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MARGINAL AND NON-MARGINAL PERSONS IN THE PROFESSIONS:

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RECRUITMENT IN

LAW, MEDICINE, AND SOCIAL WORK\*

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ABSTRACT

A sample of students from the Schools of Law, Medicine, and Social Work of a Midwestern University (N=1,319), which consisted of all students enrolled in these schools for over a given number of years, suggests that there are at least three discernible types of marginality which are related to the status of the given professions. Such marginality may depend on one or more of the following: class origin, academic performance, and sex roles. The students of social work are high in both class- and role- marginality, but are favorably comparable to law students in performance-marginality. The study suggests that prestige of a given profession (as was rank ordered by North and Hatt in 1947) is neither necessarily nor always dependent on performance-marginality, but is related to role-marginality of persons in the professions.

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A brief descriptive report on recruitment in law, medicine, and social work on the basis of this research was published by The Council on Social Work Education in The Social Work Education Reporter, 21, 1 (December-January, 1972-73).

## THE PROBLEM

This paper undertakes a comparative study of the recruitment patterns in the professions of law, medicine, and social work. It is anticipated that such a comparative work on these professions, all of whom require a baccalaureate degree for entrance, will contribute to the study of professions in general and to the subject of manpower in the professions in particular.

Existing literature on these professions deals mostly with various practice and research issues within each of these professions (cf. Hyman, 1967; Meyer, et al., 1967; Zeisel, 1967). Comparative studies of these professions are only a handful (Warkov, 1966; Etzioni, 1969). On the basis of an earlier study of comparative prestige of occupations and professions, medicine would seem to hold a relatively high status among the professions, the status of law would seem close to that of medicine, while that of social work would be substantially low.<sup>1</sup> Social work not only has low prestige by popular opinion, but, according to Greenwood, is an "easily accessible profession" which is "used as avenues for social mobility by working class members who aspire to surpass the occupational levels of their parents" (Greenwood, 1960).

Additionally, in a typology of the professions by Carr-Saunders, law and medicine were classified as old established professions,

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<sup>1</sup>It is to be remembered that the occupational category "physician" ranked second in the North-Hatt Occupational Prestige Scale, whereas the occupational category "lawyer" ranked eighteenth. In this ranking of ninety occupations, social worker was not listed. However, the category "welfare worker for a city government" ranked forty-sixth. Since most such welfare workers are not trained professional social workers, it would be inappropriate to assume that a category of "social worker" would necessarily rank so low, but it is extremely doubtful that such a category will be closer to "lawyer" in prestige ranking. See Cecil C. North and Paul K. Hatt, "Jobs and Occupations: A Popular Evaluation," Public Opinion News 9 (September 1947), pp. 3-13.

whereas social work was a semi-profession.<sup>2</sup> To these theoretical formulations, Warkov added a body of data, showing that students of social work have the lowest grade-point average, and make their career choice much later in life than students of other professions (Warkov, 1966).

The prestige rating of occupations and professions cited above, along with the classification by Carr-Saunders, places social work in a relatively low status in the hierarchy of professions. Such rank order, considered with Greenwood's comments and Warkov's data, would

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<sup>2</sup>Carr-Saunders differentiated the professions into five types on the basis of their knowledge content and intellectual depth: the old established professions, the new professions, the semi-professions, the would-be professions, and the marginal professions. Law and medicine were classified as old established professions, since their practice is founded upon "the study of a theoretical structure." In comparison, the semi-professions like social work, "replace theoretical study of a field of learning by the acquisition of precise technical skill." See Alexander M. Carr-Saunders, "Metropolitan Conditions and Traditional Professional Relationships," Robert M. Fisher (ed.), The Metropolis in Modern Life, Doubleday, New York, p. 279.

suggest that marginal persons<sup>3</sup> enter low status professions. Such marginality in low status professions seem to depend on either class (i.e., those moving from working class or blue collar to middle class or white collar),<sup>4</sup> or performance (i.e., those performing, academically or otherwise, below the achievement norms of high status positions) (cf. Lipset and Bendix, 1962: 236-254). A theoretical formulation of low status professions being filled by persons of either class- or performance-marginal status (or both) would therefore be in order.

