



The Roundtable

On Religion and Social Welfare Policy

Annual Conference Transcript October 23, 2002

Exploratory Research on Effectiveness

Richard P. Nathan, **Director, The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government
and the Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy**

Malcolm Goggin, **Comparative Case Studies of Faith-Based
Intermediate-Term Shelter Services in Grand Rapids, Michigan**

Richard Roper, **Evaluation of the New York City
Charitable Choice Demonstration**

David Wright, **The Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy**

Exploratory Research on Effectiveness

RICHARD NATHAN: Because it comes at the end of a very full day, people are hearing a lot and taking in a lot, this is a great deal to ask of you. But we do want you to think about two areas of our own research, where we're trying to reach out and do new work. So, I'd like to call to the podium Malcolm Goggin and Richard Roper.

And I think what I'll do -- and I see David over there, come on up Malcolm and Richard -- is say that they'll each present, and we'll hope to receive your questions, but not take the time to answer them at this meeting. And after they've presented, I'll ask David Wright to thank us and say what he thinks we should say as we finish this long and good discussion of many important subjects related to our mission at the Roundtable.

The first paper is by Malcolm Goggin, and it represents an early effort by us to do what we call comparative case studies. We believe it is a methodologically important paper, but it is a work in progress. The second paper is a report that Richard's going to deliver -- and I'll introduce both of them, and then they'll go in that order -- on an opportunity we hope to have, but don't know if we yet do have, to do a more formal quasi-experiment with a large data set in New York City.

So, these are two things that are very important to us. We'd like to hear from you; we'd like you to hear the two presenters. We should have put this first, because it really matters in terms of where we're going. We've had so many good things to do, we come to it now. But, please, think about this and help us.

Malcolm Goggin is a visiting professor of political science at Michigan State, where he is associate director of the Program in Public Policy and Administration. He is also, I am proud to say, a senior fellow at the Rockefeller Institute. He is the author of a number of books, which are referenced in the biographical sketches we provided, and he, with Deborah Orth, is working on a new study explaining research on assisted reproductive technology -- I should say, explaining that subject, designed in 11 counties.

And he's also working with us, also with Deborah Orth, in a related part of our research on our state capacity study on the family purposes -- marriage and pregnancy prevention -- of the 1996 Personal Responsibility Act. So he's a very important person in our work. I think I'll let you speak, Malcolm, and then I'll introduce Richard. And Malcolm has some charts, so I'm going to go where I can follow his charts.

MALCOLM GOGGIN: Since this presentation is accompanied by some slides, a power-point presentation, you might want to, if you can't see the screens, move back a little bit, those people who are up front and on the sides, so you can see.

Well, I'm certainly glad that I don't have to give a presentation after the Reverend Rivers and Rabbi Saperstein, because we are going to talk about research, a very dry subject, and they had something very exciting and important to say about other matters. But I do have the benefit of having to follow the words of various people who spoke

earlier today that kind of set things up for me. And I'll just make reference to a few of those words.

John DiIulio last night talked about the importance -- it was one of his commandments -- of good empirical studies of what faith-based organizations do. Luis Lugo today talked about the importance of learning about the nature, scope and impact of FBOs, and he talked about or noted that research and analysis are patchy. And I think that even Jim Towe recognized that it's important now to provide tangible data on what FBOs do, and what impact they have. And he also went on to say that we need better data on what works and what doesn't work.

So, in a way, these folks have set me up, and Professor Orth, who isn't here today, to talk about the contribution that we think we are making to the question of what works, what doesn't work, what faith-based organizations do and how they do it. So, Brian, could we have the next slide, please?

So the problem here, as I would summarize what I heard today, is a gap in knowledge, a gap between what we know and what we need to know about what faith-based organizations and their secular counterparts do, how they do it, and to what effect. What is the impact of what faith-based and non-faith-based organizations do in the area of social services delivery?

Let me just say that the purposes of this particular research are to really serve two main purposes. One is as a stand alone research project from which we have findings that we're going to report on today, and the second is to assess what the directors of these faith-based organizations and secular organizations in Grand Rapids, Michigan have to say about how they define effectiveness, how they define success. What's a successful person who's gone through their program and completed it? What does that person look like, and how do they go about defining and measuring success?

And then, finally, and I think this is important to remember as we go through these slides, is that one of the principal purposes is to serve as a pilot study for a much larger project. This is the first in a series of nine or ten case studies in other parts of the country besides Michigan, and covering other service domains besides housing. So what you're going to hear today is the first step of several steps that we plan to take in the near future to put together a large project, but learning from the lessons that we have gathered from our experiences in doing research in Grand Rapids.

