

BOOK & ARTICLE REVIEWS

A review of John Durand's *The Affirmative Enterprise*.

by Raymond Lemay

DuRand, John, 1990. *The Affirmative Enterprise*. St.Paul, Minnesota: MDI Press

A good sub-title to this book could be, “*How to Create an Affirmative Enterprise based on the Minnesota Diversified Industries’ Model.*” John DuRand should be well-known to most, if not all people working in the employment sectors of human services. His pioneering work at Minnesota Diversified Industries (MDI) has unfortunately been overshadowed by many new fangled notions such as supported employment that do not have MDI’s track record.

Upon reading *The Affirmative Enterprise* though, one would be struck that this is not for everyone. MDI uses what one might call a classical business approach to providing work for the disadvantaged. It is a valuable how to manual that should prove recognizable for those of us who have read other business management manuals, except that it pays very close attention to the particular vocation of a business designed not only to be solvent but also provide work for those who would not otherwise be so employed.

John DuRand has interacted for many years with normalization and SRV theory and it is not surprising to find many concepts and ideas that are in sympathy with normalization and SRV. He develops seventeen principles and values that in a nutshell convey a fairly good measure of SRV theory. For instance, he speaks of the role of work and develops quite coherently the richness and importance of this role, as he describes some of its component parts: “work”, “career”, “self-sufficiency”, “self-concept”, “making a contribution”, “engagement” and “valued activity”. He also gives a classical definition of charity which should be read if only to remind one that charity is not a dirty word but rather an interactive concept where both parties must give and receive at the same time.

In chapter 3, Business Profit and Social Responsibility, DuRand gives his rationale for the MDI model. It is a business analysis which opposes the cost of dependency in terms of dollars to the cost of contributing roles. DuRand, on page 46, concludes “most experts would agree that on average the cost of integrating the disadvantaged into contributing social roles would prove to be far less than the cost of doing nothing. Remember, the bill for successful integration is paid only once, but the bill for continued dependency must be paid for a lifetime.” Though, in the overarching scheme of things, this might be a fairly simplistic notion, it is nonetheless at the heart of the MDI experiment. And DuRand proves it to be true, so far as the MDI experiment goes. It is astounding to read that MDI is 94% self-sufficiency but only 6% of its income coming from government grants and so on. This is undoubtedly much less than defense industries for instance in the United States. He also tells us that MDI and its employees pay back in taxes 17 times the subsidies that they receive.

DuRand’s point, it seems, is that for an individual to have a contributing (work) role attributed to him can only be done in the context of a successful business. Therefore, it is not surprising that in an attempt to be coherent with this notion DuRand presents his book as a no nonsense business guide to creating an affirmative industry and is by and large successful. DuRand also goes to some length to rehabilitate the notion of profit, suggesting that profit can be compatible with the provision of beneficial human service and he then goes on to describe how employees including the so-called disadvantaged ones can be stockholders in a successful business.

John DuRand conveys in his book the challenge and complexity of creating a successful business that employs otherwise disadvantaged individuals. But it is nonetheless possible to see that the model depends on three basic concepts: 1) A business is a business: DuRand spends a great deal of time and detail in conveying the business nature of the affirmative enterprise, and he goes on to describe the importance of managerial leadership. His idea is not to create an ersatz work environment but a real business where employees are truly contributing to the creation of a value added good.

The second fundamental concept concerns low productivity employees. DuRand does not shy away from the need to develop new strategies to deal with employees who are less productive than mainstream workers. Not surprisingly his

solutions are businesslike. They are “commensurate pay”, “integrated work-force”, “multishift operation” and “employee lay-off”. Once again, DuRand suggest that valued work roles can only come from profitable bottom lines. And finally, his third concept at the heart of MDI success is the *model worker*. “The model worker approach can be favourably compared with the master/apprentice or journeyman/apprentice system, which has been in existence in skilled trades for centuries. An aspiring apprentice not only eventually learned his or her trade, but also absorbed a whole set of social and behavioral customs and norms associated with the social role of that particular trade. By daily on the job exposure to model workers, both during and after the work day, employees who are disadvantaged begin to acquire naturally the career and social skills essential for success both at work and in the world outside.” (p. 152).

