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ABSTRACT

The impact of urban financial crises on the provision of recreational and cultural services for children, primarily by local governments, is explored. Emphasis is on the effects upon California's children's services of Proposition 13, a tax relief initiative limiting property taxes in that State. Data from an Oakland, California, survey are presented to provide background on the characteristics of children who use such services as parks, museums, libraries, and zoos, and on the frequency of service use. This is followed by a description of the political and economic contexts of services provision, including decision making processes and financial considerations. It is emphasized that, while public support of Proposition 13 was not a mandate to reduce or eliminate children's services, the resulting reduction in government revenues had that adverse effect. County and local government responses to the need for austerity in a period of financial crisis (such as closing of service site, staff reductions, user fees, and private sponsorship), and the inadequate consequences of these responses for different children, are described. In conclusion, the future of children's services is considered. (Author/MJL)

CHILDREN'S OUT-OF-SCHOOL SERVICES AND THE URBAN FISCAL CRISIS

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AND THE URBAN FISCAL CRISIS

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I

CHILDREN'S OUT-OF-SCHOOL SERVICES IN AN ERA OF UNCERTAINTY

In Paul Goodman's remarkable retelling of the Horatio Alger myth an advocate of experiential learning intones:

> What we want for you, boy, is a life worth living, and that's Culture, that's Education...What we want to give you, boy, is the Habit of Freedom.

The streetwise truant remains skeptical, however:

> First you say, no school! Grand! Then you say there'll be a leader draggin' me around. Not so grand. Then you say we don't get life but a selection of life. So you have a school after all! I seen 'em walkin' along the street two by two on the way to the Aquarium!... Include me out! Freedom is freedom - you don't have to teach me no freedom! [1]

Young Horatio has grasped the most basic dilemma of out-of-school life--its simple pleasures are too important to be left in the hands of children. Since some very important lessons are learned outside school, children need to be "given" the proper "selection of life." Toward this end, over time many recreational and cultural activities directed at children have become a social responsibility.

Romantic notions of children's autonomy may be appealing, but in contrast the creation, planning and budgeting of recreational and cultural activities is a complex business. Within the public sector it is an activity done not only in the name of children, but for society as a whole, and our commitment to providing these opportunities has been substantial. Yet, nearly a century after their inception, the providing institutions are in a precarious, marginal postition. Today, the urban parks, recreation departments,

libraries, museums and other facilities which serve children are in a predicament with potentially devastating consequences. They must contend with both a crisis of resources and a crisis of purpose. This is a study of how they are managing and what is at stake for children.

In this monograph we are concerned with a whole range of services and programs that have, over time, developed pro-educational agendas--agendas which either directly or indirectly complement traditional school activities. The linkage may be ambiguous but those who provide these out-of-school services are often quick to justify them as learning experiences, enriching or supplementing the school curriculum. One salient difference, of course, is that children use these facilities and services voluntarily and even those who participate do not "learn" the same structured lessons that the schools are expected to provide.

This informality makes it difficult to measure the precise impact of these services on the educational achievement of young people, but their relationship to issues of learning and development has always been prominent. The vagaries of mandate and purpose are reflected in the history of out-of-school, publicly provided services for children. At times they have been in the vanguard of social change in the inner city, and at other times they have been the most concrete symbol of the child-centered suburban "good life." They have served as a safety valve for social control of aliented, unemployed youth, and they have also been the emmissaries of "high culture" to the "masses."

There have been periods when these institutions seemed to lose their basic purpose, only to gain a new role as conditions changed. They have periodically been financially strapped, only to find new funding, sometimes from highly unlikely sources. Crises are certainly nothing new. But what we see as unique today is the convergence of a critical shortage of fiscal resources with an unprecedented level of conflict about the proper ways to provide these kinds of services for children. The two issues are intertwined, of course. Sometimes issues of program purpose and effectiveness are cited as a reason to reduce funding for children's services. In other cases revenue shortages force programming reforms aside in a single-minded push for fiscal survival. Both crises must be confronted however, for neither will soon recede. The impetus for changes in programming comes from shifts in socio-cultural values, family structure, leisure, sex roles, and other basic life patterns. The resource scarcity is a function of the broader fiscal crisis of the public sector. This heavy agenda of structural problems, and the crisis-management ambience which envelops many urban institutions, suggest that there is something more than fun and games at stake.

The Search for Legitimacy

Throughout their history cultural and recreational services have struggled to be taken seriously. That this battle has not been won can be clearly seen in countless recent confrontations over municipal budgets. The most frequently voiced sentiments have been: that these "quality of life" programs do not compare

in importance to the "essential city functions" such as police and fire protection; and that the non-essential services, if they continue to exist at all, should make greater use of volunteers rather than trained professionals. These two arguments threaten the core of legitimacy of cultural and recreational institutions. The strength of their position largely depends on two beliefs: that they perform valuable social, educational and economic functions; and that they require skilled, professional, paid staff in order to operate properly.

The quest to overcome marginal status within local government has been continual since the advent of municipal systems for recreation and culture at the turn of the century. The services had their origins in philanthropic efforts directed toward urban immigrants and their children. These sand gardens, community centers and reading rooms were seen as vehicles that could help children assimilate mainstream American culture, including leisure behavior. Many of the services were intended expressly to address the needs of children from broken homes, or to offer refuge from the "squalor" of tenement life. However effective the programs may or may not have been, they were generally recognized as necessary and essential. By 1920, social reformers and budding professions had succeeded in turning largely privately funded programs into local public responsibilities, The assumption of public control was the successful conclusion of the first "marginality crisis."

The new cultural and recreational services carved out a niche in the sphere of social reproduction, roughly between the school and the family. Like the school, they were a form of collective consumption. No working-class families in the early twentieth century could have individually provided their children with the facilities and opportunities offered by the new programs. Also like schools, they were thought to be merit goods, whose benefits were shared not only by clients but by society in general.

On the other hand, the service providers fought hard to distinguish themselves from the schools in many respects. One prime difference was the absence of compulsory attendance at cultural and recreational institutions. No child would be "forced" into a library or community center. Related to this was the notion that in these voluntary settings children could develop their individual potentials, away from the homogenizing drudgery of the classroom. At their best, librarians and recreation leaders could enliven books, sports or crafts for students who were turned off by their school's homework, physical education or shop class (or who had dropped out of school altogether). The sometimes cordial, sometimes testy rivalry among services for the attention of children has been a constant theme in this history and is today as relevant as ever.

The relationship of the new services to families entailed much more than the above-mentioned aspect of collective facilities. Most early recreation workers were essentially social

workers for whom helping families was a basic mission. Sometimes this meant removing the children from the home as much as possible, both to relieve the pressure of overcrowded tenements and to inculcate values which were assumed to be lacking at home. There were also other therapeutic approaches, however, which encouraged families to recreate together in the community center or park. And of course, many of the new centers, especially the settlement houses fostered the solidarity of neighbors. There were several ideological strands within recreation, as within all the helping professions, and some were more respectful of the working-class family than others.

In the last several decades service providers have employed some highly resourceful strategies to overcome successive marginality crises. These strategies have included courting new constituencies and client groups; developing a social service expertise (by providing compensatory education or therapy); establishing channels for financial assistance from higher levels of government; and redefining the boundary between public recreation and private amusements. At present all four of these strategies can readily be observed. Throughout this monograph we will examine these strategies in historical context and in the situations where they are currently being pursued.

Children as Clients

In most of the services considered in this study children are often the most numerous, but not the only clients. The children's component of each recreational and cultural institution operates within two political frames of reference: that of the

service (e.g. libraries, museums); and that component of the service pertinent to children's status. It is worth noting briefly three aspects of the politics of children's services which bear directly on the issues that will be analysed in this study.

1. First, children have little or no voice in the creation or administration of most programs. The concept of the "best interests of the child" is generally predicated on the assumption that adults will be determining and defining the scope of activities. This is self-evident or unavoidable in many contexts, of course, and debate consequently revolves around which adults are to exercise their judgment (parents, judges, psychologists, social workers, teachers, etc.). In the realm of recreation and culture, however, children's rights are problematic in several respects. Some have argued that the very concept of play--the most visible form that some of these activities take, regardless of more subtle developmental agendas-- should involve minimal adult interference. The "right to be left alone" is thus important, and its limits are continually tested in playground design, art instruction, library rules and any number of other situations.

Even so, in most cases children are planned for, argued over and manipulated much more often than they are consulted for their opinion about the design or the management of programs. There are youth councils of various kinds, and occasional surveys, but they are not viewed as powerful or influential decision-making centers. The most effective statements children can make about programs and facilities are to "vote with their feet," either by

participating or staying away. The essentially voluntary nature of the domain makes this possible and distinguishes it from compulsory services such as schools.

It has been argued that children's services are comparatively disadvantaged because, unlike many other services, the primary clients cannot take part in the political process. The increasing involvement (and manipulation) of children and teenagers in demonstrations to defend programs may be a sign that some people are trying to overcome that weakness.

2. A second aspect of children's service politics is that, in the broadest sense, children go in and out of fashion. The readiness with which taxpayers or legislators will vote for increased spending or new programs in education, recreation, health and other services fluctuates in accordance with demographic, economic and social factors. While this is difficult to understand and explain, the phenomenon can be clearly seen in indices ranging from the fate of school bond elections to the proliferation of adults-only housing developments. The general consensus seems to be that the later 1970's represent a downward stage of the cycle for children's interests, contrasted (often in the false light of nostalgia) with the child-centered 1950's.

The generally unsympathetic climate for children is partly a function of their reduced numbers at the present time. This is due largely to a decline in the number of children born to each woman, and an increase in mothers' ages at the birth of their first child. The "shortage" of

children is not permanent, and the next upswing is expected around 1985-1990.

The demographic shift has led to the closing of schools in many communities and a decline in the demand for certain other children's services. Concurrently there is increasing resistance by non-parents to supporting these services through taxes, and a growing age-segregation in many housing markets. In some cities it has been documented that more than half the rental housing is barred to families with children even as home ownership becomes unfeasible for more young families.[2] The result is a metropolitan landscape dotted with emergent "life-cycle ghettos," much more strongly delimited than in the past.

The concept of a society unsympathetic to children also touches deep-seated cultural frustrations. The inadequate performance of schools and other services, the persistence of stagflation, and a general economic and social malaise all seem to be telling parents that hard work will no longer ensure a better future for their offspring. We are treading on tricky, very subjective terrain here, and only wish to suggest that what popular sociology has dubbed "the end of the American Dream" is a force to be reckoned with.

3. A third general quality of children's services is that they frequently endow those who work in them with second-class professional status. Children's librarians, recreation supervisors, museum personnel and others all consistently report that many financial and promotional rewards of their professions and agencies

are denied them, at least partly because they work with children rather than adults.

The majority of people who serve young children are women, including 99 percent of children's librarians and 82 percent of elementary school teachers. Yet the proportions of women in management and administrative positions are very low, and in some cases (including school superintendencies) actually declining. While many of the sex role stereotypes within the human services professions are being broken, progress has been slow.[3] Many professionals feel that there is an additional increment of discrimination which is specifically directed at those who work with young people.

Inequality

The services we are concerned with here have never been provided equally to all American children, nor have they often achieved the standards of equity laid down by the professions or the courts. The issues surrounding the equitable provision of cultural and recreational services have their own peculiar history and logic. While in some respects the situation is analogous to that of public schools, there are crucial legal and empirical differences. The issue of who gets what, and at what cost, is central to our inquiry. Though the services as a whole may be in crisis, the effects will be felt very differently in the cities and suburbs, and in rich and poor neighborhoods within cities. Race, sex, income, family structure and other characteristics of a child's "life circumstance" play an important role in determining his or her opportunities.

Attempts to measure the quality of municipal recreational and library services have usually focused on their inputs--the resources which are allocated. The most important input is, of course, money, and measures of operating expenditures per capita (or per child) are commonly employed. Unequal expenditures have often been challenged in the courts when a class of discriminated persons can be identified. As a consequence of many court decisions, on constitutional grounds it has been easier to show discrimination against racial groups than economic classes, age groups, or other categories of possibly underserved people.[4]

Other things commonly measured to determine service quality are facilities and capital stock--library books and films, park acreage, number of tennis courts, and so on. Professional associations and planning agencies are continually revising their standards of per capita "requirements" for capital equipment and land, but the levels in most inner cities and many suburbs have always been consistently well below these targets. This, of course, raises the question of how useful standards of this sort really are.

In recent years an increasing number of performance criteria and output, or "outcome" measures have been developed for municipal services. Program budgeting, survey research and a variety of other management tools have been brought to bear on recreation and cultural services, as a way of finding out who

actually uses the services, whether they are cost-effective, and whether they seem to be having an impact on the clients. These findings sometimes conflict with the results of studies of inputs.[5] A broad disparity in per capita operating budgets between two library systems may not be matched by broad disparities in attendance or circulation. Conversely, different districts can spend identical amounts on a service and achieve vastly different results. Inequality of service outcomes does not currently have the legal standing that inequality of inputs has achieved--only the latter convincingly qualifies as unequal treatment under the law. However, with each passing year there is a greater social pressure for the recognition of outcomes. The Children's Time Study, from which some of the data reported in this study is taken, is a prototype for a certain way of measuring the impact of children's recreational and cultural services. Time Study data is especially relevant to the study of out-of-school publicly provided services because it contains extensive information about family time structures. One consequence of sustained budget cutbacks is greater dependence on parents, especially mothers, to facilitate their children's participation in out-of-school programs. Parents are differentially equipped with time, money, transportation, and other resources to handle these tasks. "Privatization" of this sort is already a source of increased inequality in post-Proposition 13 California.

Aside from the question of resources, we are concerned with the types of programs offered to children. Recreation has a long history of ethnic and sexual stereotyping and segregation. For decades, libraries and museums offered only the cultural artifacts of mainstream white, middle class America. The pluralistic explosion in all of these institutions in the 1960's and 70's is one of the truly significant changes in their history. The changes encompassed not only content but also the forms of service delivery and the composition of the work force. Even as these innovations were beginning to make a measurable impact, they were starting to fall in the wake of budget cutbacks.

In this monograph we will discuss service disparities in a wide variety of contexts, using a number of different indicators. We will compare neighborhoods within the same city, and different cities within the same county or state. We will compare the experiences of blacks and whites, boys and girls, affluent and poor children. As we shall see, for the more poorly served communities and individuals the "era of limits" began years before the current tax revolt and recession.

In this chapter we have provided synopses of four general themes which dominate this account of recreational and cultural services for children. These include:

- the convergence of prolonged fiscal crisis and a crisis of basic purposes and principles.
- the continuing efforts of the services to overcome marginality and gain legitimacy as professions and government functions.
- the special circumstances and vulnerability of programs for children.
- the changing but persistent inequalities in the distribution of program costs and benefits.

We will elaborate each of these themes in this study, focusing in particular detail on the fiscal dilemma that has so drastically altered the circumstances and conditions under which California municipalities provide children's out-of-school recreational and cultural services.

DEFINITIONS AND BOUNDARIES

The primary focus of this analysis is publicly sponsored recreational and cultural services for children. However, to cover the subject adequately we must explore some related topics. Following are five kinds of distinctions that will affect our inquiry.

1. Public and Private Services

The problems of private youth-serving agencies are closely related to the fate of local government. In many respects the two sectors complement each other, but in certain situations they directly compete for resources and clients. As already mentioned, the initial impetus for many programs came from private, non-profit organizations started during the Progressive Era. In some circumstances foundations today still provide "seed money" to underwrite innovative programs. More common these days, however, is the private agency whose dependence on government subsidies and job training funds eclipses its philanthropic support. When this happens, the sharp line between private and public services is blurred. This takes on special importance in light of massive public service cutbacks. Some private agencies

have been overwhelmed by a rush of too many new clients, while others have aggressively recruited new program participants from the diminished public sector. Furthermore, from our own research it was clear that most preadolescent children did not know whether the sponsors of programs they used were public or private. Consequently, at various points we shall mention quasi-public and private service agencies, including YM-YWCA, Scouts and others. Commercial leisure activities are also of some interest, especially in terms of their relationship to the public sector.

2. Local, State and Federal Funding for Children's Services

Our primary interest is locally administered and funded institutions. It is important, however, to note the small but growing role of the state and federal government in the field of urban recreation and culture. This support has taken the form of grants to localities for development of facilities (e.g. acquisition of parkland, construction of libraries), and support of the arts, of which a sizeable component is directed toward children.

A second kind of higher level governmental involvment in the provision of children's services may result from the "tax revolt." The replacement of local property taxes with state level funding may lead, some say inevitably, to greater state control of municipal institutions.

In California, there has been no such administrative shift in the first two years since the passage of Proposition 13, even though the state's financial contributions have greatly increased. This lack of change may be only because few long-range plans have been implemented as yet.

3. Distinctions Among Types of Services

There are important differences in the structures, traditions, political bases and basic missions of recreational and cultural service institutions. We do not intend to underplay these differences, and in fact they are a key element of the analysis.

Longstanding rifts such as between public and school librarians; between parks and recreation administrators; or between physical educators and Little League coaches reflect different priorities within the community of children's service providers. These differences range from ideological disputes about the most effective environment for informal education, to comparisons of the cost/benefit ratios of various modes of service delivery.

However significant the characteristics of individual services may be, their cumulative impact on children, and their collective future, are the more basic issues. We hope, in fact, that one result of our work will be greater mutual awareness of common problems among the people working in these services.

4. Services for Children in the Context of Services for the General Population

To understand the status of services to children within an institution which serves clients of all ages, it is necessary to study that institution's overall structure. Libraries, museums, and recreation departments provide services for several specific age groups, in addition to their general offerings. Sometimes age-specific services grow and decline according to the latest pedagogical fad, or the latest budget cuts. (Library programs for "young adults," for instance, seem to be a recent casualty.)

In this report we will examine the ways in which the bureaucracies' overall budget and operations affect their programs for children. The other side of the story, whereby children serve to attract resources and legitimacy that enhance an agency's overall standing, will also be explored.

A clarification is in order concerning our flexible use of the word "children." In some cases we are referring to All minors served by an agency. But where specific life cycle references are intended, we will endeavor to be clear. Adolescents, toddlers and pre-adolescent school-age children are distinct groups, of course, with some very different needs. The last group, pre-adolescents, receive the most attention in this monograph, because they were the subjects of our field research. On the other hand, many of the service providers who were interviewed for this study addressed issues faced by young people at all stages of development.