Now, why did we choose Grand Rapids? What is it about Grand Rapids that makes it an attractive place to do research? Well, I think we have four different reasons for that. One is that, as Amy Sherman and other people who've done scans of various states have determined, Michigan's one of those states that is most likely to contract social services out to faith-based organizations. Michigan has a reputation for being very faith intensive.

Now, Kent County, which is in the western side of the state, which is not like Wayne County in Detroit, which is very heavily Democratic, very liberal, a much different -- we're like in two different states here on the southeast side of the state and in west Michigan, two very different cultures. In west Michigan, there's a vibrant, mature, well-integrated network of social services agencies. In fact, in the housing area, there is a Grand Rapids Housing Continuum of Care, which includes more than 50 representatives of homeless shelters, service providers, community-based organizations, public and government agencies, and the private sector.

Now, this is a town of 200,000; we have 50 organizations that are involved in this coalition. And finally -- and anybody who knows that part of the country will know that Kent County is a very religious community -- churches, especially the Christian Reform Church, but also the Catholic Church and Evangelical churches play a very important role in civic life in Grand Rapids.

So those are the reasons we chose Grand Rapids. It also happened to be the fact that we live in Grand Rapids, Deborah Orth and I live in Grand Rapids. We have something called a convenience sample -- well, that's one of the reasons. But we also found that we had great entre to these organizations and the people who worked in them. When we told them that we taught at Michigan State or at Grand Valley State, as is the case with Deborah, they perked up and said "Sure, come on in."

Now, we don't know what's going to happen when we end up going to places where we're less well known and we don't go to the university or teach in the university that's in the neighborhood, but we certainly had a very, very warm reception. And a lot of the people that we talked to were graduates of Michigan State University, or they were currently enrolled in the master's and social work program at Grand Valley. So that helped a lot.

Now, why we chose housing, after considerable deliberation and considering alternatives, was that it's a very common social service that's offered by faith-based organizations. If you look at some of the reports of inventories of what faith-based organizations do, or what churches or congregations do, many of you know a lot of them are involved in providing emergency services like food pantries and others, and a lot of them are involved in housing. Yet the number of studies that have been done of housing are relatively few.

A lot of the studies that are being done today are, of Charitable Choice anyway, are of employment and training, and not of housing. So there are studies out there, but there are few studies that specifically look at housing and the role of faith-based and non faith-based organizations in the delivery of housing services.

Now, I will say -- and I need to define for you what we're talking about here. We are talking about intermediate term housing, not necessarily emergency shelters. These are not the places that you think of for somebody to come in for a night or two. We're talking about a minimum of 30 days stay, with a maximum of 24 months stay, with case

management. And in many cases, it's intensive case management. So, we didn't look at the rescue missions and the services that they provide just to people who come in for a night or two.

Now, I'm going to spend a little bit of time talking about my favorite subject -- I'm a little obsessive about this -- theory, method, and data. And it's a little late in the day for this, but let me tell you a little bit about how we designed this research. By the way, the copies of the report are on the table on the way out, and they're 45 pages of single-spaced report -- that's quite substantial -- and I'm not going to go into a lot of the details of the case studies themselves. But I do want to talk about how we went about doing the research, because we're going to go from here to the next step, which is doing nine of these, and we want to make sure we've got it right.

So, first thing we tried to do was to compare cases that were similar in as many respects as possible, except those variables in which we were particularly interested in. Now, what were the variables we were interested in? What did we want to purposely vary? Well, we wanted to have faith-based organizations and at least one non faith-based organization. So, in this case, we had a government provider of housing services, a direct provider. But the problem was, we couldn't even find a secular organization that provided housing services.

Grand Rapids is so faith intensive that almost everybody who's involved, except for this government agency, is, in fact, a faith-based organization. The only organization that qualified was the YWCA, and they had a special program just for victims of domestic violence. And by the time we got to Grand Rapids to do our field research, we found out they needed a six-week period to get approval for doing any kind of research, a very sensitive area. They didn't want anybody poking around in this particular program.

So the one difference that we did want to see in our study was differences in type of organization, between faith-based and a secular counterpart. In this case, it was a government agency.

The second difference that we wanted to purposely include as a result of our sampling was the difference between faith-based organizations that receive government money and those that do not. So, in our study, we included four organizations that get money from the government and two organizations that don't. But unfortunately, even in the case of, let's say, a category of cases that we call FBOs that don't receive government funding, we found there's quite a bit of difference.

What if these organizations refused to take government money because they didn't want it to interfere with their proselytizing? They wanted to be able to give out bibles, they wanted to have a required bible study class for everyone who came into the program, and they wanted to have their folks go on retreats, religious retreats, and they also didn't want to jump through all the hoops that they expected to have to do if they took money from the government.