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<sup>3</sup>The classic definition of marginality was offered by Park when he suggested that persons in cultural duality and functioning in cultures antagonistic to each other are marginal persons. See Robert E. Park, "Introduction," Everest V. Stonequist, The Marginal Man, Scribners, New York, 1937, pp. xiii - xviii. Park's concept of marginality, while developed for explanation and description of the fate of migrants, can be reformulated to mean persons who come to be guided by two or more forms of contradictory or antagonistic socialization patterns. It is clear that such multiple socialization patterns may be produced not only by corresponding multiple societies or cultures, but also by multiple reference groups or social strata within the same culture (for a discussion of the term 'socialization,' see John A. Clausen, "Introduction," John A. Clausen (ed.), Socialization and Society, Little, Brown, Boston, 1968, pp. 1-17; for a discussion of the term 'reference group,' see Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1957, pp. 281-386). The term 'marginality' as used in this paper should be understood in its reformulated meaning as outlined here.

<sup>4</sup>The term 'class' should be understood as consisting of upper, middle, working, and lower classes, as operationalized by Ellis, Lane, and Olesen from the concepts of Richard Centers, Joseph A. Kahl, and Kingsley Davis. See Robert A. Ellis, W. Clayton Lane, and Virginia Olesen, "The Index of Class Position: An Improved Intercommunity Measure of Stratification," American Sociological Review 28 (April 1963), pp. 271-277. However, the upper and middle classes can be subsumed under the term white collar or non-manual classes, whereas the working and lower classes can be subsumed under the term blue collar or manual classes. Existing research suggest that mobility between these two categories (i.e., blue collar and white collar) is the most difficult. See Seymour M. Lipset and Reinhard Bendix, Social Mobility in Industrial Society, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1962, pp. 11-75.

The present study proposes to explicate the concepts of such marginality, and then derive implications for manpower in the professions.

## HYPOTHESES AND OPERATIONAL

### DEFINITIONS

The foregoing discussion of existing literature and theoretical formulations suggest the three hypotheses outlined below.

1. Social work is a "relatively easily accessible" profession, while law and medicine are not.
2. More persons of high "class-marginal status" are in social work than in law or medicine.
3. More persons of high "performance-marginal status" are in social work than in law or medicine.

The term "relatively easily accessible" is defined as longer time-lapse between college graduation and entry into a chosen profession (hereafter referred to as distance from college graduation) by the students of a profession than such time-lapse of students in other professions in comparison. In other words, the higher the time lost between college graduation and entrance into a profession, the more "easily accessible" is that profession in comparison with other professions where such time loss is comparatively lower.

The term "class-marginal status" is defined as attendance in less competitive colleges for undergraduate education. The degree of competitiveness of colleges is ascertained from Fire's list.<sup>5</sup> Thus the

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<sup>5</sup>The criteria by which this classification was arrived at are as follows: The criteria for a college to be ranked as most competitive, the students must come from the top 10 to 25 percent of their graduating class, must have median SAT scores of 675-800, and between B+ to A grade-point average. These same criteria are used in descending order for other classifications as highly competitive, very competitive, etc. Some examples for most competitive: Amherst, Bryn Mawr, Dartmouth, Harvard, etc.; highly competitive: Antioch, Brandeis, Case, Chicago, etc.; for very competitive: Albion, Knox, Rutgers, Tulane, etc.; for competitive: Adelphi, Elmira, Florida State, Ohio State, etc.; for less competitive: Alabama State, Arkansas Polytechnic, Howard, Morehouse, Roosevelt, George Peabody, etc.; and for non-competitive: Bethany Bible of California, Eastern Montana, George Williams of Illinois, Walla Walla, etc. Benjamin Fire, Barron's Profiles of American Colleges. Woodbury, New York: Barron's Educational Services, 1968.

lower the rank of one's college of undergraduate education in Fire's list, the higher his class-marginality. If the students of a given profession come from high quality (i.e., "most competitive" and "highly competitive" classifications by Fire) colleges, then their class-marginal status is defined to be low. Students coming from a medium quality (i.e., "very competitive" and "competitive" classifications by Fire) college would be defined as persons of medium class-marginal status. Students not fitting any of the two above classifications would be defined as persons of high class-marginal status.<sup>6</sup>

The term "performance-marginal status" should be understood in the following terms: low performance-marginal as undergraduate grade-point average of 3.0 or above in a four-point system (where A = 4.0, B = 3.0, C = 2.0, D = 1.0, and F = no points); medium performance-marginal as that between 2.5 to 2.9; and high performance-marginality is 2.4 or below.

