CSD Research Report

In Between Employment and Volunteer Work: Serving as a "volontaire" and as a "corpsmember" in France and the United States

Maud Simonet

CSD Research Report 05-07

2005

Center for Social Development
Global Service Institute

Washington
WASHINGTON·UNIVERSITY·IN·ST·LOUIS
George Warren Brown School of Social Work

In Between Employment and Volunteer Work: Serving as a "volontaire" and as a "corpsmember" in France and in the United States

Maud Simonet
Chargée de recherches au CNRS
GRASS (CNRS)
59-61 rue Pouchet
75017 Paris
France

Center for the Study of Philanthropy
The Graduate Center, CUNY
365 Fifth Avenue, Suite 5401
New York, NY 10016
csp@gc.cuny.edu

CSD Research Report 05-07

2005

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

In France as in the United States, our common understanding of the notions of *volunteering* (*benevolat* in French) and *work* (*travail*) more or less similarly define those two social practices as opposed to one another. While volunteering—benevolat—commonly refers to a free will activity exempted from remuneration; work implies both institutionalized constraints and remuneration.

The social practice that this research will focus on stands in between volunteering and work and has been defined by Michael Sherraden as "an organized period of substantial engagement and contribution to the local, national, or world community, recognized and valued by society, with minimal monetary compensation to the participant" (Sherraden, 2001b, p. 2).

A long-term anchored institution in the United States, more recent in France, these various forms of *long-term, full-time, stipended volunteering* known as *volontariat* in France and as (National/Community/Civic) service in the United States, are more easily captured through examples than through definition—to name a few, the Peace Corps or the AmeriCorps programs to the American people; the legal status covering the French Doctors when they spend four months abroad and therefore receive a living allowance and health coverage. These examples provide sense of what is the social practice at the core of this research.

A Theoretical Perspective Rooted in a Previous Research on Volunteering

The questions addressed in this comparative study of service in France and in the United States are grounded in the "theoretical discoveries" uncovered in an earlier

comparative study on the French and American volunteerism that I conducted for my doctoral thesis (Simonet-Cusset, 2000).

My aim in this previous qualitative research was to develop a comprehensive understanding of the meaning of volunteering in France and in the United States through an analysis of the French and the American "social worlds" (Strauss, 1978) of volunteering: the network of individual and institutional actors that contribute through their interaction to the social definition and construction of volunteering. This research was based on one hundred interviews, conducted in the two countries with different actors from the voluntary sector: including volunteers, volunteer coordinators, nonprofit leaders, and politicians involved in the public policy making on volunteering. This relational and symbolic approach to volunteering, developed via the comparative process, ended up stressing the dual, and therefore ambivalent meaning of volunteering through the notion of "citizen work" (Simonet-Cusset, 2000).

The frame analysis (Goffmann, 1991) of volunteering conducted in this research showed indeed that the experience of volunteering was not organized around one, but around two principles: involvement and work. The frame of involvement referred to the civic or even *political*, in a broad understanding of the word, dimension of the volunteer experience. The frame of work both referred to a synchronic and a diachronic dimension of the volunteer experience as a work experience. First it referred to the inscription of the volunteer experience in one specific "social drama of work" (Hughes, 1958) where the role of the volunteer as a worker was more or less formally defined, constructed and controlled by the organizations or the institutions running volunteer programs or activities. It also referred, in a more diachronic perspective, to the various objective and subjective interactions between the volunteer career and the professional career pursued by volunteers. By completing--and sometimes substituting for--the

occupational activities volunteers were involved in--by helping them define, test or train for a new professional career or even by allowing them to continue being involved in an activity they can not pursue professionally, the volunteer experience appeared to contribute in many different ways to the construction of an "ideal self at work": a self involved at work (Simonet-Cusset, 2004).

The Analytic Bet: A Partial Look for a Heuristic Benefit

The reference to my previous research on *volunteering* brings out the deductive dimension of this new research on *service* and the main hypothesis that is being *tested*. The theoretical framework formulated in this research is presented as follow: as a social engagement more formally defined and institutionalized than volunteering, service could even more obviously and more relevantly be analyzed as citizen work: service involves a sustained commitment, for a specific period of time and some type of remuneration (stipends, grants, etc). If one acknowledges that there is a heuristic benefit from studying *traditional* volunteering--i.e. volunteering with no monetary compensation and no sustained commitment--as *work*, this should be even more true for service which stands, in most of the attempts that has been made to define it, somewhere between the ideal-type of volunteering and work as we usually define it.

However, if the civic aspect of service has been emphasized and studied, much less attention has been paid to the implication of service as *work*. The hypothesis of this research is in fact an analytic bet: the bet that something can be learned about this specific social practice by looking at it through this particular sociological eye.

Focusing on this specific theoretical frame to study service is to choose a partial look over this social practice. To study service as work, does not imply that service is

only work. When Goffman decided to analyze the psychiatric hospital from the point of view of the patient, he did not mean that this was the only relevant point of view on this specific institution. His aim in this research was to counterbalance the predominant look that has been traditionally undertaken in sociology to study that institution: the one of the medical profession. On a more epistemological level, the theoretical perspective adopted here follows the same idea: sociologists have paid too little attention to this *working* dimension of service, which, therefore, deserves an autonomous analysis.

Service as Work: Four Analytical Dimensions

From a sociological point of view, service can be--and has been--studied as an activity (Goldsmith, 1993), as an experience (Simon & Wang, 2002), as a program (Van Til, et al, 1998; Sherraden, 1984), and as a policy (Sherraden, 2001; Chambré, 1989; Perry & Thomson, 2004).

Each of these entry points into the analysis of *service as work* raises a specific set of questions that the research attempts to answer.

The working dimension of the service activity: analyzing the server's position,

its role and its status

As Amanda Moore McBride, Carlos Benitez, and Michael Sherraden put it in *The Forms and Nature of Civic Service: A Global Assessment* (2003), "the service role is similar to a job position as defined by the labor market, where there are expectations of the worker. Service is carried out through a program or organization that has defined the service role, which an individual *fills*."

Studying this role requires a detailed description and an analysis of the definition of the server's work and the process of controlling that work. In which social matrix and therefore which division of labor is the role taken? The answer to this question needs to consider both the organization that runs the program and the sites where the server works, and the server's participation in the process of defining and controlling their work. Some other questions include: How and to which extent is the role of the service worker specifically defined? Does it encompass one or different activities? Are the workers selected and trained for that role? What are the criteria required to be eligible for that role? What are the commitments required by the role? What is the compensation for the work and therefore what exactly is, from a social but also from a judicial point of view, the status of the server?

The working dimension of the service experience: analyzing the objective and subjective interactions between the service experience and the career of the server

How do servers experience service work? What are their expectations of this experience when they enter those programs and how do they recall it once they have left the programs? What are both the subjective and the objective interactions between this service experience and the development of their professional career?

The working dimension of the service program: analyzing the implementation/ influence of the service program in/ on the professional field.

What are the different professions, professional organizations and institutions of this world in which the server works and what relations do they develop with the

programs and the organizations that run them? How and to what extent do professionals appreciate/support/use the program? Why? Does the setting or the issue of this work world influence the founding, the development, or the evolution of these programs? And in return, have these service programs influenced or even shaped this work world, and in which way?

The working dimension of public policymaking on service: analyzing the political meaning of service work

Where does service stands on the political agenda? How has the government intervened in the implementation, the development, and the regulation of service work? Which administration has supported which programs or organizations running these programs, how and why? To which extent is the political support for such programs explicitly or implicitly linked to work related issues?

Implementing the Theoretical Perspective: One Field of Activity,

Two Countries, Four Programs

In order to implement this study, one specific field of service activity has been selected: the field of education, and a dually comparative methodology (both cross-national, and national) has been elected. Regarding both their different educational systems and their converging service historical paths, France and the United States seemed to offer an interesting heuristic background for a cross-national comparison. Because the activity of comparing should not stop at the border of each of the two studied countries but has to be pursued inside each country as well, two service

programs in education have been studied in the United States (City Year and Teach for America (TFA)) and two programs in France (Unis Cité's *service civil de solidarité* and *Association de la Fondation Etudiante pour la Ville's* (AFEV) ACTE program). The two cities where the joint organizations supporting this research are based, New York and Paris, were selected as the local sites to conduct the fieldwork.

In order to analyze the working dimensions of service, through the four analytical entries presented above, several different kinds of data were collected. The core of the research material consists of 46 in-depth interviews, 31 among them being conducted with servers and former servers from the different programs mentioned above. In each of the four programs under study, two or three servers were interviewed a few months after they entered the programs; two or three around the end of their service commitment; and two or three interviews were conducted with former servers. These different sets of interviews enabled to maintain a diachronic approach to the service experience as the constraints of the research timing did not allow for the implementation of a follow-up study. Except for one City Year member, who was interviewed first at the middle of his service program and a second time one month after he finished it, the other 29 servers were interviewed only once.

Nineteen participants and 11 former participants of 4 different service programs were interviewed. Among the 30 interviewees (participants + former participants), 18 participants were women and 12 were men. The age of participants that were interviewed range from 18 to 24. The age of former participants that were interviewed range from mid 20's to late 30's.

As the interviews were conducted in two countries, within four different programs with different access policies and status for members, global data on the sample of interviewees are not very meaningful. For example, out of the 30

interviewees, 21 were students the year preceding their entry into the program, but by definition AFEV volunteers are post-high school students and to be eligible for the TFA program, interested students must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 at the time. Except for one TFA member who was part of the City Year program the year before, the other 8 interviewees were not students before entering the program.

Interviewees were contacted with the help of a representative for the organization running the program who presented my research and my call for interviews to the servers or formers servers. Most of the time, the contacts for the servers or former servers volunteering for an interview were transmitted to me by this organizational representative. Sometimes (s)he narrowed the selection from that list, or at least invited me to specifically meet with particular individuals. In all the organizations, people on the list and even some of the people I was directed to, were interviewed as they were presented to me as *representing* something of, and therefore saying something about, the organization—the *typical* member, a *success story*, diversity. In the mean time, a snow ball sampling was combined with these referrals to counterbalance the *organizational bias* and to protect the confidentiality of the sample of interviewees. In order to protect that confidentiality, members of the French programs would were referred to by a number and members of the American ones by a letter in this report. All the individual interviews were aimed at collecting the service/*volontariat* experience and started with the same open question: "you are/ were a corps member/a *volontaire* in X program, can you tell me about it?"

In addition to these 31 interviews with servers or former servers, two types of *institutional* interviews helped fill out the information gathered from the *individual interviews*. Eight interviews were conducted inside the four programs with people working for the organization that run the program (e.g. founders, national

representatives, local representatives, and service team leaders). Seven interviews were also conducted outside the programs with professionals from the educational, the nonprofit, or the political worlds.

In addition to these 46 in-depth interviews, historical, political, legal, organizational and academic materials have been compiled and analyzed on the four studied programs.

In Between…: The Range of the Programs and the Frontier Question

When I wrote the proposal for this project, the main criterion for selecting Teach for America, City Year, Unis Cité and AFEV programs was the visibility of the programs in the two studied countries. Teach for America and City Year were the most famous service programs related to the field of education in the United States. In France, l'AFEV was interesting to study as a national nonprofit organization symbolizing the boom for voluntary tutoring activities among French students. Unis Cité, as the first and only nonprofit organization having implemented a French version of the American *civic service*—and more precisely a *French version of City Year service program*—was an obvious choice to make regarding both the French, the cross-national, and even the transnational dimensions of the fieldwork.

Since the study got underway and more information has been reviewed on each of these four programs, I have realized that they also offer an interesting and even accurate diverse sample for this specific research for another reason: *taken together, these four programs range from formal volunteering to employment*. In other words, this sample of service programs covers the whole scope *in between volunteering work*

and occupational work, with l'AFEV program on one end of the spectrum and Teach for America on the other end.

Unis Cité and City Year programs totally fit the definition of *civic service* presented below. Youth serving in those two programs make the commitment to serve full-time (for 10 months for City Year, for 6 or 9 months for Unis Cité) and they receive a stipend from the organization during that period (250 dollars a week for City Year New York, 535 euros a month for Unis Cité)[1]. As servers in a program affiliated to the AmeriCorps network, City Year corps members also receive an education award from the Corporation for National Service (about 4725 dollars a year) at the end of their service year.

Table 1.
Civic Service and Occasional Volunteering: Organizational Structure and Characteristics

	Mutual Aid	Occasional Volunteering	Civic Service
Structure	None	Some	A lot
Organizational host	None	Yes	Yes, possibly complex
Compulsory	No	No	Maybe
Time commitment	No	Intermittent	Sustained
Intended beneficiaries	Others	Others	Others and self
Remuneration	No	Expenses	Stipends
Rewards	No	Acknowledgement	Grants, scholarship,etc.

(Amanda Moore McBride, Civic Service Worldwide: Status and Directions, presentation at Civic Service: Impacts and Inquiry, An International Symposium, September 25, 2003)

Teach For America program is also affiliated with the AmeriCorps network. But if TFA corps members are receiving the same education award as City Year's after the completion of their two years full-time service in the program, they do not get a stipend

---

[1] In City Year the amount for the stipend is defined by the organization and varies locally. Since Unis Cité servers are now under the public status of the *volontariat de cohésion sociale et de solidarité*, the organization has to apply the stipend recommendation defined by the State. Until last year, the stipend for the members of this program was around 380 euros.

during the two-year commitment, but a real salary. As the national representative for TFA whom I interviewed clearly and immediately put it at the beginning of the interview: "TFA is a sort of...you know, *a hybrid between a service program and a professional program* [italics added]. All of our teachers are hired by the school district, they are first year and second year teachers in the same way that any other teacher would be. They get paid the same salary, the same benefits; they are employees for school districts."

Students serving in l'AFEV program commit for a year. They receive strong support from the organization, which offers them training sessions on different items and a coordination of their tutoring activities. But they only commit for a few hours a week, and do not receive any stipend for that voluntary work. Even if the organization uses the word volontariat or volontaire*s* to refer to the students involved in the program, these students actually operate as *bénévoles* (volunteers) with a structural support and a time commitment more sustained than that of the *occasional volunteering* defined in Amanda Moore McBride's table presented above.

Ranging from a *structured volunteering* program to a *hybrid between a service program and a professional program*, these four programs also offer different roles to their members. Before comparing those different roles, one has to notice that the four programs appear to be more or less exclusively focused on education and that, for some of them, this degree of specialization has evolved along the years. If education is and has always been the exclusive area of activity for Teach for America since its creation in 1990, City Year National Youth Corps and AFEV have developed along an opposite

path. Whereas City Year has focused increasingly on working with kids and schools[2], AFEV, which started as a tutoring program almost fifteen years ago, has tried over the years to develop a more varied portfolio of activities. Still, most of the students that belong to l'AFEV's tutoring program are exclusively doing this activity. Regarding the inscription of the service program and its *service positions* in the education field, Unis Cité stands as an exception. Only occasionally operating in the field of education, the cultural transfer of the City Year model into France appeared to focus less on children and education than its original model and the two other programs studied. According to the national representative for Unis Cité whom I interviewed, this French service program is actually, in terms of area and scope of activity, at the same stage City Year was four or five years ago, before they started targeting their mission towards youth and kids: "*we are working all over the place!*"

More or less specialized in the field of education, those four programs also define a more or less specialized *service position* to their members. The roles of members of TFA and AFEV programs are defined explicitly and can be encompassed in one term: TFA members serve as *teachers* in the schools and l'AFEV volunteers as *tutors* in the school or at the child's home. In contrast, youth entering City Year and Unis Cité service programs work in teams (a team of 10 for City Year, a team of 7 for Unis Cité) on different activities. Each City Year team works in a specific school were they develop various activities for the kids: they tutor them, run the after-school program, spend time mentoring them, and introduce them to service by running community service projects. Unis Cité teamwork is even more varied because what

---

[2] In *About City Year: History* a presentation of the organization's history available on its website (www.cityyear.org), the first mention of the organization concern with educational issues comes in the description of 1991 Boston eight's teams division of work on the city's "most pressing community needs. Four teams form the "Older Kids Helping Younger Kids" division, funded by W. K. Kellogg, while the other division works on a range of issues, including housing, AIDS prevention and hunger relief" (www.cityyear.org/about/1991.htm). The fact that in 1996, "the Corporation for National Service has made children and youth a priority for AmeriCorps, with the goal of broadening the emphasis on their learning and development" (Public/Private Ventures, 1999) might explain the growing focus on this issue within the program's agenda.

varies is not only the type of activity the team does but also the site where they do it. Apart from the *Wednesday project* that lasts for the whole period of the service commitment (9 months for most of the teams, 6 for two of them), the service work is defined by a succession of projects (from one week to one month) realized for the most part in nonprofit organizations working with different target groups (i.e. poor people, kids, handicapped, drug addicts, migrants). In every different project, the team is given a specific task. This specific task, which has been negotiated by the team coordinator and the *host organization*, defines the temporary *job position* the team will *fill* in that *host organization*.

In order to complete this brief introduction to the four studied programs, one should consider the way each program defines access to the server role. As Amanda Moore McBride, Carlos Benitez, and Michael Sherraden (2003) put it, "access establishes boundaries, determining who is and is not included." Regarding this access element, TFA and AFEV can be opposed to Unis Cité and City Year. To be eligible for the TFA program, interested students must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 at the time Teach for America receives their applications and must receive their bachelor's degree by the first day of the summer institute, beginning mid-to-late June. By definition, AFEV volunteers are post-high school students. In comparison, Unis Cité and City Year both have a specific diversity recruitment policy that is designed to build teams with people from various educational backgrounds.

As the two programs fitting with the definition of *civic service* Amanda Moore McBride has developed, and because one (City Year) has been a model for the other (Unis Cité), the focus of the report—and of the analysis—will be put on these two specific programs. But, in the meantime, the range of the four studied programs, the variety of status, role, implementation, and experience they offer will be analyzed and

compared as they will help specify how and to what extent *service work* differs from *volunteer work* on one hand and from *occupational work* on the other. As l'AFEV stands somewhere between the ideal type of *traditional volunteering* and *volontariat*, and TFA between the ideal type of *civic service* and *occupational/professional work*, the comparison of these four programs invites the researcher, in accordance to Weber's *ideal type methodology*, to confront those theoretical categorizations and the dichotomies they rely on, with the empirical data.

Traditional Volunteering_____Volontariat/ Service_____Occupational Work

       AFEV   *Unis Cité City Year*   *Teach for America*

As conceptual and theoretical as it may appear, this question of the frontiers of service is grounded in the empirical world studied in this research. As illustrated below, the question of the frontier--and therefore of the possible ambivalence--between volunteer work (*travail bénévole*), service work (*travail volontaire*), and professional/occupational work (*travail salarié*) has emerged, in the two countries, as a recurrent theme in the institutional interviews conducted with representatives of the organizations running the studied programs as well as with professionals from the field of education and the non profit world. "Are we creating a status for a super volunteer or for an under employee?" wondered a representative of the French nonprofit world who participated in the negotiations over the recent implementation and the possible enlargement of the scope of the *public status of volontaire*. "A full-time activity, for the youth, in the nonprofit sector, contributing to their own personal development**...***people get confused* [emphasis added]," mentioned the representative for Unis Cité I interviewed while pointing to the difficulty she is often faced with in explaining the

differences between *volontariat* and *emplois-jeunes* (a *job program* implemented by the French government in the late 90's to develop youth employment and new positions in the public and the nonprofit sector). "It's true that doing our program help youth finding a job, but we're not a job program.…Whereas City Year servers," she says a little later in the interview, "*they are as the equivalent* [emphasis added] of the French *aides-educateurs* (educators aids)", referring to a specific *paraprofessional* position created, under this *emploi-jeunes program*, in the French primary and secondary schools. In the United States, this question of the frontier between service and professional work was raised in the interview conducted with the national representative from Teach for America. While acknowledging the *hybrid* aspect of TFA program, she also mentioned a confusion frequently made about her program "we're not a certification program and *people get confused on that* [emphasis added]**.** Because we go in to whatever the certification programs are there, already existing in the State that we're in. But when people are looking at the whole idea of alternative routes to certification, TFA is frequently named as an example."

Instead of being excluded from the research, this question of the frontiers of service will be at the core of the analysis and the study of the four dimensions of service work: the server status, contract, and role (Chapters 1, 2, 3); its career in and out of the program (Chapter 4); the implementation and impact of service work in the professional field (Chapter 5); and the agenda of the public policy making on service work (Chapter 6).

CHAPTER 1: THE LEGAL STATUS: A HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE
PRESENTATION

The purpose of the three first chapters is to provide an understanding of the institutional frame through which the service work is being performed in the different French and American service programs that are being studied here.

First and foremost, the attention will be put, in this chapter, on the legal dimension of this institutional framework. This legal frame of service work will be referred to herein as the *status of the service worker* and while the focus will be put on the actual state of the legal institutionalization of service in the two countries--the *volontariats civils* in France and the *AmeriCorps member* in the US--the historical background for their construction will be briefly presented.

The study of the institutionalization process will point out the role played by City Year, Teach for America, and Unis Cité in the construction of the current status for service in France and in the United States. While pointing out a difference in the way service is financed in the two countries, the comparison of the French and the American legal framework will show a similar concern on the part of the legislator in France and in the United States, to prevent the displacement of volunteers and paid workers by service workers.

The American Corps Member and the French *Volontaire*: A Historical Presentation

In the second chapter of their research synthesis book *Civic service—What differences does it make?* James L. Perry and Ann Marie Thomson (2004, p.9) wrote that, "…if civic service is merely an ideal, it is nonetheless a resilient one that has been

periodically expressed through American public opinion in response to economic and social conditions."