The affirmative enterprise is an important book that should be required reading for those who take seriously the notion of providing valued roles in work situations. This manual conveys fairly well the enormity and the complexity of the task at hand.

This should not be surprising as serious students of SRV know full well: the task of successful integration through the attribution of valued social roles is never easy. DuRand reminds us that in our capitalist culture, valued work roles are only to be found in environments that are seriously attentive to the bottom line. In these post cold war years, the business of the world is business and the goal of human services must be to make our disadvantaged clients successful participants in this world. But the real success story of MDI is not to be found in the book but rather by visiting Minnesota Diversified Industries as I had the pleasure a few years ago. First impressions are important, at first sight, John DuRand appears as a successful businessman and MDI is a successful business. Business manuals are to repeating that a successful bottom line starts on the shop floor and good labour relations. As John DuRand lead us on a guided tour, our first sight was of a busy and productive plant. And as we went by, every employee stopped to say Hi to John and John knows all of his employees by their first names. MDI’s success is no doubt due to the hard nosed businessman, but it is also due to John DuRand the very good man that all the MDI employees enjoy working for.

The Affirmative Enterprise is available from MDI Press, Minnesota Diversified Industries, 670 Pelham Boulevard, St.Paul, Minnesota, USA 55114 at \$22.00 US a copy. Please add \$7.50 for additional postage for shipment by air or \$2.50 for shipment by sea for each book.

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A review of Lutfiyya et al.

by Susan Thomas (Training Institute)

Lutfiyya, Z.M., Moseley, C., Walker, P., Zollers, N., Lehr, S., Pugliese, J., Callahan, M., & Centra, N. (1987). *A question of Community: Quality of life and integration in “small residential units” and other residential settings*. Syracuse, NY: Center on Human Policy, Syracuse University.

Using the Passing instrument (Wolfensberger & Thomas, 1983), the authors visited and evaluated seven different residences for mentally retarded people in upstate New York. These residences were: a house for three handicapped adults that is part of an intentional Christian community (l’Arche); a staffed apartment for three young men; a staffed group home for four women; an intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded (ICF/MR) for eight adolescents; and three “small residential units” (SRUs), one for 12 children, one for 12 adults, and one for 12 adults “with challenging behaviors.” The three SRUs were located together on the grounds of a large state institution for the mentally retarded in a rural town. The assessment

group interview workers, and visited and had a dinner meal at each site.

The assessment was to serve two purposes: to examine the “quality of life” for residents in the SRUs; and to examine the “quality of life” in other residential settings, and make comparisons among them all.

Apparently, different members of the assessment group wrote different sections of the report, though it is not clear who wrote what.

Only one person, the senior author, had PASSING training; both she and one other member had had PASS training and experience. The senior author met with the other members for two 3-hour sessions to orient them to PASSING and its ratings. Thus, these visits did not constitute anything like real PASSING assessments.

For each site, each assessment team member was supposed to complete individual level assignments for each rating, and then a type of conciliation was conducted, namely, if all team members agreed on the level assigned to a rating, there was no discussion about it; if there was not consensus, then the team discussed and “negotiated” until consensus was reached. The team leader was never identified in the report, and it is not clear that it was the person who was PASSING-trained.

As would be expected, the smaller, more physically integrated residences scored better overall, as well as on the PASSING subscores.

There is much detailed description of the exterior and interior of each setting, and of its neighborhood context, though little is said about any physical juxtapositions of the settings, such as to cemeteries, other human service settings, positively -imaged neighboring sites, etc. A description of a typical day for each site is given, and one or two residents at each site are briefly described.

