to resort to those forms of behavior which society has labelled delinquent.  

In light of these heady objectives, careful, detailed analysis of particular personalities, idiosyncratic institutional events, and varied chronologies in each CAP neighborhood may have struck Shaw as information too trivial to report to the larger public.

In our judgment, however, to portray the Area Project mainly in ideological terms is to create serious distortion. Most important, it encourages neglect of the process of implementation, obscures the CAP as an operational reality, and directs attention away from Shaw's own strong pragmatic, adaptive strain in his relations with individual community committees. All of these elements, as recent evaluation research indicates, are critical for understanding success or failure in a wide range of social innovations.  

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of his own "social experiment," Shaw may well have missed an opportunity to explain systematically why the CAP was more successful in some communities than in others.

Obviously it is impossible today to analyze the genesis, programmatic structure, and evolution of the CAP's pioneer experiment in Russell Square at the level of fine detail and nuance that would have been possible in the 1930s and 1940s. Considerable oversimplification of the early history is inevitable. Yet, accepting these limitations, it seems to us that two broad features of the RSCC's early history stand out with considerable clarity. First, implementation conformed to several criteria that social scientists today consider essential to successful social innovation. Second, the RSCC managed to overcome many of the operational hurdles that continue to bedevil the vast majority of innovative programs in delinquency prevention today.

We have already reviewed the basic facts regarding implementation. Shaw's vision of the CAP did indeed include a grand reform strategy, but that strategy was not unchangeable and, most importantly, Shaw believed it could not be imposed on local residents without subverting the principle of communal self-help. Consequently, the CAP entered Russell Square slowly and cautiously, and by the time-worn path of least resistance to children and parents alike: organized recreation. But recreation was only a means to larger programmatic and organizational ends. In short order, Shaw expanded recreational contacts with juvenile gangs to include extensive curbstone counseling. Becoming fully rooted and accepted in the neighborhood, though, required more than CAP energies alone could provide. Thus Shaw began his careful courting of the
Catholic Church and influential Catholic laymen. This turned out to be a lengthy process, but one that Shaw would not force or rush. In the end, "inside" sponsorship proved crucial for galvanizing widespread community support and participation in all phases of the CAP's venture in Russell Square. To local residents, the CAP may have appeared mainly as an appendage to St. Michael's. To the pragmatist in Shaw, however, the Church connection was essential to get his own experiment off the ground, even if it entailed risks, demanded compromises, and necessitated occasional smoothing of priestly feathers. The implementation of the Area Project in Russell Square was a classic example of mutual adaptation of ideology to local context.

Mutual adaptation continued throughout the early years. Shaw exercised his authority minimally and discreetly, but his presence remained unmistakable, an energizing force to inspire local "natural" leaders and CAP staff alike. Ideology may have dictated turning over control of local operations to indigenous residents without delay, but James McDonald, assigned from CAP headquarters, remained in charge for over four years until an especially talented local leader (Stephen Bubacz) could be found, trained, and set loose. Ideology may have dictated that indigenous street workers carry the burden of curbstone counseling because they shared the local youths' culture and world view, but nonindigenous street workers from CAP headquarters remained the bulwark of curbstone counseling throughout the 1930s. At first glance, furthermore, camping seemed irrelevant to CAP ideology. Camping smacked of rural sentimentality and inappropriate genteel solutions to the problems of streetwise gang youth. Ideology notwithstanding, however, once it became clear that Russell Square youth wanted to go to camp,
that their parents wanted it for them, and that the community considered camping an essential tool of delinquency prevention, Shaw became reconciled to camping as integral to the Area Project philosophy—an extension into the countryside of Russell Square's revitalized community spirit. In this as in other CAP endeavors in the Bush, Shaw both guided and followed as the occasion dictated. He was a pragmatic ideologue, ever ready to adapt general principles to local conditions and desires.