In their attempt to "provide a historical context in which to understand the gradual transformation of the ideal of civic service into concrete administrative structures and programs," the two authors explain that "a historical account of civic service from an institution-building perspective suggests that since the beginning of the twentieth century, four distinct cycles of civic service policy have occurred." (Perry & Thomson, 2004, p.9)

In the first lines of *Youth Civic and Voluntary Service in France*, the only research that has so far been conducted on *volontariat* in France, Valérie Becquet notes that:

Voluntary service is a concept that has only recently received media attention in France. It was primarily at the time when national service was reformed (1997) that the term *volontariat* (voluntary service) entered the public discourse, although programs such as European Voluntary Service, volunteering for international solidarity, and projects run by various associations existed already (Becquet, p. 20).

What those two academic studies suggest, in their content as well as in their format (a research synthesis compiling and coding more than a hundred publications on service programs in the US vs. the first study conducted on *volontariat* in France), is that comparing the American civic service to the French *volontariat* is to compare an anchored institution, an "enduring part of the American psyche--both as an ideal...and as a historical reality" (Perry& Thomson, 2004, p.8) to a social practice in its early

stage of institutionalization, and almost unknown to the public in France. The history of the construction of the *statut du volontaire* in France is not only recent, it's still in motion. As I am writing this report, the French Ministry of Youth, Sport and--for the first time in the history of the French administration--of the *nonprofit life* (*la vie associative*) presented, in early March 2005, a new *projet de loi sur le volontariat associatif* (law proposal on nonprofit volontariat) to the French government. This bill should be presented to the French Senate in May 2005. As the history of the corps member status is much longer in the United States than the one of volontariat in France, the presentation of the historical background of the American server status will be provided in a more general and a less detailed way than the French one.

USA: the Corps member

Many books and articles have related the long-term history of national and community service in the United States. Before describing the current figure of the corps member in the United States, the Americorps member, a brief history of American civic service "concrete administrative structures and programs" will be related, as "today's AmeriCorps is the child of all the programs that proceeded it" (Shapiro, 1994, preface).

The corps member programs, from the Civilian Conservation Corps to AmeriCorps

Even though it is difficult, from an historical point of view, to precisely date the birth of an institution, most of the literature on national or civic service in the United States converge in presenting the Civilian Conservations Corps (CCC) as the first of a

long list of America's twentieth-century service programs where Clinton's Americorps and Georges W. Bush's Freedomcorps would figure as the most recent ones. In James L. Perry and Ann Marie Thomson "policy cycle" description, as well as in Peter Shapiro's *History of National Service in America*, the CCC funded by Roosevelt in 1933 stands as "the first large-scale civic service program in the United States" (Perry & Thomson, 2004, p. 10), "the first large scale experiments with national service in the United States" (Shapiro, 1994, preface).

The lexicon in these two different academic works differs. Susan Chambré's analysis of Federal Volunteer Programs between the 1960s and the 1990s should also be included in the bibliography for this section as it describes and examines the same exact programs and administrations. Neither regards the social practice they refer to nor the author's theoretical perspective they inform us on; i.e., can civic service, national service and federal volunteer programs be taken as synonymous? Yet, the historical framework presented in those three works offers similarities. First, the *high periods* are under Roosevelt, Kennedy, Johnson, and Clinton administrations and one, sometimes a few, main programs are specifically identified with each of these democratic administrations:

- the CCC for Roosevelt,

- the VISTA[3] and the Peace Corps for the Kennedy and Johnson administrations,

- the AmeriCorps program for Clinton's presidency.

Secondly, the *down* period for civic/national service or federal volunteer programs is, according to the different authors, the Reagan years.

---

[3] As Melissa Bass notes "VISTA, obviously, was created under unique presidential circumstances: proposed by Kennedy, but passed under Johnson, it is not strongly identified with either. Given its early conflicts with Democratic mayors and southerners, it is also not intimately identified with the Democratic Party. More than president or party, VISTA is identified as a program of the Great Society" (2003, p .13).

Yet, whereas Susan Chambré presents the evolution of federal volunteer programs as a trend, only interrupted by and under the Reagan administration, James Perry and Marie Ann Thomson see the history of service programs in the United States as a succession of cycles[4], each of them being distinct from one another.

Brief presentation of the CCC, the VISTA and the Peace Corps programs

Many books have provided a detailed description of these programs, either on a general scope or through a case study approach. Nevertheless, because Americorps was frequently presented as *the domestic Peace Corps*, and CCC and VISTA were integrated into the AmeriCorps network, a brief description of these three programs sheds light on AmeriCorps'origins and activities as an umbrella program.

The Civilian Conservation Corps. In March 1933, newly elected president Roosevelt launched the Civilian Conservation Corps. The CCC was established as a prescriptive tool for economic recovery during the New Deal. It undertook numerous conservation projects in the regions of the country. As Perry and Thomson note:

> The organizational structure behind the CCC was innovative for its time, reflecting the extraordinary circumstances of the Depression. The CCC was initially administered cooperatively under the Department of War, Labor, Agriculture, and the Interior. The Army, whose primary responsibility was

---

[4] The four historical Policy Cycles are named as follows: 1) The Civilian Conservation Corps; 2) Fighting Poverty; 3) Conservation and Youth Corps; 4) Service as a Problem-Solving Strategy.

providing for the general welfare of program participants, shouldered the bulk of the effort (2004, p. 10).

This cooperative administration was as follows:

- the Army provided housing, food, medical attention, and supplies;

- the Department of Labor administered the selection of enrollees;

- the Department of Agriculture and Interiors carried out the planning and the implementation of specific work projects.

For the participants in the program, the commitment was for 6 months up to a maximum of two years. The program provided a salary of $30 a month. Of this amount, $25 was redirected to the participant's family.

Volunteers In Service To America. VISTA was established by the Johnson administration under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. "The program addressed poverty-related issues by providing material resources and organizational expertise to communities through the placement of volunteers in government agencies" (Perry & Thomson, 2004). Originally administered by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) and the Office of Economic Opportunity, the administration of the VISTA program was transferred to ACTION, a new federal agency for service programs, in 1971. In 1993, VISTA became part of the new Corporation for National Service and is now known as AmeriCorps* VISTA.

The VISTA commitment to local public or nonprofit organizations was a one-year commitment, participants in the program working and living in the communities where they serve. They received a subsistence allowance: average pay was $465 per

month and readjustment allowance of $75 for each month of service. Members also benefited from Health insurance.

The Peace Corps. Kennedy's establishment of the Peace Corps in 1961 was, according to Perry and Thomson, "the most notable and long-lasting byproduct of the New Frontier era" (2004, p. 11). This two-year program sent volunteers abroad to aid developing countries in fields such as education, agriculture, and health care. In 1971, the Peace Corps became part of Action and in 1981, it became an independent agency.

AmeriCorps—the vision and the swallowing umbrella. While the National Service Act that created AmeriCorps and the Corporation for National Service—the "umbrella agency that houses all domestic national service programs in the United States" (Perry &Thomson, 2004, p. 178)—was passed by Clinton in the early days of its presidency, a National and Community Service Act was passed, three years before, in 1990, under Bush administration. This 1990 Act "…established the Commission on National and Community Service, which provided funds for a variety of service programs including demonstration projects that awarded vouchers for education, training, or a down payment on a home" (Bass, 2003, p. 9).

This law, introduced by Senator Edward M. Kennedy and approved by President Bush, also "provided funding for a new, non partisan, nonprofit organization called the Points of Light Foundation" whose mission was to "engage more people more effectively in volunteer service to help solve serious social problems" (Bass, 2003).

According to Perry and Thomson (2004), this act set the stage for the commission's 1993 report, *What can you do for your country* which helped in the

development of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. As Melissa Bass notes, if national service had gained some popularity and some institutional support under the Bush administration, it "had an even bigger impact on the party out of power" (Bass, 2003, p. 9); "In fact, in 1988, Will Marshall made national service a cornerstone of the centrist Democratic leadership Council's platform, and in 1992, the DLC's presidential candidate, Bill Clinton, made it a cornerstone of his campaign" (Bass, 2003, p. 9).

According to Susan Stroud, who was working in the White House during the passage of AmeriCorps, the construction of AmeriCorps is "a case study of sausage making." In her email of December 5, 1999 to Michael Sherraden, Stroud states:

The group of us working in the White House in 1993 who put together AmeriCorps may have lacked a clear theoretical basis for what we did, but we had sound ideas generally. However, regardless of how good and theoretically-grounded they may or may not have been, they were modified by (1) the President, who had his own ideas and sense of what would sell politically; (2) presidential advisors such as Gene Sperling and the Democratic Leadership Council who were attempting to fit the program into the larger Clinton agenda, hence the emphasis on *reinventing government* in the design of the Corporation...;(3) other administration officials, e.g., the team of Education Secretary Riley; (4) various constituencies, e.g., we couldn't combine VISTA totally with AmeriCorps, and we kept the Points of Light Foundation, which Clinton promised Bush he wouldn't eliminate; (5) members of Congress, e.g., we had to satisfy Sonny Montgomery regarding

the size of AmeriCorps benefits vs. Veterans benefits, and so on" (Sherraden, 2001).

On different levels, both City Year and Teach for America took a part in this multiple actor construction of Clinton's domestic service program. First and foremost, and as it is often emphasized both in City Year's communication documents as well as in the academic literature on service: City Year has been the model for Clinton's vision of a national service program[5].

In a 1998 speech at City Year's national convention President Clinton declared:

> We need more idealistic, energetic young people out there working in our communities, helping to solve problems at the grassroots level...and we also need to open the doors of college to everyone...when I went to City Year in Boston the lights came on and I said this is what I want to do.

As pointed out in the long extract below, from an interview I conducted with a former Boston City Year member, City Year not only participated in influencing the President's vision on service but also, on a more concrete level, it actually contributed to the concrete design of AmeriCorps:

> Um...the relationship with the Clintons, I'm not sure exactly when that started, but I imagine pretty early because AmeriCorps was so strongly based on City Year and the success of City Year in such a short period of time. City Year

---

[5]Less known and emphasized is the fact that City Year received its first federal funding under the Bush Administration as a demonstration project in the National and Community Service Act of 1990. (cf. "Light" stories for the Boss, Bush official is moved by City Year program's work, workers, *The Boston Globe,* 1990).

was still so young and already a national model was being based, was being developed, based on just a few years of demonstrating, of trying it out. An absolutely fantastic opportunity for me arose after City Year, when I was at X College. Clinton had been elected and then there are a hundred days before he actually becomes president, and I was active in the community service program at college. And then I got a call from somebody at the Governor's office from Ohio, inviting me to participate in a national youth conference to help develop—it wasn't called AmeriCorps yet—a national service program. When Clinton started, in January, there were three things on his agenda he wanted to institute immediately...I forget what the other two were, but one of them was, this national service idea. So he wanted to have a lot of information, he wanted to be very close to passing a bill and that in the beginning. So, between fifteen and twenty of us met in DC for about four days.

Question: From City Year?

Answer: No, from all over the country, all kinds of service and youth leadership programs, or individuals. A wide range! And we worked for four days and four nights until two or three in the morning and came up with the name AmeriCorps. I remember drawing this picture of an apple—that's the symbol of America, it's an American pie—with a bite out of it, as the double... well the core of the apple isn't really a bite, but a bite big enough that you can see the core as sort of the double meaning of C-O-R-P-S and the apple core."

In her book, *One Day, all children...The unlikely triumph of Teach for America and what I learned along the way,* Wendy Kopp, the founder and president of Teach for America, also relates how she, incidentally, got invited in 1993 to participate in that same meeting.

> While we lurched from payroll to payroll, I was trying to secure a federal grant that would alleviate our problems. It seemed logical to me that we would be able to get some kind of appropriation through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, whose purpose was to strengthen K-12 education in low-income areas...My argument didn't seem to strike a chord with the government officials I met. Instead, they suggested we try to get in on newly elected President Clinton's plans for launching a domestic service corps. So I began working with the administration to shape the legislation in a way that would make it possible for organizations like us to get funding...I made the case for including a professional corps model where highly qualified college graduates could meet pressing needs in low-income areas at regular salaries...In 1994 the legislation was passed. It created the Corporation for National Service, a public-private agency that would fund nonprofit organizations to operate AmeriCorps programs. The legislation authorized the Corporation to include professional corps. (2001, pp. 91-92)

Americorps: the network and the status. AmeriCorps is made up of three programs: AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*VISTA, and AmeriCorps*NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps).

AmeriCorps*VISTA is the new name for the VISTA program since it became part of the Corporation for National Service in 1993. As Melissa Bass notes "For Clinton's national service staff, VISTA was a piece of the puzzle that had to fit in"; it was not a part of the original plan" (Galston, 2003; Bass, 2003, p. 10).

AmeriCorps*NCCC is a 10-month, full-time residential program for men and women between the ages of 18 and 24. It "shares much in common with the old CCC, combining civilian service with military elements" (Bass, 2003, p. 10). "Proposed by a bipartisan group of senators in 1991, it was enacted into law in 1993 and launched in 1994" (Perry & Thomson, 2004, p.173). Members serve in teams of 10 to 15 members. Priority is given to projects in public safety, public health, and disaster relief. Teams are based at one of five campuses across the country but are sent to work on short-term projects in neighboring states.

AmeriCorps*State and National is the one that we will focus on in this research as it is the one under which City Year and Teach for America are covered. The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 authorized the AmeriCorps State/National funding to flow through several channels to support community service programs. More than three-quarters of AmeriCorps grant funding goes to Governor-appointed State Commissions, which in turn distribute and monitor grants to local nonprofits and agencies. The other quarter goes to national nonprofits that operate in more than one state. The organizations receiving grants are responsible for recruiting, selecting, and supervising AmeriCorps members[6]. This responsibility is defined in the *AmeriCorps Provisions*, a 50-page document available on the Corporation for National Service website. The list of the Provisions, provided in Appendix I, show the extent to which

---

[6] According to the Corporation for National service, approximately 44,000 members served in AmeriCorps*State and National programs, 6,000 in AmeriCorps*VISTA and 1,000 in AmeriCorps*NCCC in fiscal year 2001.

the service organization policy, and therefore the server's working conditions, are covered by the AmeriCorps status.

1997-2005 the construction of the statut du volontaire associatif in France

The 70 pages on France in *Youth Service in Europe* give a detailed presentation of the policies developed up to 2004 in terms of Youth Service in that country as well as an overview of the different types of international, European, national or local service programs that are currently in operation there. Therefore, this chapter will neither provide a complete presentation of all the voluntary and civic service programs for Youth available in France nor relate the long-term history of national service in France. It will rather focus on the recent elaboration of the current status of volontaire under which Unis Cité members are actually working, give a brief description of the basic historical steps and most important actors in that elaboration, and provide a few considerations on its current evolution.

What it meant to be a 'volontaire' before 1997

The reform of national service has changed the understanding of the word *volontariat* in France. Until 1997, volontariat basically had four different uses, four different meanings that were coexisting in the French nonprofit world.

Volontariat as an equivalent for bénévolat. In national and local *centres du volontariat* (volunteer centers), volontariat actually stands as an equivalent for benevolat. The choice of the first term instead of the second just underlines that this

social practice—making the link between volunteer demand and volunteer supply—and the institutionalization of these practice into an organization were imported into France from the United States. In the mind of those who imported that structure, the word volontariat just appeared to be a better translation for volunteer than that of *benevolat*, even though in the everyday life of these centers, *benevole* is the word that is and has always been in use. Moreover, the type of practices it is referring to wholly fits the definition of traditional--"occasional volunteering" Amanda Moore Mc Bride has developed (See table 1 in the introduction).

Volontariat as a symbolic substitute for bénévolat. In some French nonprofit organizations, the word volontaire has also been used purposely as a substitute for benevole which was considered to be carrying too much of an amateur and a compassionate connotation. Such organizations usually place emphasis on the *professional* skills of their volunteers. They have developed an application process, recruitment procedures and strategies, training and support sessions for their volunteers. They sometimes ask them to commit for a specific period of time. L'AFEV is a good example for this second use of the word volontaire.

Volontariat as a long-term, full-time, sometimes stipended type of volunteering outside of a legal framework. Long before 1997, some nonprofit organizations have been offering long-term, full-time, sometimes stipended volunteer programs for Youth, in France or abroad. Unis Cité' *service volontaire de solidarité* created in 1994 belongs to that category along with many different nonprofit programs for Youth such as the "work camps for young volunteers which are engaged in long-term voluntary projects

whether associated with European Voluntary Service or not" described by Valerie Becquet in her report (Becquet, p. 46).

Volontariat as a long-term, full-time, stipended type of volunteering legally formalized. The legal category of *volontaire* as distinct from *benevole* has been elaborated in the field of international solidarity volunteering. In January 1995, a decree created a status for volontaire international and defined him/her as a long-term expatriate, receiving living allowances and benefiting for health coverage. In opposition, the benevole international was defined, in the same decree, as someone committing for a short time, not benefiting from any official status, living allowances, or any kind of social security. The legal frame work for *pompiers volontaires* (voluntary fire fighters) established by the law n° 96-370 May 3, 1996 and the decree n° 99-1039 December 10th 1999 should also appeared in this fourth category.

1997 reform of national service and the creation of the three volontariats civils

The creation of a status for volontariat in France follows the reform of national service--i.e. the ending of the conscription and the professionalization of the Army that took place in France in 1997-1998 under Jacques Chirac's presidency and impulse. As he presented his decision to reform the Army, the President, relying on (and inspired by) the growing importance of the various types of civilian forms of national service as an alternative to the military ones throughout the 1990s[7], also expressed his desire to create a new civil service that could fill the void of the soon-to-be former military

---

[7] As Valerie Becquet notes, "Thus, at the point when the move towards professionalizing the armed forces was undertaken, there were five civilian forms of national service; co-operation service, technical aid service, service in the national police force, service in civil defense and service as a conscientious objector. To this list should be added the *military forms with civilian purposes*, or the eight protocols linking the defense ministry with other ministries and making conscripts available for civilian missions. There were also *atypical military forms of national service*: the gendarmerie or rural and traffic police, military service in French overseas territories and fire brigades" (2004, p. 17).

conscription. After a short but intense debate in the political arena on the voluntary versus mandatory version of this new civil service, three types of *volontariat civils* (voluntary civil services) were created by the law of March 14, 2000 and the decree of November 30, 2000:

- the voluntary civil service in civil defense, prevention and security

- the voluntary civil service in social cohesion and solidarity

- the voluntary civil service in international cooperation and humanitarian aid.

The laws and decree passed in 2000 provided, as Valerie Becquet (2004) puts it, "the common framework" for these three types of volontariats civils.

The common framework for the three forms of voluntary civic service

Voluntary civic service programs are open to those aged between 18 and 27, whether they are French citizens or citizens of a "member state of the European Union" or another "state in the European Economic Area" (Becquet, 2004).

Programs range in length from six to twenty-four months. They may be extended once. The placement may be with local or regional authorities or with any legal person such as a company or an association. Volunteers come under the rules of public law, with the signing of an agreement between the state and the host organization. It is possible to carry out voluntary civic service as part of the European Voluntary Service program. In this case, the European Commission signs the agreement.

The agreement contains various pieces of information, such as:

– the nature of the activities entrusted to the civic volunteer;

- the conditions under which expenses arising from the volunteer program are offset by allowances, services, social protection;

- training to be undergone by the volunteer, and the conditions of supervision;

- the ways in which work is allocated and carried out.

Under certain circumstances, the volunteer placement may be terminated. The March 2000 law also defines the volunteer's rights and obligations. The placement consists of a full-time activity, which cannot be carried out in conjunction with another public or private paid activity. There are few exceptions to this. These concern the production of scientific, literary or artistic work. Volunteers must also respect the rules of the host organizations. In terms of the volunteer's right, the law specifies that he or she will receive a subsistence allowance exempt from income tax. The 2000 text also specifies the amount of the allowance. The amount is intended to be identical for all voluntary civic service, not exceeding "50% of the salary corresponding to the *indice brut* 244, a point on the French civil service pay scale." This was equal to 570.86 euros on 1 February 2002, 573.72 euros on July 2004. This allowance may be revised upwards for placement abroad. Separate allowances for accommodation, food, and equipment may also be payable. Volunteers also benefit from paid holidays.

A distinction is made between volunteer placements in France and those abroad in relation to social security coverage. In the first case, the host organization is supposed to provide for the volunteer's social protection by paying a fixed contribution. In the second case, the host organization also takes responsibility for the volunteer's social security cover but this cover has a wider scope than in France, as it includes professional indemnity and repatriation.

Time in service is taken into account at three levels:

- in calculating pension entitlement,

- for access to civil service employment (age requirements are pushed back),

- in the recognition of professional experience (Becquet, 2004, p. 26-27).

For a detailed presentation of the voluntary civil service in international cooperation and humanitarian aid and that in civil defense, prevention, and security, one should refer to AVSO report. The focus here will be exclusively on the second type of service mentioned above, the civil voluntary service in social cohesion and solidarity. This *volontariat civil de cohésion sociale et de solidarité* is, indeed, of particular importance for this research for two reasons. First, as the two other types of volontariats civils have mostly used and compiled various statutes that already existed[8], it is the only real institutional creation entailed by this law.

As the representative of the Interministerial Delegation for Social Innovation and Social Economy I interviewed in 2004 puts it:

> Regarding the voluntary civil service in social cohesion and solidarity, we're definitely not in the same system because we have created something new. Somehow there is a type of bet there, which stands as an answer to the nonprofit request for volontariat: show us, by getting involved in this civil voluntary service status, that there is a real space, for the nonprofit world, in between volunteering and employment.