Charts show the levels achieved by each service on PASSING, and compare the performance of each service on the five PASSING subscores. However, charts 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 are very difficult to read, because the lines—drawn by computer—that are supposed to represent the different settings are not very distinguishable from each other.

The end of the report contains a useful, brief one-sentence summary of each PASSING rating.

Copies of this 130-page monograph are available for as long as the limited supply lasts for a small postage and handling fee only. Order from Syracuse University Training Institute, 805 South Crouse Avenue, Syracuse, New York 13244-2280 USA.

References

Lutfiyya, Z.M., Moseley, C., Walker, P., Zollers, N., Lehr, S., Pugliese, J., Callahan, M., & Centra, N. (1987). *A question of Community: Quality of life and integration in “small residential units” and other residential settings*. Syracuse, NY: Center on Human Policy, Syracuse University.

Wolfensberger, W., & Thomas, S. (1983). *PASSING (Program Analysis of Service Systems’ Implementation of Normalization Goals): Normalization criteria and ratings manual*. Toronto: National Institute on Mental Retardation.

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Review of Shaddock & Zilber’s Current service ideologies

By Wolf Wolfensberger (Syracuse University)

Shaddock, A.J., & Zilber, D. (1991). Current service ideologies and responses to challenging behaviour: Social role valorization or vaporization? *Australia & New Zealand Journal of Developmental Disabilities*, 17(2), 169-175.

Shaddock and Zilber (1991) published an article with the snotty title, “Current Service Ideologies and Responses to Challenging Behavior: Social Role Valorization or Vaporization?” The article is a typical example of the poor workmanship of so much of the critique of normalization or Social Role Valorization, even from within academic circles. It is probably in about the 80th percentile in the large number of misconceptions, half-truths or misinterpretations that it has compressed in its few pages when compared with other such critiques, but at least unlike many such critiques, the authors do cite some of the literature on the topic of their critique, namely, two publications by Wolfensberger and Nirje each. The latter features prominently enough in this article to deserve to have his two items related to some of his other—and particularly his earlier—publications.

Below follow numerous examples of the poor workmanship referred to above.

Normalization is referred to as an “illusory” concept. (Did the authors mean “elusive”?) Social Role Valorization is interpreted as being a new name for the principle of normalization rather than a reconceptualization. Sentences and phrases are so strung together as to convey the impression that Wolfensberger’s theory is synonymous with mainstreaming and deinstitutionalization.

At one moment, Wolfensberger’s theory is interpreted—in a fashion apparently meant to be depreciatory—as assimilationist (which would imply primarily accommodation by the devalued person to the social environment), and the next moment, the authors contradict themselves by interpreting it as paying excessive attention to environments. And after having derided Wolfensberger for giving too much emphasis to people’s environments, the authors once again say that Wolfensberger puts too much onus on the individual to change. Apparently, the authors seemed oblivious to their own internal inconsistencies. Efforts that render a person valued within a culture are interpreted quite erroneously by the article as making that person “invisible within the dominant culture”—as if all valued people were invisible.

SRV is also interpreted as coercing people into lifestyles that they do not desire, and perhaps even subjecting them to “intrusive, even violent, interventions,” and to “methods... which in any other settings (including gaols) would be illegal” (gaols here means jails) on the rationale that this would “lead to more normalized behavior.” Apparently, SRV is seen as so awful and low-down that “in a sense of panic, one looks to the legal rights movement for the new way,” though the authors did have the good sense to find it wanting as well.

The authors made a clang association between the name of the PASSING instrument, and the sociological term of “passing,” whereas the names of PASS and PASSING initially were intended to convey a multiplicity of meanings, and especially that of a *human service* (not an individual) passing or failing a test of quality.

The statement is made that “the villages of Steiner and Vanier where large numbers of people with disabilities live, work and recreate in the same setting, where independence and particularly supported or open employment are not highlighted, would not score well on PASSING.” The truth is that such places typically score better on PASS and PASSING than the vast majority of human services of any kind, with the exception of those for valued people.