So their motives were very different from the other organization in this study that didn't receive money, which was an organization that actually applied for government money, but was turned down by the local family independence agency, the social welfare office in Kent County, and got so discouraged by their experience that they didn't want to go back.

Now, the other part of this is that they were one of the organizations that did not want to play by the rules. If you took money from HUD and you had a shelter, you had to kick people out on the 29th night. If they weren't ready to go or were ready to go, they had to go. But one of the things about this other, this second organization, it was the Interfaith Hospitality Network, was that they wanted to be able to keep people as long as they needed to be there.

And if they took government money, they couldn't do that. And they wanted to take some of the hard to serve people, people who had felony convictions. And if you take HUD money, you can't do that. So, there was a different reason for, even though these are two similar kinds of cases, in the sense that they didn't take money from the government, their reasons for it were quite different.

Then, finally, so we wanted to have variation in terms of type of agency. We wanted variation in terms of type or sources of funding, either government or private. And we also wanted variation with respect, within the faith-based community or organizations that we had in the study, between those who were faith integrated, who integrated faith or religion into their program, and those who were faith segregated, or those that didn't integrate that into their program.

So if you're thinking about this from a methodological point of view, we have a most similar systems design, which tries to keep, as much as possible, similarities that are not theoretically important to us, and allow variation on independent variables that are theoretically important. And the one thing we didn't want to do was select cases on the dependent variable. I mean, anybody who's taken statistics, the first thing you learn is, you do not pick cases on the dependent variable.

We didn't want all cases of success and no cases of not so successful. But we did want a minimum of success, so we went to our expert informants in Grand Rapids and said, here are the cases that we think we want to look at; tell us if we've got somebody in here that's really not doing the job. And everybody said, yes, everybody you have here is fine; they are at least a credible, viable organization that's living up to its mission.

Now, what are our expectations? These were the organizations, and this is the way they've been divided. There's the Salvation Army and the Catholic Human Development Outreach. These are very well known national organizations. But then, there are some homegrown FBOs, like West Town Jubilee Housing, a very small operation that's one of those that doesn't receive federal funds, and Dwelling Place, which is a very large organization that was started by the Christian Reform Church and has turned into a much more secular kind of organization.

So let's stop for a second and ask ourselves, well, what are our expectations? What did we expect to find? We expected to find variation in service delivery, in the program model, and we expected to find variation on the effect on clients. And what we were looking for was co-variation between those things and the type of organization, the sources of funding, and the level of faith integration. That's what we were looking for, based on our theoretical perspective.

So these are our research questions, and I will just let you take a look at these; I don't want to dwell on them. But you can see that we're driven by a need to try to answer a number of questions about variation. Do faith-based organizations behave any differently than non faith-based organizations? Do those faith-based organizations that receive federal funds behave any differently than those that don't? And are faith integrated FBOs doing things differently than faith segregated FBOs?

And we wanted to also, in looking at that last question -- how do organizations define and measure program effectiveness? Now, we weren't measuring effectiveness. This is not a study of comparative effectiveness. If we wanted to do that, we would have to have the pair matching technique that Chris Winship and others have used in Boston, or we would have to use a quasi-experimental or experimental design with random assignment and with control and treatment groups.

So we weren't trying to do that. We wanted to look at effects. How were clients affected by going through the program in which they were enrolled? So we have to be very careful that we limit what we are doing here. We're not measuring effectiveness. We're not testing hypotheses. We're not testing theory. This is a case of analytical induction, building up from the ground up, and developing theory and developing hypotheses that we will test later in the larger comparative case studies.

So what is our theoretical perspective? Again, a brief mention of what it is that we're using to guide our research. This is theory driven research. So, in that sense, we have used a theory of change, which has four propositions: FBOs are more holistic, they stress spiritual renewal, they place program participants in an ongoing support network, and frontline workers in FBOs, compared to non FBOs, are more caring and more personal in their approach to clients.

Now, in addition to that, we've introduced another aspect of theory that doesn't usually show up in the literature on FBOs. It comes from communications theory, and I've used it in other research, and I find it very useful. If we're going to try to change people, we're going to try to change their attitudes or their behavior, we need to have a change agent, and we need to have a message that that change agent is delivering to clients. And we have to have clients that are either going to be receptive to or resistant to that message to be able to act on it and change their attitudes or change their behavior.

So communications theory provides valuable insights into programs that aim to transform the lives of participants by changing their attitudes and behaviors. And the

effectiveness -- the theory, so goes the theory -- the effectiveness of, let's face it, what's going on here is the effort at persuasive communications. If I'm a caseworker and I'm working with a homeless person, I'm going to try to persuade them to change their life, to change their attitude, to change their behavior, to leave this program and go out and do things that they weren't able to do before they got into the program.