---

[8] Basically, the security service was covered by the voluntary fire fighters status, and the international one by the national service in companies abroad that existed in the frame of the pre-reformed national service.

The second reason for focusing, in this research, on this specific type of *volontariat civil*in the field of social cohesion and solidarity is that Unis Cité was the first nonprofit organization to implement this status for its members, just after the circular came out in July 2003.

The 28 July 2003 circular on *volontariat civil de cohesion sociale et de solidarite* covers the arrangements for:

- establishing an agreement between the host organizations and the responsible authorities,

- youth volunteer applications,

- the way in which applications are processed,

- the allocation of placements to volunteers and subsequent follow-up,

- allowances and social security.

Organizations wishing to take in volunteers must submit an application to the local prefect's office so that an agreement can be drawn up. The agreement will specify the organization's obligations in relation to the volunteer, *in particular, in terms of training and the exercise of the activity, and the conditions under which the voluntary placement will occur.* Young people wishing to volunteer must also submit an application to their chosen host organization. The organization examines the application and defines a volunteer project covering various areas such as the volunteer's activities, allowance amounts, the ways in which training will be provided, the duration of the placement, etc. Once this project document has been agreed, a letter of appointment is prepared and a date on which the volunteer will be assigned to the organization is selected.

Volunteers benefit from social security coverage and a subsistence allowance amounting to 573.72 euros (50% of the salary corresponding to French civil service pay

scale 244). The host organization is currently responsible for all the costs associated with the volunteer. The circular specifies that associations should be exempted from paying the 293. Twenty nine euros/ year contribution for social security" (Becquet, 2004, pp. 29-30).

What the quotation from the representative for the Ministry I interviewed, as well as the specific role played by Unis Cité in the early implementation of the *statut du volontariat* point out, is that the reform for national service is a necessary, but not a sufficient explanation for the institutionalization of volontariat in France. If the Presidential will explains the law on volontariat civils it can not account for the whole history of the creation of this status which has been claimed by different actors from the French nonprofit world, long before the reform of national service. In many ways, this reform appeared as a political *window of opportunity* for these different actors who have been lobbying, with various interests at stake, for the elaboration of such a status.

Unis Cité and the American model

Unis Cité was created in 1994 by two French and one American women. As a student at Yale, Lizbeth Sheperd had been running a mentorship and tutoring program for years. When she finished her studies in 1993, she heard about and applied for a *social entrepreneurship* grant from a foundation in the US. Her project was related to France where she had spent some time during her summer vacations. The Vice-President for City Year National was on the committee and after she got the grant he invited her to come and visit the organization because he thought she might be interested in it. She did so and as she came to France with her grant, took six months off the project she was supposed to implement, and started researching civil service in

France. She eventually met with two students from l'ESSEC, a prestigious French Business School, and they cofounded Unis Cité together. They "took the City Year model and adapted it to France" as one of the representatives told me in an interview. "While they start at 7:30 in the morning, doing exercise, in the US...here we start at 9, smoking our cigarette and drinking our coffee!"

No uniforms, no flags, no company logos on the Unis Cité servers. No *community* but a *collectivité* (collective) to serve. But the basic frame of the City Year National Youth Corps has been conserved: team work, mixing youth from various backgrounds, partnership with private companies[9] and a tri-dimensional program which adds two agendas to the service work: *sensibilisation citoyenne* (citizen sensitization) and *préparation au projet d'avenir* (preparation for the future).

In 1995, after a year of prospecting for partners and testing the model, Unis Cité started its first team of 25 volunteers in Paris. In an interview, a national representative for Unis Cité stated, "And then, in that same year, in April 1996, that's when Jacques Chirac made his announcement about the reform of national service. Suddenly, there was an actuality which was that we were going to go towards a voluntary service that would be both civil and military."

As early as 1996, Unis Cité has been identified by the government as *a kind of experimental laboratory for voluntary civil service*. The organization received public funds and attention and started lobbying in the direction of the government, the Senate[10].

A Unis Cité national representative states:

---

[9] As for Timberland, the partnership was sometimes implemented with the same companies.

[10] Senator Robert Del Picchia, in the report on the law proposal on voluntary civil service he presented at the Senate in October 1999, in the name of the foreign affairs, defense and armed forced referred to Unis Cité program to illustrate "the dynamism of some private initiatives in the field of voluntary service."

We did some lobbying and we still do…As far as we are concerned, we want a national program that would allow each young person who would like to do so, to get involved for a year, or a long period of time, in service for the collectivity. Now, it so happened that this law on voluntary civil service, the reform for national service came out so we clung on to it, because, as you can very well imagine, there are not thousands of initiatives around civil voluntary service. But we would not have chosen this specific law."

The representative offered the following argument to explain that they would "not have chosen this law" and are, therefore, still lobbying to make it evolve in another direction is that:

It's clearly in the continuation of the national service so it has a connotation, *service to the nation*, and then it's a public law status which is very constraining...But most of all, what we are interested in is to have a program totally carried out by the nonprofit sector. And that's why we are very much influenced by the American example (Ibid.)

The Centers for Leisure and Vacation and the "grey zone" issue

Along with Unis Cité, other nonprofit organizations in the same sector of activity have been playing a part in the implementation of this status and in the debate around it, before, during, and after the reform of national service. The major difference between the claim they formulated and the one formulated by Unis Cité is that this specific group of Youth nonprofit organizations are/were not requesting a status for

volontariat in order to legally cover young people involved in a *voluntary service program*. These organizations have been requesting a legal framework to cover specific workers in their organizations. In other words, the question of the grey zone between volunteer work and employment, and the issue it raises regarding labor laws and conventions, has always been an *explicit* part of the debate here.

As Philippe Vuilque, a French Deputy wrote it in its report on *activity leadership occupations* for the National Assembly in 2000:

> There is a whole *grey zone* of activity leaders who can not come under labor laws because they are not intending to turn their activity leadership into a profession but their activity should not be assimilated to volunteering and should consequently be subjected to a kind of remuneration. It is from this category that arose, in the last years, a legal problem which requires a general consideration on the activity leadership sector.

This particular category of workers is especially prevalent in Vacation Centers, but also exists in Leisure Centers (Abou N'Diaye, 2004). They are *occasional workers* with management or activity leadership tasks, working during school breaks or, for Leisure Centers, on Wednesdays. Hired under the Appendix 2 of the collective convention ruling the sector since 1988, they are not paid for their *effective work* but receive a daily remuneration equivalent to at least two hours of work. According to Philippe Vuilque, this derogation from the common labor laws was entailed by "the nature of the activities in these Vacation and Leisure Centers that requires these pedagogical workers to be continuously present among the children and the teenagers, in every moment of the day,

requiring them to take their meals on the spot…and, in the case of the Vacation Centers, to be sheltered there."

Since the mid-nineties, a growing number of Centers have been legally pursued by activity leaders or law inspectors for not respecting the labor law on working hours. As a good number of these occasional pedagogical workers are students and their *employers* are nonprofit organizations, the emerging call for a legal status to cover those workers and the growing consideration and debate it entailed, intersected very strongly with the one on voluntary service.

Cotravaux and its role in the CNVA

Last but not least, the third noticeable nonprofit actor to play a role in the debate around the legal institutionalization of volontariat brings out the oldest and most important component of that lobbying activity: the international solidarity and peace movement organizations that developed volunteering abroad as a means to promote peace and solidarity. The import is not, as for Unis Cite, an American but a European one. As Valerie Becquet describes it, this movement arose in France after the Second World War and got institutionalized through the founding of umbrella organizations such as Cotravaux, in 1959 and Clong-Volontariat in 1979. As Valérie Becquet (AVSO, p. 42) notes those organizations "had a relationship with the conscientious objectors' movement" and provided placements for them.

Cotravaux along with some other network organizations (like CIVI, Volontariats) have been very involved in promoting a status for their volontaire. If Cotravaux' first target was the construction of a *status for international volontariat*

which was actually voted in 2004, it contributed to the debate on what nonprofit volontariat should and should not be beyond that specific form of voluntary service.

In the interview I conducted with the representative for the Interministerial Delegation for Social Innovation and Economy, Véronique Busson as the representative for Cotravaux was mentioned as the person "who best knows the file (of volontariat) and have carried out the reflection on it inside the CNVA during the previous mandate." In the nonprofit world as well, many actors I interviewed referred to her as the key person, and to Cotravaux as the key organization on the development of this question in the CNVA.

The National Council on Nonprofit Life (CNVA)

The CNVA, Conseil National de la Vie Associative, is a consultative entity created by decree in 1983, *placed next to the Prime Minister* and composed of 66 permanent members (60 nonprofit representatives from all the different sectors of activities, and 6 qualified personalities) and 66 substituting members. Members of the CNVA are appointed by the Prime Minister. Its general mission is to inform the government about the concerns and the expectations of the whole nonprofit world. More precisely, CNVA is entitled to:

- formulate advice on legal and regulatory proposals that are submitted to it,
- conduct and do follow up studies of any interest to the development of nonprofit life,
- present measures that could ameliorate nonprofit life,

- publish an overview on nonprofit life every three years. CNVA website presentation.

CNVA has been supporting the creation of a legal status for volontaire for many years. In June 1997, during the debate on the reform of national service, a working group on volontariat was started there. A year later, in June 1998, members of CNVA voted a recommendation calling for a *frame law* to define the principle of a social volontariat, and specific measures related to varied sector.

> In order to clarify the situation, nonprofit organizations claim for a law on volontariat and defend a frame law defining the meaning of volontariat and allowing it to rule its different civil forms, present and future (CNVA, 1998).

The call for a legally defined status was raised by different voices in France, across different and competing models and visions of volontariat. Volontariat appeared to be the answer to different questions and problems: for Unis-Cite which lobbied to develop and find support for their service civil de solidarite-inspired by City Year, for the Leisure and Vacation Centers for kids and their need to find a status for their summer or Wednesday workers, for the international solidarity and peace organizations promoting international civil service…and the Presidential will to reform national service.

Only by taking these different calls into account can one understand that the history of the creation of the status for volontaire did not end with the creation of the three volontariats civils.

Unis Cité is the only nonprofit organization who really battled for the implementation of civil voluntary service. The other ones watched it happen and then…they did not oppose it but they wanted something more ambitious from their point of view, closer to the reflection the government is actually conducting. Something widen, more flexible, with a less rigid frame in terms of age, nationality, mission...

Question: Still under public law?

Answer: No, that's actually what they've been contesting.

Between 2003 and 2005, from the circular that allowed Unis Cité to implement the first corps of *volontaires civil de cohésion sociale et de solidarité* to the presentation of The French Minister on Sport, Youth and Nonprofit Life law proposal on *contrat de volontariat associatif* (the nonprofit voluntary service contract) to the government, the legal frame for volontariat evolved from civil to nonprofit, from public status to private contract, from youth to adults.

What Jean-François Lamour actually designed in this law is a volontariat contract, exclusively for the nonprofit world. This contract could be passed by any nonprofit organization or any social utility foundation that has been authorized by the State to do so and any European citizen or legal immigrant that could justify having lived continuously in France for over a year. The contract for one voluntary service

mission cannot exceed two years. The total duration of all the missions fulfilled by one volontaire may not exceed three years.

These voluntary service missions can be fulfilled on the national territory and everywhere in the European Union. The activities concerned by this contract embody any general interest mission to which the law related to international solidarity voluntary service does not apply. The purpose of these missions can be philanthropic, educational, scientific, social, humanitarian, sportive, familial, cultural, environmental, promoting French culture, language or scientific knowledge.

The law proposal also defines the *guarantees* for the volontaire:

- a stipend, which is defined by the contract, its limits defined by a decree and is paid to the volontaire by the agreed organization. This stipend is not a salary or remuneration and it is tax-exempt.

- a written contract, which defines and organize the operational mode of the collaboration between the organization and the volontaire but is not subject to the labor code rules.

- adequate training, which the agreed nonprofit organization has to offer to the volontaire.

- social benefits. The volontaire is necessarily affiliated to the general regime for social benefits. Health benefits and work accidents and diseases are covered by the organization. Retirement is covered by the organization under a minimal code defined by decree.

- credits bonus for a professionally-oriented degree. The skills learned through the volontariat experience can be taken in to account in the *dispositif de validation des acquis de l'experience.*

A brief look at the calendar for the elaboration of this law proposal, points out how much it has been driven by a dialogue between the Ministry, Jean-François Lamour, and the CNVA. This underscores, one more time, the role of the nonprofit sector as a co-constructor of the status of the volontaire, this time in its private, contractual form.

On March 10, 2004, the day the CNVA installed its new mandate, the Prime Minister said in his inaugural speech that he would ask members of his government to work together and define a status for volontaires. In the speech he gave at the Social and Economique Council on July 8, 2004 to present his "nonprofit policy", Jean-François Lamour declared:

> Next to the volunteers and to the salaried workers, there is, according to me, a space for volontaires. In order to answer the will of many of our citizens to get involved, for a limited period of time and in an exclusive way in a nonprofit organization, a real status has to be eventually given to volontariat...In that state of mind, I will ask the Prime Minister to seize upon the National Council on Nonprofit Life in the very next weeks, for a proposal on a status for volontariat in France…This law proposal will help to insure an operational frame for all types of volontariat and will include some specific dispositions to end the problem of the occasional activity leaders in Vacation and Leisure Centers.

On October 23, 2004, the pre-proposal law designed by Jean-François Lamour was sent for review to the National Council on Nonprofit Life.

The CNVA, which had a little more than three weeks to do so, appointed a specific group, composed of 31 of its members, to read and comment on that pre-proposal. Two representatives of Unis Cité, including the organization's new president and Véronique Busson, as the representative for Cotravaux, were part of that group. On November 15, 2004, the CNVA gave its report back to the Prime Minister.

While the *parliament of the nonprofit world*, as Former Ministry and founder of the CNVA, Andre Henry, used to call it, recognizes that some progress has been made regarding the duration, age limitation, and nationality conditions of the program, and most generally the *contractual characteristic* of the status, it formulated some critics to the preproposal. Some of them[11] were integrated by the Ministry in the final draft of the law he presented on March 2, 2005. As this report is being written, the work group on volontariatin the CNVA is preparing a review of the law proposal. The law proposal is to be presented to the Senate in May 2005.

Comparing the Two Kinds of Status: Non-Displacement and Financial Issues

It is undoubtedly a risky exercise to compare these two kinds of status as the historical background has just shown how embedded they are in each country's political traditions and institutions. Still, in the course of the research, two dimensions of the legal framework for service have emerged as accurate points for that comparison. Regarding the theoretical perspective endorsed in this research, it is first and foremost interesting to note that both French and American texts defining the legal frame for service raise the issue of--and try to prevent--potential displacement of volunteers and employees. While this first dimension of the legal framework comparison sheds light on

---

[11] The lack of a clear "motives exposition" (exposé des motifs) in the introduction of the law proposal, for instance, was denounced by the CNVA. The one the CNVA actually wrote for that occasion was then introduced words for words by the Ministry in the revised version of his text.

a similar perception of the threat the *in between status* might causes to volunteering on one side and employment on the other, the second dimension of the comparison points out a surprising difference between the two studied countries. Financially speaking, service is much more supported by the government in the United States than in France.

The Legal Interpretation of the 'In-between' Status: The Non-displacement Issue

In the legal texts defining the status of the French nonprofit *volontaire* and the one of the AmeriCorps member, an explicit emphasis is put on the differences between this particular type of involvement and volunteering on one side and employment on the other side. In both countries, a *neither...nor* definition of the server is provided and transcribed into non-displacements requirements for the organizations intending to recruit those specific types of workers.

The 'Neither...Nor' Definition of the Server

AmeriCorps members rarely hear themselves referred to as *participants*. Nonetheless, as Anna Seidman (1994) notes in her *Special legal issue for AmeriCorps USA*, "The term *participant* is the very name chosen by the Congressional drafters on the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 to identify the individuals who serve in AmeriCorps programs." As illustrated below, the Act and the AmeriCorps provisions distinguish the participant from a volunteer and from an employee.

Despite the apparent similarities between *participants* and *volunteers*, the Act itself suggests a contrary conclusion. The legislation distinguishes *participants* from *volunteers* when it creates a definitionally distinct *adult volunteer* category of service personnel. Unlike *participants* who receive a variety of benefits as part of their service experience, *adult volunteers* work without financial remuneration. Through this statutory provision, Congress appears to communicate a distinction between *participants* who receive compensation (living allowance, education awards) and volunteers who do not. (Seidman, 1994, pp. 3-6)

AmeriCorps members are not employees of the Program or of the federal government. The definition of *participant* in the National and Community Service Act of 1990 as amended applies to AmeriCorps members. As such, "a participant (member) shall not be considered to be an employee of the Program in which the participant (member) is enrolled" (42 U.S.C. 12511(17) Moreover, members are not allowed to perform an employee's duties or otherwise displace employees."[12] (AmeriCorps provision 6.F- Member Classification)

This *neither...nor* definition of AmeriCorps participants echoes the one French Ministry Jean Francois Lamour gave of volontaires in the speech he made before of the national council for sport nonprofit organizations as an introduction to the presentation of his law proposal on nonprofit volontariat. While declaring that "volontariat should become the third pillar of nonprofit human resources," he specified that this should take

---

[12] Although the member classification provision specifies that "for the limited purposes of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, the member may be considered an eligible employee of the project sponsor" this Act generally applies only to second term members. The Family and Medical Leave Act's requirements as they apply to AmeriCorps Programs are contained in 45 C.F.R. 2540.220(b).

place "next to other forms of involvement and without substituting for employment" (Lamour, 2004).

Ensuring the Non-displacement

In that same speech, Jean Francois Lamour declared that he "wanted some guarantees to be taken in order to prevent that, in a misappropriation of the spirit of the law, volontariat develops to the prejudice of volunteering or salaried work" (Ibid.).

Regarding the Non-displacement of Volunteers by Volontaires

Those guarantees mentioned by the French Ministry are inscribed as follows in the Law proposal on nonprofit volontariat and educational involvement:

"In order to protect the development of volunteering, the volontariat contract is incompatible with collecting a retirement pension. Indeed, retirees, who are benefiting from both an income and social security, can carry on general interest activities in a totally gratuitous way.…Besides, volontariat distinguishes itself from bénévolat by the exclusive characteristic of its commitment; therefore, the volontaire can not carry on any paid activities nor perceive any replacement income or the *free choice activity allowance*" (Ibid.).

Regarding the Non-displacement of Salaried Workers in Nonprofit or Foundations by

Volontaires

"In order to prevent a misappropriation of the new legislatives dispositions, nonprofit organizations or foundations which have been proceeding to a lay off, for economic reasons, in the six months preceding the effective date for the contract can not resort to volontaires. In the same way, labeled organizations are forbidden to substitute volontaires for salaried persons who have been laid off or have resigned in the six previous months. Besides, in order to prevent retired workers from the nonprofit sector from pursuing their work under the volontariat cover, which would be detrimental to employment in this sector, volontariat is not compatible with collecting a retirement pension. Finally, the maximal amount of the stipend allowed to volontaire will be defined by decree at such a level that it doesn't put into question the disinterested characteristics of the collaboration, which prevents any risk of confusion with employment" (Ibid.)

As illustrated by the table below, the potential displacement of both volunteers and employees has also been precisely addressed in the AmeriCorps provisions.

i. **Prohibition on Displacing an Employee or a Position**. The Grantee may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a member in a Program or project.

ii. **Prohibition on Displacing a Volunteer**. The Grantee may not displace a volunteer, including partial displacement such as reducing a volunteer's hours, by using a member in a Program or project.

iii. **Prohibition on Promotional Infringement**. The Grantee may not create a community service opportunity that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.

iv. **Prohibition on Displacing Employee Services, Duties or Activities**. A member in a Program or project may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee, as part of the assigned duties of such employee.

v. **Prohibition on Supplanting, Hiring or Infringing on Recall Rights**. A member in a Program or project may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that:

   a. Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or

   b. Are services, duties or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.

vi. **Other Prohibitions**. A member in a Program or project may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any,

a- Currently employed worker;

b- Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;

c- Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;

d- Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency or sick); or

e- Employee who is on strike or is being locked out.

Who is Paying for What: The Financial Issue in the Term of the Law

In France, except for the coverage of health and social care, no specific budget has been allowed in the legal framework for volontaires. Each organization wanting to implement a program has to ask its relevant Ministry for subsidies but nothing has been defined, or planned, on a national, general level as the different representatives of Unis Cité I interviewed deplored:

> The government wrote a nice little status but did not give a cent for its implementation, so we are paying for everything (Team Leader 2).

> We are starting that in France, in a context were there is a lack of necessary credits to…here, the difference with the United States and even with Italy that launched the same thing last year, is that France has not planned any credits at all! This is rather unbelievable. They give a status but they don't give any credits (National Representative).

In contrast, the strong mobilization following the Bush administration cuts in AmeriCorps funding in 2003, underlines the extent to which those programs rely on the Corporation for national service, and behind on the federal support, to pay for:

- the totality of the educational award,

- part of the server's stipend.

Therefore, regarding this financial issue, the status of the French server, in the current and even more in the future version of the legal framework, is more of a *nonprofit* worker and the American one of a public service worker.

As the brief history of the institutionalization of the legal status for civic service/volontariat related above pointed out, three of the four organizations running the programs studied in this research, Unis Cité, City Year, and Teach for America, have taken an active part in the political elaboration of the legal frame under which their servers actually work. Beyond the legal frame and on a more organizational level, the service programs also play an important role in formalizing the contributions, compensations, rights and duties of *their server worker* in the work place.