If implementation of the CAP's program in Russell Square combined authoritative direction, flexibility, and adaptation in a manner that appears (in retrospect) conducive to successful social innovation, so was its mode of daily operation consistent with its ultimate objective, namely, the reduction of crime. That this was no mean achievement is attested to by the inglorious history of federally sponsored innovations in delinquency prevention during the 1970s. These programs were ostensibly designed to upbuild the capacity of local youth-serving institutions to reduce rates of delinquency in relatively small areas (not unlike the CAP). In practice, however, these programs—in addition to floundering in purpose due to diffuse, often conflicting theoretical orientations—rarely dealt with and often assiduously avoided seriously delinquent youth; confined their treatments largely to recreation; fostered only superficial cooperation among youth-serving agencies, and between agencies and schools; systematically avoided developing close working relationships with vital social control institutions, notably police and juvenile courts; ignored problems and characteristics distinctive to the particular communities; and failed to elicit sustained participation from local volunteers.²⁶

²⁶ So, at least, conclude the two most comprehensive evaluations: Jerry Walker, Albert Cardarelli, and Dennis Billingsley, The Theory and Practice of Delinquency Prevention in the United States: Review,
We have already seen how different the CAP's program was in practice. A clear but relatively unconfining theoretical orientation guided the enterprise from beginning to end. The RSCC reached out especially toward seriously delinquent youth, including highly antisocial gang members and ex-convicts, and dealt with them in every phase of its program. Recreation remained central to the program, but it served as a springboard for attaining broader goals: facilitating counseling with gang youth; providing employment for "natural" youth leaders; eliciting adult participation in structuring and monitoring social activities for youth, and introducing adults to one another; solidifying the Catholic Church's authority in the community; and so forth. There were obvious limits to the RSCC's willingness to cooperate with other youth-serving social agencies—as witness its hostility toward Neighborhood House. But the RSCC did work closely with the Juvenile Protective Association and, perhaps most important, it developed very close links with local police and parochial schools, serving children as advocates and prodding administrators and teachers to more conscientious performance and assessment of children's individual needs. Even more systematic were the RSCC's links with the police and juvenile court, for whom, in modern-day terms, the RSCC served essentially as a community-based diversion agency. Throughout its endeavors, the RSCC shaped programs and assigned personnel to take maximum advantage of its knowledge of local communal needs and sensibilities. Finally, the RSCC was built upon volunteer, indigenous

leadership and elicited sustained participation and financial support from a sizable portion of the local residents, men and women. The RSICC's program in the 1930s and 1940s, in short, appears in practice to have embodied the very features whose absence, in the opinion of recent scholars, foredoomed attempts in the 1970s to innovate in the field of delinquency prevention.

Dare we conclude, then, that the CAP actually "worked" and resulted in a two-thirds reduction in rates of delinquency in Russell Square? Of course not. However, we do feel justified in concluding that until scholars and policy analysts develop more imaginative means to assess performance in the field, it is premature to generalize that "nothing works." History never provides incontrovertible "lessons" for current application, but it can suggest possibilities for social invention to which we might otherwise be indifferent or unaware. The CAP, we believe, embodies one such possibility. In light of our case study, it seems prudent not to dismiss out of hand the initial statistical picture that Shaw presented of unique achievement in Russell Square; that picture may well have captured social reality to some degree. In a field where a quest for perfect knowledge has proved so frustrating, and where there is no consensus on appropriate designs for research or evaluation, the numerous distinctive features that separated the CAP from virtually all other experiments in delinquency prevention would appear to warrant serious study and reconsideration.

Of course, this is a frail reed on which to hang recommendations to guide delinquency prevention policy in the future. Even if we grant the

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possibility that the CAP "worked" unusually well in Russell Square, countless questions remain as to its relevance today. Moreover, our historical analysis is obviously incomplete. Until we have the opportunity to trace the later evolution of the Russell Square experiment to its demise in 1959 and to pursue systematic, comparative inquiry on the other two pioneering Area Project communities on the near west and near north sides,\textsuperscript{28} the contours of our ultimate interpretation must remain uncertain. But one conclusion seems overwhelmingly clear: We have much new to learn about, and perhaps to learn from, the legendary Chicago Area Project.

\textsuperscript{28} For example: Did the nature of gang behavior differ? Were indigenous institutions more or less receptive? Was the spirit of community stronger or weaker? Did Shaw exercise more or less control?