So, what is it that makes for effective communications? Well, it's the messenger, or, in this case, the caseworker or the person who's working face to face with the client, and the standing or reputation of that caseworker in the eyes of the client, the message and its clarity, or consistency, or credibility, or the frequency with which that message is delivered, and, finally, the characteristics of the clients that the messenger is trying to change.

Are these clients receptive to the message? Are they willing to change? And are they convinced of the benefits of change? So let's go to our, okay -- where do we get our data? What do we do here? We are basically doing qualitative research; there's no bones about it. It's qualitative research, field research, case studies, whatever you want to call it. We are using traditional methods of data collection, but we have a multi-method approach.

First, we went out and we surveyed -- first of all, we got a list of all the organizations in the City of Grand Rapids who were supposedly delivering some kind of housing services to the homeless, and we had a list of 34. And we went out and talked to all the executive directors of those 34, and we gave them a survey to fill out, which, on the basis of their responses, were used, then, to really decide, were they delivering the kind of services to the kind of clients that we wanted to include in our study?

For example, we did not want to include the rescue missions that really provided emergency shelter to adult males. So we eliminated them. We didn't want programs that were too specialized in terms of the population they were serving. So we did this survey and, at the same time, we identified the faith-based organizations in our data set, and we administered a faith integration survey, and from that survey of 21 questions, we developed a scale, from one to four, and placed each of the organizations that were faith-based on the scale, depending on how they answered those 21 questions in the survey.

Then we conducted face to face interviews with six of the seven executive directors and 22 other managers, caseworkers, tenant managers, and other frontline workers. In addition to that, we observed several client-provider interactions. We sat there and watched what happened, and we checked what happened against what they told us they did. Then we also had focus groups, from four to eight clients, in each of the seven organizations that we included in our study, and we collected documents that we included in our analysis.

Now, we wrote seven case studies. We have copies of our report here. Of the 45 pages in that study, in that report, 35 are the case studies. So the bulk of what we talk about, through the words of the people that we interviewed, is their stories. And their

stories are broken down in this method of structured, focused comparison of cases that we use. We have a standard set of questions that we ask of each case. We use it like a respondent to a survey. A case is, we ask questions about the background of the individuals who are involved, their education and experience, how many people work there, what the budgets are, how many people they serve, factual information.

Then we have a second section on program model, what the program looks like, how it works, who does what, what's the sequence. Then the use of evaluation -- do they do evaluation studies, do they do exit interviews, do they do surveys of clients? How do they define effectiveness and success? And what efforts do they make to try to collect data on performance?

And then, finally, based on our focus group interviews, where we spend an hour and a half, approximately an hour and a half, with four to eight people in a focus group setting, we ask about client perceptions of what it's like to go through the program and the effects of that program on them. And so we rely on documentary research and we rely on triangulation, using all of these methods to come together, a method that Peter Spoto, John Orr, and others in California have used in their research.

Okay, what are some of our findings? I'll just summarize them very briefly. We have two types of clients who are in this intermediate term housing program. The first type -- and most of the people that are served by these programs are either women with children or women, but there are two or three of these service providers who actually include single men with children. Those happen to be the ones that don't take money from the federal government.

But anyway, we found that there are really two types of women. One is, those who basically just lack some skills, and these are educable clients who are just there through no fault of their own, who happen to end up on hard times and are in a homeless shelter. A lot of them come from living in cars, living in emergency shelters, living on the street.

And then, the second, who we also find in some of the research we've been doing on TANF, is the multiple barrier client, who has many different problems, and going through a life skills education class isn't going to solve those problems. And so the approach that one has to take to those kinds of clients is very different than for the first.

So we found that faith-based organizations who were funded by private donations and not government grants and contracts are more likely to work with this hard to serve population. So, in one way, if we talk about comparative effectiveness, we have to be careful that we are really comparing apples and apples, that we're not taking one organization that treats the hard to serve, comparing it with another organization that treats the educable, and then come to the conclusion that, hey, this secular organization didn't work, or this organization that didn't take money from the government didn't work, whereas the one that did, did. So we have to be careful.

So one of the other findings -- this is a table that's in the report, and I'm not going to -- I just suggest that when you get a look at the report that you take a look at this. This actually just displays the various differences among the seven organizations that are in our study. And the main point that I want to make here is that there's no standard approach to service delivery. There is kind of a model that the Salvation Army uses that is a five-step model that involves a tiered approach, with rewards at the end of each tier.

But other than that, there are very different approaches to the way in which intermediate housing programs with case management are delivered. And although all the programs aim at finding clients stable housing, and all of them have rules and regulations, all of them provide case management, they do differ significantly in both policies and programs.