The article is punctuated by six little boxes, each containing a quiz question on whether Wolf Wolfensberger or Bengt Nirje made a certain statement. The answers to the quiz item are nowhere provided, and it is just as well because the questions are very faultily formulated or outright misleading. For instance, one of them asks “Who said that it would have been preferable to call normalization ‘orthofactorization’?” Wolfensberger did say something along these lines, but he did it as a joke, and this raises the question of whether the authors are sophisticated enough about the topic on which they write to know this. Other quiz items, taken totally out of context, are presented in such a fashion as to convey an entirely distorted meaning to what one or the other writer referred to may have meant.

The final hilarity of this paper is its last lines: “The latest TASH book gives little prominence to normalization (Meyer, Peck & Brown, 1991).”

What—if anything—do the authors stand for? Apparently, they subscribe to an empowerment model, and critique SRV in light of it. They are apparently not aware that Wolfensberger himself, quite aside from SRV, rejects this model as it is currently taught, promoted and practiced, both because it has its roots in modernistic divisioning individualism, and in false assumptions about human nature and how things really work.

Very revealing is the statement that one should “treat people with challenging behaviors as our fellow human beings, that is people who have citizenship rights,” as if it were the law that were the ultimate authority in defining who human beings are. After all, laws often redefine the humanity of some people, and may conceivably define nonhumans as humans if the animal rights people have their way. Currently, in most Western countries, the unborn are not defined as human beings by the law, which even goes as far as saying that they are not even human while they are being born, i.e., until their head emerges from the birth canal. This very law and its interpretation has opened up a new abortion technique which extracts a baby feet-first from the womb, then stops the process long enough to perforate the baby’s skull, vacuum out the baby’s brain and collapse its skull, and then pull out the baby’s head—and the law calls this whole gruesome process an abortion which is legal because it did not kill a human being.

One of the false criticisms of SRV that is offered is that from the perspective of this empowerment theory, the “supreme compliment which can be given to someone with a disability is ‘I never think of you as handicapped’,” whereas “the supreme compliment” (if there were such a thing) of SRV is really “You are a valued person in society, and this is not merely my opinion, but that of most people.”

The authors conclude that “normalization belongs to the Ptolemy era,” and that the “human and citizen rights” conceptualization is the Copernicus that is currently considered to be heretical but that actually fits the facts better, and is ultimately more useful.

This critique shows yet again that any theory that is multidimensional and contains any subtleties whatever seems to pose the most peculiar difficulties to people related to human services. This is probably one more reason why Nirje’s conceptions are so widely accepted: they are vastly simpler than Wolfensberger’s, and come closer to being a conglomerate of easy-to-understand prescriptions than a strongly unified theory.

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A review of John Horgan’s Eugenics revisited by Raymond Lemay (Children’s Aid Society)

Horgan, John, 1993. Eugenics revisited. *Scientific American*, 238 (6) June 1993. p. 122-131.

The multi billion dollar human genome project has breathed new life into the social darwinists who make claims for the biological basis of many if not all diseases, handicaps and social problem. Genetics are in the news with the popular media for instance suggesting that the biological basis of human problems is now firmly established. Daniel Koshland, the editor of *Science*, which is according to *Scientific American* “the most influential peer reviewed journal in the US” declared in an editorial that the nature/nurture debate is basically over and that genetic research will help eliminate problems as varying as drug abuse, homelessness and violent crime. John Horgan, a senior writer with *Scientific American*, with this very timely article, suggests that there is nothing new in these claims. They are today just as unsupported by research as they were in the past. The *Scientific American* article goes on to list and review the history of the claims of behavioural genetics. In a section called “a