CHAPTER 2: THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTRACT

City Year, Teach for America, and the Unis Cité programs were created between three to five years before they got covered by the AmeriCorps member/*volontariat civil de cohésion sociale et de solidarité*/status. Therefore, before the legal status set the general rules and frame for the work of the corps members and the volontaires, these specific types of workers' contributions and compensations, rights and duties, were entirely defined by the organization running the service program. As Suzanne Goldsmith explained in her book relating her experience with City Year in 1990 (three years before the National Service Act created AmeriCorps):

> The rules, as well as the disciplinary code, were laid out in a document, called the City Year Contract. The contract focused on ten areas of performance, and [outlined] the consequences of any possible infraction" (Goldsmith, 1993, p. 32).

Fifteen years later, the City Year contract still exists. There is no doubt that the implementation of the legal status has changed the way these programs are ruled, as will be described in this chapter. Yet, there still is in each of the programs a tradition, an attempt and some power left, to define some aspects of the work conditions of the servers. In other words, the work of the French and the American server is not only covered by a legal framework but also taken into a contract with the nonprofit organization, whether formally or informally, explicitly or implicitly specified. Moreover, this organizational contract, whatever forms it takes, is, from the server's perspective, the vehicle through which (s)he experiences, on a daily basis, the reality of

his (her) status as a server worker. Rather than the law, this agreement is the one the server refers to when thinking, defining, measuring and sometimes contesting, the compensations and contributions that his (her) worker status entitles him (her).

Compensation: The *Pay* and the Various Economic, Social, Educational and Symbolic Benefits from Service

As briefly stated in the introduction for this report, what the servers receive in exchange for service is one of the most salient criteria allowing us to think about these four programs in terms of a continuum ranging from volunteering to employment. Focusing only on *the pay* could actually drive us to think in terms of three different categories of remuneration, rather than as a continuum. AFEV volunteers get no payment at all for their volunteer service; Unis Cité volontaires and City Year corps members get a stipend; whereas Teach for America corps members get a beginner teacher salary.

Nevertheless, as soon as one takes into account the other monetary benefits members of these different programs receive in addition to that *pay*, the categorization appears a little more complex. As members of a program affiliated to AmeriCorps, both City Year's and Teach for America's corps members, for example, also receive the AmeriCorps educational award at the completion of their service program. The spectrum of the programs then could be described as follows: while AFEV volunteers get no money at all, Unis Cité volontaires get a stipend, City Year corps members get a stipend and an educational award, and Teach for America corps members receive a beginning teacher salary and an educational award.

The more we move from a *pay oriented* analysis of the compensation for service work to taking into account the variety of benefits, whether monetary or not, the server receives in exchange for service work, the more we move away from the ideal typical definitions that isolate volunteering from civic service, and civic service from employment.

The Pay: The Words for it and the Amount

Regarding the first type of work compensation one could have in mind when analyzing these four programs, Unis Cite and City Year clearly differentiate themselves from AFEV and Teach for America. L'AFEV tutors are volunteers, in the most common understanding of the word; they are not paid for the work they do. Teach for America corps members, as employees of the school districts, earn a regular salary. In between these two poles, Unis Cite and City Year members get... a *stipend*, *pay*, a *living allowance*, a *grant*. The various words used in each of those two programs, by both members and staff that were interviewed, demonstrate that the nature of this remuneration is not free from ambivalence. Even though these different actors know that this *money* is given to the volontaire/corps member in order to allow him (her) to be full-time and exclusively committed to his (her) voluntary service, there still is a tendency to consider it as a type of *pay* and connect it to the work the servers do.

The Words For It

Looking at the interviews with staff, members and former members from Unis Cité and City Year, one is struck by the variety of words used to designate that weekly

(City Year) or monthly (Unis Cité) *money* members receive from the organization running the program.

       If they have to live off the City Year *salary***...** (C).

       The *pay* is really bad. Um...if you can even call it pay [laugh] (X).

       All of our corps members receive *stipends*, which are different in each city, but they are living *wages* (representative for CY).

       They call it *stipends*. We should not talk about allowance: we should not talk about salary. Right now we say: in volontariat, there are no salaries, there are no allowances, you see. Those are stipends, the word to refer to it is stipend (6).

       I heard it's this year that the *allowance* rose (5).

The Level of the Pay, From Being Too Much, To Being Not Enough

       Stipends may also be given, but service is distinguishable from employment, because any monetary award for service is not equivalent to market wages" (McBride, Benitez, & Sheraden, 2003, p. 3).

       If this statement is applicable to City Year and Unis Cité, it is not so for Teach for America. Not only do TFA corps members receive the same salary as any other

beginning teacher in the same area, but they actually receive more than the market wage, on an annual basis, if one takes into account that they also receive the AmeriCorps education awards upon completing their two-year commitment. This was not the case until 1995 and was required, as Kopp (2001) describes in her book, by the Corporation for National Service.

> Six Corporation staff members explained that they would renew our grant only if we met two conditions. First we had to agree to accept *education awards* for our corps members. Second, we had to cut another $1 million from our budget by the following day…I couldn't believe the paradox of these two conditions. All other AmeriCorps members received education awards, which could be used against any past or future educational expenses and were worth approximately $ 5, 000 per year of service. But unlike our teachers, other AmeriCorps members were making small stipends rather than full salaries…We were worried that the awards would create political difficulties for our corps members, who would be teaching next door to other new teachers who made the same salaries as our corps members but wouldn't receive the education awards (Kopp, 2001 pp.120- 121).

The reference to the market wage has also been expressed, with a different concern in mind, by a coordinator for Unis Cité I interviewed. Before Unis Cité implemented the civil voluntary service status, the organization was paying the volontaires 380 euros. As defined by the 2000 law on volontariat civil and the 28 July 2003 circular on volontariat

civil de cohesion sociale et de solidarite, they now provide them with a 573.72 euros *subsistence allowance*.

> When we say to a structure they are volontaires, people ask us 'are they volunteers (bénévoles)?' And we say, no they get a remuneration...when we used to say 380 euros, it's nothing but when we say 570 euros, it sounds like a part–time salary, it sounds like...it's getting much closer to a salary...

As explained in the first chapter, this *subsistence allowance* is actually legally defined as 50% of the salary corresponding to French civil service pay scale 244. This makes it also a little under 50% of the French minimal wage (1286,09 euros bruts in 2004) and, as one interviewee pointed out, a little over the poverty threshold (the poverty threshold was established as 557 euros a month for one person in 1999).

> What is weird is that they were giving us 500 and something so that we would be just above the national level for...I mean, I don't want to speak badly but if we were getting less than that we would have been part of the people in difficulties...we talked about it among the corps members because they were telling us about the poverty line and about the fact that a lot of people were on the margin and this just came to our mind! They [the organization] were talking about a 525 euros threshold and we were getting 535 or something...we were just above.

In the United States, where the poverty threshold for one person under 65 years has been established at $9,827 a year, some of the City Year members, including the ones

from New York, would be above it, while some in other parts of the country might fall below that line.

> It's $250 a week before taxes and yeah...We have like different sites all over the country and we're the highest paid site. So some places get $150 before taxes. Things like that. So it was very difficult. I feel like on a national level if they want people to want to do it, 'cause I think it really is a wonderful organization, and I think it'd be better if people weren't struggling so hard to survive on that little amount of money while doing an immense amount of work.

In Unis Cité as in City Year, almost all the corps members I interviewed complained about the amount of the living allowance. Some criticize that amount with regard to their own living situation. But some of them also complained on a more general level, pointing out this has an impact on who it attracts and brings in to the program and also creates an unequal situation among servers: those of them who are supported by their parents (whether they are still living with them and/or are getting some money from them) and those who are supporting themselves independently.

> …some of us were living at home, with our parents. For me it was pocket money but some had to pay for their apartment, they were not seeing their parents anymore had social difficulties

By doing so, interviewees openly underline the unequal meaning of the *living allowance* (*pay* for those who are living only on it/ *pocket money* for the others). This

has been acknowledged by a team leader from Unis Cité I interviewed when he mentioned the question raised by taking money from the stipends of those who are late (see part 2):

> Still, it's a bit like pay, I mean they live on it, the volontaires. I know there are a number of them upon which it has an influence, because they are living on it. There are also some of them who are living with their parents and are very independent from all this, but the other ones, they live in shelters, have to rent a room, they live on it.

While questioning the level of pay, some American corps members have also brought into question, on a more general level, the reality of program access to a diverse community of servers and therefore of the diversity mission of the service programs.

> We had a diverse group...but all of our, most of our men of color came from the same background. They were mostly coming from disadvantaged communities and they only had a high school degree, diploma...So it was very undiverse in that fact that our black males were all coming from the same socio-economic background and educational background. And we were talking about this and we were like, well, how do we get black men who have gone to college or black men who are in college and who want to take a break? Not that there is anything wrong with not having a college degree. But you don't want to focus on one type. In America, it's so hard for some people to make it. So once black men make it into college or make it out of college, they don't want

to do something where they get paid $250 a week before taxes. It's like I made it. I'm going to go and get a nice clean job and start a family and get a house. Y'know and move up. So it's hard to pull them back into the communities that most of them came from.

The way race and class work in this country, it's my belief that um…if you are a black man or a black woman in this country who has a strong education behind you--you have four years of college--although sometimes you will want to give back in terms of doing service work, oftentimes, there's a lot of pressure to be extremely successful and in our country that often means making a lot of money, having a lot of power. Going to law school, going to med school, being an investment banker…those have a lot more clout than does being a teacher or…So even though Teach for America is a very well respected and prestigious organization and City Year is strong in its own right, I think that if you're a Latino or black, especially, I think it is going to be less likely to do one of these service organizations, not necessarily because you don't want to...I don't know, I'm speaking as an outsider but I think there's a lot more to do something that's going to be more prestigious.

The Social and Educational Benefits

In France and in the United States, social benefits come right after the *stipend* as a legal criteria for distinguishing bénévoles from volontaires and volunteers from (AmeriCorps) participants.

Both City Year's and TFA's web pages offer a detailed presentation of the benefits members are entitled to get--some of them being linked to their AmeriCorps status and therefore included in the AmeriCorps Provisions, some being added by the program itself. In the voluntary civil service status covering Unis Cité members, the nonprofit is supposed to pay for offered benefits and get part of that money back from the State.

Some Teach For America Corps members also mentioned loans contracted with the organization itself during the summer period when they've already been recruited by the organization but not yet paid by school districts. And, as City Year corps members, they receive the educational award from AmeriCorps.

There's also, there's another reason why I am for Teach for America is free graduate school. At least in New York City. That's been a plus. I didn't know it was going to be free…I knew that I would, for two years of service, get the AmeriCorps award of $4,975 or $5000 and I was like, great, I'll take care of my loans. All right! Like that was one of the nice by-products of joining Teach for America…It turns out that that's not going toward my loans, it's going to pay for grad school. And the

department of education in New York City is also giving $8,000 per person and that's how I get my grad school paid.

In France, if neither Unis Cité nor AFEV volontaires get an educational award by the completion of their volontariat, they still may receive some educational benefits from their service experience. Since the implementation of the Social Modernization Law of January 2002, skills obtained through a salaried, a non salaried or *a volunteer* experience, for a cumulative three-year period, if validated by a commission made of professionals and academics, allows one to get credits or the totality of a degree in college or university or provides access to specific vocational curriculum. The 2003 circular for volontariat civil de cohésion sociale et de solidarité and the 2005 law proposal on volontariat associatif both referred to this French service learning type educational law, emphasizing the academic or vocational benefits volontaires can get out of their service experience. This type of *service learning* recognition was already effective for AFEV volunteers in their access to French schools of education (Instituts universitaires de formation des maîtres).

Contribution: The Definition of the *Good Worker*

Among the four studied programs, City Year is definitely the one that has the most formalized work and even behavior policy. As one former (2003) City Year corps member I interviewed put it:

Any time I had any City Year items on, I had to follow the code. I signed this contract that I wouldn't…I mean some of the things made

sense: you couldn't smoke, you couldn't um…use swear words 'cause you wouldn't want to set that example for kids. But some of them were very funny. Like you couldn't listen to headphones, you had to stand up on public transportation if there were no seats…um…if like, for instance, if I were on a seat and someone…like there were no seats…and a 20-year-old guy who's just as, you know, strong and walks on, I would have to get up and give him my seat…even after having worked a really long day. So just things like that were pretty funny.

Question: And it is a contract that you signed?

It is a contract that you sign, yeah, at the beginning of the year. And I knew what I was getting into. And I was glad I did it cause it was the work I wanted to do.

No interviewee from the three other programs mentioned having signed a contract with the organization at the beginning of their service period. But the absence of a formal contract does not mean an absence of formal working rules or *work policy* for the servers.

For instance, In Unis Cité and AFEV, as in City Year, the amount of hours put in the week or the period for vacation breaks are defined by the organization. AFEV, for example, strongly recommend the volunteers take a break before and during their exams, so that they give a good example to their tutee. In City Year, even the working day in the school seems to be defined on an organizational level--so much so that one school principal I interviewed actually criticized it.

They are very helpful in the classroom and organizing like field trips and other things. The only thing is that they work like morning to six o'clock and it's too much, I think it's too much stress on them…It's a good program but I think they get tired by, to be a long day for them, they need to break it for them. Cause some should come earlier or late and stay in the room and if they stay in the room, they should rest and come back for the after school. It's too much! You know, being in a school...if you're not an educator you don't know how tired you get because mentally, you're challenged all day...If you're working with kids all day, it's too much, you need a break.

As one team supervisor for Unis Cite acknowledged:

On specific projects, they might work at night, or in the week end. This does not happen thirty times in the year, but this happens.

One Unis Cite volontaires that has been sick the week before I interviewed him was actually surprised that the organization had asked him to bring not only a medical certificate but an actual work suspension (*arrêt de travail*).

They say it's not a job but if you're sick you need a work suspension! A medical certificate is not enough! First I gave them a work certificate but they told me, no, you have to ask for a *work suspension*. That's ambiguous.

Part of the answer to the question raised about rules and behavior by this corps' members can be found in the argument developed by this team supervisor for Unis Cite in the quotation below:

> I think that today, the management of the 'volontaires' is a kind of mix…I mean there is this *volontariat stipend* and regarding that stipend...it's in regards to that stipend that we have some demands regarding not being late, not missing, documentary evidences, things like that. For instance there are some financial sanctions if, and I'm not sure this is totally legal though, still there are some financial sanctions so this has a direct impact on the stipend. So we probably have stronger demands than last year, because last year, with a 370 euros stipend, taking some more money off...

> I just think some things are really...I mean, if my pants are pressed, that should be fine. And then we had discrepancies with discipline. Like I would refuse to crease my pants for the first month...and I got suspended for it. Got suspended for a day and my pay got docked $50. Yeah, after all the work I've done. I was very upset. Um…but we had another corps member who did it...and he was not reprimanded for it with anything taken out of his paycheck. Nothing happened. So things like that were, you know, they were really...they weren't dealt with properly.

As pointed out in the introduction to this section, as well as in the quotation above, City Year policy not only includes work hours, breaks, punctuality, but also a lot of codes related to the behavior of the service worker while (s)he is wearing the uniform. As one of the corps members from that organization pointed out, this actually goes *far beyond a regular work contract.*

The Loyal[13] Worker

Most of the corps members or former corps members I interviewed accepted these rules and codes even thought they admitted they first felt pretty surprised with some aspects of it, usually the most culture-oriented ones.

> There is a lot of...um hoops and bings and things that we say and we're just…there's a lot of culture that's involved in it...and um...which was a lot...It was a big shocker to everyone to get used to at first because there's a lot of cheesiness and silliness. But um...then once it kind of becomes your culture, you kind of own it, like, you know; that's what we do...But generally speaking it's a very well organized structure and that's what I like about it.

> Personally I found it a little weird at the beginning, because we're not used to do that: we meet all together, we talk...Honestly, at first we were thinking it's a little bit like a sect! Really! Even by the end, we were

---

[13] This use of the term "loyalty" refers to Albert O. Hisrchamann three categories: "exit," "voice," and "loyalty." According to Hirschmann, these are the three possible reactions to a disillusion with an organization one belongs to.

laughing about that! But it's true it's a little hippie: we meet, we sit...Our

"referee" (it's funny, it's like in the army, we all have barbarian names!

There's a name for everything and it's weird. I really had troubles

getting use to this, the social, the group vocabulary).

Some were a little more critical about the more disciplined aspects of the server's code

and talked about it as one of the negative aspects of their experience with the

organization. They sometimes *voiced* their disapproval to the organization hoping to

make things change by denouncing them, sometimes threatening the organization that

they might just opt for *exit*.

I'm not one to sit there and not say anything. If something's up,

something's wrong, I say it. But I also say things...I'm not a complainer.

I like to focus on this is a problem and how to make it better and I have

some ideas to do that. But I guess some people had a problem with that,

some people thought I was a little aggressive...Me versus the people that

don't ever complain, I guess I would seem like I was kind of

aggressive...My boss was really concerned. He was like. "I'm worried."

I was like, "You should be!" He was very concerned about me

leaving...I said, "The best you can do is try to understand my grievance.

I do as I believe. Don't berate me for leaving." Nothing came through.

Sometimes, the opposition has been collectively expressed, as related below by a

former member of Teach for America, who was part of the first year of the program.

We held an eight weeks boot camp for, to, I guess, give you all the skills you need to become a public school teacher in a challenged school district. It was very fun! Everyone there was very progressive, everyone was constantly talking politics twenty-four hours a day, it was an intoxicating atmosphere to be with all these people who were going to go and do something very difficult, who were very charged up about it. Even within the short period, there was a lot of challenging the authority of the people who were running the program--a lot of that...People were on strikes--not real strikes, you understand--but just people would demand to take over the microphone from the teacher.

This experience of a young organization *spontaneously* criticized from the inside, and almost overwhelmed with it, contrasts a lot with the one this founding year New York City Year corps members described in his interview. When I met him in the last months of his experience with City Year, he was *"trying to establish a corps union, which establishes certain rights for the corps members."* All along the interview, this corps member denounced what he calls *"these stupid rules that tend to treat corps members in general like children."*

They have you working long hours, like seventeen hours a day, stuff like that. You need to be yourself in that uniform! So I'm trying to say: a corps member has the right to be comfortable in his or her uniform. So if they have us out doing physical exercise, like PT, for show and everything, then in a hundred degree weather, we don't have to wear our bomber jacket…When we get our paychecks on Fridays, they don't

want corps members going to the bank during our lunch hour, cashing our checks so we can get paid, cause they don't want people to be late coming back. So instead of saying, okay, listen, if you're late, you get written up, they say you can't do this at all. And my friend, *G*, you know, his money is spent on Friday, because it's such a small paycheck we get in the city, so he needs that money to eat lunch. So I have to spot him money, for him to get lunch. It doesn't make any sense to just do it because they can. And we have no recourse, we can't say anything...So that would be the first purpose of a union, to say, okay, while we're here, we have these rights, even though we're leaving at the end of the year. Because we deserve to be treated fairly for what we're doing, to be able to have a living wage, and to feel comfortable in our environment and to feel that we can still maintain our autonomy in some ways.

In Unis Cite also, the idea of creating a union was raised by one of the volontaires *"to ameliorate the life of the volontaires."* Even if he specified many times in the interview that this was not such a serious project, he declared at one point that his claim was to decrease the work week of the volontaires:

We are doing 39 hours! When you think about it, the staff is only doing 35! I find it a little...there is no word to qualify this, I was disgusted when I found that out...35 hours when we are doing 39, from 9 to 5.

CHAPTER 3: THE ROLE OF THE SERVER AND THE DUAL MATRIX OF WORK

As Amanda Moore McBride, Carlos Benitez, and Michael Sherraden stated in *The Forms and Nature of Civic Service: A Global Assessment* (2003), "the service role is similar to a job position as defined by the labor market, where there are expectations of the worker. Service is carried out through a program or organization that has defined the service role, which an individual fills."

The first part of this chapter, then, will compare the different *job positions* servers are expected to fill and show how they differ among the four studied programs. Moreover, what this comparative analysis will point out, is that, with a varied intensity, all those service roles are not taken into a single, but into a dual matrix of work; the one of the site where the server works, but also the one of the organization running the service program.

If, as Everett C. Hughes has stated in *Social Role and the Division of Labor* (1971), "no line of work can be fully understood outside the social matrix in which it occurs or the social system of which it is part," then to fully analyze the role of the server worker, one has to analyze the part (s)he plays in these two systems (the site/ the organization), the way those dual duties are combined, and the possible contradictions this combination entails.

The Role on the Site: Teachers, Tutors, Paraprofessionals…But Members

"G" was pointed out to me by a TFA corps member I had interviewed as someone I should definitely meet with for my research. In his first year as a Teach for America

corps member, G. had also done City Year the year before. Indeed, when I met with him, he started the interview by comparing his role in the two programs.

My work there [City Year] was very different. I was in a school so I was tutoring one-on-one six students. I would do that during the school day. So I'd work with them, the same six students all year, for a half an hour each very day and then after school, I would do after school programs with a group of ten of us at the school. It was very low pay…This year I applied to do a program called Teach for America which um…is considerably different. Well it's also part of the AmeriCorps network as is City Year but you get a pay, a starting teacher's salary, you still get the education award and the possibility for loan deferment. And in addition I also get my master in education work drastically reduced in cost so that's exciting. I get to go towards my certification in education. And *I'm a teacher* rather that what's considered a *paraprofessional* or an *assistant.*

Question: Which is what you were when you were in City Year…?

Yeah. I was really if you kinda think about it, like, you have your principals at the top and, you know, your assistant principal's below and then you have your teachers and then you even have your paraprofessionals which are semi-professionals and I was

even below that where I was considered above a service worker or

a volunteer.