Let's skip over the next slide, Brian, and I'll just go to the last point.

What are the most important findings here? Well, the first has to do with the method. We, remember -- one of the purposes of this research is to serve as a pilot for a larger set of cases, comparative case studies of probably ten different locations, in five different service areas. And we learned that since this is a naturally occurring experiment, it's not a laboratory, we have to worry about control.

And one of the major challenges of this kind of research is to use purposeful or purposive sampling as a method of control, because you don't have a treatment group and a control group. You don't have a laboratory setting where you can control everything. You have to deal with the threats to validity that come from a lack of control.

The remedy, then, is to select cases that are similar in as many respects as possible, but differ along the independent variables that are of theoretical interest. And one thing that we learned is that probably, Grand Rapids is too small. We have to go to a larger city, where there are not 10 or 12 possible organizations to choose from, but where there are maybe 50 or 75. And then you can really carefully pick and choose the ones that you want to include that are similar in more ways than the ones that we happen to end up here.

But nevertheless, you're always going to end up -- Campbell and Stanley talk about control. There's no way that you can eliminate control. It's a question of how much control you can get.

We also learned that in-depth case studies can provide a very rich complement to some of the aggregate, large end, statistical correlation studies that other people are doing around the country. I think we learned a lot by listening to and recording the voices of the people who manage these programs and the clients that are served by them. And in that sense, I think we make a contribution that complements the work of others, like the work that's going on in California and Indiana, and in other places around the country.

So we do think it's a very useful method. And if you have a chance to read our report, and read the case studies, you will get inside the heads of the people who run these organizations and the people who are served by them, and I think you'll have a better understanding of the personal side of research about faith-based organizations, what they do, how they do it, and to what effect.

Finally, I think that David Saperstein said that there is no standard approach, that not all faith-based organizations are the same; there are significant differences among faith-based organizations, and there are also significant differences between faith-based organizations and the one government agency that is in our study. And I think the most important observation that we made was that -- and this is not because the people in the government agency didn't care about their clients, it's just that caring about their clients and reaching out to them, and trying to touch them and address their spiritual needs, was not one of their priorities.

So what we found was that clients perceived the frontline workers, at most, if not all the faith-based organizations, as more caring, more loving, more enduring than those who worked for government agencies. And then, finally, as it turns out, what appears to make the greatest difference in the lives of the homeless are these frontline workers. They're the ones who have daily contact with clients, and how they approach them makes a huge difference.

Whether a client perceives frontline workers as caring, empathetic people, "who've been there," -- a lot of these caseworkers are reformed alcoholics, who are former crack addicts, who are people who have been in poverty, who are single mothers, who have been homeless, that can identify with these clients, and the clients know this. They can tell the difference between somebody who is just out of their master's program in social work and hasn't had any experience living, and those people who've been out there and in similar circumstances.

And on the other hand, you find, in some cases, the perception of clients that say that these caseworkers, these frontline workers are merely enforcers of the rules and regulations; they're the taskmasters. They make us, you know, toe the line, they keep us in line, they write us up; they kick us out of the program if we don't live by the rules. And they're not very sympathetic. And those two perceptions were very distinct, and you'll get a flavor for those as you read the case studies in the report.

Thank you.

RICHARD NATHAN: Thank you very much, Malcolm. Now, it's my great pleasure to introduce Richard Roper, whom you've already heard from once today. And we thank him for doing double duty.

Richard Roper is the founder and president of the Roper Group, a public policy consulting firm that specializes in economic and social policy research and analysis. Before establishing the Roper Group, he served the director of the Port Authority of New

York and New Jersey, which is a big organization, as head of the Office of Economic and Policy Analysis for the Port Authority.

He was the director of the Program for New Jersey Affairs and the executive director of the Council on New Jersey, and a lecturer at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, where Richard and I worked closely together and became close associates in research projects that Richard has performed ably, that we've worked on over many years, worked on together.

He's the author of many articles and reports on social, economic, political, and government operations. He has his MPA degree in public affairs from Princeton University. And he's going to describe, as I said earlier, a project which the Institute is engaged in, which we hope and think may open up an opportunity for quasi-experimental research that is more sophisticated and data driven in ways beyond what we're doing in the comparative case studies in ways that personally I could say a great deal about and I care a lot about, but we wanted you to know about it.

And so I'm very happy to have Richard describe a report which the Roper Group has written for us on the New York City Charitable Choice Initiative.

Richard Roper.