5. California versus the Nation

Most of the contemporary evidence in this report comes from municipalities in California. Almost all of the primary source material (interviews and surveys) were collected in the San Francisco Bay Area. However, the basic issues and the results obtained are not only relevant in California. As we shall note, with regard to children's services, the conditions described are basically similar in state throughout the country. The services and their corresponding professions have many common practices and operating styles. The structure of local government varies among cities, of course, but much of that variation is found within California.[6] Many cities

elsewhere have seen their budgets strained to the same point as Oakland or San Francisco circa 1979, for other reasons but to much the same effect. It is clearly a national phenomena.

Where unique circumstances appear to be a prevailing influence on children's services, we will so note and explain. However, it is our hope that the information and analysis in this report will be useful to people throughout the country who are concerned with the future of cultural and recreational services.

THE DATA

This monograph is based largely on four types of data about children's services. These will be introduced briefly here, with the technical details reserved for appendices.

Interviews with Service Providers

During the past three years interviews have been conducted with scores of professionals who work in parks and recreation departments, libraries and museums. Our subjects ranged from entry level children's librarians to the chief city librarians, and from play leaders to directors of parks and recreation departments. There is a cross section of age and ethnicity among the men and women to whom we talked, and they represent a broad range of experiences in child-serving agencies. Most of the respondents were employed in the cities of Oakland and San Francisco, or in the suburban communities of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

Also interviewed were the members of city managers' or mayors' offices who had responsibility for preparing the budgets for cultural and recreational service agencies. In addition, we spoke with leaders and rank-and-file activists within the unions representing workers in the various municipal and county agencies.

Several interviews were also conducted with faculty members of Bay Area universities who taught training programs in librarianship and recreation.

Interviews covered a wide range of topics. The questionnaires were varied to suit the role of the particular subject, but most respondents in each round of interviews commented on a comparable set of issues. The earlier round, in 1977 and 1978, focused on the subjects' perception of their work; their relationships as service providers with children and parents, with their profession, and with the organizational environment. Respondents were also encouraged to describe their motivations for entering the field, their sense of how children's services have changed during the course of their professional lives and what the future holds.

The second round of interviews, conducted in the Spring of 1979, was directed at exploring the fiscal crisis precipitated by California's Proposition 13. The interviews offered a detailed look at the budgeting and decisionmaking process of urban public bureaucracies. The consequences for children of California's tax rebellion emerged clearly as those people close to the decisions described the outcomes.

In almost every instance we were given excellent cooperation by our subjects. The general tone of their responses was satisfaction that "outsiders" were interested in their work. The fact that we did not pose as advocates of their existing programs did little to diminish most subjects' belief that more public dialogue could only help their situation.

2. The Children's Time Study

The Children's Time Study research project, of which this monograph is one product, undertook various studies exploring children's use of discretionary time.[7] Time spent outside of school represents a large and important component of children's lives about which relatively little is known. The Children's Time Study developed a new approach to measuring and analysing five "domains" of discretionary time use--television viewing, participation in organized activities; chores and jobs; free play and parent-child time use together; and school achievement.

The principal instruments of the Time Study was a survey conducted in 1976. Children from the sixth grade of Oakland's public schools were interviewed in their homes by a trained survey researcher and, at the same time, a parent completed a self-administered questionnaire in a separate room. The Study involved 764 families and featured a cross-section of the city's public school enrollment. Appendix B describes the survey sample characteristics.

The survey has extensive information about children's use of publicly provided services: parks, recreation centers, schoolyards, libraries and other neighborhood-based facilities. It contains accounts of each child respondents' visits to community-wide cultural facilities, museums and regional parks. The data on the social and economic background of the children are also extensive, permitting detailed analysis of the use of facilities by various types of children. There is also data on parents' attitudes about the quality of services and their importance to children. Finally, information from other studies of Oakland's public services has been brought to bear on the Time Study data, to see if the availability of programs, facilities and services is a major determinant of children's time use patterns.

Publications on the Tax Revolt

While local taxes and what they pay for have long been a subject of general concern, the last two years in California have been a quantum leap in research in the field. Even a partial listing of the sponsors of research on "the effects of Proposition 13" shows the broad range of constituents which include, among others, the National Association of Social Workers (California Chapter), the Urban League, the California State Library, the Children's Rights Group, the California State Department of Finance, the Institute for Governmental Studies and the California Commission on Government Reform. There are even several new publications, such as the Tax Revolt Digest, aimed at keeping up with the escalating information

flow. In preparing this report we have reviewed this great range of studies and evaluations. In addition, we have analyzed many hundreds of newspaper accounts describing the fate of children's services in cities across California.

Professional Literatures

Each of the services examined here has been the subject of extensive research about its history, principles and practices. The histories range from uncritical "in-house" chronicles to skeptical revisionist analyses of the social role of these urban institutions. For our somewhat eclectic mission, the entire range of material has been useful to us. Similarly, although textbooks and evaluations of the state of the art in recreation or librarianship tend to quickly become dated, they too proved to be useful indicators of the conventional wisdom within these professions on matters of planning for children. There is also a considerable recent literature on innovative approaches to the delivery of children's services. The new writing, especially in recreation, reflects the influences of sophisticated quantitative management techniques, on the one hand, and humanistic psychology and philosophy on the other.[8]

Worthy of special mention here is the long tradition of empirical research on the use of neighborhood facilities. Since the community studies of the 1920's, sociological methods have been applied to the questions of who uses recreation, libraries and other leisure services. The marriage of urban social analysis to public policy is not always fruitful, but there have been some valuable contributions through the years.[9]

ORGANIZATION OF THIS ANALYSIS

We focus here on the fiscal condition of publicly provided cultural and recreational services for children. To begin with, however, it is necessary to locate the place of these activities in children's daily lives. In other words, before trying to understand how contemporary trends in local government finance are affecting children's out-of-school services, it is important to know about the constituency for these services and the range of need needs that they appear to fulfill.

With this as background, sections III and IV examine the current fiscal environment of local government and the particular services in question. After describing some of the factors affecting the provision of human services by local government generally, we will focus directly on children's services--exploring the process of decisionmaking within children's programs, between competing agenices, and among different levels of government. Here we shall confront California's Proposition 13 and examine its particular impact on services for young people.

Section V reflects on our findings and considers the ways in which Porposition 13 is changing the provision of children's services in California. The changes seem to be taking place at three levels: immediate, often unplanned response to budget shortfalls; structural reorganization of the service delivery systems; tna a reformulation of the fundamental boundary between public and private spheres of childrearing. In other words, the current debate, which this report can hopeuflly inform, is not only about what the services <u>can</u> do for children in the future, but what they <u>should</u> do.

In Appendix A we present an account of the impressive growth and abrupt decline of summer school in California. Significant differences in financial and administrative contexts required us to separate summer school from the other services being reviewed. Nonetheless, as the most prominent early victim of Proposition 13, summer school is a prime example of the tenuous position of programs intended to enhance children's educational experience.

Chapter One

Notes

1. Paul Goodman, The Empire City (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1942) p. 122.

2. Dora J. Ashford and Perla Eston, The Extent and Effects of Discrimination against Children in Rental Housing A Study of Five California Cities (Santa Monica: The Fair Housing Project, 1979).

3. Accounts of recent efforts to combat sexism in library work can be found in publications of Women Library Workers (Berkeley, Ca.): WLW Journal and SHARE A Directory of Feminist Library Workers (Second Edition, 1976).

4. The most noteworthy "service equalization" case is Hawkins v. Town of Shaw: 437 F.2d 1286 (5th Cir. 1971). For a good review of the issues see Robert Lineberry, "Mandating Urban Equality: The Distribution of Municipal Public Services," Texas Law Review, 53:26, 1974).

5. Frank Levy, Arnold J. Meltsner, Aaron Wildavsky, Urban Outcomes:Schools, Libraries and Streets (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

6. Library and recreation services are provided by cities, counties, special districts and school districts. Cities vary in their charters and forms of government, some with professional city managers and others with strong mayor systems.

7. See Appendix B for a description of the Time Study Survey. For an extended analysis, see Elliott Medrich, Judith Roizen, Victor Rubin and Stuart Buckley, The Serious Business of Growing Up: A Study of Children's Lives Outside of School (Berkeley: University of California Press, forthcoming, 1981).

8. See, for a broad range of modern techniques, James F. Murphy and Dennis R. Howard, Delivery of Community Leisure Services: An Holistic Approach (Philadelphia: Lea and Febiger, 1977).

9. Robert S. and Helen M. Lynd, Middletown (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1929); R. Havighurst, Growing Up in River City (New York: John Wiley, 1962); and Celia B. Stendler, Children of Brasstown (Urbana, University of Illinois, 1949) are useful in this respect.

II

THE CLIENTS: WHO ARE THE USERS OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL SERVICES

This monograph focuses on a variety of out-of-school activities and programs for children, many of which have "educational" or (in the traditional sense) "pro-educational" agendas. It is not possible to know with certainty the degree to which these activities affect in-school achievement. However, there is little doubt that they contribute to children's development and well being and that they are part of the important link between out-of-school life, in-school learning and school performance.

To understand the argument we will develop in this monograph it is first important to know how these various out-of-school activities fit into the lives of children. Using data from our Oakland survey of children we begin by locating these activities within children's activity patterns. This provides a backdrop for the assessment of how the eroding fiscal condition of the providing agencies may be affecting children.

In this report we shall focus on services and facilities provided by public agencies and intended for use by pre-adolescents, (though not necessarily exclusively by them). We must distinguish between types of activities and be aware of the locus of program provision. "Facilities" and "programs" represent two distinct categories of children's out-of-school services. The former are settings (e.g. a schoolyard or a park); the latter are activities, organized and structured in varying degrees (e.g. sports, music, dance). These categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive. All programs, for instance, are provided at facilities. But for our purposes we characterize a park as a facility (for it tends to be a place children go to play on their own), and a recreation center as a program (for children who go tend to make use of the organ-

ized activities it provides). The two loci of services considered here are "neighborhood" and "city/region." The former represent decentralized opportunities, close to home, often intended to maximize access for children. Schoolyards and branch libraries are prominent examples. The latter demand larger "catchment areas" to generate a user population, hence they are typically limited to relatively few citywide or regional locations. A zoo or an aquarium fall into this category. Here we shall distinguish neighborhood level facilities uch as schoolyard, parks, and branch libraries;from citywide or regional level facilities such as museums, zoos, aquariums and "special interest activity centers" (e.g. the San Francisco Exploratorium,and Marine World, a commercial theme park).

CHILDREN'S USE OF SERVICES: THE NEIGHBORHOOD LEVEL

The following sections draw data from the Oakland Time Study Survey and report use levels across a range of facilities and services available to children in that community.* We begin with neighborhood-based activities and, in the later sections,examine use of citywide and regional services.

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* Appendix B provides backgron information on the Survey and the characteristics of the sample. A scan of that material before reading further may help interpret the data presented here.

Schoolyards

In many communities the most readily available out-of-school neighborhood facilities for children are playgrounds, often located adjacent to public elementary schools. In California, for instance, there are specific State Department of Education guidelines requiring the provision of open space for recess and organized play. Schoolyards sometimes include recreation centers administered by municipalities, thereby providing a comprehensive after-school leisure activities complex. Even in the majority of cases, where there is no adjacent recreation center, every primary school provides, minimally, some kind of open space. These may be small, fenced-in, asphalt surfaces or they may be large, unfenced grassy areas. In either case, they are familiar turf to children, who mostly attend school close to home and find these facilities within easy walking distance.

Having a schoolyard close to home significantly affects use levels. As Tables 1 and 2 indicate, 62% of the children interviewed in Oakland play at the schoolyard, and 53% play there at least once a week. Aspects of the distributions are of interest. Boys are more likely than girls to play there, and they are more likely to play there often. Chidlren from lower income families are more likely to use the schoolyard than children from higher income families. (This may in part reflect differences in children's access to alternative kinds of play space, particularly yards at home and rooms to themselves.) Blacks tend to use the schoolyards more than whites or Asians. This is especially true of black males, who are by far the heaviest users. The pattern of occasional

TABLE 1

CHILD USES SELECTED SERVICES, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS: BY CHILD'S BACKGROUND

	Schoolyards	Parks	Recreation Centers/Programs	Library
Total Sample	63%	69%	31%	43%
All Boys	71	74	37	46
All Girls	55	64	25	41
Income Per Family Member				
<$175	66%	74%	35%	41%
$175 - $499	66	65	28	48
>$500	38	60	22	41
Parent Education				
High School Degree	64%	72%	32%	41%
High School Graduate	60	66	31	43
Some College	65	70	30	43
College Graduate or more	57	68	29	51
Sex/Race Typology				
Black	68%	71%	33%	41%
Boy	76	76	39	41
Girl	61	66	29	42
White	51%	63%	29%	51%
Boy	60	75	35	56
Girl	42	53	25	47
Asian	47%	54%	14%	61%
Boy	52	53	21	65
Girl	45	55	6	57
Family Structure/ Mother's LF Status				
Single Parent	63%	71%	36%	40%
Working	62	69	37	42
Not Working	64	73	34	38
Two Parent	64%	67%	25%	46%
Working(both)	63	68	24	46
Working(one)	65	66	27	48

TABLE 2

HEAVY USERS OF SELECTED SERVICES, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS BY CHILD'S BACKGROUND

	Schoolyards (at least 1 day/week)	Parks (at least 1 time/week)	Recreation Centers/Programs (two or more programs)	Library (few times/ mo.or more)
Total Sample	53%	41%	14%	38%
All Boys	-	47	20	41
All Girls	-	36	10	36
Income Per Family Member				
$175	59%	38%	16%	41%
$175 $499	54	39	12	40
$500	41	29	8	32
Parent Education				
High School Degree	60%	45%	17%	38%
High School Graduate	50	45	16	37
Some College	54	37	11	38
College Graduate or more	42	38	10	39
Sex/Race Typology				
Black	61%	44%	17%	38%
Boy	-	49%	23%	39
Girl	-	40	12	38
White	37%	31%	10%	39%
Boy	-	42	15	45
Girl	-	19	7	33
Asian	19%	37%	3%	51%
Boy	-	39%	5%	58%
Girl	-	35	-	48
Family Structure/ Mother's LF Status				
Single Parent	57%	45%	15%	36%
Working	54%	45%	11%	36%
Not Working	60	44	19	36
Two Parent	51%	38%	12%	39%
Working(both)	48%	41%	10%	38%
Working(one)	54	34	15	40

and frequent use is also quite different for white and black children. Fifty-one percent of white children report that they play in the schoolyard some time, but only 37% play there at least once a week. For black children there is a much smaller difference between occasional and frequent users--68% as against 61%. This suggests that for these children schoolyards are a basic part of their regular recreational patterns. In contrast, Asian children are far less likely than children of other ethnic groups to use the schoolyard or to use it on a regular basis.

Children who are regular users of schoolyard recreational facilities seem to have relatively few alternatives. According to a recent study by the Oakland Planning Department, low income neighborhoods had on average significantly lower capital investment in other parks and recreational facilities.[1] In effect, schoolyards help to meet the play space needs of children in low income neighborhoods where there are few other off-street places to play. An apparent demand for these play opportunities is indicated by the higher level of use in these lower income areas.

Frequent schoolyard users are also more independent and are less likely to depend on parents for assistance in their after-school hours. Only a third of the parents whose children go to the schoolyard five days a week or more say that their children depend on them to take them places they want to go. This contrasts with the situation of the infrequent schoolyard users, 61% of whom depend on their parents to regularly transport them to their leisure activities. We may conclude, then, that children who are on their own a good deal

of the time (and therefore need facilities close to home), who have fewer material resources, and who live in areas poorly serviced in other ways make up the largest share of the "regular" schoolyard users. And the predominance of black children in most of the sampled neighborhoods having these characteristics accounts for much of the ethnic disparity in schoolyard use. Schoolyards, whether supervised by adult leaders or not, represent relatively accessible recreation areas for young people. Particularly in inner cities, where open space is often at a premium, these facilities provide both an important play opportunity and a place to socialize and be with peers.

Parks

Like schoolyards, many urban communities have systems of neighborhood parks--often quite small--distributed throughout residential areas. Today, in most large cities, this open space is largely a highly valued legacy of the past. Typically parks were situated on the outskirts of towns and as the towns grew into cities the parks were surrounded and sometimes engulfed by housing and commercial development. There is little possibility of expanding these existing systems of facilities without extraordinary expenditures of money and (often) major dislocation of business and residences.

Parks are by no means as ubiquitous as schoolyards. Where there is a schoolyard located in most elementary school attendance areas, the expected service area for a park is usually larger. Hence, when we speak of the parks system of a community and children's use of these facilities their access is, by definition, more limited.

Referring again to Tables 1 and 2, let us consider the situation as reflected in the Oakland survey data. Overall, use of parks parallels use of schoolyards. In our sample, 69% of the children said that they played in a local park at least once a month. Forty-one percent report playing there at least once a week. Compared with schoolyards, a smaller proportion of park users say that they are heavy users. Furthermore, a much smaller percentage of children play in parks frequently than play in schoolyards frequently.

As we have said, not all children have easy access to parks, and the data suggests that proximity does impact use levels. Sixty-nine percent of those who say they go to the park at least once a month walk there, and children from families without cars are somewhat overrepresented among both occasional and frequent park users. Similarly, parents of park users are more likely to say that parks are "easy for their children to get to" than parents of non-users (Table 3).

TABLE 3

Access to Parks and Use of Parks

Parent: Is Access Easy	Child Goes To Park: Once Per Month or More	Child Goes To Park: Less Often
Yes	65%	58%
No	30	36
Don't Know	4	7
	(N=518)	(N=232)

There are sex differences in parks use, at a level parallel to differences in schoolyard use. Overall 74% of boys, compared with 64% of girls, say that they go to a park at least once a month. Only 47% of boys and 36% of girls say that they go to the park at least once each week. Fully 92% of all girls who frequently use the park are black, and the attendance pattern of black girls is more similar to black boys than that of white girls is to that of white boys.

There are significant differences in use patterns across income groups. Children from lower income families are much more likely to use parks and to use them regularly than children from upper-income families. This tends to support the thesis already proposed that children from lower-income families have fewer open-space alternatives and that parks, like schoolyards, represent important play area opportunities. We shall return to this point in a subsequent section.

So the pattern of parks use is somewhat similar to that of schoolyards. In particular, those who are economically disadvantaged and those who live with relatively less yard space around their homes tend to be the heaviest users.