At one point, during the interview, G, blaming the policy guidelines at City Year, declared "their organization as a whole doesn't trust *their workers*. And I can understand why, because a lot of them are young and still being developed. But that makes it really hard for the *workers* that are...old enough, mature, and able to handle it." More than the content, the words he used captured my attention and I asked him to explain what he meant by "their worker" and if he also felt like a "Teach for America worker" today. The answer he gave me, interestingly enough, hierarchized the different accountability he felt in these two programs.

> [When I was doing City Year] I never felt extremely accountable
> to the school. Definitely accountable to City Year… so I would
> say first to my students, then to City Year and then maybe to the
> school. Now, definitely to the school first and then Teach for
> America.

Trying to specify his different relation to both service organizations, G made this comment:

> TFA, in so many ways is a glorified job search...or a glorified
> temp company. They help find people to fill teaching vacancies.
> And of course their goal is to find the best possible candidates. But

in a lot of ways, once they find you, they train you and then they

send you off on your way and they give you support.

Teach for America is undoubtedly the program where the service role is the
most similar to an actual job position as corps members not only serve, but are also
hired, paid, and actually work as *real teachers*. This professional definition of the role
has been strongly emphasized in an interview I conducted with a former TFA corps
member currently working as a staff member in the organization:

At the end of the day, during those two years, you're a *full-time
teacher*. You are, you know...it's not like all grassroots "great,
we're going to go and work in the community"...You're a teacher
and you're doing everything that the teacher next door to you is
doing...and in terms of the service piece of it...it's definitely a part
of a service movement and you know, that is what draws certain
people to it. But, um, during those two years you're in there, it's a
full-time job. That is just what it is.

Still, being just like the teacher next door does not seem to be a *given* for the TFA
teachers, as some of them actually call themselves, underscoring in that way their *dual*
affiliation.

I feel that there is a difference. Of the teachers, of me being a
teacher here. I try not to make that a difference, no; I try to make
sure that difference is ummm…negligible…not apparent. I'm

trying! I'm trying…being a part of the community. I want to be as

much of a colleague as the other people.

As a representative for TFA explained to me, the organization policy is to try to assign, as frequently as they can, at least two or three of their teachers to the same school so that they can be a support for one another. Those interviewees that I have met, who were in that work configuration, actually seemed to be much closer to their TFA colleagues than to their non-TFA ones.

Every day, pretty much, teachers will get there about 7:45 so about 15 minutes before the school day starts. I get here at 7 with my co-teacher and I'll usually stay until 4:30 or 5. Most teachers leave at 2:30, so there's never a chance to get to know the other teachers really. The Teach for America teachers, a lot of us stay much later. So I get a chance to know them pretty well. But it's very different. There's not as much a sense of community as I thought there would be.

One corps members in his second year of service I interviewed, who happened to be the only TFA teacher in his school, actually made the choice to keep it secret, finding it the best strategy to "establish himself as part of the school community."

I guess consciously, I opted not to publicize that I was a TFA…um...because I...I guess I didn't want older veteran teachers to look down upon me as too young to be a good teacher or too

inexperienced in life to be a good teacher...They might have formed certain notions about me and...I guess, maybe I consciously didn't tell them because I didn't want them to form those ideas. And I wanted to first prove to them that I was like any other new teacher that worked hard. At this point I'm in my second year and even toward the end of last year, if people asked me I told them. And even I brought it up sometimes, once I have established myself as part of the school community.

As close as their role in the classroom might be to that of the school paraprofessionals, City Year corps members cannot expect to be considered, or even to feel, just like the paraprofessional next door. In contrast to TFA teachers, and as their uniform will always remind them, and their professional co-workers, City Year corps members are *outsider* workers, working inside the school.

People in the school weren't necessarily...they didn't quite understand what we were doing with their students. Plus we had to wear these uniforms, so we were always different. So that took a while. Teachers didn't always give me the time of the day. They still kind of looked at me like "oh, who are you?"

AFEV's volunteers serving in the school share some elements of their role definition with TFA teachers and some with City Year corps members. Like City Year corps members they are outsiders from the school matrix of work, working inside of the school. But like TFA they do not feel as workers from AFEV organization. As one tutor

mentioned in the interview, AFEV is "just an intermediary", "providing them help and support." AFEV volunteers sometimes tutor students one-on-one or sometimes have a small group of two or three kids. But, for example, they never work in the classroom with the teacher as New York City Year corps members do every morning. They work in the school, but after the school day ends. Consequently, they are mostly not interacting with educators in the course of the day, neither that much in the course of their year. In the social system of the school, they are mainly in touch with the kids and with the principal who is generally the one deciding which student will get a tutor, and who matches the tutor and the tutoree and introduces them to each other.

Regarding their server's role or position, Unis Cité is distinct from the other programs under study, not only because it does not primarily operate in the field of education but also because it does not operate in a permanent site or environment. As described in the introduction, Unis Cité volontaires, as City Year corps members were previously doing, are working in various nonprofits where team-projects are handled for a few weeks to a month, with the exception of the *Wednesday project* that is supposed to last for the whole commitment period. In contrast to City Year's, AFEV's and Teach for America's servers, Unis Cité volontaires cannot identify with one specific role for the whole period of the service program. Their role is more that of a volontaire and that's actually how they define themselves and *name* who they are/what they are doing, in the interviews.

Most of the Unis Cite volontaires I interviewed rank, in a more or less precise way, the different projects they've been through. All of them inevitably elect, in the course of the interview, their favorite. If they acknowledge that their preferences are sometimes related to some personal or vocational interest, on a more general level their integration into the social matrix of work of the host organization appears to be one of

the major criteria for the evaluation of the *objective* quality of a project. They have, or they have not, felt *welcome* in those organizations. The have or have not appreciated the job that was offered to them. Not because of the job itself, but more so because of what it actually says about their *position* in the host organization.

Many were surprised because they say "Hey, what did I do?" I cut wood, I made *woodcuts*, I stored some boxes away, I picked little accessories, [I picked] over clothes, I packed, but...it looks like I applied for what? For a working man's position? Actually no, I applied for an experience in social work!...If we only came to store boxes, unfold this and unfold that, do this and do that, ok, we are giving a hand. But first of all, *we are not slaves; s*econd, *we are not stevedores*; and third, it would be ok if it was "ok, three days a week you do that and then the three other days you go with the psychologist and you get to attend to the interviews with her."

Personally, I had no motivation at all because I had the feeling that I was used as labor *(servir de main d'oeuvre)*. And it got on my nerves to feel that way, they could have hired *working men* to do the job, this would have been the same.

In this project, I had a row with one of the person who was there because we needed some room and we moved something and she started insulting me! According to her, we were there to *serve her*, do something and then leave! But we did not accept that.

In his article *Work and the Self*, initially published in 1951, Everett C. Hughes states that every occupation is not one but several activities; some of them being "the dirty work" of that trade. That activity or task "may be dirty in one or several ways. It may be simply physically disgusting. It may be a symbol of degradation, something that wound's one's dignity. Finally, it may be dirty work in that it in some way goes counter to the more heroic of our moral conceptions" (1951, p.343). As illustrated by the quotations above, the physical work at Unis Cite appears "dirty" to the volontaires when they have the feeling it benefits the host organization or a person in the organization instead of benefiting its cause or its public. They feel that their *service work* is used as *free labor*. The conflictual content of these quotations echoes to Hughes' remark that "one of the deeper sources of antagonisms in hospitals arises from the belief of the people in the humblest jobs that the physicians in charge call upon them to do their dirty work in the name of the role of *healing the sick*, although none of the prestige and little of the money reward of that role reaches the people at the bottom" (1951, p. 345).

Both in Unis Cité and in the former City Year program format, interviews have pointed out that the organization, through its staff members, has actually addressed that question of the *dirty work* and tried to reintegrate it into the server's role.

> Um, but then, you know they, say, yeah, but I don't like this work, this is boring, I want to do something interesting. So anyway, then there'd be long conversations about, well, it can't always be interesting. There are things to learn even if it's not interesting. You're doing it for somebody

else even if it isn't interesting to you, and you know, the next project
might be more interesting to you.

The Dual Matrix of Work

The direct supervision of server workers could stand as a symbol or a
crystallization of their belonging to a dual matrix of work. In the four studied programs,
members are inscribed in a dual hierarchy: above them are individuals from the
organization and from the worksite.

TFA teachers are, of course, accountable to their school principals, but they also
have a program supervisor that sometimes visits them in the school.

AFEV tutors will also refer first to the school principal if anything happens with
the kids. But they also have a *responsable d'équipe* (team supervisor), within the AFEV
organization, that they can reach out to for support and advice.

At Unis Cite, volontaires have a *referee* in each host organization but they are
also supervised by a responsable d'équipe who is part of Unis Cité's paid staff. The
term *team supervisor* though, refers to a different function from that in AFEV. As Unis
Cité servers work in teams, the responsable d'équipe is really in charge of managing
and supporting the work of a team. As one supervisor--or coordinator--from Unis Cité
told me in an interview, the actual policy for managing a team differs a lot among Unis
Cité supervisors. Some of them spend many days a week on the site with their team;
some just visit them once a week and would rather speak with team members over the
phone when incidents happen, among the team workers or between the workers and the
host organization.

In City Year, the team coordinator is not strictly speaking paid staff but belongs to the corps members' team. This senior corps members' position is actually offered to members of the team at one point in the program. As one City Year senior corps members I interviewed told me, senior corps members are "in between. We're not really staff. We're not really corps…Technically we are corps," she said. "But regarding what we *do*, we are staff."

> Certain things we do as staff and certain things we're not capable of doing, let's say, but we do it anyway, but we're not recognized for it.

Interestingly enough, she mentioned that senior corps members get an additional *$100 leave after taxes*.

With this senior corps member position, then, City Year has one more level in the organizational diagram.

> There is our senior corps member and he is under a program manager and he is a kind of liaison between our group and the staff...so he spends all the time with us and then sometimes he reports back to the staff. Whereas, the program manager spends most of his time with the staff, and reports back to us.

Moreover, this specific *in between* position tends to create more continuity between members of the program and the organization staff. This might be part of the elements explaining that City Year corps members are the one that have the most expressed their feeling of being "workers" or even "employees" of the service organization.

CHAPTER 4: THE CAREER OF THE SERVER IN AND OUT OF THE PROGRAM

Initially introduced by Everett C. Hughes as a way to study and compare different types of professions, the symbolic interactionnist concept of *career* had its scope of analysis extended outside the realm of professional activities when Howard S. Becker, a student of Hughes, used it to study *the career of the deviant* in his famous work *Outsiders—Studies in Sociology of Deviance* (1963). Belonging to the same generation of the symbolic interactionist School of Chicago as Becker, two authors have developed a *career approach* to volunteer activities: Robert A. Stebbins in *Amateurs— On the Margin Between Work and Leisure* (1979) and Arlene Kaplan Daniels in *Invisible Careers—Women Civic Leaders from the Volunteer World* (1988). As the titles of these two books suggest, Stebbins' and Kaplan Daniels' use of the concept of career stands in-between Hughes' traditional one and Becker's export out of the sociology of work and of profession. Furthermore, both authors have challenged the social frontier by applying the notion of career to volunteer activities between work and non-work. As Catherine R. Stimpson wrote in the Series Editor's Foreword for *Invisible Careers*, "Yet," as Arlene Kaplan Daniels insists, "their voluntarism is work. Daniels persuasively and originally renders voluntarism visible as an occupation and as a career" (Stimpson, 1988, p. 9).

My aim has been to encourage a serious reevaluation of the *work* of volunteering, particularly that of the leadership who envision and organize the activities of volunteers in their communities. These women work hard, and persistently, on important projects that benefit their city. They belie the notion that all volunteer work is casual and intermittent.

For these women, at least, it can be a taxing full-time and even life-time occupation. Women develop careers, as do salaried workers. Their careers, however are not generally recognized and most of the women don't think in such term themselves" (Kaplan Daniels, 1988, p.267).

Grounded in the research he had conveyed in fields as various as theater, astronomy, baseball, archeology, magic, etc., Robert A. Stebbins has developed a research program on *serious leisure*, a third type of involvement into an activity that calls into question the work/leisure dichotomy[14]. Among the six criteria that distinguish *serious leisure* from *casual leisure* is the tendency to develop careers in these activities. The endeavors of the serious leisure participants--the *career volunteer*, the *amateur* or the *hobbyist* as Stebbins defines them--"are enduring pursuits with their own histories of turning points, stages of achievement, and background contingencies. They are anything but evanescent occurrences devoid of social or psychological continuity" (Stebbins, 1982, p. 263).

In this chapter, the notion of career will be used in a dual way. Part 1 will refer to that third understanding presented above and provide a comparative description of the career of the servers in the different programs studied. This will allow us to develop a diachronic approach to both the objective and subjective dimensions of the service experience. Part 2 will focus on the role played by this service experience in the

---

[14] "During the current exploratory stage of research on serious leisure, seriousness is most effectively examined as a dichotomous quality, with casual or unserious leisure as its opposite. Even today, nonetheless, there is evidence among amateurs, for instance, to suggest that seriousness and casualness, as personal approaches to leisure, are merely the poles of a complicated dimension along which individuals may be ranked by their degree of involvement in a particular activity. Hence, a more sophisticated, research-informed construct will likely abandon eventually this primitive categorical terminology for terminology conveying continuousness" (Stebbins, 1982).

construction of the *professional career*, in a more traditional understanding of the word, of the server.

The Career in the Program: Paths and Profiles

The interests of the concept of career, at least as it has been used by symbolic interactionists, includes: an attention to the objective and the subjective[15] dimensions of a social practice; and a diachronic, process-oriented analysis of the social practice in both these dimensions.

This first part will provide a comparative description of the objective way the career of the server is constructed by the organization in the different studied programs. This *career line* analysis will underline the different stages and the possible evolution in those careers, from the entry to the exit. The second part will focus on two crucial moments of the career of the server in the program: the entry and the exit. It will point out how the profile of the server actually subjectively and objectively influences the type--both the meaning and the length--of career developed in the programs.

The "career line": application, selection, training, promotion, graduation...

In every service program the organization running the program has designed a career line, a succession of stages that mark the tempo of the year or the two-year commitment in the program. In order to get into the service program, the candidate to

---

[15] In *Institutional Office and the Person* published in the American Journal of Sociology in November 1937, Hughes defines the concept of career as a series of status and jobs clearly defined; a typical flow of positions, realizations, responsibilities and even adventures. But to this "objective dimension" of the career he also added a subjective one, defined as "the moving perspective in which the person sees his life as a whole and interprets the meaning of his various attributes, actions, and the things which happen to him."

service has to go through a more or less extended application process and, by the end of it, to be selected.

The Entry Stages

As this volunteer from AFEV recalls it, the application process often starts with a phone call.

> As soon as you contact l'AFEV, they call you back. They really explain you what it is. As soon as you give them a call you already get involved a little bit, I mean you don't have to go all the way but...

Once the contact is made, the organization running the program usually offers the potential candidate to meet with some staff members for a more- or less- developed round of information giving and interview interviewing.

> Then I had an appointment. We were three persons considering doing volunteering and they explained us what l'AFEV was, the different actions we could do and they gave us an application form. They kind of asked us why we came, not really our motivations, but we had to answer a questionnaire saying how we heard about l'AFEV, why we want to get involved, things like that.

A Teach for America participant describes the application process for the organization:

There's this whole round of the interview process. It starts off with an essay and…um…I think…the first round is an essay: describe why you want to join Teach for America. And I remember I talked a lot about education as what got me through. Like, I loved school and I love learning…The other essay is: describe the time when you…your most significant achievement in college. I remember I wrote about how one of my friends got into a car accident and became a quadriplegic and doing a fund raiser for him. And I cheated a little bit in terms of I knew that wasn't personally my most significant story or most significant achievement. My most significant achievement was a lot more intrinsic…The second round, okay. So the second round, you have an interview with like, seven, other people and you have to teach a lesson plan, a 5-minutes lesson…and you…have to read these articles and be ready to talk about them and debate with other people. Not debate, but like, discuss. And they're education articles. And you need to get a letter of recommendation and bring your transcripts. I went on this one Saturday during finals week…one on Monday. I went in…they told us all about what the interview process was going to be like. Then they gave us…then we did each our lesson plan…and actually I found out later when we did one lesson plan they just wanted to see if we had confidence; they didn't care how well we teach. And then, we look at these articles and debate…and then we had a prompt. We had this issue of like "you, as a teacher, are realizing that your school is way behind, are going to fail the test. What are you going to

do? Your options are Saturday school and um raising school hours. How are you going to approach the principal and community with this? Give two distinct options." So I had to write about that, and I was like…how in the hell am I going to do this? And then, if you knew a foreign language, you have to write or translate something and then they did one-on-one interviews. That was the interview process.

A team supervisor for Unis Cite describes the recruitment process in this organization as follows:

So for the 9 months program, at least, there is first the recruitment phase, which is pretty long, in three moments. First, we do info sessions, very general, we organize these information sessions, once a week, here, in the kitchen. We show a little documentary we have on Unis Cité, which explains a little bit how it works and what voluntary service is...Youth who are interested take an application file, fill it up, and send it back to us. Those who have sent their application file back have an individual interview, whose purpose it to know them better. So we take a little time to let the person give a presentation of her(him)self, her(his) path, experiences, and also to explain her(his) motivations in doing a voluntary service and see a bit what (s)he had retained from the program. By the end of these individual interviews, people that seem to have well understood what we are offering them and that seem to be fairly motivated, we call them in for a collective interview. So now there are several candidates. We organize two prompts that allow us to...so, first prompt, we tell them "you are a

team, it's a Christmas project, you have to organize a Christmas party for 100 person with a 0 euro budget, how do you make it? What do you organize?" The goal is not to have them build up the project, it's not possible, but to see who speaks, who does what. And this allows us to see how each of them could be in a team. Second prompt, we have one of them play the role of the server who's sick of it and wants to leave and we tell the other ones that they've been together for six months and it's going well but now, since you have started this project for Alzheimer's people, well there is one of yours that is coming less and less, he's always late and now he has decided he's gonna leave. You have fifteen minutes. Try to understand what's going wrong and to convince him to stay. At the end of this collective interview, we meet together, and we try not to have the same team leaders seeing people in the three sessions so that every one of us sees all of them and then, we meet, us, as a selection committee.

In Unis Cité, because of a lack of applicants, the selection rate is not very high, but according to one City Year New York representative I interviewed, only 25% of the 2003 applicants were accepted. In Teach for America, the selection rate is even higher as the organization received 16,000 applications nationwide in 2003 and selected 2000 candidates among them (470 of them being assigned to New York).

Being successful in the selection process and therefore, entering the program, does not mean the newly recruited server will enter his(her) service role immediately. If AFEV volunteers combine their training sessions with their tutoring activities, the other programs require the server to go through a pre-training period before they actually start

practicing their role. Unis Cite, for example, has settled an *integration week*. In City Year, the first month of the program is a *training session month*. "In September," as one representative for the organization I interviewed put it, "[corps members] are not doing any work in the community yet. They are involved in extensive training…where they are bonding, and learn how to work together." In Teach for America this pre-training period takes the form of a five week *Summer Institute*, where future teachers are trained by the organization and veteran teachers, do some field work, and take some classes.

> The first piece obviously is the Summer Institute that prepares
> corps members for their experience. And so I went down to X.
> You're set up in a university setting...and um, we spent the first
> week really just preparing, you know. They're different courses
> that corps members take during that five weeks and...there was
> some work we did before coming to the Institute. And then we
> went through five weeks and then the first weeks we just
> continued to do all those classes and work with advisers and then
> the next four weeks we actually taught a summer school program
> in an X independent school district. We almost took over a
> school...and taught the summer school program and there were
> collaboratives of corps members, so we worked in teams of four
> corps members with one corps member adviser who was
> typically a TFA alumnus that worked closely with your
> collaborative…and also a faculty adviser who was actually a
> teacher in the X public school system. And those two--the corps
> member adviser and the faculty adviser--took on a group of four

collaboratives, and so like sixteen corps members and then several classes of kids. Each collaborative had a class...and we worked with them for four weeks.

The Summer Institute is actually the only moment when TFA corps members will formally be asked to work in teams. By the end of the summer, each corps members will be recruited and therefore will soon begin to perform individually as a teacher. For the team service programs, like Unis Cite and City Year, teams will last the whole duration of the program. Yet, the moment of the formation of the teams is a crucial one for the organization and it never happens right at the beginning of the service year. In order to make *balanced teams*, the staff usually builds on their observation of the *newly recruited* members in action, during the training or integration session, to create a good *psycho-social* combination in every team.

Those 24 persons were all integrated at the same time. We had one integration week, teams were not formed already; we had the 24 altogether for one week, one week with two days to present more specifically the different parts of the program and so on. To better explain the structure, the staff, the goals, the history...Then two days of construction site, we went to Val d'Oise and had a renovation construction site there. And on Thursday night, coming back from the site, we locked ourselves up in the kitchen until twelve thirty at night and we tried to form six balanced teams.

According to that team supervisor from Unis Cite, the *ideal team* would be one were there is "at least one or two persons with a strong personality, who are moving on and can drag the others along."

Extra Activities and Promotion Opportunities

Once in the program, and in operation on their sites, corps members sometimes have opportunities to add more responsibility to their agenda. In other words, the server career in the program is not only a horizontal line; it can also be a vertical one. City Year members, as an example, can decide, for a certain period of time, to carry on some specific projects in addition to their regular school day *job*. As this City Year member describes it below, this *position* is called *program director* in the organization, and corps members have *to apply for it*.