#### METHODS

A sample of 1,319 students from the Schools of Law, Medicine, and Social Work of a Midwestern University (hereafter referred to as the University) during a five-year period is chosen for the study. In this sample, each cohort within each school is identified by the year it entered school rather than the expected year of graduation. Thus the 1964 cohort of the medical school here means the group of medical students who started their medical training during the academic year 1964-65, and is referred to as the "class of 1968" by the University, since their expected year of graduation is 1968. Similarly, the 1964 cohort in law school means "class of 1967" (law training takes three years), and the 1964 cohort in social work school means "class of 1966" (social work training takes two years). The reason for identifying the cohort by year of entry rather than expected year of graduation is convenience in tabular representation for the purposes of this paper.

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<sup>6</sup>The rationale for using the quality of undergraduate college as approximation of class position of students is twofold: (a) detailed data on family positions of students were not available in the admissions offices; and (b) the most prestigious and competitive colleges in the U.S. are frequently colleges attended by persons of higher class origin than the non-prestigious and less competitive colleges. See Hannah Arendt, "The Crisis in Education, Hendrik M. Ruitenbeek, Varieties of Modern Social Theory, Dutton, New York, 1963, pp. 341-362; and Christopher Jencks and Davis Riesman, The Academic Revolution, Doubleday, New York, 1969.

The sample comprises of 416 students from the School of Law for a three year period between 1966 and 1968; 429 students from the School of Medicine for a five year period between 1964 and 1968; and 474 students from the School of Social Work for a five year period between 1964 and 1968. Further, each subsample from a given professional school represents all registered students in that school for the specified time period. The records of the admissions offices of the three schools were the sources of the samples.

Existing national samples indicate that there is less variation within schools than between schools (cf. Davis, 1964; Davis, 1965). Therefore, it is assumed that the three schools of the University have about equal rank in their respective professions, and are therefore comparable.

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data on distance from college graduation, or time lapse between graduation from undergraduate school and entry into respective professional schools are presented in Table 1.

The data in Table 1 show that more social work students decide to enter their profession much later in life than do students of law and medicine. Approximately 80.5 percent of law students and 69.9 percent of the medical students entered their professions immediately after graduation, whereas only 40.9 percent of the social work students entered school under the same conditions. The data reveal that the decision to enter the profession of social work can be made much later in life than the decision to enter law or medicine. The ability to make such a career decision by social work students much later than those in law and medicine, coupled with the fact that social work training takes only two years, supports Greenwood's contention that social work is comparatively an "easily accessible profession" than law or medicine. Hypothesis one, therefore, can be accepted as stated.

The data on the quality of undergraduate schools from which the students in the three professional schools received their undergraduate education are presented in Table 2.

The data in Table 2 make it clear that the School of Medicine recruits a substantial majority of its students from high quality undergraduate schools, whereas the Schools of Law and Social Work recruit more from medium quality schools. It seems that the School of Law recruits a reasonably higher ratio of students from high quality schools than does the School of Social Work (23.8 percent in the School of Law to 13.7 percent in the School of Social Work). It appears that if the assumption of persons of higher class origin attending the nation's high-ranking colleges is correct, then the profession of medicine recruits persons from higher class positions than do law or social work. Also, law recruits a relatively higher number from higher classes than does social work. Also, law recruits a relatively higher number from higher classes than does social work. Thus it seems that a majority of students in medicine are of low class-marginal status, whereas the same for law or social work is about medium.



Table 1  
 Distance from College Graduation for  
 Students in Three Professions  
 (Percentages)

Entry into Professional Schools	Three Professional Schools in Midwestern University		
	Law	Medicine	Social Work
Immediately upon graduation from college	80.5 (335)	69.9 (300)	40.9 (194)
After a lapse of one to four (inclusive) years	16.8 ( 70)	23.8 (102)	37.2 (176)
After a lapse of five to eight (inclusive) years	2.2 ( 9)	4.7 ( 20)	9.7 ( 46)
After a lapse of over eight years	0.5 ( 2)	1.6 ( 7)	12.2 ( 58)
Total (1,319)	100.0 (416)	100.0 (429)	100.0 (474)

The trends derived from observing the variable of race add additional evidence to the above observation. Information on the variable of race is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 suggests: the students in the three professional schools are practically all white; the Law School unsuccessfully attempted to have a larger number of Negroes; the School of Social Work enrolled a higher number of Negroes; and that representation of other racial (or foreign) groups is minimal.