Recreation Centers and Organized Recreation Programs

Participation in recreation center programs is considerably lower than use of the facilities already examined. Referring to Tables 1 and 2 the pattern is as follows. Overall, 31% of the sampled children had taken a lesson or participated in a group at a recreation center. Only 14% had participated in two or more programs.

Like parks, the distribution of recreation centers across the city is such that many children live at some distance from the nearest facility. But in 7 of the 22 sampled neighborhods the recreation center was located in the schoolyard, meaning that children living in these areas had the easiest access. As the data show, use of the programs is quite significantly related to proximity (G=.72). Furthermore, 92% of children who took at least one lesson lived in close proximity to these facilities (Table 4).

TABLE 4

Proximity of Schoolyards to Recreation Centers and Levels of Use

Number of Lessons or Groups Child Has Taken at Recreation Center	Schoolyard Has Adjacent Recreation Center: Yes	No
0	43%	84%
1	24	12
2	32	5
P < .001	(N=266)	(N=498)

Differences in use levels between the sexes are noteworthy, no doubt related to the content of the programs offered. To begin with, boys form the larger constituency. Thirty-seven percent of boys as compared with 25% of girls had participated in at least one activity at a recreation center. Twenty percent of boys but only 10% of girls had participated in two or more.

If we consider different types of activities the pattern becomes more distinct. For example, sports is an important component of the programs offered at recreation centers, and twice as many boys as girls participated in sports groups and lessons. While girls were more likely to take fine arts lessons, this likelihood was not correspondingly as great as boys' participation in sports. This suggests an inadvertent imbalance in programming or, perhaps, some deliberate bias in the provision of activities Some activities are "intended" for boys, others for girls, and for various reasons there are generally more programs for boys than for girls.

This kind of data does not provide a definitive description of the institutional mechanisms through which unequal opportunities for girls and boys are maintained. In other, more extensive analyses of sex differences in organized sports activities, we have found that girls tended to participate in their smaller number of programs at rates roughly equal to boys', and that elementary school athletic programs offered girls more opportunities than did municipal or private recreation agencies.[2] We also recognize that some significant changes are taking place in all

these agencies in the four years since our survey, due to compliance with federal Title IX guidelines and other social pressures. It is also apparent that fiscal constraints on children's services are jeopardizing these innovations at a time when they would otherwise be gaining acceptance.

Differences across sex and ethnicity in levels of participation are also striking and may be associated both with the nature of the programs available and their appeal among children of different backgrounds. There are significant differences in use and heavy use levels across ethnic groups and by sex within ethnic groups. In Tables 1 and 2 the extraordinary decline in participation from black to white to Asian children and the important differences between the sexes within each ethnic group is evident. Unravelling the sources of the differences is more than we can do here, other than to assert that they no doubt reflect, among other things, cultural differences across ethnic groups and parents' perceptions of the safety of public spaces. They may even seem to confirm some traditional stereotypes of "who likes to do what." This should be read not just as a matching of personal choices and opportunities, but as evidence of constraints in program offerings that limit a child's sense of what he or she can do.

Recreation center programs sponsored by municipal government agencies fall into two categories, those that are free and those that charge a fee. From our data it is clear that when lessons and groups are identified by their fee structure, children who are black, from low income families, from low educa-

tion families and from single-parent families participated in free programs more often than white children and those from groups with higher income, higher education and two parents (Table 5). In other words, the fee structure clearly influences

TABLE 5

Activity Fee Structure and Participation in Recreation Center Programs

Child has Participated in at least one activity and has following characteristics	Fee Structure	
	Fee Charged	Free Activity
Black	10%	28%
White	23	17
Low Income	14	34
High Income	12	13
Low Education	10	27
High Education	12	20
Single Parent	10	31
Two Parent	12	12

the nature of the user group. (Elsewhere in this monograph we will discuss in some detail the consequences of changing the fee structure in response to municipal budget cutbacks

With recreation center programs family structure and mother's labor-force status does not seem to significantly influence participation rates, except that children of non-working single parents are the heaviest users, and that children of single parents are more likely to be users of free activities. Child care or babysitting is implicitly provided by these services although it is difficult to know how many parents--regardless of family structure--encourage their children to participate for this reason.

Recreation center programs, then, are different in several ways from the activities we have already discussed. First, recreation centers are not just places to go and play, but are the scene of organized programs and activities. Children's propensity to participate is likely to be linked to their own interests and, perhaps to their parents' desires. Second, the programs are historically tied to the developmental objectives that communities and professions have for the young. Thus, the programs available are not free of larger social purpose and, therefore, they are also susceptible to social and/or sexual biases and stereotypes. Third, these programs function in a two-tiered structure, "fee" and "free," which apparently attract rather different constituencies, determined largely by family resources. Fourth, because they are supervised, these activities have the possibility of meeting a special need of parents today--child care outside of school hours, while parents are working or otherwise engaged.

Branch Libraries

Libraries are prototypical "pro-educational" out-of-school services. Branch libraries have traditionally been located in small facilities distributed across neighborhoods and intended to serve a different clientele than downtown main libraries. Children have always been an important client group of the

branches and are therefore the recipients of a variety of special professional services. While we may think of the library as a place to go for books, our data suggests that, like other public facilities, it also serves as a gathering place where children can meet and be together without necessarily utilizing the service in the conventional way. We deduce this by comparing children's responses to two questions, "Do you have a library card?" and "How often do you go to the library?" (Table 6).

TABLE 6

Library Cards and Library Use

	Go to Library	
Have Card	Once/Month or More	Less Often
Yes	75%	38%
No	25	62

P <.001

In our sample 54% of the children had library cards while 41% report that they go to the library at least once each month (Table 2). Relationship between the two measures is strong (G=.65) indicating a general link between the two items, although the pattern of responses across social groups reflects the varying needs that libraries fill.

Sixty-eight percent of children from high income families in the Oakland sample have library cards, as against 40% of children from low-income families. Seventy-nine percent of children whose mothers have graduated from college (or more) have cards as against 48% of children whose mothers did not finish high school.

Differences are considerably smaller in response to the other question: "How often do you go to the library?" In this case 41% of high income children and 37% of low-income children report that they go once a month or more. Among middle-income children fully 50% say that they go once each month or more. The smaller differences in children's behavior across income groups may be a reflection of alternatives available among wealthier families. In these homes there may be more reading matter on hand or readily obtainable, so that going to the library, especially if it is not conveniently located, is simply not done. Also, the range of responses to the "How often do you go" item is narrow across groups stratified by mother's education. Only 10% difference was reported, with 41% of the lowest education group going to the library at least once each month compared with 51% of children whose mothers are in the highest education group (Table 7).

TABLE 7

Library Use and Mother's Education

	Mother's Education			
Child Goes to Library	Less than High School	High School Graduate	Some College	College Graduate or More
Once a month or more	41%	43%	44%	51%
Less often	59	57	56	49
	(N=206)	(N=222)	(N=228)	(N=90)

Libraries are not as common as schoolyards (Oakland has four school sites for each library branch) and for many children they are not within easy walking distance. Proximity apparently is

an asset in attracting young people, for fully 73% of the children say that they walk to the library when they go there. A recent trend of closing down the smallest branches and replacing them with fewer, larger regional centers has been lauded for its economic efficiency but criticized by many senior citizens and parents of young children--the population for whom distance poses the largest barrier.

We developed a composite measure of the extent of library service in each sample neighborhood as a way of probing the nature of services across areas within the city. The lower the neighborhood index score the less likely a child was to use the library on a regular basis (Table 8).

TABLE 8

Children's Library Service and Library Use

Library Index Summary Score[1]	Non-Users and Infrequent Users[2]
4 (Highest Quality Service)	14%
3	24
2	30
1 (Lowest Quality Service)	32

$P < .01$

[1] The "Library services summary" index consisted of the following items: availability of a specially trained children's librarian, closeness of the library branch to the neighborhood, and the size of the branch's circulation of books (which is a reasonable proxy for size of collection). Each item was rated on a three point scale.

[2] Visits library less than once per month.

Going to the library is a different social experience across groups. Girls are a bit less likely to go to the library alone than boys. Eighty-five percent of girls as compared with 80% of boys report that they usually go with friends and siblings. Parents also have a clear impact on their children's library behavior. They serve as role models and as facilitators of transportation and card registration. Children are more likely to go (G=.37) and are more likely to have a library card (G=.56) if their parents use the library themselves. And going to the library with a parent is basically associated with high income, high education level, coming from a two-parent family and being white or Asian. This kind of modelling behavior, under any circumstances, represents an important dimension of library use (Table 9).

With regard to differences between boys and girls the following picture emerges. Overall, boys are just slightly more likely to go to the library than girls, while girls are much more likely than boys to have a library card (61% against 47%). In general, girls and boys look more alike in their library behavior than they do on any of the other types of activities we have examined here (see Tables 1 and 2).

Finally it should be noted that parents are more satisfied with the library if their child used it or had a library card. The correlation of satisfaction and direct contact with the service is one that holds for many of the other children's services where participation is not compulsory. In Chapter Four we will discuss the relationship of indicators of citizens' satisfaction with local services to the "taxpayers' revolt."

TABLE 9

Parent and Child Library Use

Child's Library Use	Parent's Library Use: Not at all	Hardly ever	Sometimes or often	N
Once per month or more	45%	25%	30%	(328)
Less often	51	31	18	(421)

Child's Library Use	Parent's Library Use: Not at all	Hardly ever	Sometimes or often
Once per month or more	41%	39%	57%
Less often	59	61	43
P<.001	(N=364)	(N=214)	(N-171)

Parent Library Use and Whether Child Has Library Card

Child has card	Parent's Library Use: Not at all	Hardly Ever	Sometimes or often	N
Yes	41%	30%	29%	(403)
No	58	27	16	(346)

Child has card	Parent's Library Use: Not at all	Hardly ever	Sometimes or often
Yes	45%	57%	68%
No	55	43	32
P<.001	(N=364)	(N=213)	(N=173)

CHILDREN'S USE OF SERVICES-- "COMMUNITY WIDE" AND "REGION WIDE"

The facilities discussed above are principally neighborhood based. They are characteristically provided in decentralized networks relatively accessible to children near their homes. We now turn to a range of facilities that are thoroughly "non-neighborhood" in that they service a much larger area and typically require much larger populations as a base of support.

We will focus on six facilities that have an educational dimension built into their programs. Three are museums--Oakland's city museum, the University of California's Lawrence Hall of Science and the San Francisco Exploratorium. The Oakland Museum is located in the downtown area, near the main library, the largest city park and main routes of both mass transit systems. It provides a full range of art, history and science exhibits as well as programs exploring local or regional issues of culture, history and ethnic tradition. It has a working agreement with the public schools whereby large numbers of children come to the museum each year to participate in activities led by specially trained instructors. The Lawrence Hall of Science is located in the hills above the University of California campus in Berkeley (adjacent to Oakland). Its science programs and exhibits are principally designed for children and teenagers. The Lawrence Hall sponsors a variety of after-school and weekend classes for children with special science interests. Its focus is "sub-regional," that is, most of its programs are attended by children from East Bay communities. The San Francisco Exploratorium is also a science facility for young

people. Supported by city funds and Federal and foundation grants, the Exploratorium utilizes high school students as "explainers"--docents who work with children at science exhibits designed to be touched and manipulated. The programs are relatively unstructured, although every effort is made to help children learn as much as they can or will during each visit. The Exploratorium has a region-wide clientele. Hence, the museums have somewhat different agendas and intended audiences, but all three seek to interest and attract young people with educational programs and exhibits.

The other three facilities discussed here also have educational and cultural concerns, but they are somewhat less intentional. Also, they charge admission fees, meaning that access may be related not just to the distance one must travel, but to the cost of the activity itself.

The Oakland Zoo serves the city and the entire East Bay. It is supported principally by city budget allocations. Only capital improvement programs receive significant outside support, mostly in the form of patron and corporate grants The San Francisco Aquarium and Marine World are both located quite far from Oakland. The Aquarium functions much like a museum, while Marine World is more of an amusement park. Of the six activities, fees at Marine World are highest, while depending under whose auspices a child visits, entry to the other activities may cost several dollars or they may be free of charge.

In this section then, we will be examining children's use of several different kinds of facilities--some located in close proximity to our sample population, others at some distance, and some charging fees while others are free or nearly free

The Museums

Even cursory examination of Table 10 indicates important differences among museums in terms of their relative drawing power. Oakland's city museum had been visited by 48% of the sample during the survey year, while only 19% had been to the Lawrence Hall of Science. This kind of difference is not explained entirely by proximity. For instance, the Lawrence Hall of Science is much closer to Oakland then is the San Francisco Exploratorium, but the latter was visited by many more children during the year (28% of the sample).

Most children go to these museums as a school activity rather than outside of school hours. Sixty-seven percent of those who had been to the Oakland Museum went with a school class, as did 70% of those who had been to the Lawrence Hall and 77% of those who had been to the Exploratorium. Respectively only 18%, 14% and 12% of those who had visited each facility during the year had gone with their parents. The differences across the sample in terms of "who they go with" will be explored below.

The Oakland Museum can claim some success in reaching many different kinds of children. Roughly the same proportions of the sample, across all family income and education groups have been there during the year. This is not the case for either of the other museums, where the likelihood of attendance rose steadily with increasing income and mothers' education.

The proportions of blacks and whites who had been to the Oakland Museum are comparable. However, only half as many

TABLE 10

SELECTED "COMMUNITY WIDE" AND "REGION WIDE" FACILITIES
(Children who have been to each facility during the school year of the Survey.)

	Oakland Museum	Lawrence Hall of Science	Exploratorium	Oakland Zoo	Aquarium	Marine World
Total Sample	48%	19%	28%	57%	30%	23%
All boys	50	23	26	59	30	25
All girls	46	16	30	54	31	21
Income per family member						
Less than $175	54%	10%	27%	59%	34%	26%
$175-499	44	22	28	57	31	23
$500 or more	51	34	35	53	24	19
Mother's Education						
Less than high school degree	52%	15%	27%	57%	36%	27%
High school graduate	46	17	22	54	25	23
Some college	45	21	32	64	29	20
College graduate or more	52	32	36	50	34	22
Sex/Race Typology						
Black	50%	16%	29%	66%	33%	27%
Boy	53	19	27	70	33	29
Girl	47	12	32	62	32	26
White	49%	31%	26%	42%	21%	15%
Boy	49	35	27	44	21	17
Girl	49	28	25	41	21	14
Asian	26%	32%	16%	13%	21%	9%
Boy	27	32	16	9	24	15
Girl	25	32	17	18	17	3
Family Structure/Mother's Labor Force Status						
Single Parent	50%	16%	28%	63%	34%	29%
Working	49	18	25	64	29	29
Not Working	51	15	31	61	41	27
Two Parent	47%	23%	29%	54%	28%	19%
Working(both)	45	26	30	57	27	24
Working(one)	49	20	28	51	30	13
Who Child Went with(This Year)						
School Class	67%	70%	77%	15%	67%	40%
Parents	18	14	12	39	23	43
Child Has"Ever Been" to Facility	85%	38%	47%	94%	60%	73%

Asian children (25%) reported that they had been there in the Survey year. The relative distributions for the Exploratorium are somewhat similar, although the proportions of each group are much diminished. On the other hand, the Lawrence Hall mainly draws white and Asian children (in equal proportions), and less than half as large a proportion of blacks.

Tables 11 and 12 reveal important differences between two groups of children--those who went with their school class during the year and those who went with their parents. For the Oakland Museum, as family income and education levels increase, the child is less likely to have gone with the school class and more likely to have visited with his or her family. A far larger proportion of whites and Asians have been with parents rather than with school and a diminished proportion of blacks have been with parents.

The children who had visited the Oakland Museum with a school class were evenly divided between those with single parents and those with two.* Visits that children made with their own parents were not equally common, however. Just 29% of those who went with their parents were from one-parent households.

For the Lawrence Hall of Science, the use patterns are drawn very sharply, suggesting more exclusivity in the clientele. Whereas 33% of those from low income households who had been to

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* The total sample includes 42% single parent families and 58% two-parent families.

TABLE 11

Characteristics of Children Who "Went with School Class" to Facilities

	Oakland Museum	Lawrence Hall of Science	Exploratorium	Oakland Zoo	Aquarium	Marine World
Went with School Class						
Income per family member						
Less than $175	48%	33%	42%	41%	48%	66%
$175-499	39	45	40	44	43	30
$500 or more	13	22	19	15	9	4
Mother's Education						
Less than high school degree	35%	24%	32%	40%	39%	35%
High school graduate	31	30	24	19	26	33
Some college	24	34	35	32	26	23
College graduate or more	10	12	10	8	9	9
Ethnicity						
Black	79%	71%	83%	79%	83%	92%
White	11	15	7	12	5	-
Asian	2	7	2	1	1	-
Family Structure/Mother's Labor Force Status						
Single parent	50%	42%	45%	58%	55%	60%
Working	28	22	23	31	24	33
Not Working	22	19	22	27	32	27
Two Parent	50%	58%	55%	41%	45%	40%
Working(both)	28	36	30	19	22	28
Working(one)	22	22	25	23	23	12

TABLE 12

Characteristics of Children Who "Went with Parents" to Facilities

	Oakland Museum	Lawrence Hall of Science	Exploratorium	Oakland Zoo	Aquarium	Marine World
Went with Parents						
Income per family member						
Less than $175	25%	3%	17%	40%	35%	28%
$175-499	33	55	55	46	39	49
$500 or more	39	42	29	14	26	23
Mother's Education						
Less than high school degree	20%	-	3%	31%	21%	27%
High school graduate	16	14	28	23	19	26
Some college	35	37	35	33	36	32
College graduate or more	29	49	34	13	25	16
Ethnicity						
Black	50%	7%	26%	73%	53%	70%
White	43	83	64	16	28	24
Asian	6	10	8	3	14	4
Family Structure/Mother's Labor Force Status						
Single Parent	29%	18%	31%	38%	25%	41%
Working	12	18	13	25	12	25
Not Working	17	-	18	14	13	16
Two Parent	71%	83%	70%	62%	75%	60%
Working(both)	32	38	48	38	43	41
Working(one)	39	44	22	24	32	18

the Hall had gone with a school class, only 3% had gone with a parent. At the other extreme, 22% of school visits to the Exploratorium were by children from high income families, while they accounted for 42% of trips with parents. The differences based on stratification by mother's education are most dramatic. Children whose mothers had not graduated from high school accounted for a quarter of school class visits to the Hall, but none of them went with their parents. Only 12% of children who had gone to the Hall with a school class had mothers who were college graduates, while 49% of visits with parents were by children with mothers who were college graduates.