lack of progress report”, this article points out that there is as yet no proven genetic basis for crime, manic depression, schizophrenia, alcoholism, intelligence and homosexuality. In an other section, “the Huntington’s disease saga: a cautionary tale”, the author charts and describes the efforts that were made to discover the genetic basis for a very biological disease, i.e. Huntington’s. It took over ten years for many teams of researchers and millions of dollars to find the gene; “as difficult as it was to pin point the gene for Huntington’s, it will be almost infinitely harder to discover genes for behavioural disorders, says Evan S. Baliban, a biologist at Harvard University. Unlike Huntington’s disease, he notes, disorder such schizophrenia and alcoholism cannot be unambiguously diagnosed. Furthermore, they stem not from a single dominant gene but from many genes acting in concert with environmental effects. If researchers do find a statistical association between certain genes and traits, Baliban says, that knowledge may never be translated into useful therapies or tests. What does it mean to have a 10% increase risk of alcoholism?, he asks.” page 127.

The article goes on to make the link with **eugenics** suggesting that we are in the midst of a new wave of eugenic thinking and action. There is a great enthusiasm for genetics today, with countless billions of dollars being invested for instance in the human genome project that has as its ambition the complete mapping of the genes of human chromosomes. We must recognize that it takes a certain amount of courage in writers such as Horgan and researchers such as Baliban who point out that this type of research could easily lead to what they call a “hierarchy of worthlessness.”

This article, in its own way, supports the basic thrust of SRV training. There is much that is seductive in these genetic projects that can get governments to commit billions to research of dubious value. It is important to remind oneself that SRV proposes that social integration can be achieved by the democratic attribution of valued social roles. For whereas, eugenicists and the well-funded human genome project propose to cleanse the human genome of deficiencies. The fact that this project is doomed to failure will probably do nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of those who are totally committed to genetic cleansing. It reminds us that in our confrontation with the powerful medical cure and disease model, we need to hone up and develop the **developmental model**.

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Review of Bowman ‘s Disability and gender

Susan Thomas

Bowman, D. (1992/1993). Disability and gender: Community care. National Council on Intellectual Disability; *Interaction*, 6(3), 4-8.

This paper was written by a mother of a mentally retarded child. It appeared in an Australian journal, and was based on a presentation she made to the August, 1992 conference of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Mental Deficiency. It purports to analyze “community care” from a feminist perspective, and the writer says she will “leave any analysis and discussion of men’s situation to men” (p. 4). Bowman calls for more community services to assist families with handicapped members at home, and for payment for services that are rendered by family members, rather than expecting families (mostly mothers) to render unpaid service to their handicapped relatives. She devotes a few paragraphs to normalization, and claims that it “totally ignores any analysis of gender or race” (p.6).She also claims that in his “most recent work” (without citing what that is), Wolfensberger “shows little understanding or concern about women’s rights or gender

issues” (p.6).

Totally incorrectly, Bowman claims (again without documentation) that Wolfensberger has “argued for the abolition of human services on the assumption that the community will care” (p.6). While Wolfensberger has certainly analyzed the profound shortcomings of organized services, he has also been at great pains to repeatedly point out that it is foolish and naive to look to modernistic society or “the community” to voluntarily serve handicapped people in any numbers. If there is such a thing as “the community,” it is infected with the same devaluation and modernistic values as the rest of society and human services, and both devaluation and modernistic values (such as selfish individualism and materialism) mitigate against both providing quality formal services to afflicted people, and extensive unpaid personal or communal serving and caring.

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Review of Fein’s Analysing Psychotherapy: A Social Role Interpretation

Susan Thomas

Fein, M.L. (1992). *Analyzing Psychotherapy: A Social role interpretation*. New York: Praeger.

A 1992 book by Fein applies social role theory to the constructs of “emotional disturbance” and “behavioral problems, and claims that this “goes a long way to explaining why people are in distress” (p. 15). Even though Fein believes in the physical origins of mental disorders, and in the use of psychoactive drugs, he proposes that “role theory holds the prospect of a grand synthesis that can place competing schools of therapeutic thought in a shared context” (p. 3), much as SRV teaching interprets SRV as an overarching theory for human services that can encompass many lower-level theories, strategies, and tactics.