Quite obviously the data on race reveal discriminatory practices in patterns of recruitment in law and medicine. However, it will be argued that information on the race variable, as reflected here, is more indicative of a class bias than a bias against race per se. Banfield, in an extensive argument published recently, shows that "much of what appears (especially to Negroes) as race prejudice is really class prejudice or, at any rate, class antipathy" (Banfield, 1970: 70). If this is so, then information on the race variable suggests that class-marginality is relatively higher in social work than in law or medicine. This trend, coupled with the earlier one about class-marginality being low in medicine and medium in law and social work, suggests that class-marginality is somewhat high in social work, medium in law, and low in medicine. The second hypothesis of more persons of high class-marginal status being in social work than in law or medicine may therefore be accepted, with the understanding that such acceptance has been based on two assumptions: quality of college attended and minority group status as reflective of class positions.

Undergraduate grade-point average is usually an indicator of ability to compete in an academic setting. The data on the undergraduate grade-point average are presented in Table 4.

The trends obvious in Table 4 may be summed up as follows: students in medicine come with high quality performance in the undergraduate school; the students in law and social work come with somewhat mediocre levels of performance in their undergraduate education, though social work students come with a slightly higher level of performance.

The surprise that emerged from the trends in Table 4 is that students in the School of Law - who have minimal time lapse between graduation from college and entry into professional school, and who in comparison come from high quality schools than those in the School of Social Work - tend to have a lower grade-point average than the students in social work. As a result, quality of school was cross-tabulated with quality of performance (undergraduate grade-point average) in Table 5. The trends drawn from Table 4 seem to be more or less maintained in Table 5.

**Table 2**  
**The Quality of Undergraduate School**  
**from Which Students in Three Professions Received**  
**Their Undergraduate Education**  
**(Percentages)**

Quality of Undergraduate School <sup>a</sup>	Three Professional Schools in Midwestern University		
	Law	Medicine	Social Work
High	23.8 ( 99)	59.2 (254)	13.7 ( 65)
Medium	65.1 (271)	38.5 (165)	64.8 (307)
Low or Unknown	11.1 ( 46)	2.3 ( 10)	21.5 (102)
Total	100.0 (416)	100.0 (429)	100.0 (474)

<sup>a</sup>As classified by Fire. Thus the definition of high quality here is Fire's classifications of most competitive and highly competitive; of medium quality is Fire's classifications of very competitive and competitive; and low or unknown quality is Fire's classifications of less competitive, non-competitive and schools not in Fire's list (such as unaccredited schools or foreign universities).

Table 3  
 Distribution of Students in Three Professional Schools  
 by Race  
 (Actual Frequencies)

Student Cohorts Defined by Year of Entry	Racial <sup>d</sup> Distribution in Three Professional Schools in Midwestern University											
	Law				Medicine				Social Work			
	Total	White	Negro	Other	Total	White	Negro	Other	Total	White	Negro	Other
1964	a	a	a	a	77 <sup>b</sup>	76	1	0	69	64	5	0
1965	a	a	a	a	83	81	0	2	94	a	a	a
1966	163	163	0	0	90	90	0	0	95	85	8	2
1967	146 <sup>c</sup>	134	12 <sup>c</sup>	0	91	89	1	1	112	100	9	3
1968	107	104	3	0	87	84	1	2	104	84	18	2
Total	416	401	15	0	428 <sup>b</sup>	420	3	5	474	333	40	7

<sup>a</sup>Not available.

<sup>b</sup>Race of one student unknown.

<sup>c</sup>Twelve Negro students were recruited this year with special effort, according to the admissions officers. All but four of them left, were dismissed, or withdrew within the first two years of their stay.

<sup>d</sup>All foreign students and other groups which are neither American White nor American Negro are considered to be "other."

**Table 4**  
**Mean of Undergraduate Grade-Point Averages**  
**(Based on a Four Point System)**  
**of Student Cohorts<sup>b</sup>**

Student Cohorts Defined by Year of Entry	Three Professional Schools in Midwestern University		
	Law	Medicine	Social Work
1964	a	3.2	2.6
1965	a	3.1	a
1966	2.5	3.2	2.8
1967	2.6	3.2	2.8
1968	2.5	3.2	2.8

<sup>a</sup> Not available.