RICHARD ROPER: Thanks, Dick. You guys are a hardy group. I knew that there were a couple of ladies here from the New York State office, who were particularly interested in hearing about this demonstration, and I hope they managed to stick it out. Unfortunately, I don't present like Reverend Rivers; in fact, I don't even present like Malcolm Goggin. So we're going to have to get through this. I'm going to try and make this a relatively brief presentation. I'm going to try and keep it under 15 minutes -- I'm going to shoot for that at least.

A little over two years ago, New York City's Human Resources Administration, the HRA, in cooperation with the New York State Labor Department and the Research Foundation at the State University of New York, initiated a demonstration project in the city that sought to take advantage of the Charitable Choice provision of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, the Welfare Reform Law.

A colleague of mine, JoAnn Rock and I, contracted with the Rockefeller Institute of Government to perform a process evaluation, an implementation, an evaluation of the implementation of the demonstration. The demonstration lasted about 18 months, and our observations occurred over the first year of that period. Feedback from the evaluation was used to inform the implementation of this project and served as a way of modifying and achieving the goals that the partners, the public partners sought to achieve at the outset.

HRA is the city's welfare agency, and in 2000, in the year 2000, it was in the midst of implementing welfare reform in the city. Over the preceding two years, the city's welfare caseload had declined substantially, but concern about the hard to serve clients hitting the 60-month eligibility ceiling prompted local officials to think about ways of reaching clients who had fallen into sanction status because of their failure to participate in the requirement, but whose time clocks were still running.

HRA's 28 welfare offices -- they call them job centers -- had encountered considerable difficulty in getting sanctioned clients to respond to agency entreaties with respect to the participation requirements. Under welfare reform, HRA was contracting with private service providers, both for-profit and non-profit organizations, to assist clients with job readiness skills and job placement.

The officials decided that perhaps contracting for outreach services to the sanctioned population might be worth pursuing as well. Given its difficulty in getting the attention of this population, the agency concluded that perhaps using faith-based organizations might achieve a greater success, believing that the FBOs offered both cultural awareness and credibility that a government agency could not.

Sixteen faith-based organizations were selected to participate in the demonstration; all were African-American or Latino Protestant congregations, located in neighborhoods with substantial welfare populations. Four of the 16 organizations were selected to serve as administering entities or intermediaries for a small group of churches in each of the city's five boroughs. An advisory board composed of representatives from the FBOs, HRA staff, and state officials served as a mechanism for problem solving as the demonstration was implemented.

The State Department of Labor, using TANF support funds, contracted with the four intermediaries -- three of which were large congregations, and the fourth was a community based organization -- to provide outreach services to the clients the agency identified. The intermediaries subcontracted with the other 12 FBOs participating in the program. The intermediaries provided financial accounting and other technical assistance to the subcontractors, all of which were relatively small congregations.

The start-up period of the demonstration was a bit rocky for both the government and the faith-based partners, as they ran head-on into cultural differences, conflicting lines of authority, and competing missions. The government agencies had approached the FBOs as they did any other vendors, as outside organizations hired to perform tasks that government specified. The FBOs, in contrast, viewed themselves as independent organizations that government was tapping to help solve a social problem.

Further, the intermediaries had expected to take a leadership role on par with the senior government partners, applying their expertise as senior administrators running successful organizations.

This rocky start, fortunately, served to build a strong foundation as the partners reinforced their commitment to the project as it went forward. The contracts given to the FBOs were all cost reimbursement. The FBOs were also given small startup grants to get their programs underway. Each FBO established an outreach center in or near its church facility, but none operated the center in the church sanctuary itself.

The contract specified that the FBOs were to assist clients in four areas. Once contact was made and the clients had agreed to accept the services offered by the FBOs, they were to conduct an assessment of the client's skills, complete an employment report for the client, provide job readiness activities, and enable the client to cure her sanction.

Benchmarks were established for each of these areas, and the intermediaries reported back to HRA on a monthly basis by borough. Each benchmark had a dollar value that ranged from \$150 to \$300. All the outreach centers set up sophisticated computerized --

(TAPE CHANGE.)

RICHARD ROPER: -- cost reimbursement contracts into performance based contracts. This conversion, however, never took place. Throughout the demonstration, the FBOs were paid on a cost reimbursement basis.

HRA provided the intermediaries with a list of sanctioned clients every two weeks, using a zip code catchment area for each borough. The intermediaries then distributed the names among the frontline churches. During the first year of the project, each outreach center received approximately 1,500 out of a total of 20,000 referrals from HRA.

Well, what happened? It was projected that about 50 percent of the clients referred to the FBOs would agree to be assessed, but outreach proved more difficult than was expected. Even with redoubled efforts that included mailing multiple letters to clients, making several follow up phone calls, and making home visits, the FBOs did not make contact with most of the clients, and this was a bottleneck in the demonstration. Only about 27 percent of the referrals were contacted.