The overwhelming proportion of black children who went to the Lawrence Hall of Science went with a school class. Blacks accounted for only a small proportion of trips with parents while the converse is the case for whites. Finally, as with the Oakland Museum, children of two-parent families made up a much larger proportion of trips with a parent than did children from single-parent families.

The Exploratorium in San Francisco drew Oakland sixth graders in a distribution falling between those of the two museums described above. Black children and children from low income or single-parent families were substantially more likely to have gone with their parents to the Exploratorium than to the Lawrence Hall of Science. For school visits there was a smaller difference between the two institutions. Since the Exploratorium is somewhat further from Oakland than the Hall of Science, the difference in

attendance with parents cannot be explained simply by distance. The difference reflects parents' and children's preferences based on prior visits, word-of-mouth, and publicity, as well as other factors influencing the choices of a family outing. Regardless of these specific qualities of family travel decisions, it is clear that visits with school classes greatly increase disadvantaged students' chances of seeing these museums.

Zoo, Aquarium, Marine World

This diverse set of activities reflects classic "distance decay" travel decisions. The Zoo is in the Oakland hills and 57% of the children had been there during the year. Overall 94% of the children in our sample say that they have been to the Zoo at some time in their life the highest proportion of any activity studied). The Aquarium is in San Francisco, about 20 miles from Oakland, and 30% of the children had been there during the Survey year. Marine World, a popular Bay Area amusement park, is the farthest from Oakland, almost 40 miles away, and only 23% of the sample say that they had been there during the year.

In the case of all three facilities a somewhat smaller proportion of high income children had gone during the year. This is interesting given that these are mostly fee charging activities and private transportation costs are considerable. As we will see below, school sponsorship (and subsidizing) of trips accounts for some of these differences.

Ethnic differences in use are large and significant. Whereas 66% of blacks had been to the Zoo during the year, only 42% of whites and 13% of Asians had been there. Similar ethnic differences are found for Marine World and in slightly attenuated form for the Aquarium.

Perhaps most notable for our purposes, a much larger proportion of children had been to the Zoo with parents than with their school class (39% against 15%), while about equal proportions had been to Marine World with parent and school class (43% against 40%). Only in the case of the Aquarium is "school dominance" in evidence (67% against 23%).

For the Aquarium--the school dominated activity--the pattern is much like that which we have seen above for the museums. Lower income children and children from families in which mothers have less education made up the largest proportions of Aquarium visitors who had gone with a school class. Children from upper income families and those with more education were more likely to have gone with their parents. Blacks comprise most of those who have gone with school classes. Finally, children from single-parent families represent over half of the school class visits to the Aquarium but only a quarter of the parent-child trips.

The Zoo and Marine World are our two examples of activities that children did more often with parents than with school classes. As noted earlier, 39% of children who had been to the Zoo during the year went with their own parents, only 15% with a school class. (The rest went with siblings, friends, friend's parents or other

organized groups.) The comparable figures for Marine World are 43% and 40%.

The Zoo is the city's most popular facility for children. Virtually all of the respondents had been there at some time and more than half had been there during the year of our study. By income group, among those who went to the Zoo, about the same proportions had been there with school and parent.

By ethnicity, blacks accounted for a larger proportion of school trips to the Zoo and a somewhat lesser amount of family trips. White children accounted for about three times as many trips with parents as with school. Fifty-eight percent of school trips were by children from single-parent families, 38% of the family trips were children from single-parent families.

While Oakland's Zoo resembles the city Museum in terms of the patterns of attendance, Marine World has a pattern all its own. Here family resources are extremely important. With increasing family income a larger proportion of trips are with parents rather than school. Similarly, families with higher parental education levels make up a larger proportion of family trips. An extraordinary finding is that fully 92% of school trips to Marine World were by blacks, while none were by whites or Asians. In contrast blacks accounted for just 28% of the trips

with parents. Finally, as in the case of most of these activities, children of single parents made up the majority of those who had been to Marine World with a school class while children of two-parent families made up the majority of those who had been with parents.

We can complete this analysis by looking more closely at the role of the school and family as a source of exposure to these citywide and regional facilities. The evidence is reported in Table 13. If a child attends a school which received federal Title I compensatory education funds, and he or she has gone to any of the activities described, the trip was more likely (except in the case of the Zoo) to have been a school trip. If a child does not attend a Title I school, with respect to places where there is an admissions charge--Zoo, Aquarium and Marine World--the trip was more likely made with parents. In every case children from Title I schools were more likely to have gone with the school than were children from non-Title I schools. On the other hand, in every case but one, children who did not attend Title I schools were more likely than their Title I counterparts to have gone to a particular facility with their parents.

The extensive use of Title I funds to subsidize these outings is evidence of their widely recognized educational value, or at least of the ease with which they can be integrated into an elementary school program. Resource allocations for trips are made by principals and teachers at each school. Although Title I funds are awarded to schools in Oakland if they have a

TABLE 13

Sources of Exposure to "Community Wide" and "Region Wide" Facilities

Facility	Child Attends Title-I School and Went with School	Child Attends Title-I School and Went with Parent	Child Does Not Attend Title I School and Went with School	Child Does Not Attend Title I School and Went with Parent
Oakland Museum	75%	11%	45%	36%
Lawrence Hall of Science	85	3	55	25
Exploratorium	86	6	57	26
Zoo	17	39	9	38
Aquarium	77	17	32	48
Marine World	49	34	7	77

certain level of low-income or under-achieving students, the characteristics of an individual child are not a factor in determining whether he or she goes on any particular trip. In other words, the subsidy goes to the school rather than "following the child," a policy adopted in some school districts.

No doubt the findings presented here about proportions of trips taken with parents and with classes are influenced by the fact that Oakland's Title I schools are predominantly black and have, on average, more single parents, lower family incomes and lower average years of parental education than non-Title I schools. Other papers based on Time Study data explore in more detail this relationship between school and family resources in the exposure to cultural opportunities.[3]

We have now described children's use of six non-neighborhood facilities. We have seen significant differences in levels of use and sources of exposure across social groups and across type of facility. These differences sometimes reflect constraints on access (proximity, material resources, educational background reflecting cultural resources) and sometimes differences in interests and preferences. Overall, Oakland's citywide facilities drew surprisingly well among all social groups, suggesting an interest on the part of the Zoo and Museum leadership in reaching a broad spectrum of the community. The most dramatic differences across groups occur at the regional level where cost, distance and facility specialization significantly affect use patterns, thereby increasing the importance of public subsidies as a mechanism for equalizing children's cultural opportunities.

Neighborhood, Citywide and Regional Services As an Analytical Context

This description of children's use of various out-of-school facilities and services provides background for the discussion that follows. To begin with, it is clear that these kinds of opportunities are valued by children. Neighborhood facilities attract large numbers of child users and are clearly important on a day-to-day basis. Citywide and regionwide facilities are, for a variety of reasons, less frequently utilized but nonetheless encountered by the majority of preadolescent children in the course of a year.

Only a small literature has focused on children's use of neighborhood and community facilities. As a result, it is easy to lose sight of the special role they play in the lives of children. Since children do not lobby politically on their own (and do not constitute an interest group in traditional terms), their facility use patterns are the only data with which we can evaluate the significance of various publicly provided services directed at them.

This cluster of services is hardly a "frill" from the perspective of young people. They use the facilities and services to meet various needs, although not always in the conventional fashion. The services, as we shall see, often have developmental and "pro-educational" agendas that complement activities and programs at school. For that reason we must view them as far more central to the well-being of children than adults often presume. Understanding their role in children's daily lives provides a context within which we shall explore the impact of the contemporary urban fiscal crisis

Chapter Two

Footnotes

1. Oakland City Planning Department, Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element of the Comprehensive Plan (1976), Chapter 3.

2. Elliott A. Medrich, Judith Roizen, Victor Rubin and Stuart Buckley, The Serious Business of Growing Up: A Study of Children's Lives Outside of School (Berkeley; University of California Press, forthcoming, 1981).

3. Charles S. Benson, "Time and How it is Spent." In Charles S. Benson and Michael Kirst (eds.), Educational Finance and Organization: Future Research Directions (Washington: GPO, 1980); Charles S. Benson, "Household Production of Human Capital: Time Uses of Parents and Children as Inputs." In Walter W. McMahon and Terry Geske (eds.), Toward Efficiency and Equity in Educational Finance (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1980); and Charles S. Benson, Stuart Buckley and Elliott A. Medrich, "Families as Educators: Time Use Contributions to School Achievement." In James Guthrie (ed.), School Finance Policy in the 1980's: A Decade of Conflict (Cambridge: Ballinger, 1980).

III

URBAN FISCAL STRAINS AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Close examination of the history of children's recreational and cultural services should disabuse us of any notions that they have existed "outside" of major political, ideological and economic processes. Rather, linkages between the services and the larger social system provide the substance for assessment of their current predicament.

Perhaps the most important set of linkages is that comprising the urban fiscal crisis. Revenues and budgets delimit the boundaries of change in urban services. When fiscal conditions are relatively stable, these boundaries are well-known and incentives and risks are reasonably predictable. When they are not, as at present, the situation, even in the relatively short run, is fraught with uncertainty. In this section and the following one we intend to describe this period of uncertainty and transition. First, we will provide a context of political and economic developments in which to place the services. Then, in the next section, we will examine the responses of service providers, clients and politicians to the tax revolt and fiscal strains associated with California's Proposition 13. That response encompasses both immediate crisis management and the beginnings of fundamental re-organization of the services. And while the situation as a whole is unique, there are, in these

responses, important elements of continuity with the resolution of past difficulties.

Growing up with Local Government

Three broad characteristics of the role of children's services in local government provide a basic framework for understanding the recent fiscal history. First, the services have evolved into substantial municipal bureaucracies, complete with a largely unionized or professional workforce; routinized, often cumbersome administration and frequent managerial turbulence. Second, the services have remained primarily local in funding and control, in increasingly sharp contrast to other services which have seen massive growth in state and federal involvement. Third, the services remain in a fundamentally ambiguous position concerning their main objectives. They have sought legitimacy both as an instrument of social reform and as a conventional, non-controversial collective good, and have not garnered enough support in either role to ensure a stable niche as an "essential service." These three characteristics of children's services emerge from their history, which we can briefly summarize here. 1/

Children of urban working-class immigrant families were the first recipients, in the 1890's, of playgrounds and programs designed specifically for recreation. While the ideological roots of these services went back to the 1830's, it took the pressure of industrialization and urbanization during the Progressive Era to establish recreation as a social movement. Led by upper-class philanthropists and educators, the recreation movement sought to

create a niche between schools, public health and social welfare agencies, where they could address certain special, largely unmet, needs of children. Their program was intended not just to amuse young people or keep them out of trouble, but to socialize them to the values of the dominant American culture.

By 1920 the recreation movement had succeeded in making the basic program universal in large cities, and the focus shifted to the leisure needs of adults. Public libraries, which had followed a parallel route from privately sponsored children's rooms to substantial municipal edifices also shifted their emphasis somewhat. The two services flourished in the twenties in the cities, but found that with the Depression their source of local public support dissipated quickly.

The funding crisis brought on by the Depression held a source of salvation, however, since the Federal government stepped into the field for the first time. Recreation leadership and the construction of parks, libraries and other cultural facilities became a major component of every federal youth employment program. The New Deal also created 6,000 new recreation councils in small towns, which became the basis for permanent commissions.

In the two decades after World War II, recreational and cultural services regained their primary orientation toward young children, particularly during the period of great suburban development. The number of new facilities and programs grew tremendously, part of the child-centered life style sought by so many young families. Concurrently, families remaining in central cities

watched as their older facilities became obsolete and ever more inadequate. By the mid-sixties, the failures of urban recreation (and to a lesser extent, libraries) were repeatedly cited as contributing causes of poor school achievement, juvenile crime and civil disorders.

With the War on Poverty, a second important period of major federal involvement in recreation and cultural services provision began. Recreation was seen as an immediate form of "social control" of youth, and a way of dissipating tension and stress in urban ghettos. But many of the leaders hired under these new programs saw themselves as community organizers rather than "soft cops." The tension between the dual purposes of these youth programs in time contributed to the withdrawal of federal support, once again leaving local governments with a new stratum of bureaucracy. Through the 1970's both city and suburban agencies alike have sought to diversify and modernize their service to attract a relatively shrinking youth population, one which has access to many more commercial alternatives when compared to the old playgrounds and lending libraries of the past generations.

So within this historical context, it is clear that in many ways recreational and cultural services "grew up" with local government. They were established as municipal responsibilities at a time when many other reform-oriented institutions were likewise becoming public. From experimental "sand gardens" and reading rooms the services developed into extensive networks of

neighborhood-level and centralized facilities with programs for people of all ages. In the early decades of this growth most political issues concerned the expansion of facilities and programs: whom to serve, where to locate. The internal workings of the programs were relatively simple and usually not controversial. As local recreation and culture agencies became universal and the levels of service rose, so did the degree of bureaucratic complexity and the number of active interest groups. Increasingly, the administrative procedures of municipal agencies became the focus of political disputes, and were often targeted as obstacles to innovation and equity.

In terms of local fiscal commitments for these services and the size of the supporting bureaucracies, these programs have been well entrenched in the local government services "package." Municipal park and recreation expenditures, for example, have accounted for a remarkably steady proportion (roughly two percent) of local government expenditures throughout this century (Table 1a). During that period the per capita and absolute expenditures for parks and recreation have grown substantially (Table 1b) but not disproportionately to other government fuctions.

The political and administrative processes by which recreation and culture agencies have operated have been similarly consistent with other domains of local government. Parks construction and maintenance yeilded its fair share of clubhouse patronage and "honest graft" in the heydays of urban political machines.

TABLE 1

State and Local Government Expenditure on Parks and Recreation: 1902 to 1976-77

Year	A Percent Local Government Spent on Parks and Recreation	B Per Capita State and Local Expenditures on Parks and Recreation
1976-77	2.3%	$22.72
1975-76	2.4	18.00
1974-75	2.4	16.24
1973-74	2.4	13.96
1972-73	2.2	12.20
1971-72	2.2	11.13
1969-70	2.3	9.29
1966-67	2.2	6 52
1962	2.2	4.77
1952	2.0	3.57
1948	1.8	2.06
1944	2.0	0.89
1938	2.1	0.81 (1936)
1934	2.4	1.18 (1932)
1927	2.6	1.29
1922	2.0	0.77
1913	3.2	0.59
1902	3.3	0.37

Source: US Census of Governments, (1977) Historical Statistics

TABLE 2

U.S. Municipal Expenditures on Recreation and Libraries: 1976-77

(thousands)

	Library	Parks and Recreation
Total Expenditure		
Direct Municipal Expenditures	$ 656,089	$ 2,503,571
Current Operation		
Total	581,975	1,857,588
Salaries and Wages	369,634	1,170,092
Other	212,341	687,496
Capital Outlay		
Total	74,114	645,983
Construction	49,497	478,817
Other	24,617	167,166

Source: U.S. Census of Governments, (1977) Municipalities

Administrative reforms from civil service to program budgeting were implemented in libraries and youth centers as extensively as in sanitation or police. The clash between machine and reform management philosophies, so common in American urban history, has been prominent in parks and recreation as much as any aspect of government.

Just as many of the issues in recreation and culture paralleled those of other urban services, so do many of the active interest groups. Organizations such as the American Library Association and the National Recreation and Parks Association developed standards by which to measure local services, and have helped foster progessional identity and public acceptance. The associations trace their origins to the social reform movements of the Progressive Era, but in recent decades have often been more "establishment" than reformer. In the 1960's and 70's challenges from caucuses of ethnic minorities and women, and from advocates of non-traditional forms of service have jolted the associations in a manner comparable to other professions. For now it is sufficient to recognize that these groups developed within the general contours of American service professions, and are themselves potentially powerful voices in fiscal crisis politics.

Public employee unions have also become important actors in the policy-making process for recreation and culture, though their growth has been relatively recent. Many full-time, permanent workers in these services are covered by collective bargaining agreements, in proportions generally following the level of

unionization as a whole in an area. Because of their relatively small numbers, the staffs of museums, libraries and recreation departments are generally in "grab-bag locals" including workers from a variety of services. As we shall see shortly, this can have important consequences for the type of political action these groups undertake. Staff who work with children are rarely in their own bargaining units. Thus, unlike school teachers, the mere presence of labor activism does not automatically create high public visibility for issues concerning children. Also the high proportions of temporary and part-time workers and the extensive use of volunteers combine to give these services a more diversified labor force than most public services. Yet other services are increasingly employing these kinds of flexible staffing arrangements, so some once distinctive features of cultural and recreational programs are becoming more common.

While most of the above description emphasizes the things that children's services share in common, with other local government services, there are still important dissimilarities. One such difference is that these programs are highly dependent on locally generated revenue. Though there are noteworthy exceptions (some of which we will discuss), recreation and culture have seen only limited state and federal assistance compared to other functions, especially education, welfare and health. Funds for capital improvements have always been a key element of federal aid for these services. When only operating expenses are considered the proportion of local funding is even higher. A corollary of low state and federal spending is a lack of mandates from those

entities determining how local governments should organize these services. Local decisionmaking is more firmly established in libraries, parks and recreation than almost any other function of municipal government.

The high degree of local financing means, in most cases, that the property tax has been the dominant source of revenue for these services. In the wake of Proposition 13, the property tax has yielded California cities less revenue, and even in states without fiscal containment legislation there has been a trend toward reduction in the share of local expenditures covered by property taxes.[2/] And increased involvement of states in the funding of culture and recreation raises for the first time some ssues which are more familiar where public schools are concerned. Does the state have the power, responsibility or will to equalize expenditures among municipalities? Will the state take an active hand in running the services, and what consequences might that entail?

Answers to these questions would imply development of comprehensive policies vis a vis the services where none have existed. This could mean more attention given by legislators and policymakers to the usually implicit tension among different objectives of children's services. Our historical analysis, presented in detail elsewhere, shows that attempts to establish these programs have been founded on either their potential as activist social services, or their value as basic non-controversial providers of leisure activities. In the first mode, cultural and recreation

programs might gain legitimacy by being part of the "solution" to critical problems such as crime and unemployment. The second model is less ambitious, but consequently has usually offered more stability. While different historical periods have seen either the social reform or the leisure orientation dominant, the current situation seems to have brought out both approaches as defenses against budget reductions. Conservatives such as Howard Jarvis, co-author of Proposition 13, argued that parks and recreation were "property-related" services and therefore not the target of his tax-cutting initiative. On the other hand, residents of low income inner-city areas have been arguing that these services, and libraries as well, are needed as deterrents to social problems like juvenile crime.