> So I was a program director for a camp that we ran for 150 kids
> in X and I was completely...We had a camp camp director, I was
> program director, we had an operations director and we were the
> leadership staff. So we found the building, we filed for all the
> paperwork, we got all the kids planned, all the field trips, did all
> the transportation, got all the money....I applied for the position.
> The corps [members] have to apply for positions and then they
> went through an interview process. That was in addition to...As a
> program director I was doing all those things I told you about,
> you know, managing...and then, I was with my regular employer
> being in the classrooms and tutoring and mentoring children.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, City Year corps members that are asked can also accept to become senior corps members. They will then operate more as a liaison between *their* team, the school and the organization, than as an actual team worker. This specific change of position can be interpreted more as a promotion than as an addition of activities or even of responsibilities. The *nature* of the job and the stipend are transformed. In AFEV, some interviewees mentioned that they have been participating in the organization's recruitment campaign, in addition to their regular tutoring activities. Those of them who did it full-time for the whole recruitment period were paid by the organization to do so. Yet, for a short period of time, those volunteers became paid workers for the same organization.

> Right now, I'm a volunteer, I'm not salaried. But the *temporary*
>
> *paid job* gives the opportunity to have more responsibilities and
>
> for a short period of time, you're part of the staff of the
>
> organization.

If City Year's senior corps members shows the continuum between categories (members to staff), AFEV's policy to hire its volunteers for a temporary job points out how the line between these categories is easy to cross.

The Exit Stages

As for the entry in the program, the exit from the program is formalized, at least in Unis Cité and City Year. Both organizations hold a *graduation ceremony* at the end

of the service period (around the end of June), where members get their service certificate in front of their friends and family. The exit from the volontaire role actually starts earlier in Unis Cite, as the last month of the program is dedicated to an internship that is required of volontaires as they prepare for their *life after Unis Cité*. This serves somehow as a transition for Unis Cité team workers who will now be working individually, as interns, in a nonprofit they have *chosen* to match their personal or professional projects.

Completing the program does not mean an end to an affiliation with the organization, as service programs generally try to maintain some contact with their former members. Teach for America and City Year, for example, have formally organized an alumni network. If Unis Cite is not there yet, one of the staff persons working on the local level nevertheless is keeping in touch with alumni.

Question: Did you keep in touch with Unis Cité?

Answer: Yes, through X. It's his role too, he's good at keeping in touch with former volontaires and this is pretty good. Last year he organized a big couscous meal with all the former volontaires to meet with former volontaires of the previous year, and with the new recruits. I couldn't go because of my classes but then there is the volontariat day, every year, with the volontaires and there is a cocktail party, were they show a film on what volontaires have done.

Rhythming the Year: The Organization's Events

City Year opening day, City Year and Unis Cité's graduation ceremonies, City Year and Unis Cité's national conventions, Teach for America's week, AFEV's and Unis Cité's participation to the *journées du volontariat* (global service day), are a few examples of planned events conducted by these organizations. All these organization have their singular calendar of events that bring the members together, along with their national or international counterparts. Not only do these events create--or at least are meant to create--a strong *community* feeling among members from the same organization, they also help to mark the tempo of the service period. They emphasize the two strong periods of the commitment, the entry and the exit, and, in between them, those special events occur to break the routine of the year.

The Two Serving Populations and the Dual Entry...and Exit Paths

When one leaves the career line presentation behind and tries to reintegrate, into the analysis, the individuals who are taking those different stages, one realizes that the service experience differs considerably. It differs subjectively in the way servers evaluate their service experience and the meaning they give to that experience in relation to their life as a whole.

The moment preceding entry into the program has appeared to be an accurate stage to capture those different meanings of service among the corps members. While some of them were looking for a way to take a break and *do something useful for society* (France) or *give back to the community* (US), some others admitted they were actually looking for a job.

Indeed, those different subjective approaches to entry into the service program are very much embedded in some more objective conditions. As became clear during the course of this research, the diversity of backgrounds affects both the meaning corps members attach to the service experience, and the evolution of their career in the program.

The dual entry path to the program. As symbolic interactionists have often stated, when sociologists are interested in the meaning people give to an activity or a social practice, a good question to raise is usually not *why* but *how*. When asked how they found out about the program, many interviewees in Unis Cité and City Year mentioned in the description they gave of their first "encounter" with the service program that they were looking for a job.

Question: How did you get there?

Response: By coincidence! As I told you, I always wanted to do something like this so I did some research on the internet, not very advanced though and I saw this ad and I called and we did interviews and it went well.

Question: And you were looking for a volontariat in the social field?

Response: No! At first I was looking for a job! I was looking for a job at the end of school, just a small job.

If some of the corps members that were looking for a job found the service program on their own in the course of their research, some others were directed towards Unis Cité by social workers.

> At first I went to the *mission locale* where I live and I went to see a social worker and I told her that I wanted to work in the nonprofit world and she had just received an email from Unis Cité so she gave me their contact and I called.

> Until I feel better I have a case worker...so he did some research on the web and he found out Unis Cité. He told me, "This is volontariat, you will even be paid and everything, you'll have the opportunity to do lots of things. This is a big non profit that helps other non profits." So I went there...I was not that excited at the beginning and I went to the information session and it turned out it was exactly what I wanted to do.

This specific entry mode into the program echoes back, in a less stereotypical way, to the description this former City Year Boston corps members gave me of the "two categories of people who had the most applicants" in the early ages of that program.

> There was the category of people who weren't in school, had dropped out of school. Likely had been in jail, were out of jail, were at home, very broken homes, very difficult home situations

People who really were in no situation to get a job even. And their social worker, or their…somebody in the juvenile detention system had said, "Now, here's a program, this is your last chance. Join this program, wear the uniform, follow the directions, you even get paid a little bit, and if you can stick to this, it will keep you out of jail, and from there, you have a good chance of getting a job"…because you'll have something very positive on your resume and staff people will help you and they have good connections. Um, so do a good job, like sort of this is your last chance. Otherwise the rest of your life is probably going to be very negative. And always be in and out of jail.

As she adds, a little later, in the interview:

Honestly, there were people who joined the program because it was a job. It was a very, very low paying job. I think we got a hundred dollars a week. But a hundred dollars a week was better than nothing. And some people's home life was so unappealing, was so awful that, oh, here's something I can go to every day, I'll have something to do and I get a hundred dollars a week.

The other category she asserted belonging to, was that of:

"the educated--educated at seventeen, eighteen years old--um, suburban upper middle class, young people raised in a family, in a

community that really valued service, from kind of an intellectual perspective and wanted to do this, instead of just read about it…Or people who realized, and this was true of me too, beginning to realize how much I had in my life--not because I did anything to get it, I just got it. You know, how lucky I am to be born into my family and my community. I got a great education, why? Just because my parents gave it to me and the school in the neighborhood is an excellent school. Um, and beginning to realize that that's just not true for everybody. Um, so I think that, that upbringing led a lot of people to want to give back and also meet other young people who were different from themselves.

This categorization is more of an ideal one than a precise way to divide City Year or Unis Cité corps member populations in two. Still, what the analysis of the entry modes points out, both in France and in the United States, is that while the *haves* seems to enter more on the volunteer side of the service program, the ones that have *less* seem to enter more on the occupational side of it; the same exact way the stipend might be more like *pocket money* for the first ones, and more like a *regular pay* for the second ones. The influence that these backgrounds factors have on program entry appears to play an active part in how servers exit from programs.

The exit-paths: who stays, who leaves, who is being fired? Making it to the end of the program is not that easy. A lot of the corps members and former corps members I interviewed indicated that they seriously thought about leaving at one point.

Question: Have you thought about leaving, really?

Answer: Yeah, I thought about quitting a couple of times. About everyday for about a month.

Yet, not everybody makes it to the end. One former TFA corps member I interviewed had left the program three months after school opened, four and a half months after his entry into the program. Two Unis Cité corps members I have interviewed at the beginning of their service period left before the end of the program. In contrast to the TFA member mentioned above, they did not leave voluntarily. They got fired from the program.

The same way Hughes has blamed the traditional sociology of profession for being more concerned with high prestige than low prestige occupations, one can attribute the sociology of civic participation for having developed more interest in those who stay involved than for those who don't. Interestingly enough, people involved in the programs talk a lot about those negative cases.

In my team, we fired a volontaire, who had left for two weeks, well he had some troubles that kind of pushed him to do so, because he had some troubles with the police, and so on. And he left for two weeks without warning anybody, no news, and then he came back and he said, "I would like to come back here." And finally we said no. Even though we are generally more like *second chance*, but this time we said two weeks, this is not possible. (Unis Cité team supervisor)

One Unis Cité volontaire who happened to be in that specific team came back to this firing many times, during the interview and even after, during the less formal conversation we had together. Even though she admitted he made a mistake by not warning or contacting anybody for two weeks, she kept repeating "still, he really wanted to come back. I think they should have let him back in."

As pointed in the quotations below, the people that got fired or left the programs seem to come mostly from underprivileged backgrounds:

Question: so you said someone left in your team?

Answer: Yes. She left after a month. She did not get along with someone else in the team...Though I think money was the big problem. She certainly did not have any from her parents and after one month she felt she was already in debt and that was going to be hard to deal with all that: going to work, not getting along with one person, having money problems on the side...after a while the motivation was less strong and finally all this did not look exactly like what she had imagined...

...Seventeen people got fired, I think.

Question: Got fired or quit?

Answer: Got fired or quit. And I think ten of them were minorities, maybe more, I'm just not sure about that.

There are some very different people, from a culturally and financially high environment, some middle populations and some who were really in trouble. The two that left--one voluntarily and the other one not--are two persons who really had financial and life problems.… It seemed like we were working for others, helping others but we were not helping each other in the group. It was pretty weird...In fact we have this vision of helping people in general, but we don't help the guy next to us, the one we see every day. This is harder... Much harder! And this got me back on the ground 'cause you realize that we had a false vision of things like saving the world...but not the person that is next to you!

The Career of the Server: Service as an Entry into a Work World?

The story of my interview with "9", transcribed below, serves as an illustration of the difficulties encountered in the attempt to evaluate, with a qualitative methodology, the benefits of the service experience for the server's professional career.

Nine was one of the Unis Cité former corps members who have answered the call for interview the staff person from the organization has sent to a list of former volontaires he had preselected. When the staff person gave me 9's contact information,

over the phone, he described this service experience as a real success story. The story of someone feeling lost in his life, who completed the service program, and from there, decided to go back to school and study law. If I had met with 9 six or three months earlier, I would probably have subscribed to this version of his life story and of the role the service program had played in it. This would be the case at that time; he was back to school and had successfully passed his first year exams. But at the moment I met with him things were a little different. If 9 acknowledges that Unis Cité and his meeting with a law adviser in one nonprofit organization where he conducted a project had given him the motivation to study for a new career, "right now, (he) was in real doubt about his studies and actually dropping out of them." And he added, "This is just so typical of me!" before giving me the list of the five different career projects he had started and abandoned before doing Unis Cité. At that point, 9 was describing his experience after Unis Cite as one more item to put on that *failure* list. Still, 9 already had a new career project in mind: he wanted to become a baker. He was also thinking about going back to that nonprofit organization that he liked so much and doing some volunteering there.

The Career Output From the Server's Perspective: The Ideal Self at Work

A quantitative methodology would certainly be more relevant for measuring the professional benefits from the service experience. Some figures, collected in research conducted on, or by, the service programs will be presented in this chapter. Still, to specifically evaluate the professional benefits from service programs, one should be able to compare the career paths of two samples: people selected but choosing not to enter the program and people who actually entered and completed the program. For

instance, knowing that 90% of Unis Cite volontaires had found a job since they completed the program does not tell us what part the program played in that. More than how much the service experience contributes to constructing the professional career of the server this chapter will attempt to capture how servers invest their service experience in terms of career construction.

In 2003, 63% of TFA alumni were still working or studying full-time in education, nearly 40% as teachers and just over 20% in administration (more than 100 are principals) or other positions. Nearly half of all those who are still teaching remain in their original TFA placement community.

Those figures show that TFA can be considered as an entry into the educational world, not only into the classroom. This also was suggested by the interviews. Most of the TFA corps members I interviewed declared they would stay over their two- year commitment in the same teaching position and school.

> This school year, in June, my two-year commitment with TFA
> will be up. And I'll officially be an alumnus of TFA. But that
> doesn't mean that I can't stay as a teacher in my school. So I may
> decide to stay a third year…um…just because I think…I think I
> am learning so much every day on how to be a good teacher.

> Even if Teach for America goes two years, I want to try and stay
> three years. Just to stay invested with this school.

The national representative from TFA I interviewed stated that, "60 % of the corps members actually teach beyond that second year." Yet, not all of the interviewees

mentioned thinking about staying in the classroom *forever*. They expressed a desire to stay committed to the field, for a long time, and to their school, at least for a little more than what they are required to, but not necessarily to the profession of teaching.

> TFA is a two year commitment, so this is my first year. I definitely want to stay involved in education because I'm definitely built…and I've worked in other education programs, so I'm building up all my experiences and really getting some ideas for, ok, how can this be improved in the education system? Or what questions do I still have. So do I want to stay in education? Yes. Do I want…Will I want to be a teacher after these two years, still? I don't know. I mean, maybe. It's… I know I want to stay in education. I know I'll want to work trying to help equalize educational opportunity. But it seems so far down the road right now to really say one way or the other.

All of the TFA corps members I interviewed share this idea that you have to have at least a few years experience in the classroom if you want to do something with your life in the educational field, whether it has to do with education policy, opening a charter school, or becoming a principal in the public school system.

> I would say that most of my options in my mind are related to education…If you plan on influencing and changing the education system in the city for example, you need more than two years in a classroom.

As a good illustration of this specific position attributed to teaching in the professional world of education, the three staff members from TFA I interviewed (all of them being former TFA corps members) have all evoked "one day they might go back to teaching for a while."

> I think my long term, maybe goal out there is to be a principal or be in some sort of administrative role at a school site. But I feel like I wanna teach for a few more years before I do that too…My experience in education is that it's a profession that's really rooted in "you need to know what I've gone through with teachers!"

Therefore, while providing a *professional* experience in teaching, TFA service experience can also be seen as a *pre-professional* experience for other professions in education.

When looking at AFEV volunteers' educational profiles, as Dan Ferrand-Bechmann (2000) did in her study on volunteering in that organization, the pre-professional dimension of the volunteering experience appears obvious. Fifty two percent of the volunteers are studying literature or social sciences, the most common academic background for those who professionally enter the educational field. Moreover, when asked what kind of occupation they want to undertake in the future, 53% declared they want to become a teacher and 17% want to do social work. In their educational profiles as well as in their career projects, more than 75% of tutors appeared to be directed towards socio-educational occupations. This appears in a lot of the

interviews conducted with AFEV tutors; teaching being the occupation they most refer to.

> Well there are a lot of different activities in AFEV, there is tutoring and other actions like Health prevention, organizing community events, things like that…but tutoring is the most important activity, it is the whole year, and we're supposed to follow the kids either at their home or in the school, so I chose to do it in the school as I was getting my teaching certificate.

Not only do volunteers get a pre-professional experience through the program, and an experience they can objectively--academically--valorize, but they are also testing their calling. They are meeting with the reality of the job, but even more with the reality of their will and abilities to perform it. And while some of them have confirmed this calling in the course of their volunteering, some others have ended up putting it in to question.

> Question: So primary school teacher…you don't want to do it anymore?

> Answer: No, I think I don't have enough patience for it.

> I thought about being a teacher for a long time, when I was in high school…I thought about getting the certificate for teaching History but actually, no!

Question: No to History or no to teaching?

Answer: No to teaching! I think I won't be a good teacher and I said to myself I should not impose that on anyone, but that being said, I like to give classes!

In the interview I conducted with her, a national representative for Unis Cite declared:

We have many, many young people who want to work in the social field. Who come to us because they see in Unis Cité a way to get experience and test themselves.

A lot of the volontaires from Unis Cité I interviewed confirmed this, while referring to their own career project or to those of their team co-workers.

Most of us, we want to…like I want to become a specialized educator so I wanted to have an experience, try to get the maximum out of it, to know the maximum of things so that I can really find my way, see what is it exactly that I want to do. I really want to work with youth, teenagers, in relation to drug, jail and all this, I'm very interested in this…but maybe all this will allow me to see new things and get new interest.

According to that study conducted in 1999 by Unis Cité on its former volontaires: 46% of those that have found a job are working in the social field. As noted in the commentary on that figure:

> Unis Cité can develop an attraction to the social field but does not condition youth to systematically work in that field. For some of them, this is even an experience that allows them to renounce that social track as they come to size up its difficulties (Unis Cite, etude impact, 1999).

In terms of professional career projects of the servers, City Year emerged as more diverse than the three other studied programs. Some of the corps members seem to direct themselves towards teaching after that year serving in a school, and some of them have thought about it previous to that year.

> When I finished college I wanted to join NYC Teaching Fellows[16] and before I could sign on for that I needed…I needed something that would put me in a classroom but not as a certified teacher so I could still be eligible for this program that I wanted to do…And I saw City Year and the first thing that caught my eyes was, you know, working with kids in a classroom doing different initiatives and I was like, oh that'd be kinda cool.

Some others seem to be more attracted to the nonprofit world *in general*.

---

[16] See chapter 5.

They don't just limit one thing, you can do so many different things, experience different things and um…that was really important to me because I want to go into the nonprofit sector. And so I wanted a year where I would be able to try out a lot of different roles and see which ones seem to fit my personality and my work style and what I would be good at.

The Careers Questions from the Organization's Perspective: The Recruitment Strategy

As this team supervisor for Unis Cité stated in the interview, taking a high proportion of youth from underprivileged backgrounds entails a dual risk for the organization: "Regarding the management of the program, this means we have volontaires that might leave" (Team Supervisor 1). And as clearly pointed by this City Year corps member while mentioning program exit: "If you let too many people go...you lose your funding".

Referring to the previous year when there were an "unbelievable number of departures" from Unis Cité (almost 50% of the servers) the team supervisor explained that, as a consequence, this year's recruitment has tried to focus more on people "in the frame." This has entailed some debates inside the organization, about what the mission of the program *really was about*.

The more we have volontaires with high educational backgrounds and so on, the easier it gets in terms of project management. They are easier to manage because they are already in the frame. They already know there are hours and you have to

respect them, they know how to get organize for a project, they

know how to make a plan (Unis Cité team supervisor 1).

Secondly, a high proportion of underprivileged youth might affect how the program is going to be identified, labeled--not only by funders but more generally by the outside world.

At the beginning, Unis Cité mainly recruited underprivileged

kids and as a consequence we had this "we are helping youth

getting over it and find their way in the society" aspect. But then

people were confused about the program, thinking Unis Cité was

a type of job program, or welfare program for youth (Unis Cité

team supervisor 1).

In the same way, recruiting too many people wishing to work in the social service field might send too much of a *pre-professional* signal about the program.

We have many, many young people who want to work in the

social field. Who come to us because they see in Unis Cité a way

to get experience and test themselves. But we don't want to have

teams full of people wanting to work in the social field so we

have to proportion that correctly, in terms of people's motivation.

The ideal, you see, is to have a mix of people who indeed are

going to work in the nonprofit or the social sector next to people

who are not going to stay in that field, for whom this is just a

bracket and are maybe going to work in a big corporation or as a teacher or something else totally different but will have this experience. This is very important otherwise it's true that we can easily turn into a kind of pretraining for social work, this is very easy, right? (Unis Cite national representative).

In certain ways it is just an entry way into the professional fields and they certainly are people who see it that way. At the same time, we are an organization that is built around a very specific mission that is to focus on trying to close the gap between kids in high income communities and kids in low income communities. So when we interview people, when we recruit people and when we interview people, we are definitely looking for people who are thinking about...who are thinking about the experience in that way. So we certainly want people who want to teach, obviously, and we welcome people who want to teach long term, who are deciding this is what they want to do for the rest of their life...but... (TFA national representative)

In Unis Cité as in Teach for America, the national representatives I interviewed have actually developed a similar rhetoric on this *career outcome* question:

A lot of our servers stay in the educational field (TFA) and find a job in the social field (Unis Cité) but this is not our goal. It is a positive outcome from the program, but if we put that as a goal,

then we'll have to be accountable for that national representative).

We are not a jobs program but we help, and even we are constantly juggling with that because we have impact studies that show that doing Unis Cité helps 90% of the youth to find a job…But if we say that explicitly from the beginning "this is going to be a lever (*tremplin*)," it changes totally! (Unis Cite national representative).

I think most people who were there would say that we were so surprised at the number of people who did choose to stay. Because we didn't and still don't pitch it and retail it as "if you want to teach for ever, join TFA." We say. "You are committing for two years and we expect you to do it." Beyond that we're pretty much agnostic about whether you choose to stay or you go. If you choose to stay, we're thrilled and we think you're gonna do a lot of good for kids in that way; if you choose to do something else we are also thrilled because we think you're gonna take this experience and use it to do other things that are going to impact your communities (TFA national representative).

Still, if this professional outcome is not used to pitch the program, as this team supervisor from Unis cite said it in his own words:

Unis Cite prides itself in giving a real future to its volontaires...and

in the way we get funding...the words we use for...Like when we

have done impact studies and we say "we succeeded!" That many

volontaires are doing this, that many volontaires are doing that!

Controlling the servers' career path in and out of the program, through a good

recruitment strategy, has emerged in the course of the research, as a key issue for the

organizations running the service programs. Recruits' profiles will, in fact, strongly

influence the number of people that stay in the programs and what they actually make

out of that service experience...and this in return will have an impact on both the image

the program gives of itself, the criteria it will be evaluated on, and the support it

receives from private and public funders.