Fein suggests that the mental helping services should think more in terms of helping people abandon maladaptive old roles and craft new, more satisfying ones. The majority of the book is given to analysis of specific well-known psychotherapies from a social role perspective, focusing on whether they emphasize social support, socialization or resocialization, reexperiencing/identifying defective roles, relinquishing defective roles, or renegotiating defective roles and substituting more satisfying ones. This section is much less relevant to SRV than the first part of the book.

Fein also identifies certain techniques used in psychotherapy sessions as being role-related, such as role-playing.

Two shortcomings are that (a) what Fein identifies as negative social roles are fairly specific to particular individuals (e.g., “the family rebbel” or “the family scapegoat”), rather than universally recurring negative roles into which the members of whole classes are cast, such as the role of menace or eternal child; and (b) Fein appears to address only those roles that require certain functions or competencies to fill (such as work roles and marital roles do), and not other roles—both positive and negative—that a person holds by attribution, and that the person does not have to “do” anything to fill.

In SRV training, we note that helping people to break out of old (negative) roles can be very difficult for many reasons, and that this is one reason why newness (e.g., of contexts), and the ambiguity of roles that goes with it, must be capitalized upon to craft new positive roles for people. In this connection, Fein notes that “...role change is challenging....Such change is normally slow, and often traumatic, because the elements that hold roles in place are only modified with difficulty” (pp.14-15).

Fein also addresses the bugaboo that has been raised in SRV about whether roles capture the “real” person, or are artificial. He notes: “By putting roles on or taking them off, we vary what we do and with whom we do it. *Yet roles are not*

epiphenomena standing somehow apart from our real selves. Basic personal roles form the core of our identities and are not merely play acted. Indeed, roles that are learned early in life and underlie many divergent activities are essential to our self-understanding. They are maintained with a tenacity that makes them almost impossible to relinquish, even if it is discovered that they fail to meet needs” (pp. 17-18, emphasis mine).

Fein phrases what SRV teaching calls the imposition of negatively valued roles (onto devalued people) as follows:

“Unsatisfying roles are usually imposed upon people in coercive role negotiations, often in their earliest socialization experiences. Since all roles are developed in collaboration with role partners, when these act unfairly, they have the potential for inaugurating flawed roles. Partners who are more powerful than an individual, and who are not concerned with his welfare, can enforce the adoption of behaviors that are not in his interest. The victim may protest, but will not have the strength to resist. During coercive negotiations, the partner’s demands can be so compelling that they shape the victim’s thoughts, feelings and plans in directions that cause him to act in ways not satisfying to himself. These internalized patterns... perpetuate unhappiness even when the partner ceases his coercive demands” (p.18).

Fein notes that “...jobs are roles,” and that when rehabilitation counselors “...inculcate job skills, they simultaneously instill role skills” (p.58).

Fein claims that Thomas Scheff has “...hypothesized that assigning people a deviant role serves a function for the larger society by establishing and enforcing the boundaries of normality” (pp. 139-140), just as SRV training has also taught, based in part on the work of Kai Erikson.

Fein cites Wolfensberger’s normalization, and describes it as meaning “...that teaching a disabled person a viable new role thereby empowers him....The client achieves ‘normalization.’ It is alleged that many of the difficulties of the disabled result from social stigmatization, and that therefore teaching them to behave in ways that attract less censure will relieve them from external constraints. Moreover, a sense of competence that derives from being able to perform satisfactorily is expected to generalize to the person’s self-esteem and help her function in the world” (p. 204). While we would probably not use exactly that language, it is a good brief summary of the two SRV thrusts of image enhancement and competency enhancement, though interestingly, given the book’s concern with social roles Fein doesnot cite SRV or any references to it.

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