The rhetorical defenses of children's services may be diverse and with historical precedents, but they are not necessarily effective. For cultural and recreational services are not in control of their own destiny. Even though they do not, necessarily, constitute the "fat" in government which taxcutters have sought to eliminate, they bear some of the heaviest budget reductions. Even though they might mobilize considerable political support, they must compete for scarce resources with other functions whose claim on public funds is undeniably more urgent. Therefore, in order to understand the possibilities for children's culture and recreation services, we must see how they fit into the broader urban fiscal crisis.

Budget Cutting vs. Fiscal Stress

Children's services may be immersed in long-term structural fiscal stres but what they mainly experience from month to month is a succession of immediate budget crises. The scenarios of actual or threatened reduction of services have an internal logic which is somewhat independent of the complex, diverse causes of long-term fiscal stress. The closing of libraries evokes similar responses in a state with a large tax surplus and one with a substantial debt. Proposed layoffs of recreation staff generates a particular kind of political reaction, regardless of whether there is a "taxpayers' revolt" in progress. The best guide to the impact of Oakland's Proposition 13-related service reductions, for example, was a 1976 budget cutting episode in that city, rather than any factors related to the 1978 intiative itself. In short, there is a micro-politics of austerity in each community which engages most of the regular interest groups in reaction to a given set of fiscal circumstances. In the following chapter we will describe how a variety of California communities coped with the impact of Proposition 13 on services for children. But while much of that process might be understood in terms of a seemingly stable set of interest groups and bureaucratic processes, there is more at issue. We must explore the ways in which that political process around children's services is itself changing. In this sense, municipal budget cutting episodes and taxpayer dissatisfaction need to be understood in historical and political context.

Most of the research on urban fiscal stress has undertaken the task of explaining the remarkable growth in public expenditures, especially of state and local government. The fact of that growth is not so much at issue here, but its causes and its relationship to the political process are our concern. Insofar as Proposition 13and related fiscal containment measures signify a reversal of the expansionary trend or at least a slowing of that growth, these prior theoretical perspectives may seem somewhat dated. Yet even the fiscal containment controversies should be seen as a response to the long-range trends in the growth of state and local government.

Another broad task of a theory of fiscal crisis is to explain the widening gaps between revenue and expenditures. The expansion of government would not present the same kinds of problems if the resources necessary to sustain that growth were readily available. Also, a useful theory of fiscal stress should account for the dynamics of change in political structures which occurs in response to a crisis situation.

These are three very different tasks, so it is not surprising that most analysis tends to focus on only one or two of them and thereby provide only a partial explanation of fiscal crisis. In contrast, the few overarching structural analyses which have been developed seem to miss the variability and the salience of particular local conditions. We suspect that our purposes would be best served by some kind of middle-range perspec-

tive, and that one can eventually emerge from critiques of the exceedingly general and excessively specialized analyses that predominate today.

Children's interests have been especially poorly researched by those concerned with urban fiscal problems. Advocates and scholars of the different services for young people seldom address their common situation. Even rarer is an analysis which cuts across agency lines and attempts to link immediate budgeting issues to the long-term prospects for public support for these programs. In an attempt to do these two things, we must examine both numerous partial explanations that have been advanced to explain urban fiscal problems, and also consider the potential value of a more comprehensive theoretical framework. For as we have shown so far, the future of children's out-of-school services is inseparably bound up with the course of local government as a whole.

Particularistic Explanations

In 1975, when New York City had less company in its advanced state of fiscal distress than it does today, that city's unique civic responsibilities and structure of governance were frequently blamed for its deficits. New York did have somewhat more extensive commitments than most municipalities, especially in hospitals and higher education. New York bore a higher proportion of welfare costs than most cities, included a proportionately larger dependent population. Its ponderous, highly centralized government

seemed to escalate the cost and minimize the effectiveness of all kinds of services. Yet in the final analysis, New York's special features only help to explain why it was the first of many major cities to approach default in recent times. For example, Morris, in his recently published history of the city's budget crises, shows that New York's salary levels and expenditures for most city services were not out of line with those of the nation's ten largest cities.[3/] Since some of those cities have recently experienced major budget problems, it is necessary to recognize that while every city has unique characteristics, virtually all of them will experience some kind of fundamental difficulties. Also, fiscal stress is no longer only a feature of large city governments. Chronic revenue shortfalls are now being experienced in all kinds of suburbs and rural communities. This relatively recent phenomena needs to be analyzed systematically, with attention to the relationships between cities and suburbs as well as the diversity among suburban communities.

Even when the factors contributing to New York City's plight can be identified as general urban phenomena they do not provide an adequate explanation for crisis conditions. Certainly poor management techniques and inadequate leadership are common enough, but they do little to explain the origins of the tremendous growth of expenditures, (a tripling in New York between 1965 and 1975).[4/] Nor does it help much to single out the redistributive function that urban governments in the United States have taken on. Undoubtedly some social spending has been intended to lessen income inequality through transfer payments and public sector employment.

And without question many of these initiatives were ill conceived, awkward, cynical and wasteful. But regardless of the verdict concerning the redistributive nature of recent urban spending, it cannot alone account for the fiscal crisis. For much, if not most government spending was not of this type, but rather served the interests of large capital, or of entrenched middle class "producer interests" in the service bureaucracies. What is needed is an approach that can account for the diversity of demands made on urban government, rather than explanations that target a particular group as the prime beneficiary, whether it be the poor, ethnic minorities, civil servants, local businesses, national and multinational corporations, organized crime or corrupt officials.

Another promising angle on urban fiscal crisis focuses on the erosion or dispersal of local tax bases, contingent on the locational shifts of capital and residential investment. The migration of much industry and commerce to the suburbs, along with a large segment of the middle class, has of course for decades been the dominant fact of metropolitan spatial dynamics. The increased service levels, higher costs and shrinking tax base of New York and many other central cities have been contributing to fiscal strains for many years. Furthermore, recent shifts in private and public investment between regions of the country (often oversimplified as a Sunbelt/Frostbelt competition) have also contributed to the sense that locational factors are of central importance, and that fiscal stress may just be a corallary of a city's economic "obsolescence."

But no matter how serious these capital shifts may be, they are never simply equivalent to the fiscal condition of cities. As Friedland, Piven and Alford write:[5]

> American cities have experienced fiscal strains at earlier historical junctures, at periods when capital was concentrating in the cities, not deserting them. And not all cities, either in the United States or in Western Europe, that are suffering fiscal strains are the victims of territorial shifts in capital investment. In short, while some empirical verification can be found for all of these assertions, they do not propose an explanation of fiscal strains commensurate with their perennial and widespread occurrence.

There are numerous partial explanations and it is neither possible nor necessary to "choose" among them solely on the basis of empirical evidence. A general theory of urban fiscal crisis that is eclectic but still rigorous would be very useful. Unfortunately, such a theory is still in the embryonic stages, as an examination of one major line of argument and the numerous critiques it has attracted will show.

A Structural Theory of Fiscal Crisis

One starting point for a general theory of fiscal stress demands an enumeration of the functions of the modern capitalist state, rather than an analysis of particular services or levels of government. This is the approach taken in the widely cited framework developed by O'Connor.[6] In this framework there is a dual nature to public sector activities. On the one hand, the government plays a crucial and expanding role in the economy through direct enhancement of productive capacity and the reproduction of a viable labor force. On the other hand, the maintenance and legitimation of the social order is also necessarily largely a governmen-

tal function. In performing both of these broad functions the state is absorbing many of the costs of economic development, while appropriation of the profits from that development remains basically private. That rule of socialization of costs and privatization of profits is, in neo-Marxian terms, the hallmark of a capitalist state. In a modern capitalist state, such as the United States, fiscal crisis is an inherent tendency resulting from increased demands on the state and a structural incapacity to cover the costs of meeting those demands.

What are the general categories of public spending, and how can some particular services and programs be characterized? One of the longstanding areas of public involvement in the economy has been development or subsidy of physical infrastructure, including the transportation, utilities, and land improvements so essential to industrial and agricultural enterprise. These activities, along with government sponsored research and development intended to create new industrial technologies, are known as social investment. Social security and various aspects of health and education which contribute to the reproduction of the labor force are forms of social consumption, an indirect support of capital accumulation. Police and welfare (and national defense) are the most often cited examples of social expenses, tasks of maintaining order and a minimal level of legitimacy for the system. Most social expenses are directed at the "surplus population," those who bear the brunt of structural unemployment and who, when they can work, are largely segregated in the least stable and least desirable jobs.

In practice, though, few services are pure examples of any one function, and the intermingling of purposes must be understood as a basic feature of many public activities. This is especially true of services for children. Education is clearly a social expense in certain situations, a gloomy "warehousing" of ghetto youngsters, but it is never without some connection to preparation for the labor market. Recreation and cultural services for children are in a similarly split position. Various federal initiatives during the Depression and the 1960's made urban recreation a key element of employment policy and the social control of youth. The origins of the municipal agencies in the Progressive Era exhibit a duality of socializing working class immigrant children and providing healthy, basic leisure or all classes of people. The dichotomy between a social service and a leisure program, which we showed above to be intrinsic to children's programs, is akin to a dual role of social consumption and social expense. Even these programs then, though they represent only a small proportion of public spending, are subject to the same general imperatives as larger services whose goals are more frequently made explicit.

Perhaps the best developed and most helpful element of O'Connor's theory, for our purposes, is the explanation of the growth of public expenditures. The structural necessity of an increasingly active, interventionist, non-neutral government is convincingly argued, and its general functions are easily recognizable, if not always discrete. By establishing a plausible logic

for the growth of government, the theory takes a burden off particularistic assertions of the influence of individuals or social groups.

But a general structural theory runs the risk of determinism, which greatly lessens its value, in at least two important respects. First, the long-term growth of public spending has not been steady or automatic, nor is the growth of any particular service simply determined by its functional utility. There are all kinds of historical contingencies and counter-trends which also define their current situations. In the following section on the recent deceleration of the growth of government some of these counter-trends are discussed.

The second weakness of a deterministic theory is that it suggests that crisis is ever present. This is not true in a practical sense, for crisis should also be seen as an inherently political and variable condition. While there are always conflicting structural tendencies toward fiscal str n, an actual crisis, if the term has any real meaning, is an episodic phenomenon. It is a time when the conventional resolutions to contradictions do not work, and the conditions for fundamental change are apparently set. In the concluding section of this chapter some of the more common political elements of urban fiscal crises will be outlined. We shall argue that variability of government spending growth and of political definitions of fiscal crisis represent a middle range of inquiry, between the particularistic, single-cause theories, and the macroeconomic structural frameworks which miss so much of the actual content of urban change. This middle range is

relatively undeveloped, but may be the most productive level at which to understand fiscal containment issues as they affect specific populations, such as children, and specific services, such as out-of- school recreation, education and culture.

Counter-trends to the Growth of Government

Notwithstanding the long-term trend of government expansion, the rate of expenditure growth in constant dollars now appears to be decelerating, independent of the effect of recent fiscal containment legislation. As a 1979 RAND report concludes:

> Over the last four years, the average rate of annual increase for the three levels of government has been half what it was between 1949 and 1975. The rate has shrunk the most for federal and local spending; only state spending even approaches its historical rates, and...it too may slow down further before long. (Table 3)[7]

RAND also reports a similar leveling off of government spending as a proportion of GNP and public sector employment. The 1979 leveling off point represents roughly a tripling of per capita spending since World War II at each level of government, measured in 1967 dollars.[8]

The RAND indicators may well have pinpointed a major countertrend to the long term growth of public spending, but there are a number of reasons why prevailing public perceptions are still dominated by images of an expanding government. First, to reiterate, the downturn in the growth rate is a relatively short-term phenomenon and still represents an overall absolute increase after adjusting for inflation. The high inflation rate which has prevailed over this period has caused the dollar amounts of government bud-

TABLE 3

State, Local and Federal Spending:

1929-1979
(In $ billion 1967)

A. Expenditures

Year	Local	State	Federal	All Levels
1929	11	4	4	19
1939	20	7	18	45
1949	18	12	53	83
1959	33	21	96	150
1969	68	39	153	260
1975	86	56	189	331
1979*	95	66	203	364

*Estimated

B. Average Annual Rate of Change (%)

1929-1975	4.6	5.9	8.7	6.4
1949-1975	6.2	6.1	5.0	5.5
1975-1979	2.3	4.1	1.8	2.4

Source: Anthony H. Pascal and Mark David Menchik, Fiscal Containment: Who Gains? Who Loses? Report R-2494/IFF/RC, RAND, Santa Monica, California, September 1979, p.2.

gets to grow at an even faster rate than before.* This is not necessarily true for the budgets of local parks, recreation and cultural agencies, however. As we shall see in the next chapter, their disproportionately large cutbacks sometimes resulted in absolute reductions even before Proposition 13-type measures took effect.

Another aspect of the size of government is the elusive but important issue of productivity. Over the last five years numerous examples of higher costs per unit of service have become prominent. There are, in many metropolitan area school districts, fewer students but more educational personnel and much higher per-pupil costs. The pattern of fewer direct services and greater overhead expenses is a common perception, if not always precisely defined or accurately measured. In a case study of service productivity RAND found that in Los Angeles 86% of the increase in government spending between 1973 and 1978. was due to inflation, higher salary levels for the same employees, and other factors not indicative of any increase in the level of services provided. And Zevin used similar data to critique the structural theory we alluded to above:[9/]

* It is not our intention here to discuss the fundamental relationship between government spending and inflation, a highly controversial topic. This point concerns only the literal increase in the size of budgets which can be attributed to inflated currency.

> [O'Connor's argument]...suffers by comparison with the realities of New York's actual dilemma. Although municipal employment has doubled, it is dubious whether the actual level of services provided by the city government has increased very much. Although welfare and other transfer-payment burdens have increased over the past ten years, the rates of increase have been far less than the tripling of the city's budget, and furthermore, the modest increases which have occurred seem to be more related to the faltering of the growth of the Monopoly Capital sector, rather than its progress.

As noted earlier, children's recreational and cultural services were consistent with many of these trends in administrative practice. The phenomenon of increased costs is really the product of several different factors which need to be seen as part of an overall pattern. The obsolete physical plant in older cities was being replaced at costs unavoidably much higher than the original land and improvements. Public employee salaries and benefits rose dramatically in a relatively short period of time. New technologies were instituted with high start-up costs, but with savings due to efficiency accruing only more gradually. New programs begun under special federal grants were continued under local funding when that original source was terminated. For these and other reasons more and more money was spent for the same or deteriorating levels of recreation and cultural programming in many cities.

Finally the incidence of state and local taxes did not in its overall effect support the image of "leveling off" which the aggregate expenditure data show. The yield from the more visible

taxes, especially on residential property rose extremely quickly during this period, due mostly to inflation-fed increases in assessed valuation and a gradual shift of the tax burden from commercial to residential property. In some cases, most notably California, the state increased its take to the point of building a multi-billion dollar surplus. (Shortly after Proposition 13 passed in June, 1978, U.S. News and World Report showed 41 states with some kind of surplus.[10/])

We will return to the specific case of California in the next chapter. Our point here is the diversity of coexisting fiscal conditions: some governments have large surpluses, others face massive short-term debts. Cutbacks in services have been accompanied by unprecedented rises in property taxes. A deceleration of the overall growth rate has encompassed vastly different rates for various levels of government, and for localities in different economic circumstances. The more one searches for the typical fiscal crisis, the more one finds a welter of contrasting specific situations.

Crisis and "Normal" Fiscal Politics

Turning from economic indicators to political structures and behavior concerning fiscal matters, we find that much more has been written about "normalcy" than about "crisis." Not surprisingly most analysts have tended to emphasize the ways in which urban governments seek to minimize turmoil and reduce conflict over budget and revenue issues. In the broadest sense we can speak of two schools of thought--one "radical," often neo-Marxian, and the other liberal or, as has become fashionable,

neo-conservative. (The labels are not fixed or particularly important, of course, and are only rough indicators of ideological positions.)

From the radical perspective urban political structures are seen as largely designed to diffuse class conflict.[11/] Sometimes this means that public services expand in response to popular unrest, but usually in a way that co-opts the most potent challengers. Many interpretations of the War on Poverty, including its youth recreation component, take this approach.[12/] But more basic barriers to fundamental change are seen in the pattern of governmental jurisdictions itself. Many of the most important activities which urban governments perform in the interests of economic growth (urban renewal, infrastructural development, subsidies to business) are effectively shielded from popular challenge, or so thoroughly fragmented in a myriad of agencies that they can rarely become solid political targets. What remains most susceptible to effective political organizing are community services, including recreation, education, police and welfare, with which people have almost daily contact. These services therefore absorb most of the conflict, at the local level, while most of the factors that determine both the overall resources available and the opportunities for the population remain relatively unaccessible. Friedland, Piven and Alford summarize this line of argument this way:

> ...over time urban governments come to be structured in ways which allow them both to support economic growth on the one hand, and to regulate and manage political participation on the other. Urban governments are organized in ways which allow them to absorb political discontent through political participation which is limited to agencies and issues which do not impinge upon economic growth.[13]

Ironically perhaps, most of the empirical research on urban fiscal politics has not been done by people who share this perception of structural constraints. Fortunately for us, given our focus on California and Oakland in particular, some of the most extensive analysis of these issues was undertaken by the University of California's Oakland Project in the late 1960's and early 1970's.[14] Meltsner, for example, asserted that in Oakland ten years ago, local revenue was a political problem, not an economic one. He detailed the ways in which, through judicious manipulation of "tax publics" (the constituents directly affected by and aware of a given revenue charge) officials could meet their basic revenue needs without drawing too much political fire.[15] Some of these methods were already employed, he argued, but many others were not due presumably to a lack of creativity or felt need on the part of officials. Meltsner, Wildavsky, and others described the annual cycle of the budgetary process in Oakland, which they saw as a routinized procedure of bargaining, primarily between the city manager and department heads.[16] The typical result, notwithstanding public posturing and even attempts to mobilize constituencies, was a small annual incremental increase in each department's budget.

The more dramatic changes in Oakland's public spending came from the introduction or withdrawal of federal programs, which operated by a rather different set of rules than the local budget.