CHAPTER 5: THE SERVICE PROGRAMS AND THE PROFESSIONAL FIELD

How and to what extent the service programs studied are shaping the

professional field in which they operate was one of the major questions on the agenda

for this research. What institutional changes have they brought to the field? How are

these programs viewed by individual and organizational actors from that professional

world?

With regard to program implementation and the employee status of the servers,

TFA is more professionally anchored in the field of education than the other programs.

It also appears, in the course of the research, as the one having the most influence on the

field. Therefore, a case study of TFA as an actor of educational change will be

presented in the first part of this chapter. Both the changes the organization brought into the field and the debates these changes have induced in the organization and education world will be analyzed. What this chapter will point out is that in its initial form, TFA was more of an *educational reform* than a *service oriented* program. It was aimed at reshaping the educational world whereas the other programs under study have mostly been shaped by the structure and the issues of their specific field.

Shaping the Educational Field: Teach for America and the Alternate Route

to Teacher's Recruitment and Training

Considering the number of media or academic publications on this organization, Teach for America and the professional field of education could stand as a research subject in itself. In a way, this subject would not be very far from the one Wendy Kopp, the young *social entrepreneur* who created TFA in 1990, researched in 1989, for her senior thesis. Her *argument and plan for the creation of a teacher corps* actually tried to establish the need for such an innovation in the education world and to design a plan to make that private answer to a public problem come true. In the elaboration of that *private educational policy* found in her thesis, service, in fact, stands as a means, or a strategy to meet the educational reform goal.

Service as a Strategy

"Recruiting More, Better Teachers" was defined as the *towering task* for Teach for America by Wendy Kopp, one year before she actually founded that nonprofit organization. In the introduction of the senior thesis she presented at Princeton

University in April 1989, she explained how her will to "develop plans to improve America's public educational system" had lead her to "become committed to the belief that a teacher corps must exist". This "private, non-profit organization, funded through the support of corporations and foundations," as she envisioned it at that time, would address "one of the three major problems in our schools: the lack of qualified teachers" (Wendy Kopp, 1989, i).

This plan and argument for the creation of a Teacher Corps, makes clear that the service dimension of this *hybrid* program appeared to the founder of TFA as a means to attract *bright young idealistic* people into the classroom. Those people, as Wendy Kopp explicitly put it in the early pages of her thesis, would otherwise never consider teaching as a career. Partly because of the salary issue, but even more so because of the "*shadowed* social standing…teaching has always had in America." Referring to a Gallup Poll from 1984, she mentions that "teachers feel that the public rank them at the bottom of the social scale."

The habits of service would therefore draw to the Educational System the *youthful idealism* that she perceived in late 1980's America. Moreover, as she explained in the fourth chapter of her thesis:

> The Teacher Corps will seek to capitalize on the fact that salaries
> are low to actually increase the status of the endeavor. By billing
> the opportunity to serve in the Teacher Corps as something the best
> and the brightest will sacrifice for--something they do merely to be
> of service to the others--the agency will create the same kind of
> mystique that the Peace Corps is able to create with its slogan "The
> Hardest Job You'll Ever Love"

Therefore, as researcher Thomas s. Popkewitz (1998) suggests, Teach for America as a program, and even as an idea, was rooted in a dual heritage.

First of all, TFA drew on the idea that individual initiative and private enterprise can find solutions to the grave social issues of our time. TFA represented the utilitarian spirit of American enterprise, exhibiting a *can-do* attitude toward social problems. The program intended to change the way in which teachers were recruited and it attacked what was seen to be the entrenched ineptness of government bureaucracy. This last point was a legacy of Reagan-era rhetoric about pulling government back from involvement in social affairs. The program also epitomized an idealism of youth that the country had not witnessed since the early days of the Kennedy era and the creation of the Peace Corps. 500 youth, most of whom had grown up with privilege, were committing themselves to spend two years working with people who were often denied any privilege. As if to evoke the image of the Peace Corps, TFA recruits were called corps members" (pp. 8 & 9).

From Teach for America to the New York Teachers Fellow Program:

Spin-off and By-products

We're not a certification program and people get confused on that. Because we go in to whatever the certification programs are

there, already existing in the State that we're in. But when people

are looking at the whole idea of alternative routes to certification,

TFA is frequently named as an example (TFA national

representative).

Although TFA is not strictly speaking an alternate route to certification, it is

frequently *named as an example* for that path. This is because: first, *alternative*

certification programs that existed in certain states to ease people without traditional

teacher certification into teaching were actually researched by Wendy Kopp as

potential models for Teach For America. A whole chapter of her senior thesis was

dedicated to drawing the lessons the Teacher Corps could learn from these different

programs, their successes, and their failures; moreover, TFA is responsible for the

creation of a more recent *traditional* alternate routes to certification. In 1997, Wendy

Kopp, formed *The New Teachers Project*, a non-profit consulting group, spun off from

TFA, as she "recognized the need for school districts to be able to replicate [TFA's]

effective recruiting and training practices."

The New Teacher Project

    The New Teacher Project was formed in 1997 to "address

the growing issue of teacher shortages and teacher quality

throughout the country." TNTP is a nonprofit organization which

works with districts, state departments of education, universities

and other entities in various ways including:

- creating and running alternate routes to certification to attract

    people from non- traditional backgrounds to teaching;

> - offering certified teachers recruitment programs to help
>   school systems address specific needs and vacancies in
>   subject areas with chronic shortages.
>
> To date TNTP has attracted and prepared more than 13,000 new
> teachers and launched more than 40 programs in 20 states.

As Wendy Kopp explains in her book, *One day all the children –the unlikely triumph of Teach for America and What I learned along the way,* "The New Teacher Project's initial contracts included the creation of the highly publicized New York City Teaching Fellows (NYCTFP)" (Kopp, 2003, 124).

> The New York City Teaching Fellows (NYCTFP)
>
> Supported by former Chancellor Harold O. Levy, NYCTFP was created in 2000 in order to attract people on successful career path into teaching. This two-year program enrolls people in a subsidized Master of Education program, most of the cost being covered by New York City Department of Education. After two months of summer training based on Masters Degree coursework, field placement work, and fellow advisory meetings, the fellows complete their academic requirements while they teach. During that time they are considered as having a transitional B certificate from New York State.

In New York City in September 2002, in addition to its traditionally-certified teachers, the city drew:

- 2,000 new teachers from the New York City Teacher Fellow Program (NYCTFP),

- 300 new teachers from other certification programs,

- 200 recruits from Teach for America.

Even more interesting in terms of figures is that NYCTFP "attracted 13,000 applicants for 2,000 spots in the city's lowest performing schools" (Ibid). In 2004, NYCTFP received nearly 15,000 applicants and recruited 1,850 of them.

The NYCTFP and other alternate programs designed by the New Teacher Project are *by-products* of Teach for America. Therefore, if the program is not, in itself, an alternate route to certification, but more of an alternate route to recruitment and training, it "became part of this whole alternative certification movement" as the TFA national representative said in the interview.

From the Field to the Summit: The Ideological Tension Inside the Organization

The political support TFA gained under President George W. Bush within the context of the *No Child Left Behind* legislation (see table below) was also based on a *professional* rather than *service oriented* understanding of the program. "Teach For America has shown us that there is no shortage of outstanding college graduates who are eager to teach and pass on their love of learning to students in low-income communities who are often left behind," said U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige in September 2002 when he awarded a one million grant to the organization; a grant from

the Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE), under the Office of Educational Research and Improvement[17]. The First Lady, herself, who is presented on the White House web site as being "dedicated to advance education in America and supports the President's work to ensure that no child is left behind in school or in life" has promoted the TFA program on many occasions and through various means.

The No Child Left Behind Act

The No Child Left Behind Act was signed by Georges W. Bush on January 8, 2002. While giving states more flexibility on how they spend their education dollars, the NCLBA also mandates states to set academic standards for students' achievement and institutes measures to assure that states and school systems meet the expected academic results. It also tries to develop the use of *research-based* education method (*scientific teaching*) and results-based competition among schools by providing parents educational vouchers.

Its goals are defined as follows:

- stronger accountability for results

- more freedom for states and communities

- encouraging proven education methods

- more choices for parents."

The quote below, extracted from an interview with a representative for Teach for America, mentioned a tension that arose inside the organization, as the program gained federal attention and support.

> I think that a lot of what's in that legislation--the No Child Left Behind Act--we've been saying for a while, so it's sort of giving...so people are now looking to us and saying "oh here's an example program that has been actually operating this way, this all time." So that's been a good thing for us. The Bush family is actually a huge fan of TFA…Which is interesting. They've given us a lot of support, which is helpful and also sort of politically interesting (light laughter).

> Question: But you were saying that the corps members come from the left to the center...so how do you deal with that?

> Response: It's been a challenge. We've had corps members protesting. I mean for example, we have this program we have called TFA week, where we bring high profile people, famous people in to classroom to teach, and here we have politicians, and actors, CEOs companies. And Laura Bush did it, last year I guess, and we had corps members who protested against her. Now essentially what we try to articulate is "you can absolutely hold whatever political beliefs you want and that's great and we have our own political beliefs, but essentially if the president of

the United States wants to support your program publicly, you

don't say no. It doesn't make sense."

The different representatives for Teach for America I interviewed have defended a pragmatic interest in the government's support and identified it as a result of some converging visions of educational reform. In contrast, corps members have mostly presented it as a *paradoxical* misappropriation of *their* program.

Bush "supported the program in words, yes, but he stopped the funding for AmeriCorps!" declared this former TFA corps member now running a school in California.

Wendy Kopp should have seen that coming. To me you don't

accept anything from these people. Bush has no commitment to

the values this organization should be about.[18]

The New Blood versus the Deprofessionalization of Teaching:

Ambivalent Voices from the Field

Competing definitions of program values, if not of its missions, are also embedded in the ongoing debate between Teach for America and professionals about the program's contribution to teacher training and recruitment. The most famous article written about the organization is by Linda Darling-Hammonds in Phi Delta Kappa and

---

[18] Interestingly enough, this conflict between corps members and staff person regarding "*the values this organization should be about*" has some history in the service field. See "U.S. Agency Sued", 1974.

appearing in 1994. In this article, she strongly criticized the organization for sending unprepared people into the classroom. In fact, the sharp dialogue between the leader of TFA and representatives of the education world or academy started even before the organization was created. In her plan and argument for the creation of a Teacher Corps Wendy Kopp anticipated, and prepared her answer to many critical questions she and her organization would face from the Education establishment.

Roughly summarized, the professionals I have interviewed for this research have a dual reaction to the organization. Most of them acknowledge a positive impact of the program in terms of *new blood* brought into the public school system, but many of them also fear the deprofessionalization of teaching that Teach for America and the whole movement it is part of, might produce.

> If you are comparing coming out of Teach For America where you have a summer's worth of training and someone coming out of the school of education where they might have...X where I teach, they spend four semesters student teaching, in four different placements. I mean how can you compare that and that's in addition to their theory classes and all their course work. So how can you compare that to six weeks? You just can't. That doesn't mean that Teach For America hasn't attracted some wonderful young people into the field, and some of them have stayed. So you know, it's providing a valuable service, but you just can't compare the preparation.

On the one hand, you can read these kinds of programs as simply

an effort to try to address shortages and to increase the supply of

qualified teachers who are receiving funds in exchange for

making a commitment to teach in schools that have high needs.

But on the other hand, I think it can also be viewed as a broader

effort to deprofessionalize teaching, the idea that one doesn't

need to have any specialized training in the form of the content

of an education school curriculum to become a teacher...It is a

threat to the teacher schools of education and the ability of

professional associations to control who gets defined as a

teacher. So you can think about professions and power relations

as being very much at the heart of this. (Professional 1)

As the last interviewee mentioned, not only are Schools of Education increasingly

working with alternate routes to certification but some of them are also developing their

own alternates routes inside the institution. This internal transformation raises,

according to him, a lot of questions. He depicted it as an *ambivalent* answer from *the*

establishment to the external competition.

I don't quite understand it! Because there is a sense in which it

involves schools of Education embracing a position that they

should be opposed. And it may be in part due to the money that

this is a mechanism for bringing students who have paid tuition,

into the institution. Maybe a recognition that if we don't do it,

other providers are going to do it and start encroaching on our

core market for teachers. I don't quite understand that.

(Professional 1)

Shaped by the Educational Field: The Space Left to Service

None of the other programs under study have made the reform of education a goal. City Year and Unis Cité are advocating for the development of service, as an experience available in an organized way to young people, while AFEV's lobbying agenda has more to do with the recognition of volunteering as a *service-learning experience* inside University curriculum.

Although AFEV contributed to making tutoring more visible to the public and the media in France, its quick development benefited from the growing opening of French public school system to exterior--public or private--actors in the last ten years.

As stated in the introduction to this report, the priority set by the Corporation for National Service might explain, at least in part, City Year's focus on education in the last ten years. In 1996, the President's Summit for America's Future officially declared the commitment to children and youth an "obligation, distinct and unmistakable." Following that summit, the Corporation for National Service made "children and youth a priority for AmeriCorps, with the goal of broadening the emphasis on their learning and development" (Public/Private Ventures, 1999).

The space left to Unis Cité in the educational field has, even more than for City Year and AFEV, been influenced by political contingencies. In the space of a year, the field of education was taken out of the volontariat scope of activity because of the implementation of the emploi-jeunes program.

In the report he wrote for the Senate on the law proposal on voluntary civil service in 1999, Senator Robert Del Picchia mentioned that between the first and the second draft for "voluntary civil service" law, the field of activities opened to service have been modified because of the implementation of the October 1997 law launching the "emplois-jeunes program." Among the activities "that were initially envisioned in the framework of volontariat" and were included instead in the emplois-jeunes program he mentions the ones "in the police (security assistants) or in the schools (educator aids)" (Del Picchia, 1999).

As the example of Unis Cité points out, beyond the specific issues of the field, the space left to service may be driven and therefore needs to be addressed, on a more political level.

CHAPTER 6: THE PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

As demonstrated in the previous chapters, the studied programs have gained the interest of and sometimes even been strongly supported by government administrations and/or politicians. Unis Cité, for example, interested the French President as a potential model for voluntary civil service and when his political party won the legislative elections and came back to power, they passed the legal texts allowing volontariat civil to be implemented. City Year gained support from the first Bush administration, and then became Clinton's model for AmeriCorps. Likewise, Teach for America received, at least for a period of time, strong support from President George W. Bush and the First Lady.

The last chapter will address political goals for supporting nonprofit programs for youth. Yet, when one looks more closely at these three programs, one can also read the story of their public support in a different way. As will be pointed out in the first part of this chapter, the American non profit programs are descendants of earlier public programs. To some extent, Teach for America can be considered a *private* version of the National Teacher Corps created by the Higher Education Act of 1965, and City Year as a child of the City Volunteer Corps created by New York City Mayor Ed Koch in 1984. In France, the chronological distance between the emploi-jeunes programs and volontariat is even shorter. On the political agenda at about the same time, these two French youth programs competed in their implementation processes with the change of government in the late 1990s and again, in 2002. Now that the emploi-jeunes program is coming to an end and the volontariat has been passed, the question of the relationship between the two programs may legitimately be raised in terms of displacement.

All of these public programs (NTC, CVC, and emploi-jeunes) openly made public work and/or youth employment their first priority. Even though the citizen dimension of citizen work has been strongly emphasized both in the more recent nonprofit version of these programs and in the political support for them, they still remain in the shadow of the public programs and in that of their work-related agenda.

In the Shadow of Public Programs

In the first pages of his historical analysis of American Welfare, Michael Katz wrote:

> Even in the 20th century it [the Poorhouse] did not disappear. Instead, through a gradual transformation, it slid into a new identity: the public old-age home. Its history shows clearly how decent and compassionate care of the poor has always remained subordinate to both law and taxes and the other great purposes that have guided relief. American Welfare has remained within the shadow of the poorhouse" (Katz, 1986, p. 3).

At the origins of both Teach for America and City Year, there is a public program that has directly influenced and modeled their foundation. From National Teacher Corps to Teach for America, from City Volunteer Corps to City Year, programs have slid into a new identity. In their current incarnation, they are privately, instead of publicly, initiated and run. They are attempting to bring the *haves* in, instead of focusing essentially on the *have nots*. And they put citizenship in the foreground, instead of

youth employment or public work issues. In France, while the same evolution is to be found between emploi-jeunes to volontariat, the historical timing is more rapid, hence more of a shock than a *gradual transformation*.

Teach for America in the Shadow of the National Teacher Corps

The National Teacher Corps was created in 1965 to improve education in needy areas and was ended by the Reagan administration in 1982. It was proposed by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy and Gaylord Nelson and created in 1965 by Title V, Part B, of PL 89-329, the HEA. It was designed to improve elementary and secondary education in needy areas (urban and rural) by sending in teams composed of an experienced teacher with several young college graduates who would work to strengthen local school programs. Teams were trained in 3-month summer programs. In Nelson's words, TC was designed to "offer young men and women an opportunity to begin to teach in difficult and challenging situations at home as the Peace Corps [had] done abroad."

Under the watch of veteran mentors, the interns taught part-time while finishing coursework for their master's degrees and teaching licenses, becoming eligible to work full-time when their internships ended. Later as teacher shortages eased during the 1970s, the focus of the Teacher Corps shifted to retraining veteran instructors to teach in low-income schools. During its 17 year life span, the program trained 25,000 teachers to work in nearly 170 school districts.

The first funds for Teacher Corps were allocated in 1967. In 1968, the Teacher Corps was extended and lost the word *National*.

A whole chapter of Wendy Kopp's senior thesis is dedicated to that federal program from which she took both the "name and overarching goal- creating a national

teacher corps that will reform education in America" as Perry and Thomson (2004) note. Not only did Wendy Kopp research that program, but she also "spent some time in Washington...talking with people who had led the federal teacher corps of the 1960s" (Kopp, 2003).

From "the best thing that ever came out of the pipeline" (William Smith, Educational commissioner under Jimmy Carter who directed the Teacher Corps between 1971 and 1979) to "the one exception to the positive findings among the studies of indirect beneficiaries" in Perry and Thomson Research Synthesis findings... the Teacher Corps was, as Ronald Corwin notes, "a multi-faceted program whose results are not easily summarized" (Perry & Thomson, 2004, p. 79).

Since its closure under the Reagan administration, the idea of a federal Teacher Corps frequently reappeared on the political scene. As Shapiro (1994) mentioned in his *History of National Service,* "over the years, Democratic lawmakers have sought to launch the Teacher Corps anew." Al Gore, Hillary Clinton, and Richard Gephard among others have presented more or less developed projects to relaunch a national Teacher Corps.

Supporting TFA as a private instead of a public agent of educational change could stand as an alternative to that supported by Democratic leaders--an option in which the "cast to the program is more Ivy League" than the one of the federal Teacher Corps, as one of the founder of the 1967 Teacher Corps told me in an interview. As Teach for America is not strictly speaking a *professional* program, it also stands as an option in which the citizen aspect, the "give back to the community" motto, is more emphasized than in the federal program. And last, but not least, the political agenda is still that of professional public work--i.e. recruitment and training for public school teachers--but because of the way TFA is funded, the option brings corporations into the

game and, as a consequence, some dimensions of privatization in the public field of education.

City Year in the Shadow of the City Volunteer Corps

City Year was founded in Boston in 1988 by two Harvard Law School graduates, Michael Brown and Alan Khazei. It started as a local program, exclusively funded by private funds. In that sense, City Year changed from a privately-funded program to one with "mixed "funding. But the service program that directly inspired City Year founders Brown and Khazei was the City Volunteer Corp, a publicly funded program initiated in 1984 by Mayor Koch that Michael Brown "worked to help launch" (Goldsmith, 1993, p. 23). As this representative from City Year explains:

> In 1980 in New York City there was a group called City Volunteer Corp. (CVC), which was a great organization. They were closed down years later. A lot of principles that make City Year actually what it is actually were rooted in that City Volunteer Corp. We made some significant changes but the founders worked at City Volunteer Corp New York and they moved to Boston and they started City Year. We like to say that New York City is the 14th City Year site, but in some ways it was the first.

The City Volunteer Corps program was created in 1984 by Mayor Koch as a three-year experiment and a model for a system of national service. The first year, 76 persons were selected out of 300 applicants. They were paid $80 a week and, on finishing the year, awarded $2,500 in cash or a $5,000 scholarship. The City allocated $7 million to the program in 1985 and planned to give 10 million a year for 1986 and 1987. The City University of New York built up a special program to help volunteers to earn their General Educational Development diplomas. A private nonprofit organization, the National Service Corporation for the City of New York, had been created by Ed Koch to run the program. The corps members were dressed in colorful uniforms and 25% of all the corps work was done in the city's parks; "it's a sort of nostalgia for our antecedent, the Civilian Conservation Corps" said the executive director of the corps, Carl Weisbrod in an interview in *The New York Times*.

Since its creation, the mission of the CVC was not totally clear and this unspecificity actually increased throughout the years. While *The New York Times*[19] presented it on its opening day as:

> The formal start of New York City's effort to put teen-agers to
> work who might otherwise be spending their days and nights on
> the street, and to set an example the rest of the country could
> follow.

Ed Koch, in the interview he gave on the program to the newspaper, said the CVC was not a job program and was not aimed at "deprived youngsters". "Whereas the unemployment rate among 16-to 19 year olds in New York City at that time was

[19] William R. Greer, "Volunteer Corps begins aiding", *The New York Times*, November 10, 1984.