<sup>b</sup> Data on grade-point average were not available for every student. Therefore, the grade-point average was calculated on the basis of those students on whom data were available. The total number of students on whom this information was available is: law = 386; medicine = 378; and social work = 343. As obvious in the above table, data on grade-point average of social work students were not available for the entire cohort of 1965.

The data from Tables 4 and 5 suggest that social work students are not necessarily academically inferior than those in law. Hypothesis three, therefore, cannot be accepted in its present form, because while medical students are lowest in performance-marginality, both social work and law students are classified as medium in performance-marginality.

The data presented so far relate to the hypotheses outlined around the concepts of class- and performance-marginality at the beginning of this paper. Upon examining data on sex distribution and other variables some additional formulations were possible toward the understanding of marginality. Such data are presented below, and the new formulations are developed thereafter.

The sex distribution in three professional schools is presented in Table 6.

The data in Table 6 suggest that the students in the School of Law are primarily male, and a substantial majority in the School of Medicine (consistently around 90 percent) is male. However, females are an overwhelming majority in the School of Social Work (approximately two-thirds of the student body). Social work, then, is primarily a feminine profession, whereas law and medicine are masculine professions.

Upon examination of the trends in Table 6, one may question whether the men in social work are intellectually inferior or are basically unable to compete (i.e., performance-marginal) in other parts of the professional and occupational world which are more masculine in character, since they have come into a profession that is primarily a woman's profession. Such a question may be answered by a two-fold test: a test that measures intellectual or cognitive capacities; and a test that approximately measures competitive functioning. Use of the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal Test (Form Ym)<sup>7</sup> as a measure of intellectual or cognitive capabilities and undergraduate grade-point average as measures of ability to compete in conventional academic settings, differentiated by sex, should answer such a question.

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<sup>7</sup>"The Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal consists of a series of test exercises which require the application of some of the important abilities involved in critical thinking. The exercises include problems, statements, arguments, and interpretations of data similar to those which a citizen in a democracy might encounter in his daily life as he works, reads newspaper or magazine articles, hears speeches, participates in discussion on various issues, etc. The test is available in two forms, Ym and Zm, each consisting of five subtests designed to measure different, though interdependent, aspects of critical thinking. Each form contains 100 items that can be completed in about 50 minutes by most persons who have the equivalent of a ninth-grade education..." See Goodwin Watson and Edward M. Galser, Manual: Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal, Harcourt, New York, 1964.

Table 5  
 Quality of Undergraduate Grade-Point Averages (4-point system)  
 of Students in Relation to Quality  
 of Undergraduate School of Students in Midwestern University  
 (Percentages)

Quality of Undergraduate School <sup>a</sup>	Students with High, Medium, or Low Undergraduate Grade-Point Averages <sup>b</sup>											
	Law			Medicine			Social Work					
	Total	High	Medium	Low	Total	High	Medium	Low	Total	High	Medium	Low
High	22.7 ( 88)	2.5 ( 10)	6.9 ( 27)	13.3 ( 51)	59.1 (223)	45.9 (173)	7.7 ( 29)	5.5 ( 21)	16.4 ( 57)	6.1 ( 21)	6.9 ( 24)	3.4 ( 12)
Medium	66.7 (257)	10.7 ( 41)	42.6 (164)	13.4 ( 52)	39.0 (147)	31.6 (119)	5.5 ( 21)	1.9 ( 7)	63.8 (218)	11.4 ( 39)	45.9 (157)	6.5 ( 22)
Low or Unknown	10.6 ( 41)	2.5 ( 10)	7.6 ( 29)	0.5 ( 2)	1.9 ( 8)	0.5 ( 2)	0.7 ( 3)	0.7 ( 3)	19.8 ( 68)	5.5 ( 19)	7.8 ( 27)	6.5 ( 22)
Total <sup>c</sup>	100.0 (386)	15.7	57.1	27.2	100.0 (378)	78.0	13.9	8.1	100.0 (343)	23.0	60.6	16.4

<sup>a</sup>See Table 2 for definition of quality of undergraduate school.

<sup>b</sup>High = 3.0 or above; Medium = 2.5-2.9; and Low = 2.4 or lower.

<sup>c</sup>Grade-point average was not available for all students in the sample. See footnote "b" of Table 4. for explanation.