Many of the Oakland Project's findings, if not their ideological judgments, would appear to be consistent with the more radical perspectives outlined above. Oakland's low profile tax policy, as Meltsner described it, suited Friedland, et al., as "an example of how key public decisions critically affecting accumulation (the tax burden on large property owners) are bureaucratized, rather than politicized, through conscious political decision."[17/] The extreme fragmentation of local government activities divided between city, county, school district and numerous special districts) often resulted in similar de-politicization. The massive "implementation problems" with federal job development programs reaffirmed that much governmental assistance for economic growth was impervious to popular control. In fact, as descriptions of "normal politics," even in as turbulent a time as the late 1960's and early 1970's, the two perspectives mesh to reveal a great deal about Oakland and many other American cities.

Our problem is ascertaining the utility of these perspectives for understanding the particular fiscal crisis precipitated by Proposition 13. And here, both perspectives are less immediately fruitful.

The radical approach emphasizes that fiscal crisis is a periodic, relatively rare situation. It develops when displaced social conflict, which has been converted into demands on the government, threatens to overwhelm the mechanisms designed to

diffuse and manage that conflict. Expenditures outstrip revenues, and "...At these junctures capital mobilizes within the framework of these urban structures to declare a fiscal crisis and subdue popular demands." (emphasis added)[18]

On its face Proposition 13 seems to be a very different scenario in many respects. It was a large surplus, rather than a deficit, which triggered much of the popular uprising. That uprising was couched in demands for less government, not more. And it was the opponents of the initiative (hardly representative of capital in this context) who most vividly tried to "declare" a crisis in order to protect services. To say that the theoretical argument fits New York City or Cleveland better than California is only to buttress our earlier point--that there are important differences among fiscal crises that are as yet not amenable to an overall structural theory.

The "incrementalist" school of budgeting and revenue is at a similar loss to reconcile Proposition 13 with earlier frameworks. It was initially a very large, highly politicized jolt to officials (at the state level) who, by virtue of their extensive experience and resources, should have been able to manage "tax publics" quietly for years to come. Instead, some of the very tactics which formerly seemed so effective at reducing the visibility of revenues became most problematic.

We should point out that some excellent accounts of Proposition 13's origins have come from observers associated with these perspectives. However, those accounts focus on the specific conditions in California and do not make extensive use of their earlier work.[19/]

The next chapter focuses on the political issues surrounding Proposition 13, two years after its passage. Though, as we said, there are continual fiscal strains in this situation, the first immediate crisis has passed. Many administrators of children's services are claiming to be temporarily back in equilibrium and at the same time warning of an impending cataclysm by 1981-82 (when the state's budget surplus may "run out"). And, perhaps not so surprisingly, the theoretical approaches which we have discussed here contribute more to an understanding of this new, precarious state of normalcy then they did to the unusual, volatile happenings of 1978.

Chapter Three

Footnotes

1. These themes are developed in detail in Victor Rubin, "The Historical Development of Childrens Services" (Berkeley: Children's Time Study, 1980 Working Paper).

2. By 1976-7 property taxes accounted for 33.6% of total local government revenues (31% for counties, 25.8% for municipalities, 42% for school districts). U.S. Census of Governments: Governmental Finances 1977.

3. Charles R. Morris, The Cost of Good Intentions: New York City and the Liberal Experiment (New York: W.W. Norton, 1980), pp. 172-75.

4. Robert Zevin, "New York City Crisis: First Act in a New Age of Reaction," in R.E. Alcaly and D. Mermelstein (eds.), The Fiscal Crisis of American Cities (New York: Vintage, 1977), pp. 11-29.

5. Roger Friedland, Frances F. Piven and Robert R. Alford, "Political Conflict, Urban Structure and the Fiscal Crisis," International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 1 (Number 3), 1977, p. 448.

6. James O'Conner, The Fiscal Crisis of the State (New York: St. Martin's, 1973).

7. Anthony H. Pascal and Mark David Menchik, Fiscal Containment: Who Gains? Who Loses? (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1979), p. 2.

8. Ibid., p. 8.

9. Zevin, Op.Cit., p. 20.

10. U.S. News and World Report, "Taxpayer Revolt: Where It's Spreading Now." June 26, 1978, pp. 16-18.

11. Friedland, Op.Cit., provide many references on this point.

12. For example, Robert E. Myers, "Controlling the Poor: The Undeclared Goal of Public Recreation."Ph.D. Dissertation, School of Criminology, University of California, Berkeley, 1974.

13. Friedland, Op.Cit., p. 453.

14. According to its Director, Aaron Wildavsky, the Oakland Project was "an attempt by scholars and students at Berkeley to develop a useful program of policy research and action in cooperation with Oakland city agencies." Quoted in J.J. McCorry, Marcus Foster and the Oakland Public Schools (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

15. Arnold J. Meltsner, The Politics of City Revenue (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).

16. Arnold J. Meltsner and Aaron Wildavsky, "Leave City Budgetting Alone," in J.R. Crecine (ed.), Financing the Metropolis: Public Policy in Urban Economics (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1970).

17. Friedland, Op.Cit., p. 458.

18. Ibid., p. 468.

19. For two good descriptions of the tax issues leading to the initiative see Frank Levy, "On understanding Proposition 13," The Public Interest, Number 56, Summer 1979; and Arthur Blaustein, "Proposition 13=Catch 22," Harper's, 257, November 1978.

IV

CHILDREN'S SERVICES UNDER FIRE: THE STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL AFTER PROPOSITION 13

On October 23, 1978, Howard Jarvis, co-author of Proposition 13--the California initiative limiting property taxes--was questioned about some of its impacts on public services:

> Reporter: Libraries are closing in Los Angeles. How do you feel about that?
> Jarvis: It doesn't bother me a damn bit.
> R: Why not?
> J: Well, because most of the children they're for can't read. And I don't know what the hell good it does to have the books there. Now I understand that they're closing one day a week. Which doesn't bother me at all. I have been familiar with libraries for some time. Ninety percent of the time you could shoot a cannon through and nobody's there...[1]

Jarvis' extreme frankness, if not crudeness, had served his campaign well, and in its aftermath he was free to escalate his assault on elected officials, bureaucrats and many government programs. His assessment of public libraries was, in laconic and colorful terms, a statement of the "marginality crisis" to which we have been referring. Here Jarvis questions not just the effectiveness of the service, but whether even children--supposedly a primary clientele--really care about libraries anyway.

Strictly speaking, Proposition 13 was only concerned with property taxes--not libraries nor the fate of any particular community service. Of course, in practice services themselves were potentially affected, and California in mid-1978 was awash with dire predictions of what would happen if the initiative was adopted. Many estimates of its consequences for children's

services implied that Jarvis' low opinion of their value would be reflected in immediate, massive closures and cutbacks. What has actually taken place in the two years since is neither that dramatic nor that simple. In this chapter we will examine Prpoposition 13 and its particular impact on children's out-of-school services. This will require, first, a general examination of the Proposition 13 phenomenon as a context within which to explore the services of special interest to us here.

In the previous chapter we showed how issues of urban fiscal stress have been described either very narrowly or very broadly such that they do not facilitate the kind of impact analysis which we are undertaking here. This is true of research around Proposition 13 and related "tax rebellion" issues as well. At one extreme, the initiative can be seen as the result of a sequence of specific events and circumstances, not likely to be repeated. At the other extreme it can be viewed as the culmination of several years of growing taxpayer discontent, and an indicator of a new "era of limits," not only in California but throughout the country. There is some truth in both of these characterizations, for while Proposition 13 might not have prevailed had there not been a certain set of fiscal and political conditions in California, it did touch some unappreciated, powerful and generalized antipathy of the electorate toward government practices. And although the initial political momentum it generated has faded, it has nonetheless effectively redefined the politics

of state and local fiscal affairs. In order to understand the political climate in which decisions about children's services were (and are) being made, we must briefly summarize the economic conditions, campaign strategy and the climate of public opinion in California at the time the initiative appeared on the ballot.

Proposition 13 and Tax Equity

Property tax burdens had by 1978 become a serious problem for many California residents. There should be no mistaking the political primacy of this fact. As a result of reformed assessment practices and unprecedented inflation of housing values, California homeowners experienced enormous increases in their property tax bills in the 1970's even though tax rates themselves were mostly stable or declining. The assessment reform had created a uniform tax roll, thereby preventing future scandals, such as that which occurred in 1966 when several county assessors had knowingly underassessed downtown office buildings. New property valuation procedures, employing computerized multiple regression formulae, enabled assessors to update property values, especially residential values, more quickly, based on recent sales data. Since the first administrative reform removed assessors' discretion and the second increased their efficiency, they had little choice than to pass on some skyrocketing increases, reflecting the 20 percent annual rise in real estate values that prevailed in many parts of California throughout the middle of the decade.[2]

Of course, the sales tax and the income tax--both primarily collected by the state--were also increasing their take rapidly while their rates remained steady. By the early 1970's, the state treasury began to accumulate a sizable surplus, although this fact went virtually unnoticed by the general public until 1978. The legislative leadership preferred it this way, mainly because they wanted to use the surplus to eventually implement the equalization of local school finance mandated by the Serrano vs. Priest court decision. Had they actually adopted a Serrano solution along with income tax reform (such as indexing to inflation), both of which were stymied in the legislature, Proposition 13 would not have had such a visible target. However, there was, until 1978, very little pressure on the legislature or the governor to enact these changes. When the legislature feverishly began to develop its own tax reform plan, in response to the proposed tax initiative, the lawmakers' low credibility was too much of a liability. The hitherto invisible surplus became routinely described as "obscene," and embarrassed state officials continually revised estimates of its magnitude upwards, finally above $5 billion. A Legislature sponsored tax proposal, on the ballot simultaneously with Proposition 13, fared poorly by comparison, had few supporters publicly (outside of the Legislature) and was rendered moot by the overwhelming passage of Proposition 13 itself. In effect, the Legislature had become an issue, and lawmakers knew that distribution of the state sur-

plus to supplant local property tax revenues--a necessary consequence of Proposition 13--would be more closely monitored than any previous fiscal matter.

There is, for those concerned with equity in children's services, a striking irony. Serrano, whatever its imperfections, seemed to require some equalization by means of greater state level spending on schools. The political deadlocks which developed around the various equalization plans lasted several years and kept the Legislature from implementing any scheme and drawing down the surplus. This inaction contributed to the overall tax burden of Californians and to their perception of the Legislature as unable or unwilling to act decisively. This enhanced Proposition 13's prospects, since it was the only lever at hand by which people could both "send them a message" and cut their own taxes. The reults of post-Proposition 13 distribution, however, shows that "in picking up the burden...the state has maintained spending-per-student disparities that led to the Serrano decision. It remains to be seen whether the state Supreme Court will order changes in state funding formulas."[3] Even if they do, the surplus will be exhausted by then, and a new formula will more likely require "leveling down" rather than up. Thus the surplus, once seen as a key to equalizing school finance, became a political liability, ultimately not even available to meet the initial equalization objectives.

There are other important tax equity issues that have been "stood on their head" by Proposition 13, and an extensive account would draw us away from our primary topic. But two issues should be mentioned briefly, because they are rooted in the initiative itself, rather than in the disruption of historic state tax policy.

First, residents receive less than half of the $7 billion in tax relief allocated anually by the state. As Table 1 shows, only 33.2% of the savings accrued to home owners, and 17% to those owning rental property (most of which was not rebated to tenants). This data was used before and after the Proposition 13 campaign by tax reformers arguing against the initiative, but to no avail. As long as voters were receiving a tangible benefit, they did not seem to begrudge business, landlords and agriculture their share.

The second issue raised by the administration of Proposition 13 may become more politically explosive in the years to come. The initiative reduced the property tax rate to 1% of 1975 market value, plus a levy to cover prior bond obligations. The average tax rate across the state dropped from $10.68 in 1977-78 to $4.79 in 1978-79. Future assessment increases are limited to two percent annually. However, new construction and resales of existing property was to be reassessed according to their current market values. The median house price has risen from $70,000 at the time the initiative passed to $100,000 in June, 1980. Since approximately 15% of the population move every year, there are sizeable numbers of newly assessed properties. In fact, total assessments have risen 9.4%, 13.8% and 17.8% in the years since

TABLE 1

Distribution of Initial Tax Relief, By Type of Property, Fiscal Year 1978-1979

	Initial Tax Relief (Millions of Dollars)	As a Percent of Total Relief
Owner-Occupied Residential	2,341	33.2%
Rental-Occupied Residential	1,200	17.0
Commercial & Industrial	1,916	27.2
Agricultural	944	13.4
State	643	9.1
Total	7,044	100.0

Source: Legislative Analyst, An Analysis of Proposition 13, The Jarvis-Gann Property Tax Initiative, May 1978, California Legislature, Sacramento, California.

1978. Given current economic trends and assuming no change in the law, home buyers, within a few years, will be paying the same amount of property tax they would have paid before the initiative.[5]

Both of these points indicate that residents are paying an ever-increasing share of the tax burden. This development, however, has not yet received widespread attention, but many observers suggest that in a few years it may become a central concern. The non-partisan California Journal recently summarized the prospect neatly:

> Barring the appearance of some revenue bonanza, the unavoidable issue for the 1980s will be whether the Legislature will raise taxes to maintain the governmental status quo. And if taxes are to be raised, who will be hit hardest? Before that can be done, however, lawmakers will be forced to convince the public that there is no longer any fat in state and local government and that the reserve tank is actually empty. Undoubtedly, belt-tightening will take place before the Legislature will take the politically dangerous course of raising taxes.
>
> The best bet is that an attempt will be made to make a major alteration in Proposition 13. The obvious target will be the business sector, which has been the prime beneficiary of Proposition 13. As years pass, the property tax bill will continue to shift from industrial and commercial parcels ot the single-family home. At some point, a major effort will probably be made to win voter approval for the long-discussed split-roll concept, which taxes business property at a higher rate than residential parcels. An effort will probably be made to relieve buyers of new homes because they are paying a disproportionate share of the tax burden.[6]

What we might add is that prospective home buyers are primarily families with young children. The next round of the tax revolt may reflect a somewhat different coalition--families anxious to

a home in communities with adequate services for children, along with public sector service providers, their clients, and liberals intent on increasing business' share of taxes. The defeat in 1980 of "Jarvis II," the proposal to cut the state income tax in half, featured the tentative emergence of that kind of voting bloc (and a decidedly low profile by state officials).

Even if this scenario is not entirely accurate, we can at least be sure that Proposition 13 has begun an era of uncertainty and greater militancy concerning tax issues. Both because of its intended tax shifts and its loopholes, more questions have been raised than answered. In the following section we will see that with regard to the future of government provided services, there is an increasing degree of uncertainty linked to some of these fiscal considerations.

Proposition 13: A Referendum on Services?

Early evidence during the Proposition 13 campaign indicated that the public shared undifferentiated anger at government inefficiency and welfare largesse. Actually, however, the real "prize" and the focus of most voter attention was the matter of property tax relief. With regard to more general concerns--including the issue of support for public services--the mood of the electorate was far from clear. The political and ideological currents were hardly consistent, leaving extraordinary room for any number of perspectives. To facilitate our discussion of children's out-of-school services, it is helpful to review these perspectives here.

1) Uncompromising conservative opposition to "big government" was not necessarily shared by many. The initiative had its origins in the landlord and anti-tax lobbies of California, and the ideological tenets of those groups held sway in the campaign leadership. But hard-core conservative support had not been enough to carry several earlier similar tax limitation initiatives. The differences which attracted voters of other persuasions to Proposition 13 were the new economic circumstances described above and the opportunity to express the growing cynicism regarding normal political channels for tax relief.

2) Rather than eliminate services entirely, most supporters of Proposition 13 were enthused about the opportunity to cut the "fat" in government. Fat in this context means several different things. First there is extravagance, or ostentatious and unnecessary spending by public officials, generally to enhance their

own lifestyles or egos. Second, there is waste, or funds lost through bureaucratic inefficiency. Third, there are unnecessary services, activities which should not be provided by local government (or perhaps, any government). Finally, there is largesse in the provision of unreasonably high public employee pay and benefits, and welfare payments. Proponents of the initiative claimed that $7 billion in "fat" could be pared from budgets without serious cuts in the essential functions of local government. Public opinion polls showed desire to cut the fat as a popular reason to support Proposition 13. Some forced-choice questions showed that this belief was strongly held, but not very well focused. As a University of California research group put it:

> ...38 percent of Californians polled by the Field Institute in July, 1978 felt that state and local governments could provide the same level of services as previously even with a 40 percent reduction in spending. And when forced to choose between lower taxes and government services 60 percent of Californians interviewed by CBS News in June 1978 opted for paying less even if it meant reduced services. [7]

However, most of those who would prefer reduced services in the abstract sense could apparently not easily find many targets appropriate for cutting back. Table 2 shows that given a list of 14 state and local functions and the inquiry "Should Spending for this Category Be Cut Back?" only Welfare was chosen by a majority of respondents in the Field poll. The services which respondents were least willing to reduce tended to be the ones most dependent on the property tax. When after the initiative passed, those

TABLE 2

Should Spending for This Category be Cut Back?

Welfare and Public Assistance Programs	62%
Government-Backed Public Housing Projects	41
Environmental Protection Regulations	34
Medical Care Programs such as Medi-Cal	26
Courts and Judges	26
Higher Education such as University, State and Local Community Colleges	24
Public Transportation	23
Street and Highway Building and Repair	23
Public Schools, Kindergarten through 12th grade	22
Parks and Recreational Facilities	22
Jails, Prisons and other Correctional Facilities	16
Mental Health Programs	9
Police Departments and Law Enformcement	8
Fire Departments	6

Source: Field Institute. Published in San Francisco Chronicle, June 16, 1978, Page 8.

were the most directly endangered services, many people were only further angered and frustrated that their message had not been translated into the appropriate selective trimming.

3) The campaign against Proposition 13, featuring prominent politicians predicting catastrophic cuts and fiscal chaos, was ineffective and played into the hands of initiative proponents. Since the leaders' credibility was already strained by their belated, inadequate attempts at tax reduction, their stance seemed vindictive and alarmist. As the reported size of the surplus kept growing, the dire predictions were viewed increasingly as false cries of wolf, and their credibility was further undermined. It was a lesson well learned, and which paid anti-Jarvis II dividends in 1980, when a less alarmist campaign more tied to grass-roots organizing was conducted successfully.

4) The inadequacies of existing public services provided an effective argument in favor of Proposition 13. As noted in the previous chapter, most of the recent increases in government spending had gone for inflation and higher personnel costs, without appreciable increases in service provision. Schools were the largest and most troubled service, of course, and discontent with declining test scores, violence, busing and a host of other issues contributed to the allure of the initiative. Perhaps, some people thought, more stringent budgets will induce concentration on "the basics" and greater administrative efficiency. Other voters were simply resentful of the relative improvements in pay

which teachers and other civil servants had gained over the decade.