The difficulty in making contact was grounded in the fact that this was a group that had not responded previously to vigorous outreach by HRA. They were difficult to locate because they moved often, and the addresses provided by HRA were often inaccurate. And many of the clients lacked phones or lived in shelters.

Once the FBOs made contact, however, almost 50 percent of the clients agreed to be assessed. Short term counseling provided by the FBOs consisted of establishing a relationship, discussing reasons for the client's sanction, and making a referral to an HRA program. Most clients wanted to comply, to cure their sanctions and to move on, but

some 20 percent of the clients reached preferred to remain in sanction status, reporting that staying home with children was more important, or did not want to participate in the dreaded community work experience program that involved laboring in the municipal parks.

The FBOs performed job readiness activities with 56 percent of the clients they had assessed, a bit short of the 60 percent. One of the tasks assigned the FBOs, they considered problematic. The FBOs were reluctant to report on client employment. This task required the FBOs to ask clients to report on undocumented income. Center staff felt that fulfilling this aspect of outreach suggested that they were working as undercover operatives -- cops, if you will -- for the government, and most of the FBOs, as a consequence, fell far short of the benchmark in this area. They were simply unwilling to press this matter.

The FBOs' performance was best in the area that mattered most. It had been estimated that the centers would be successful in getting 20 percent of the clients they assessed to proceed to cure their sanctions. Over 30 percent actually did, and some centers were able to get as many as 50 percent of the clients they assessed to cure their sanctions.

Let me point out that our evaluation was not intended to measure religious intensity or to assess the impact of the faith factor in service delivery. We did, however, attempt to draw some conclusions about the extent to which FBOs employed elements of faith in their work. We found no evidence that FBO center staff tried to convince their clients to join their faith, and they did not seem to encourage clients to attend church or church activities. Indeed, the FBO staff tended to be very cautious, even about inviting clients to participate in activities offered by the church, although staff members sometimes informed clients of other church based social services such as food kitchens.

However, while all of the centers respected the ban on proselytizing, they differed in how strongly religious character influenced their activities. We classified the centers as highly faith oriented, faith oriented or neutral. In the highly faith oriented centers, religion or faith explicitly guided their efforts, and staff members viewed their work as ministry, which they defined as doing god's work.

Several such centers recruited paid staff from their congregations, and staff members shared religious convictions and drew on religious values in training and motivating each other, and openly discussed the importance of god in their lives. They also prayed regularly together. Staff members viewed prayer as strengthening them in their work.

The highly faith oriented churches also were most comfortable with home visits, seeing them as part of their ministry. Staff indicated that most clients welcomed them into their homes, and few seemed offended by a visit, but simply wanted to know why they had been referred to the FBO. Staff members of these centers recounted that clients

asked the staff to pray for them, and said that they shared their own testimony or religious experience with clients, if asked to do so.

However, these staff members were less straightforward about whether they prayed with clients, if asked. Staff members did not seem to include formal worship, teaching of scriptures, or regular group prayer in their contacts with clients, nor did they indicate any interest in bringing clients into their particular faith or church. However, staff members did discuss among themselves the possible role of faith in helping clients to change their lives.

In the faith-oriented centers, in contrast, philosophies of hope and forgiveness shaped the outreach efforts. But religion did not directly guide daily work, and they did not necessarily frame their work as ministry. Religious experience seemed more compartmentalized for many staff members, and they did not emphasize the role of religion in their interactions with clients, focusing instead on overcoming adversity.

While some conducted home visits, they were more reluctant than the highly faith oriented centers to do so. Staff members did not share the role religion plays in their lives or pray together.

The few neutral centers shied away from any reference to faith or religious character, viewing such references as a deterrent to engaging clients. In fact, the connection of these centers to the church seemed almost non-existent. Overcoming adversity was a common theme in staff members' work, rather than references to scripture.

The New York City Charitable Choice Demonstration provides clear indications of some of the benefits, and I think as well, some limitations when government contracts with FBOs for the delivery of social services.

Let me conclude by saying that we found that FBOs set up low cost outreach centers that offered personalized and compassionate service to clients, while advocating effectively for them with the welfare administration. Clients seemed to respond to this approach. The FBOs were more successful than expected in getting interested clients back on track. We found no evidence that the FBOs offered explicit religious training or worship, or tried to convince clients to join a particular faith.

However, the FBOs varied in how they defined religious character and applied it to fulfilling the goals of the program. Some FBOs viewed their work as ministry, while others pursued a more secular mission. Despite their standing in the community, the FBOs struggled to make initial contact with clients, especially those who tended to come from beyond their neighborhoods or their congregations.