Table 6  
Sex Distribution of Students  
in Three Professional Schools  
in Midwestern University  
(Percentages)

Student Cohorts Defined by Year of Entry	Sex Distribution in Three Professional Schools in Midwestern University								
	Law			Medicine			Social Work		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1964	a	a	a	100.0 ( 78)	87.2 ( 68)	12.8 ( 10)	100.0 ( 69)	40.6 ( 28)	59.4 ( 41)
1965	a	a	a	100.0 ( 83)	89.2 ( 74)	10.8 ( 9)	100.0 ( 94)	28.7 ( 27)	71.3 ( 67)
1966	100.0 (163)	97.5 (154)	2.5 ( 4)	100.0 ( 90)	90.0 ( 81)	10.0 ( 9)	100.0 ( 95)	36.8 ( 35)	63.2 ( 60)
1967	100.0 (146)	94.5 (138)	5.5 ( 8)	100.0 ( 91)	89.0 ( 81)	11.0 ( 10)	100.0 (112)	35.7 ( 40)	64.3 ( 72)
1968	100.0 (107)	88.8 ( 95)	11.2 ( 12)	100.0 ( 87)	92.0 ( 80)	8.0 ( 7)	100.0 (104)	33.7 ( 35)	66.3 ( 69)
Total	100.0 (416)	94.3 (392)	5.7 ( 24)	100.0 (429)	89.6 (384)	10.4 ( 45)	100.0 (474)	34.8 (165)	65.2 (309)

<sup>a</sup>Not available.



The School of Social Work administered the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal Test to all its incoming students since 1966. The data are presented in Table 7.

The trends in Table 7 are by no means unilateral. Statistical testing of the null hypothesis that mean score for men equals the mean score for women shows that the null hypothesis should be accepted if all the students (Total) tested since 1966 are in the sample. Also, the null hypothesis should be accepted for the cohorts of 1966 and 1968. However, examination of the test data on the cohort of 1967 calls for rejection of null hypothesis.

The data in Table 7 may therefore be interpreted as follows: while there is room for suspicion that women students in the School of Social Work are of superior intellectual and cognitive ability, and while some cohorts actually are of superior intellectual and cognitive ability, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that male students in general in the School of Social Work are inferior in intellectual and cognitive ability to the female students.

Earlier it was suggested that undergraduate grade-point average, differentiated by sex, may be taken as an indicator of ability to compete. Such data are presented in Table 8.

The trends in Table 8 are very clear, and may be summed up as follows: male students in social work come with a lower grade-point average than do female students. Thus if grade-point average is reflective of ability to compete in existing academic settings, then men in the School of Social Work are inferior in such ability than women. Essentially, then, the characteristics associated with the preponderance of women in the School of Social Work are that women students, who may have a slight edge over men students in this field in intellectual and cognitive ability, are decidedly superior to those men students in their ability to compete.<sup>8</sup>

The information in Tables 6 through 8 suggest that an important difference between social work on one hand and law and medicine on the other is that of sex role differentiation, since law and medicine are

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<sup>8</sup>It should be observed in passing that this statement applies only to the students at the Master's level. Doctoral education in social work may not reflect this trend. In fact, recent studies indicate that seven out of ten doctoral students are men. See Frank M. Lowenberg and Eugene B. Shinn, Special Study of Doctoral Students in Schools of Social Work, New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1969 (mimeographed). For teaching and research as more of a man's vocation, see Alfred M. Stamm, "NASW Membership: Characteristics, Deployment, and Salaries," Personnel Information, 12:34 (May 1969), p. 40.

**Table 7**  
**Mean Scores of Social Work Students in Watson-Glaser (Ym)**  
**Critical Thinking Appraisal Test, By Sex**

Year of Entry of Students	Mean Score in Watson-Glaser (Ym)		
	Male <sup>a</sup>	Female <sup>a</sup>	z-scores <sup>b</sup>
1966	77.8 <sup>b</sup> (N=27)	77.7 <sup>b</sup> (N=52)	0.06 N.S.
1967	78.8 <sup>b</sup> (N=44)	81.7 <sup>b</sup> (N=71)	-2.32 (p<0.05)
1968	79.1 <sup>b</sup> (N=37)	80.4 <sup>b</sup> (N=73)	-1.04 N.S.
Total	78.7 <sup>b</sup> (N=108)	80.2 <sup>b</sup> (N=196)	-1.70 N.S.