5) Even the most consistent opponents of big government were selective in their targets. Jarvis, as noted earlier, developed a flexible category of "property-related services" which, when efficiently administered, were the rightful recipients of the remaining property tax revenue. Police and fire protection and public works were always on this list, as were, at times, parks and recreation and sanitation. Of course, it has been a very long time since the general property tax was earmarked for certain functions, but this version of minimal government had some rhetorical appeal.

Police and fire officers gave much more support to Proposition 13 than did any other group of civil servants. The debate rekindled simmering animosities among employees in various services as to whose work was the most essential. Police and fire services were formally vindicated--protected from cuts in the state's first bailout of local governments. Further security is being considered in the form of a proposed initiative that would mandate that these agencies be maintained at pre-Proposition 13 levels of service. (Estimates in Oakland are that under current funding this would leave less than 10 percent of the budget for everything else.[8]) Public pre-school childcare programs, backed by a less powerful constituency, also garnered some protection in the form of a state requirement that they not be cut more deeply than the city or school district-wide average reductions.

6) The performance of children's out-of-school services of concern to us here was not a major concern during the Proposition 13 campaign. In suburban and rural areas, where the Proposition won overwhelmingly, basic recreation and library programs were even seen as good examples of simple, locally controlled non-controversial government activities. In many urban core cities and in most minority neighborhoods with large cities, the initiative did not receive majority support. These are areas where out-of-school programs have more explicit social and therapeutic objectives, and also where the glaring inequities in the quality of basic service and facilities are most serious. People who voted against the Proposition were not expressing a vote of satisfaction with their programs as much as a fear that they would lose what they had.

Some corroboration of this observation can be found in the survey of Oakland which we reported in Chapter 2. In that 1976 inquiry we asked parents for their evaluation of local out-of-school services. On an index which combined opinions about five children's programs and facilities, greater satisfaction was associated with higher socioeconomic status (Table 3). Parents in high status neighborhoods were nearly three times as likely to be completely satisfied as parents in low status neighborhoods. At the other extreme, while 27.2% of parents in low status neighborhoods scored 0 or 1 on the index, only 6.3% of those in high status neighborhoods scored the same. Those neighborhoods which exhibited the lowest satisfaction were the most likely to oppose

TABLE 3

Parents' Satisfaction with Neighborhood Services

(Index of five Items)

	Weighted N	Least Satisfied 0	1	2	3	4	Most Satisfied 5
Total Sample	(764)	5.5%	11.1%	18.7%	23.0%	20.7%	20.9%
Neighborhoods							
Hi status	(127)	2.4	3.9	19.7	19.7	22.0	33.1
Medium status	(182)	3.8	8.8	17.6	23.1	23.6	20.9
Low status	(474)	9.5	17.7	18.6	21.5	16.5	12.0
Family Income							
$5,000	(165)	6.3	21.5	15.1	20.6	17.7	18.8
$5,000-$9,999	(184)	8.8	16.8	24.5	20.8	12.2	16.9
$10,000-$14,999	(120)	8.0	9.4	21.5	25.7	28.2	7.1
$15,000-$19,999	(96)	5.3	8.2	21.9	20.5	23.6	20.5
$20,000 or more	(139)	4.9	6.9	16.5	26.2	19.3	26.2
Ethnicity							
Black	(530)	8.4	16.0	17.6	21.5	21.5	15.4
White	(134)	1.7	7.4	27.6	24.0	15.9	23.4
Asian	(49)	4.4	1.3	13.8	27.7	26.6	26.2
All other	(51)	9.5	15.4	16.1	27.7	7.8	23.4

Proposition 13, while its greatest support came from areas where service evaluations were more positive. Thus, in Oakland, which we expect is typical of other large cities in this respect, Proposition 13 could not be interpreted as primarily a plebiscite on children's services.

In this section we have elaborated the relationship between voter dissatisfaction with government and support for Proposition 13. The initiative was first and foremost concerned with tax relief. To the extent that it recorded dissatisfaction with government, this took the form of generalized frustration with unresponsive politicians and ineffective bureaucracies. It was not a mandate for the elimination, or even the substantial reduction of out-of-school children's services. As we shall see, however, not being the object of voters' wrath has proven to be small comfort for the advocates of these services, which have by all accounts been among "the prime victims of Proposition 13."[9]

The Impact of Proposition 13 on Children's Services

Much of the research about the impact of Proposition 13 was conducted so soon after its implementation that attention invariably focused on measuring changes in program inputs. Given the early uncertainty about the amounts and forms of state aid that would be made available to replace lost property tax revenues, its particular effect on local budgets and services was very difficult to accurately measure. And even at this writing, the predominant mode of analysis continues to be assessment of resource and budgetary constraints "caused" by Proposition 13, with much less consideration of the consequence of change for community residents and service users. In Appendix A we take the case of summer school to illustrate this distinction. Summer school was virtually eliminated, saving the state over $100 million annually, yet there is no systematic empirical study of what actually happened to the children who had been and would have been served. With that caveat as to the limitations of impact analysis, we can sketch very briefly what has transpired.

A worst-case scenario of 270,000 public employee layoffs in 1978 was offered by opponents of the Proposition 13 initiative, based on an assumption of no state bailout of local governments. Prior to the June vote, school districts throughout the state--required by law to notify employees by May 14 if their jobs were to be eliminated the following fall--sent letters of dismissal to thousands of employees, and many cities, counties and special districts also drew up drastic contingency plans. After the election and passage of the initiative the State Legislature, however,

passed a one-year bailout measure totalling roughly $4.4 billion in aide to localities. This state action included various restrictions on localities receiving the assistance, but most of these were successfully challenged by communities in the courts. By January, 1979, 26,412 employees had actually been laid off, but 9,324 of them had been rehired.[10]

Agencies made most of their staff reductions through attrition and the elimination of already vacant positions. Employee turnover rose considerably in skilled positions, such as computer programmers, accountants and nurses, for which there were many openings in the private sector. Employee morale at all levels suffered seriously, because of specific changes in job conditions, reduced opportunities for advancement and the general feeling of community antipathy. Examples abounded of inefficient and inappropriate staffing arrangements provoked by layoffs and budget reductions. While the effects on clients were often intangible, they are still potentially very important.

Still speaking in general terms, and across all affected public agencies, preventive services tended to suffer especially. From street repairs to burglary protection seminars to infant health screening, these kinds of cuts were commonplace, regardless of the future costs of such actions. The problems with this short-run strategy were recognized by all, but avoided by few. Other, more "urgent" services had prior call on revenues, either because they were mandated by state law or by practical political considerations.

A number of studies produced evidence, predictably, that ethnic minorities, the poor and women were more vulnerable than others to the Proposition's impact on services. Disproportionate layoffs and setbacks to affirmative action erased much recent progress of minorities and women in public employment.[11] Social service cutbacks which affected minorities, women and many children as well included a year without a cost-of-living increase for AFDC recipients, and elimination of county level programs such as battered-spouse shelters and rape crisis centers. A study by the National Association of Social Workers carefully documented all of the changes in human services, broadly defined, and concluded that "the population groups most dependent upon state and community-provided human services...have been harmed in multiple, overlapping and mutually aggravating ways. Especially injured have been working women and AFDC mothers, their children, youth, the aged, and ethnic and racial minorities."[12]

An assessment that encompassed all services to children of all backgrounds would have to be somewhat more optimistic. After all, it can be argued, the most expensive basic health and education services reaching the largest number of children were generally able to maintain their funding and levels of service. (Total funding of schools was up 8.6 percent for 1979-80; Medi Cal was up $400 million from the previous year; and the revised, long-term bailout bill enacted in 1979 included new state funding for county-based children's health programs.)

As one of the oldest major cities in California, Oakland (population 333,000) has a long tradition of providing significant levels of out-of-school services for children. Many landmarks of past periods of urban expansion and population change are visible in the city--from the WPA-era Rose Garden to the Latin-American library, begun in the early 1970's. The city has been justifiably proud of its parks system, the special collections of its library, and its new museum, each of which are generally agreed to be among the best, most extensive or most innovative in the country. The substantial public recreation program began with a few privately endowed playgrounds at the turn of the century, as was the case in many cities. It developed through the years to embrace adult recreation, on the one hand, and even therapeutic activities like juvenile counselling, on the other.

These services are provided by a governmental structure administered by a professional city manager, and presided over by a Mayor and eight council members. The city has no authority over schools, welfare, health, transportation or utilities, all of which are governed by separate, independent local entities. This means that generally housing and economic development issues are the primary political concerns, while public safety takes up two-thirds of the general fund budget. Recreation and culture has accounted for about fifteen percent of local spending, and consistently attracts controversy only at budgeting time. The branch libraries, recreation centers and playgrounds, whose attendance patterns we examined in Chapter 2, are often the only

institutions of city government with which people interact routinely in their neighborhoods. (Oakland has no police precincts or city council district offices; indeed, in 1981, district elections of city and school officials will take place for the first time.) There are still inequities among neighborhoods in the quality of these services, though the gap between wealthy and poor areas has been diminished somewhat in the past decade.

Alameda County, in which Oakland is situated, contains a diverse collection of central cities, old and new suburbs of various levels of socioeconomic status, and a substantial rural area. The large county government administers all health, welfare and judiciary functions, as well as general services for the unincorporated areas. It also runs a library system serving not only unincorporated communities but several of the smaller cities, including Fremont.

Fremont, with a population of 130,000 and a vast land area, is in many respects a typical Western post-war suburb. This once rural area, now highly suburbanized, is midway between Oakland and San Jose--making for a virtually continuous strip of development. The city is home to a large General Motors assembly plant, numerous other industries, and a predominantly white middle-income population, consisting mostly of families with children. It has a fairly new and extensive public recreation and parks system.

San Francisco, like Oakland, has a venerable set of municipal services designed to promote culture and provide recreation for young people. Several contextual differences must be noted, however.

San Francisco is a consolidated city-county government, performing all the functions of both entities under one Mayor and Board of Supervisors. Unlike Oakland's mayor, whose job is part-time and whose powers are limited to appointments and persuasion, San Francisco has a strong mayor form of government, with the requisite salary and staff. At the time of our study, the city had recently adopted district elections, which it has since abandoned. And while both cities are mosaics of the same ethnic groups, the proportions are different. Oakland has relatively more blacks, San Francisco more Asians and Latinos. Both cities have been losing total population for a number of years, and have been "losing children" at an even faster rate.

Budget austerity measures were nothing new for Oakland and San Francisco, and many of the initial responses to Proposition 13 were virtually a continuation of their recent history.

In 1976, Oakland was forced to develop drastic budget reduction contingencies pending the outcome of a re-evaluation of its pension obligations to police and firefighters. The worst case, based on the most stringent new actuarial figures, called for a budget reduction of twenty percent in the fire department, five percent in police and fifteen percent in most other departments, for cuts totalling $8.9 million. The plan called for the layoff of 265 permanent employess, with another 183 jobs continued vacant or lost through attrition. In addition, 106 temporary workers hired under the federal Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) would have to be let go. This "contingency plan" became the center of the council's and the city's attention for two months, as residents argued, in effect, over which limbs to

amputate--the necessity of an operation having already been determined. As numerous people complained to the council, "you cut costs to the bone in previous years. Now you're cutting through the bone."

The service reductions were propsed by the city manager, based on suggestions from department heads and their advisory commissions. The cuts were posed as equitable and rational solutions to a no-win situation, and everyone was urged to unselfishly bite his or her share of the bullet. Despite the calls to unity, most speakers before the city council at the time argued vociferously that the cutback plan was discriminatory and counter-productive. Over a period of two months the council heard staff reports and public comment on several hundred budget reduction items, and eventually approved eighty-five percent of the cuts, $7.5 million, for the official "contingency budget." Services to children and youth were among the most hotly contested items. The conflicts over the emergency budget illustrated the increasingly precarious position of those services.

The budget reduction plan exacerbated at least four types of conflict concerning cultural and leisure services, all of which had especially severe impacts on the young. The four areas of conflict included:

- overall budget priorities, pitting public safety expenditures against cultural and leisure activities
- a jurisdictional dispute between the City of Oakland and the Oakland Unified School District, with each trying to shift the funding of recreation programs to the other

- arguments over the consolidation, largely for cost-reducing purposes, of several cultural and social service facilities

- competition over the use of Community Development Revenue Sharing, especially concerning its use as a supplement to operating budgets rather than for capital improvements.

It is almost incidental to this analysis that the cuts were mostly rescinded after the pension obligations were mitigated by passage of a city referendum. (Except, of course, for the fact that the "crisis" was the means by which voters were convinced to change the city charter to lower employees' benefits!) But for the dynamics of budgeting in a "crisis" it was a dry run for 1978 from which the central administrators learned a great deal.

The initial Proposition 13 situation was comparable to 1976 to the extent that the city could treat its revenue total as both exogenous and unknown at the time. Since balanced budgets (required by law) had to be adopted, and it happened that the fiscal year began only a few weeks after the election, Oakland and other cities found it necessary to approve drastic Proposition 13 contingencies before the vote and without knowing what relief the state would offer. These plans became the focus of arguments against the initiative by local politicians (if they became a reality many constituencies would suffer severe diminution in service availability). Logically, they kept under wraps all plans for increasing fees and taxes if Proposition 13 passed (the initiative permitted local increases in fees and taxes as long as they were enacted before July 1, 1978.) In the weeks between the election and July 1, the Oakland City Council did institute a wide array of new revenue measures, marking a

departure from its conservative and cautious past. The "tax publics" most directly affected by the two largest new proposed taxes were slow to react but eventually influential. An extremely high increase in the business license tax was later lowered under pressure from business groups. The "employee license fee," a payroll tax disguised for legal reasons, was never implemented, due to demands from both organized labor and business.

Plans to raise revenues locally notwithstanding, drastic budget reduction contingencies had to proceed. A weighty tome detailing hundreds of individual budget items in priority order was made available to the council and widely publicized by the Budget Director via the City Manager. One level of cuts were efficiency oriented and deemed acceptable even under a favorable revenue situation, and were quickly approved. The second level of cuts involved a broad range of highly visible services--some were admittedly consistent with long-range plans of the departments in questions (e.g. closing obsolete or inefficient facilities). The most serious proposed service reductions were those which would directly and immediately affect the quality of life and safety of Oakland residents. Many cutbacks in services to children were in these second and third categories and were approved by the council contingent on actual revenues. However, the council, somewhat chastened by their battle with the School Board over the city's intent to close playgrounds two years earlier, protected those direct services to children. This made maintenance and landscaping the most vulnerable element of the Parks and Recreation

Budget. Citizen reactions to these proposed cutbacks were mild, compared to 1976, as none were to be enacted unless the initiative passed.

As it turned out, after Proposition 13 became law, the more serious proposed cuts never were enacted, as the state bailout funds, combined with new fees and higher than anticipated local revenues enabled the city to suffer only a 4.5% cut in overall expenditures. The general services and public works departments absorbed most of this reduction. The departments providing out-of-school children's services received basically the same size budgets as the previous year, and because of inflation, were forced to reduce maintenance but not lay off program personnel. The user charges instituted by Parks and Recreationmostly concerned adults, and the Museum had rescinded an admission charge after attendance plummeted.

In the Alameda County government the administrative approach to Proposition 13 created a much more highly politicized situation. The County sent layoff notices to 1,100 employees and warnings of termination to the many community-based social service contractors, and ordered department heads to prepare skeleton contingency budgets for their discretionary programs. Unlike almost all other jurisdictions, Alameda County acted as though there were no assurances of any state aid if the tax initiative passed. Naturally, employee unions representing most county workers did not appreciate

this strategy. The unions lobbied the Board of Supervisors strongly for an alternative budget that would, given any reasonable bailout, save most jobs, by drawing down various capital and equipment funds as necessary. According to one study for the Urban Institute:

> Much of the political uproar associated with the county's initial reaction to Proposition 13 is seen by both sides of the political spectrum as stemming from the Administrator's personal decisions to use Proposition 13 to implement program reductions and efficiencies that he apparently had long thought were desirable.[13]

The consequences of this approach for the County Library could not have been more dramatic. It serves as a useful example here, since the library service has a significant child clientele. It is poorly positioned to protect itself from the inordinate budget reductions. The county library administration began preparing in February for a severe cutback, and by May felt it necessary to inform the public that due to an imminent closing, no more books could be loaned. Some circulating materials were returned, but there was a great deal of hostility from Proposition 13 supporters, who accused them of political blackmail or vengeance. Most residents refused to believe that the entire library system would be closed, yet on June 24 that is precisely what happened. Only 16 of the 261 staff members remained on the payroll, to keep the basic mechanisms in order and to plan for eventual reopening and reorganization.[14]

Both the county librarian and the union activists realized that the future of the library would rest on a successful political organizing effort. Unfortunately, due to their different positions in the service structure as well as differences of personal style and values, they disagreed over how to accomplish this.

The union activists organized the Coalition for Quality Library Service, involving patrons and staff, to fight the cutbacks. They spoke to the Board of Supervisors, utilized the mass media effectively, canvassed communities and sold "Jarvis-Canned" T-shirts. They reached out to library workers around the the state and became the center of a network of advocates of earmarked state funding for libraries. The Friends of the Library, traditionally a rather tame citizen's auxiliary, was similarly energized by the situation and staged media events of their own.

The County Librarian has applauded these efforts and credited them for generating a public response that the Board could not ignore. The union leaders said in interviews, however, that the head librarian had not kept the staff informed of developments, had prevented the Children's Service Director from actively protesting proposed cuts, and had favored administrative and professional staff in the layoff and rehiring process.

The entire system was closed for about one month and then reopened in stages, beginning with 31 percent of the previous year's funding. Staff wanted to concentrate their resources in a few branches and provide near normal service, but the Board insisted that all branches be open, even with minimal service. Increments of funding were gained after further politicking, in August, September and November, when it reached 80 percent. Table 4 is the schedule of which services were to be reestablished at each funding level. In an article she authored, the head librarian characterized her reorganization strategy as one where "some

managerial positions have been eliminated, since the organization has shrunk."[15] Union members, in contrast, stressed that mainly clerical positions were lost, making working conditions more difficult for those who remained.