Finally, the modest reimbursements the churches received for their services challenged the ability of the smaller congregations to sustain their participation in the program. I think in the report that's out front, you will be able to review in greater detail

the findings from our study. The last point I want to make, and then I'm going to sit down, has to do with the final finding contained in that report, and it is as follows.

The ban on proselytizing and worship by government funding FBOs is clear, but the definition of religious character is not. Charitable Choice is relatively explicit about permitting faith-based organizations to contract to perform public social services without having to give up their religious character, but much less explicit about what this means in the actual practice. Faith-based organizations that provide public social services need not change their name, revise their mission statement, reconstitute their boards of directors, or remove religious icons in order to appear more secular, nor, depending on state or local requirements, need they set up a legally separate organization with separate financial accounts to receive and expend public funds, though they may decide to do so for reasons of prudence.

Certain restrictions on the use of public funds by FBOs are also relatively clear. It appears to be widely understood among the FBOs participating in the New York City demonstration, for example, that public funds cannot be used for religious worship, instruction, or proselytizing. But there are large expanses of gray areas between these bright, these few bright lines.

Can an FBO counselor relate her own experience to a client, or might this be interpreted as offering personal religious testimony? If a client asks an FBO counselor to pray for her, can this be honored? What if a client requests the FBO counselor to pray with her? Without more specific guidelines, FBOs may be overly cautious and thereby undercut the very value they may provide by offering much-needed social services. Or, their activities may unknowingly cross ambiguous boundaries, leaving them and their government partners vulnerable to legal challenges. I think our research suggests that legislators and government agencies that wish to enlist FBOs in providing social services must define the faith-based aspects that may apply to this work. And on that, I'll stop.

RICHARD NATHAN: Thank you very much, Richard. That paper is available and has a note in it which explains the status of this work for the State University of New York, which is underway and almost completed. And we would ask that if you want to distribute or use this in any further way that you need to check with Richard. And I thank you, Richard, for that very clear and good description of a project that he knows very well, and indeed, I've been closely involved with him in following this work.

I'd like to call to the microphone David Wright to thank you, and I'd like, in the process, to thank David and his staff. What a good job they did.

(Applause)

DAVID WRIGHT: Thank you very much. I have the happy job of synthesizing all that we heard today, and that should take me approximately an hour and a half to two hours. I hope that you're all feeling well rested. Seriously, you stalwart souls who are still here, I won't keep you. This is a long, we hope, very full and informative day for

you. It certainly has been for us. And I really just want to do a couple of things. I want to thank some people and also want to just mention a couple of next steps that I want to be sure that we can draw to your attention.

As for whom we need to thank: certainly Luis Lugo and Julie Sulc from The Pew Charitable Trusts who made our work, this event, and so much of what we're doing possible. I want to thank those who are here now, and certainly, those who were with us over the course of the day, and who have been working with us leading up to this event, our Participating Scholars, a group of people all around the nation who have been doing terrific, very important work on this topic.

Dick stole a little bit of my thunder here, but I want to thank the people on our staff who worked so hard to make this effort possible today. They really did work tirelessly, and I would like to just name them, and I hope you'll bear with me and offer them a vote of thanks yourself. Kathleen Campbell, Lisa Montiel, Alison Sarnoff, Jason Scott, Brian Jackson, Joyce Keyes-Williams, all of whom are here on site; Jim Feck, back at home, keeping us on the Internet live -- this has been on all day -- and Patti Cadrette, who actually had to go so far as to have a new baby to get a day off, and otherwise would be with us today herself: I just want to say thanks to all those people.

(Applause)

Last, certainly not least, upcoming events. December 11th, right back here at the National Press Club, Chip Lupu, who I'm sure will be with us, I hope, the lord willing, and Bob Tuttle again, will release their full report on the state of the law, a much more in-depth report, going through the topics that they shared with us in summary form today. And we hope you can join us. That should be 10:00 to 12:00 on December 11th.

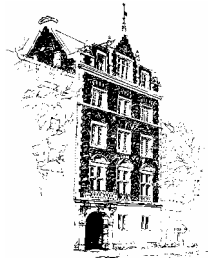
March 6th and 7th, 2003, an event we're cosponsoring with Independent Sector at the Bethesda Hyatt Hotel, it will be a full, two day conference, invited papers, panels, and we hope you can join us. Next November 13th and 14th, we'll be back again with a full annual conference and hope you can join us then.

We are going to be continuously in contact with as many of you who are interested as possible. Please join us on our website, that's www.religionandsocialpolicy.org. We will be posting transcripts of today's proceedings very shortly, probably within a day. The webcast of this event will be on the site for the next year. Those of you who want to rush right back home and relive the fun when you get back, please feel free to do that. And again, thanks very much for being with us.

(END OF EVENT.)



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