31.3%, far above the national average of 18.8", as the journalist notes, the Mayor of New York City said he "intended to give teen-agers experience in helping others, let them 'give something back to the community' and develop work habits".

In 1987, the corps began recruiting part-timers in order to increase the number of white—less that 2% of the recruits—and middle-class volunteers. In 1990, 80 % of the corps members were high school dropouts. As M. Bandow wrote in the Education week, that year, the program became one of the targets of the critics of "larger corps that are more welfare programs than service programs". "Fairly or unfairly, the program gets stigmatized, gets labeled, as a program for dead-end-youth" said sociologist Charles Moskos.

To some extent, CVC, which directly influenced City Year but was in a more indirect way influenced by the CCC, could stand as an intermediary stage between the 1930's Conservation Corps and the 1990's City Year program. As for the evolution from NTC to TFA, though a more "gradual transformation" over a longer period of time , the move from public to private programs nevertheless coincided with both a move from work related issues (here youth unemployment and public work) to a "citizenship program" (as Goldsmith defines City Year), and an attempt to bring in more privileged members.

When one goes back to the origins of all the Youth Corps programs, one sees that the political agenda was clearly stated by its founder. In his acceptance speech for the Democratic nomination for President on July 2, 1932 Franklin D. Roosevelt declared:

Let us use common sense and business sense, and, just as one example, we know that a very hopeful and immediate means of relief, both for the unemployed and for agriculture, will come from a wide plan of the converting of many millions of acres of marginal and unused land into timber land through reforestation.

As Shapiro states: "the land—having the conservation work done—as well as the men—i.e. putting them at work, were the priority goals for this federal program". Similarly as Melissa Bass notes, "The CCC was created to respond to massive youth unemployment caused by the Great Depression and did so directly, by giving hundreds of thousands of young men meaningful public work. By definition, it succeeded at its principal task, providing jobs, and the focus of its efforts led it to succeed at its other main purpose, accomplishing significant conservation work. (...) While the CCC is currently recognized as national service, it wasn't during its life time." (Bass, 2003, p. 15)

In the academic literature on service as well as in the press, many observers as stated that City Year succeeded where the City Volunteer Corps had failed: bringing more privileged youth in and therefore turning the program away from the youth unemployment issue.

In an article from *The New York Times* in July 1990, Michel Marriot presented the "brand new Boston City Year" as "the exception" stating that, "Like New York's Corps, the group emphasizes education. Unlike New York's program, City Year's recruits have diverse backgrounds."

The same idea was developed by Suzanne Goldsmith in *A City Year*:

> The idea of a summer pilot program was an inspired one. (...) It allowed them to succeed in an area where earlier youth corps, like CVC (in New York City) had failed. Because they were not asking the volunteers to take a year off from school but rather to take part in an adventure for just one summer—a summer in which they would receive $60 a week and walk away with a $1,000 scholarship—it was easier to recruit young people from affluent and middle-class families, as well as those from poorer backgrounds. ... City Year's diversity set it apart from CVC and many other existing youth corps.

She concluded her argument stating:

> Because City Year enrolled youth from all backgrounds, it was clear that it was not strictly a volunteer program, nor was it workfare. (...) Any group photo-–and many photos appeared in local newspapers that summer—brought home the fact that this was a racially diverse effort. City Year, clearly, was not a job program for minority youth. Nor was it like the Peace Corps, open to only college graduates. It was a *citizenship* program and it was for everybody. (Goldsmith, p27)

The metaphor of the picture is, indeed, an interesting one. As pointed out often in this report, the whole picture doesn't always capture each individual's story. The fact is that, in the same program, some groups of people experience service more as a "super" volunteer program, while some others, next to them, live it more as a workfare program, or at least as an under paid but "second- or last- chance' job.

Acknowledging that City Year's diversity policy have succeeded in bringing in more privileged kids does not prevent us from analyzing this program, in a public policy perspective, as a "means of relief". At least for part of the youth involved in the program, the relief of unemployment is still a salient issue. If this is not an explicit function of the service program, it may very well be a latent one of its government support. When looking at the "significant work" accomplished by corps members in public schools, one can easily acknowledge that the "land" as well as the "men" are still on the agenda.

Volontariat in the Shadow of the Emploi-Jeunes Program

The history of the relationship between "volontariat" and "emploi-jeunes" differs fundamentally from the ones presented above, as they did not gradually transform from each other but emerged in the same period. Under the pre-1997 reform of national service, the explosion of civilian forms of service entailed the creation of a number of "new positions" in nonprofits as well as public services (education, police, conservation, etc.). To some extent, the "volontariat civil" presented by Jacques Chirac and his majority, and the "emploi-jeunes" program presented by the socialists, competed in succeeding to these "civilian service"-framed positions that were going to

disappear with the ending of the conscription. The "emploi-jeunes" program was voted first, because of a change in the government bringing the Socialists back into power. The change of majority that occurred again in 2002 has entailed the implementation of the "voluntaries" status ...in the context of the ending of the" emploi-jeunes" program. Implemented as a five-year experiment, the program has not been renewed by the new majority.

As far as public support for "volontariat" is concerned, many nonprofit leaders that I have interviewed or that have expressed their point to view "off record" have wondered if the dual work-related issues at the core of the "emploi jeunes" program -- fighting against youth unemployment and having needed public work done--were not on the "hidden" political agenda for passing "volontariat." As this representative for Unis Cite stated in an interview:

> The socialists had already massively invested in the "emploi-
> jeunes" program; they did not want to be bothered with another
> program ... So those were the Jospin years. And now this other
> government has had the will to apply these texts [on volontariat].
> Nobody says it, but this might also be in order to anticipate an
> answer to the issue of youth unemployment. Nobody says it in
> the government but this is rare evidence that youth
> unemployment is a growing issue and if we can have a
> possibility...and on behalf of this, the "emplois-jeunes" are not
> existing anymore... (Unis Cite representative)

The question of the displacement of the "emploi-jeunes" program by the creation of the "volontariat" status was also raised in the specific context of education by a representative for AFEV whom I interviewed.

> Even if a few "educator assistant"—assistant d'éducation— positions have been created in the public school system, they will never replace the numerous "educator aids"—aides educateurs— positions temporary created under the "emploi jeunes "program. Are we going to see a call for "volontaires" in public schools in the coming years and therefore a deprofessionalization of emerging positions in that field?" (AFEV representative)

The next step in the relationship between "emploi-jeunes" and "volontariat" in France is yet to come. The coming future will tell us if "volontariat" in its public or private status version will end up standing in the shadow of the "emploi-jeunes" program. On the local level, some regions are currently developing job programs for youth—such as "emplois tremplins"—that will substitute for the former national program. Still, in February 2005, a representative of the Parisian Mayor's office announced the launching of an experimental program intended to gradually replace the hundreds of Parisian school crossing guards that are going to disappear with the ending of the "emploi-jeunes" program. Calling to "Parisians' citizenship" to maintain the provision of this "needed public service," the program intent is to replace the "emploi-jeunes" with "remunerated volunteers"[20].

---

[20] Research is presently being conducted by Stéphanie Boujut (GRASS) and Maud Simonet on the implementation of this experimental program.

Beyond the "citizen veil," the political agenda for supporting service still has something to do with accomplishing meaningful public work and finding the neediest people to do it. While pointing to the withdrawal of state financial support for this meaningful public work, the shift from public to mixed funding and implementation also raises a lot of issues in terms of public service work conditions and regulations. From labor-law by-pass to public employment displacement, from privatization to deprofessionalisation, the citizen dimension of service work challenges some of the established frameworks of professional/occupational public work. While those questions have been debated more frequently on a macro social level in the French than in the American context, in both countries servers have pointed out, through the notion of "sacrifice," a more inner conflict between the working and the citizen dimension of service

We talked about it, between us, but that was not our main preoccupation. And it was probably difficult for them (Unis Cite), if they could pay us more they would pay us more, but I don't know…I've been thinking about it and I said to myself that it was maybe part of **the sacrifice**.

It's hard. (...) But the kids keep me going and that makes me push extra miles so that they have the best. But not all corps members felt that way. (...) I think some of the corps members put their priorities above the children's priorities and I don't think you can.

(...) With me making $350 a week...I definitely got the **sacrificial**

aspect of it. But other people, they just refused to...

It's like you **sacrifice** your own sense of well being or happiness

or whatever you want, of comfort, as **an employee, to serve the**

kids.

As the quotations below point out, this "ethic of sacrifice" —sacrificing the

workers conditions for the values and duties of service—may very well be inscribed in

the citizen worker condition.

"Your pay will be low; the conditions of your labor will often be

difficult; but you will have the satisfaction of leading a great

national effort, and you will have the ultimate reward which

comes to these who serve their fellowman."

Lyndon Johnson to the first batch of VISTA volunteers, the

White House on December 12, 1964. [21]

"Finally, the Teachers Corps will seek to *capitalize* on the fact that

salaries are low to actually increase the status of the endeavor. By

billing the opportunity to serve in the Teacher Corps as something

the best and the brightest will *sacrifice* for—something they do

merely to be of service to others—the agency will create the same

kind of mystique that the Peace Corps is able to create with its

---

[21] Quoted in William H. Crook and Ross Thomas, -*Warriors of the Poor—The story of VISTA* (New York: William Morrow and Co, 1969, p. 12)

slogan "The Hardest Job You'll Ever Love" (Wendy Kopp, 1989, p 47).

Conclusion: the working dimensions of service, bringing a critical view to the research field

In between the volunteer and the occupational worker: where does the service worker stand?

In France and in the United States, the law defines the service worker as distinct from both volunteer and employee. At the same time, by virtue of establishing non-displacement rules for the organizations running the service programs, the law points to the threat that the service work may pose to employee and volunteer alike. To a stronger degree than traditional volunteers and like some sub-contracting workers, the service worker is inscribed in a dual matrix of work: that of the site where his more or less temporary mission is performed, but also that of the organization that defines and controls the conditions and the career line of this performance. Unlike the volunteer, his full-time and exclusive involvement gives the service worker access to social and health coverage, but unlike the occupational worker (s)he is not entitled to regular pay.

If, for the moment, one leaves behind the institutional dimensions of the "service work" and focuses instead on the servers' experiences and careers, one finds it even more difficult to provide a simple answer to the question "where does the service worker stand?" While one of the Unis Cité volontaires I interviewed used the word "bénévolat" to talk about her experience in the program before adding "*volontariat, bénévolat, it's the same except that we get a stipend for doing it,*" some others talked about the "job" and the "pay" and identified the server as being a "worker for the organization" or an "employee". If the confusion between the two lexicons were more or less shared by most of the interviewees, the analysis of the service entry and exit

paths have pointed out that while the more privileged servers subjectively and objectively experienced their service commitment as "super volunteering", many of the less privileged ones experienced it as a "job", a job they had to live off of and a job they might leave for a less ideal, but better–paid one.

Because of its hybrid institutional dimension, the precise nature of the work connected with service turns out to have a lot to do with who the server is. As the analysis of the recruitment strategies developed by the organizations running service programs has pointed out—"Take too many of that type of youth and we'll turn into this type of program…"--this objectification of the plurality of the servers' experiences has been very well accomplished on the organizational level. On the political level, this turbid dimension of nonprofit service programs makes it an interesting public policy tool from a cost-benefit perspective. Supporting service allows for the killing of three birds—i.e. youth unemployment or "professional insertion," needed public service work, and citizenship—with one "light" stone in terms of financial and political accountability. As service programs are only partly financed by the state, the cost of service work and of service policy is shared with non profits and private actors. As the work-related agenda for government support to service work is mostly implicit, government administrations don't have to be held accountable for the results of these public work and employment policies.

> While research has identified a range of positive outcomes of civic service, the possible negative outcomes remain largely unexplored. In general, the civic service field labors with attention to limitations and potential harms. Overall, scholarship

has not reached the objective balance that will be necessary to

assess the utility and the impact of service around the world."

(Brav, Moore, and Sherraden, *Limitations of Civic Service:*

Critical Perspectives, Working Paper, Global Service Institute,

Center for Social Development, July 2002, p. 4)

As stated from the outset, studying "service as work" is to undertake a partial look at this social practice, which turned out to be a pretty critical one.

Studying "service as work" brought to light a number of issues related to nonprofit workers, professional work, and public labor and, unintentionally, ended up presenting a rather disenchanted portrait of service. Yet a lot of the enthusiasm that youth has expressed about their service experience and work has been underrepresented here. On the other hand, there is little doubt that their own *voices and views* have been emphasized here, more than those of the programs' leaders or of the institutional representatives for the nonprofit, the educational, or the political worlds. And the servers' voices carried complexity and sometimes also contradictions. They conveyed interest *and* limitations, feelings of satisfaction *and* exploitation, love for the work *and* exasperation with its conditions. They were conscious of the sacrifice being asked of them as a "citizen worker", and most of the time they accepted it, but not always. Last but not least, their voices not only reflected the sacrificial dimension of their *own* work, but it also pointed out that the sacrifice did not weigh the same for each of them. The servers pointed to the fact that some of them had to live off the "program salary" while some others were using the "stipend" as pocket money, and that taking a year to serve "others" or "the community" was not the same endeavor for everybody. They pointed out that the meaning of sacrifice was not necessarily the same for the privileged server

with the will and the ability to do "something good" while testing out a possible vocation as it was for the underprivileged one hoping to find a meaningful job. In the United States, many servers also expressed their concern that because the "call to sacrifice" only attracts specific categories to service, the program might therefore reinforce some racial stereotypes: e.g. the young black males in City Year who had dropped out of school or the "missionary" white middle- or upper-class youth in Teach for America who were serving in poor black and Latino neigborhoods.

This consciousness of class—and in the United States also race—with regard to the access to and the meaning of service appears to the researcher as one of the strongest lessons the youth involved in the programs under study seem to have learned from their service experience. Diversity, not as an achievement of the program but as a critical and reflexive question that arose for the service worker during the course of his (her) work, may very well be considered as the citizen output of the programs under study.

> As the field develops, a critical eye is warranted to ensure that negative consequences are ameliorated or avoided. ... A research agenda that is rigorous, cross-cultural, and critical can help build a balanced knowledge base for more informed decision-making regarding civic service.(Brav, Moore, & Sherraden, 2002, p. 10).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abou, N'Diaye (2004). La Professionalisation des Animateurs. In Dan Ferrand Bechmann, dir. *Les Benevoles et Leurs Associations- Autres Realites, Autres Sociologies?* Paris : L'Harmattan.

Bass, Melissa (2003). *National Service in America: Policy (Dis)connections Over Time.* Circle Working Paper 11.

Becker, Howard S. (1963). *Outsiders- Studies in Sociology of Deviance.* New York: The Free Press.

Becquet, Valérie (2004). Youth Civic and Voluntary Service in France. In *Youth Civic Service in Europe*, AVSO, (CSD Research Report). St Louis: Washington University, Center for Social Development.

Brav Jennifer, Moore Amanda, & Sherraden Michael (2002). *Limitations of Civic Service: Critical Perspectives* (CSD Working Paper)., St Louis: Washington University, Center for Social Development.

CNVA Bilan National de la Vie Associative, 1996-1999. La Documentation Française.

Chambre, Susan (1989). Kindling Points of Light: Volunteering as Public Policy. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly.*

City Year, About City Year: History. Available at <www.cityyear.org>

Corwin Ronald G. (1973). *Reform and Organizational Survival : The Teacher Corps as an Instrument of Educational Change*. New York: Wiley.

Crook, William H. (1969). *Ross Thomas-Warriors of the Poor-The story of VISTA*. New York: William Morrow and Co.

Del Picchia, Robert (1999). Rapport Senat n 5 Sur le Projet de Loi Relatif aux Volontariats Civils, Fait au Nom de la Commission des Affaires Etrangeres, depose le 6 octobre 1999.

Ferrand-Bechmann Dan, Masse Jean-Pierre (2000). *Etude sur les Motivations et L'engagement des Etudiants à l'AFEV*. Cesol.

Goffman Erving, (1974). *Frame Analysis*. New York, NY Harper.

Goldsmith Suzanne (1993). *A City Year- On the Streets and in the Neighborhood with Twelve Young Community Service Volunteers.*

Greer, William R. (1984). Volunteer Corps Begins Aiding. *New York Times*, November 10, 1984.

Hirschmann, Albert O. (1970). *Exit, Voice and Loyalty, Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States.* Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

Hughes, Everett C. (1971). Social Role and the Division of Labor. *The Sociological Eye: Selected Papers.* New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.

Hughes, Everett C. (1937). Institutional Office and the Person. *American Journal of Sociology.*

Hughes, Everett C. (1951). *Work and the Self.*

Kaplan Daniels, Arlene (1988). *Invisible Careers--Women Civic Leaders from the Volunteer World.*

Katz, Michael B. (1986). *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America.* BasicBooks.

Kopp, Wendy (2001). *One Day, All Children...The Unlikely Triumph of Teach for America and What I Learned Along the Way.* New York: Public Affairs.

Kopp, Wendy (1989). An Argument and Plan for the Creation of the Teacher Corps. Senior thesis, Princeton University: 47.

Lamour, Jean-François (2004). Speech at the Social and Economique Council, July 8, 2004.

Lightstories for the Boss, Bush official is moved by City Year Program's Work, Workers. *The Boston Globe, (*1990).

Marriot, Michel (1990). Youth Service Is New Route to Diplomas and Jobs. *The New York Times*, July 18, 1990.

McBride, Amanda Moore, Benitez Carlos and Sherraden Michael (2003). *The Forms and Nature of Civic Service: A Global Assessment* (CSD Research Report). St Louis: Washington University, Center for Social Development.

McBride, Amanda Moore (2003). Civic Service Worldwide: Status and Directions. Presentation at Civic Service: Impacts and Inquiry, An International Symposium, September 25, 2003.

Perry, James L. and Ann Marie Thomson (2004). *Civic Service- What Differences Does It Make?* M.E. Sharpe.

Popkewitz Thomas S. (1998). *Struggling for the Soul: The Politics of Schooling and the Construction of the* Teacher. New York: Teachers College Press.

Branch Alvia, Leiderman Sally, Smith Thomas J. (1987). *Youth Conservation and Service Corps- Findings from a National Assessment*. Public/Private Ventures.

Roosevelt, Franklin D. Acceptance Speech, Democratic National Convention, July 2, 1932.

Seidman Anna (1994). Special Legal Issue for AmeriCorps USA. *A Community Service Brief from the Nonprofit Risk Management Center*. The Nonprofit Risk Management Center.

Shapiro Peter (1994). *A History of National Service in America*. Center for Political Leadership and Participation.

Sherraden Michael (2001). *Youth Service as a Strong Policy* (CSD Working Paper). St Louis: Washington University, Center for Social Development.

Sherraden Michael (1984). Three Squares a Day: Enrollees in the Civilian Conservation Corps. *Journal of Social Service Research*, vol7, issue 3.

Simonet-Cusset, Maud (2004). Penser le Benevolat Comme Travail, Pour Repenser la Sociologie du Travail. *Revue de l'Ires*, n 44

Simonet-Cusset, Maud (2000). Les Mondes Sociaux du Travail Citoyen, Sociologie Comparative de la Pratique Benevole en France et aux Etats-Unis. These de doctorat de sociologie, Universite de Nantes.

Stebbins, Robert A. (1979). *Amateurs-On the Margin Between Work and Leisure*.

Stebbins, Robert A. (1982). Serious Leisure: A Conceptual Statement. Pacific Sociological Review, 25:251-272.

Stimpson, Catherine R,. Series Editor's Foreword. *Invisible Careers*1988, p. 9

Strauss (1978). A Social World Perspective. In Norman Denzin, ed. *Studies in Symbolic Interaction*. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press:119-128

Unis Cite (1999). Etude Impact: 110.

Van Til Jon, Gallup, Georges H. Jr, Swalve, David A. Pettrone (1998). AmeriCorps: National Service in the Clinton Era." Paper presented at the ARNOVA conference, Seattle, W.A., November 1998.

APPENDIX 1

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 20px;">

<u>Table- AmeriCorps Provisions</u>

The AmeriCorps Provisions are binding on the Grantee. By accepting funds under this Grant, the Grantee agrees to comply with the AmeriCorps Provisions, all applicable federal statutes, regulations and guidelines, any amendments thereto. The Grantee agrees to operate the funded Program in accordance with the approved Grant application. The Grantee agrees to include in all subgrants the applicable terms and conditions contained in this award.

AmeriCorps Special Provisions

1. Purpose of Award

2. Affiliation with the AmeriCorps National Service Network

3. Local and State Consultation

4. Prohibited Program Activities

5. Fund Raising

6. Eligibility, Recruitment, and Selection

7. Training, Supervision, and Support

8. Terms of Service

9. Release from Participation

10. Minor Disciplinary Actions

11. Living Allowances, In-service benefits, and Taxes

12. Post-Service Education Awards

14. Member Records and Confidentiality

</div>

15. Budget and Programmatic Changes

16. Reporting Requirements

17. Grant Period and Incremental Funding

18. Performance Measurement and Evaluation

General Provisions

19. Legislative and Regulatory Authority

20. Other Applicable Statutory and Administrative Provisions

21. Responsibilities under Grant Administration

22. Financial Management Provisions

23. Administrative Costs

24. Equipment and Supply Costs

25. Project Income

26. Payments under the Grant

27. Retention of Records

28. Site Visits

29. Liability and Safety Issues

30. Drug-Free Workplace

31. Non-Discrimination

32. The Office of the Inspector General

33. Supplementation, Non-Duplication, and Non-Displacement

34. Grievances Procedures

35. Ownership and Sharing of the Award Products

36. Publications

37. Suspension and Termination of the Award

38. Order of Precedence