<sup>a</sup>It is to be noted that the addition of Men's and Women's samples by each cohort do not amount to the previously described class sizes of 95 for 1966 (here it is 27+52=79), 112 for 1967 (here it is 44+71=115), and 104 for 1968 (here it is 37+73=110). The reason for such discrepancy is that usually some part-time students are also given the Watson-Glaser Test. This accounts for the excess in the samples of 1967 and 1968. For 1966, where 95 students were actually in the cohort, Watson-Glaser Test scores are not available for 16 students.

<sup>b</sup>Using Normal Test, assuming  $\sigma = 7.4$  (Goodwin Watson and Edward M. Glaser, op cit., p. 7, where the suggested standard deviatric for college graduates is 7.4).

**Table 8**  
**Mean Undergraduate Grade-Point Average of Social Work**  
**Students, By Sex**

Year of Entry	Mean Undergraduate Grade-Point Average <sup>b</sup>		
	Male	Female	t-statistics <sup>c</sup>
1964	2.6 (N=22)	2.8 (N=27)	-2.41 p < 0.05
1965	a	a	
1966	2.6 (N=32)	2.9 (N=54)	-4.00 p < 0.05
1967	2.6 (N=38)	2.9 (N=68)	-5.77 p < 0.05
1968	2.5 (N=33)	2.9 (N=69)	-6.78 p < 0.05

<sup>a</sup>Not available.

<sup>b</sup>Breakdown of grade-point averages was not available on the entire cohort in any of the cases; Some of the students were foreign students, and in some cases the grade-point average was simply not available.

<sup>c</sup>In the case of each cohort, t-tests are performed by using pooled variances as unbiased estimates of population variances. Calculated pooled standard deviations were: Sp of 1964 = .25, with 47 df; Sp of 1966 = .34, with 84 df; Sp of 1967 = .26, with 104 df; and Sp of 1968 = .28, with 100 df.

professions primarily for white men who are in the mainstream of the American occupational system, whereas social work is primarily a profession for those who fall outside the said demographic classification. The latter group is indeed marginal to the American occupational system.<sup>9</sup> Greenwood's contention of "easily accessible professions" being used by working class members for social mobility thus needs a revision to the effect that "easily accessible professions" are used as career choice by occupationally marginal persons, some of whom may be of working class origin.

Since female sex roles are marginal to the American occupational system, the above observations suggest that social work as a profession has a higher frequency of persons with role-marginal status,<sup>10</sup> while law and medicine have low frequency of such persons. Further, the performance-marginality of males in social work (who have low role-marginality) is higher than the females in that profession.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Of the three hypotheses outlined at the beginning of this paper, the first one is accepted; the second is tentatively accepted; and the third seems to be only partially acceptable and needs reformulation.

The notions of class- and performance-marginality are found not to cover all forms of marginality. The notion of role-marginality is introduced at the end as an additional analytic dimension. Table 9 summarizes the types of marginality that seem to be most frequent among the three professions studied.

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<sup>9</sup>"It has been said that no woman and no Negro is ever fully admitted to the white man's world. Perhaps we should add men teachers to the list of the excluded." Willard Waller, as quoted by Richard Hofstadter, Anti-intellectualism in American Life, New York: Vintage, Random, 1966, p. 320 n. It should be noted that Hofstadter uses the quote to establish that teaching is a marginal profession for men.

<sup>10</sup>The term 'role' here should be understood in terms of sex roles. For a discussion of basic concepts in role theory, see Roger Brown, Social Psychology, Free Press, New York, 1965, pp. 154-191.

The term 'role-marginal status' is operationally defined as females in the professions. Thus males in the professions are said to have low role-marginality, while females have high role-marginality in the professions.

Table 9

Marginality in Law, Medicine, and Social Work

Type of Marginality Most Frequent

Professions

	Class- marginality	Performance- marginality	Role- marginality
Law	Medium	Medium	Low
Medicine	Low	Low	Low
Social Work	High	Medium <sup>a</sup>	High

<sup>a</sup>In social work, those with high role-marginality (women) seem to have lower performance-marginality.

### IMPLICATIONS

A recent work argued "that women are constrained before they enter social work not to compete with men intellectually," and found that male authors predominate in making intellectual contributions to social work (Rosenblatt, et al., 1970: 429-430). In view of the fact that this paper finds that social work seems to be the career choice for women with proven academic ability as law or medicine is for men of somewhat similar accomplishment, and that women are academically superior than men in social work at the time of entry into social work, it is clear that potential intellectual contributions by this important resource is seldom realized.

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