TABLE 4

ALAMEDA COUNTY LIBRARY

SCHEDULE OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES PROVIDED FOR EACH LEVEL OF FUNDING

Costs Include Salaries and Materials

Funding Level	*Admin Costs	**Circ. Control	Children's Services	Young Adult	General Services	* ILL	********OUTREACH SERVICES********				Budget Amount
							SOS	Spanish Services	Audio/ Visual	Bookmobile	
100% (FY 1978)	1,700,000	538,000	442,416	185,452	967,215	242,000	40,537	40,000	81,687	102,000	$4.2
80%	1,370,000	425,000	340,000	164,000	710,000	150,000	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	74,000	86,000	$3.3
70%	1,235,000	425,000	321,000	136,000	600,000	120,000	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	62,000	NOT OFFERED	$2.9
60%	1,100,000	425,000	220,000	136,000	560,000	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	52,000	NOT OFFERED	$2.5
50%	925,000	425,000	220,000	NOT OFFERED	550,000	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	$2.1
40%	850,000	425,000	122,000	NOT OFFERED	315,000	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	$1.7
30%	725,000	450,000	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	150,000	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	NOT OFFERED	$1.3

*Admin Costs includes operating expenditures as well as salaries

**Circulation Control—staff, CLSI System overdues

*inter-library loan

Barbara Gray Boyd, "The Ides of '78" News Notes of California Libraries Volume 73, No. 1. 1978

These differences are far from trivial but they are less important than the overall fact of the system's demise and (only) partial rejuvenation. The library was not automatically assured of any future funds, and would have not regained as much support as it has without the intense political impact its staff and volunteers were able to generate. In November, 1980 the County Librarian retired, saying that the system was adequately reconstituted. Whatever fiscal difficulties the library encounters in the future, its advocates will have some valuable political experience on which to draw.

In Fremont, where reductions in County Library funding were most acutely felt, the municipal recreation and parks department was also threatened with elimination of most of its programs. However, the response of the administrators and residents to proposed cuts in recreation activities took a very different turn from the response to the library situation.

The director of Fremont's recreation and parks department presided over a massive shift to a system of fees for virtually every class. He reported that his department suffered a 60% reduction in city budget support. Remaining funds were so limited that monies were available only for "safety and informational services," maintenance of playgrounds and parks, and central administration. Classes would be offered only if they paid for themselves through user fees. In 1978-79, fees increased from $330,000 to $560,000.

The director's preliminary assessment was that children lost more programs than adults under this new system. However, he pointed out that because demand would determine the offerings, there was more flexibility in what could be undertaken, and parents theoretically could pay for as many children's services as in the past.

Since there are few very low income families in Fremont, recreation leadership is not expected to address serious social issues, as it is in large cities. The director felt that many of the families could afford private recreation activities, and would actually seek them out because many parents supported activities for children which emphasize "competition, performance, and fancy uniforms."

Fremont is adjusting quickly, but not without difficulties, to a new form of service provision. The director of the recreation and parks agency is resigned to a curtailed program, but he will at least try to ensure that there is a future for a specifically public service. He hopes that parents will be willing to spend at least some of their property tax savings on the programs which had previously been funded entirely out of city revenue. As he pointed out, support of Proposition 13 was a form of "voting with your pocket-book," and so is choosing a provision strategy dependent on charging fees.

The various cases we have described above typify the range of responses to the first year of local government budgeting under Proposition 13. By the Spring of 1979, communities had a year's

experience with the new conditions, but still faced great uncertainties. The state's bailout provisions were temporary, and negotiations in Sacramento over a long-term plan promised to continue beyond 1979's local budget deadlines (July 1.) Revenue estimates were also difficult to make accurately, due to the clouded future of federal CETA grant categories, and the unpredictable effects of inflation on tax receipts.

In Oakland and San Francisco, these circumstances accelerated reorganization of the budgetary process. San Francisco began to implement program budgeting, whereby dollar amounts are attached to objectives rather than traditional line items. Recreation and Parks was the first and only department to do this for 1979-80. In Oakland, major administrative responsibilities were moved from the Budget Director to the City Manager, and the mode of presenting the service reduction proposals was altered. In both cities the stated rationales for the changes were to make programs more visibly responsive to the needs of residents and more efficient. An important result, if one not actually stated, was to centralize power in City Hall (meaning the Mayor in San Francisco and the City Manager in Oakland.)

In Oakland, as the first step in the budgeting process the City Manager, his assistants and the Budget Director determined the relative amounts of cuts to be taken by each department. Then the department managers were given the task of preparing their budgets in terms of five possible levels of reduction (progressively more severe.) Within these levels, individual items (e.g. a particular playground)

were prioritized.

The City Council was then presented with a volume listing all the individual items, ranked both within their department (by the department) and overall (by the Manager), and asked to consider each item. For a part-time, unstaffed Council, this represented their only chance to seriously influence the nature of the budget, and their only tools were the shifting around of individual items and requesting additional information. According to one council-member, the most significant aspect of Oakland's reorganized budget process was the new mode of presentation, "computerized across department lines, so that we could assess budget items by program, rather than department." Asked if that made it a program budget she replied, "I don't know if it is technically, but it helped."

In San Francisco, programs within departments (e.g. playgrounds within Recreation) were asked to prepare their budgets at four different funding levels. Once these were submitted, budget analysts weighted the requests of various programs within departments against each other, as well as setting priorities among departments. Program managers were assured that at each funding level, their package of requests would remain intact. This eliminated what a San Francisco budget analyst called "nickel-and-diming"--precisely the kind of minute decisions which the Oakland Council prized.

San Francisco's incomplete introduction of program budgeting made Recreation and Parks an uncomfortable pawn in the perennial

power struggle between the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors. The elaborate information system needed to make program budgeting effective was not in place, so it was easy for Supervisors to ask Recreation officials many seemingly simple but actually very complex questions about program objectives. The Supervisors did not want to lose their power over line items, because line items could more easily be addressed politically. This was particularly true in terms of the neighborhood level ramifications of decisions, as district elections had recently been introduced and Supervisors were seeking to identify and fight for their district interests. Therefore, they were less interested in the city's "tennis objectives" than in whether the courts at a particular site would be repaired. They believed that since such individual decisions still had to be made, the elected officials should help make them.

In both cities, the administrators were designing the rules of the game while legislators and residents could only react. TheOakland Council members, elected at large, were encouraged by their manager to pore over thousands of individual items. San Francisco Supervisors, looking out for particular items more than in the past, were hindered in that search for detail.

One thing that did not change in either city was the manner in which residents sought to maintain children's services. Parents and children trooped before their elected representatives in considerable numbers, pleading (or demanding) that their particular branch

library, swimming pool or recreation center remain open. Staff would dispassionately explain how the facilities selected for closing were the least efficient or most poorly attended. Residents would respond that easy access for children and senior citizens should be a higher priority than economic efficiency. Council members would regret having to cut anything and blame Howard Jarvis. One important point was that Council and Supervisors alike preferred to cut maintenance and supplies rather than programs whereever possible, repeatedly upsetting the balance which department heads had tried to maintain. In Oakland, the liberal Council members were proud to have been able to move across department lines to take some money away from street repair and give it to recreation center staffing. More common was the tactic employed by the Oakland Mayor, of turning the problems back on the residents who objected to particular reductions. "What would you cut instead?" and "Would you volunteer your time to help the children if we kept this center open?" were two of his favorite queries. Since voters in both cities had rejected Proposition 13, politicians tended toward rhetorical images of "the cities" versus "the suburbs", thereby minimizing the differences in priorities within their communities.

Compared to years past, there was little evidence that either city was deliberately discriminating against the poor or minorities in its program reduction proposals. Nor did many people argue against the near complete exemption of police from serious budget reductions, though investments in police "hardware" were criticized

and in some instances cut in favor of retaining foot patrols.

Even if service professionals are becoming less influential in the initial formation of budget priorities, they are becoming more sophisticated at organizing constituencies to protect their programs. Each service has its own style of politics, determined by its relationship to the community. The museums rely on their contacts among the city's influential elite, and on their volunteers turning out for demonstrations. Recreation leaders have an "old boy network" from whom they can elicit sympathy and occasional favors, and there have always been "Friends of the Library." But, as with the Alameda County Library, there is, after Proposition 13, a heightened militancy among many service workers. On balance the Bay Area librarians are currently much more aggressive than their counterparts in recreation.

The women's movement is an integral part of much of the organizing in libraries. The union representatives in San Francisco and Alameda County, and the Director in Oakland are all associated with a Bay Area group of women librarians which has been working to attain more access to executive power and better services.

In San Francisco the women began organizing in 1968, and later worked in neighborhoods on the district elections campaigns. They have cultivated close working relationships with several Supervisors. In Oakland, the Director owes her job partly to pressure from women's groups. She was described by the business mamger of the union (a black

male) as "someone who came up through the ranks and is good at working with the community." She is well aware that she was hired to improve the library's responsiveness to the community, and that the City Council expects her to organize her constituents. Her experience in and strong commitment to children's services was also well known.

The recreation and parks departments are not without some substantial political contacts of their own, of course, both in city halls and in the neighborhoods. In San Francisco they are well thought of by the Mayor's budget planners for their dedication and capable administration. The manager in the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department with whom we talked was well known in children's advocacy circles because he had helped organize a protest against the closing of playgrounds. He says he attends meetings of hundreds of community groups, a point corroborated by the Mayor's budget analyst.

While individual administrators or supervisors may have extensive contact with the community, the departments as a whole are not consistently involved in community politics. In Oakland, the administrator said that the Recreation Department's relationship with the Council would be damaged if the Department were to mobilize community opposition to the budget cuts before the Council had considered them. In addition, he felt that the union representing Recreation workers was concerned only with salary, and that the employees had consequently become less dedicated and professional. If other admini-

strators share this perspective it is unlikely that they would organize recreation employees as a strategy to preserve the services. For his part, the union business manager said that the library head kept him much better informed about the effects of Proposition 13 than did the Recreation administrator.

If the political effectiveness of advocates of recreational and cultural services is erratic, at least the position of children's needs as a central concern within these services appears to be strong.

Most participants in the budgeting process invoked the values we have seen to be historically important for children's out-of-school services. Social control, supervision, informal education and good clean fun were all stressed repeatedly. In our interviewing we did not encounter any official or employee who would subscribe to the idea that children had been hurt <u>disproportionately</u> by the pattern of cutbacks. Said an Oakland City Councilmenber: "By now its so bad, its hard to tell if children were hurt worse. The North Oakland library has low circulation but is used after school by lots of children. That was the rationale for keeping it open." This is in sharp contrast to a Council decision in 1976 to <u>close</u> a particular branch because it was used primarly by school children. Similar anecdotal evidence was offered by administrators in a variety of positions within the services and in budget offices. Even allowing for the expected defensiveness, there is a definite trend toward more explicit attention to children's needs within these services.

All of this relative concern for children's interests has taken place in agencies whose fiscal bases continue to deteriorate. Each year the enacted cuts are never as bad a what had been predicted. However, several years of cumulative reductions of five to ten percent, continued losses to inflation and the termination of most CETA jobs* has taken a severe toll.

In April of 1980 Oakland was weighing another 19% cut in Parks and Recreation and 10% in Libraries even if Proposition 9 (Jarvis' income tax cut) were to fail (as it did.) All strategies for cutting budgets further without closing facilities had apparently been exhausted. Most of the practical potential for increasing user fees was already tapped. Corporate donors and creative fundraising plans were running thin. The terms of the bailout, relatively meager for cities, were established and could onlu change for the worse. In fact, evidence suggests that the state surplus will be exhausted in another year. In short, municipal recreational and cultural services in Oakland and all other large California cities face a grim future, though children are officially a high priority. Whether circumstances continueto erode provision, or even lead to the ultimate demise of the services are important questions. But more fundamental is that the conditions which are bringing about this unprecedented deterioration are clearly not being addressed.

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*Oakland, for example, expects to lose 133 CETA workers between 1980 and 1981 in Parks and Recreation, Library and Museum services.[16]

NOTES

1. Information 13 Newsletter, (Sacramento, California State Library) No. 10, October 31, 1978.

2. Tony Quinn, "Political Consequences of the California Tax Revolt" Tax Revolt Digest, Special Report, September, 1979.

3. Maureen Fitzgerald, "California's Future Under Proposition 13" Tax Revolt Digest, Special Report, November, 1980. p. 2.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid. p.4.

7 Susan Bain and Walter Park, "Resource Packet for the Workshop on Proposition 13--Impact on Minoroties", University of California, Berkeley, Institute of Governmental Studies. March 2, 1979.

8. Statement of Mayor Lionel J. Wilson, Oakland City Council meeting, April 22, 1980.

9. Fitzgerald, op cit. p.2.

10. Tax Revolt Digest, January, 1979, p.2.

11. Tax Revolt Digest, July, 1979, p.1.

12. Jack Stumpf and Paul Terrell, Proposition 13 and California Human Services (National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter, February, 1979.) p. 106.

13. Berkeley Planning Associates. "Effects of State and Local Expenditure Limitations on Human Service Financing: Case Study: Public Finance in the City of Oakland and the County of Alameda" (1980, mimeo) p. 62.

14 Barbara Gray Boyd, "The Ides of '78", NewsNotes of California Libraries volume 73, No. 1. 1978, p. 14.

15. Ibid. p. 16.

16. Berkeley Planning Associates, op cit. p. 42

In Oakland, the city whose families we surveyed in 1976, this disadvantaged position is quite apparent. Between July 1978 (after Proposition 13 passed) and January, 1980 real dollar funding reductions by the city for services with extensive out-of-school programs for children were as follows:

Parks and Recreation	45%
Museum	38%
Library	25%

These figures are higher than the average city service reduction (22%) and much higher than cutbacks in funding for police services (11%).[2] Our research indicates that these proportions are reasonably representative of program funding reductions in larger municipalities throughout the state.

Many assessments of the impact of Proposition 13 have concluded that in the aggregate, municipal government services in California remain surprisingly uncompromised. The state surplus, the argument goes, "bailed out" agencies sufficiently to avoid the catastrophic dislocations which had been anticipated. This may be true, but in terms of the services of concern to us here it misses two very important points:

1. Children's out-of-school services have been in a state of fiscal decline for a decade so that Proposition 13 was not a unique intervention, merely another step in the historical slide; and

2) To appreciate the real consequences of Proposition 13 one must look below the aggregate level and consider how local agency strategies to cope with budgetary reductions affected particular out-of-school services and particular clients of those services.

CHILDREN'S OUT-OF-SCHOOL SERVICES AND THE FISCAL CRISIS: PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCE AND PERSPECTIVES ON THE FUTURE

In the preceding sections of this report we have argued that in spite of high levels of use of many children's services provided by local government, the fiscal integrity of these programs has steadily eroded through the 1970's. Proposition 13 in California represented an acceleration of a trend, more than the commencement of a new era of austerity.

We have focused on only one aspect of the public sector's involvement with young people--out-of-school services. These services fulfill many of the same functions and purposes as other types of programs: enrichment, education remediation, socialization and childcare. In this sense they are thoroughly part of the historical mainstream of local government's commitment to the young.

As we have seen, out-of-school services to children have become especially vulnerable to the uncertainties of the local government budgeting process, even before Proposition 13 type initiatives became popular. We have argued that the vulnerability of out-of-school services reflects their fiscal, political and ideological marginality, that although they are not severely critized, neither do they have extensive political support. Hence, as Rubin[1] has written:

> In the dichotomy employed by many city managers between "need to have" and "nice to have" services, culture and recreation inevitably fall into the latter category. Nor are the services protected by requirements for minimum service mandate by the State Education code or other laws. In short, no matter how efficiently or effectively the services may operate, they are likely to be labelled as non-essential luxuries which are no longer affordable.

We argue here that it is at this level that the impacts of Proposition 13 on children's services, children and families has been quite severe.

This section begins with a discussion of post-Proposition 13 bureaucratic responses to increasing fiscal austerity. We shall link this discussion to our earlier section on service utilization in an effort to understand the implications of these responses for service provision and idfferent user groups. Following this discussion we shall consider some of the longer range plans by which agencies and communities are addressing the problem of maintaining children's services. Here we will look especially at some of the new intergovernmental relations that will determine the fiscal capacity and political control of the services. Further we shall explore some of the opportunities which increased stringency may afford to break with tradition and broadly reconceptualize service mandates and provision strategies.

MANAGING THE NEW AUSTERITY

Over the course of the decade and at an accelerated pace since the passage of Proposition 13, cities like Oakland have adopted a variety of strategies to cope with reduced funding levels for out-of-school children's services. Here we shall consider those strategies that are not unique to Oakland but fairly representative of actions taken throughout the state. Drawing on our early discussion of service use levels, we shall attempt to deduce the impacts of each of these strategies on the inner-city client groups represented by our Oakland sample.

Site Closing

One of the traditional aspects of children's out-of-school programming has been a commitment to easy accessibility. In neighborhoods throughout the country an extensive network of parks, recreation centers and libraries emerged between 1920 and 1960. But through the 1960's and 1970's and certainly into the Proposition 13 era, the continued provision of highly decentralized services has been questioned in many localities. The idea that services should be located "close to home" has become a less effectual justification in the eyes of city administrators and councils than it was in the past.

In a period of greater fiscal stringency many communities have begun utilizing conventional cost-effectiveness criteria for evaluating children's programs, thereby stripping away their "special status." For the first time in memory the recreation facilities that are used by fewer children and branch libraries with lower circulations, are being summarily closed. As decentralized services are curtailed to meet budget objectives and to make those responsible for children's services apply "rational" decisionmaking techniques we must bear in mind two things that were described in Chapter II of this report:

A) most children who use neighborhood services get there on their own, unassisted by their parents; and

B) while proximity does not entirely account for use levels of particular facilities,(intervening factors such as children's interests and neighborhood safety also account for an amount of variation) most regular users of children's services live nearby.

Hence, we can argue that site closings in response to the new austerity will affect children in at least the following ways:

A) The clientele of many services will diminish because fewer children will be able to get to facilities on their own.

B) Judgments concerning which facilities to maintain and which to close will be made on the narrowest of criteria--e.g. some measure of use levels--with minimal regard to the needs of a neighborhood and its children and without recognizing that lower use levels may be a function of past programmatic decisions rather than client disinterest. For example, the fact that a branch library has a collection poorly suited to the community in which it is located may account for low circulation rates. In Oakland, libirary branches in this circumstance have been closed even though the need for library services is high, given that children in these areas have relatively few alternative sources of reading material. The apparent "inefficiency" of these branches may be a consequence of actions taken over a long period of time. But the urgency of fiscal constraints leads not to consideration of how to serve the areas' children but to a decision to eliminate the service altogether.

C) Current policies seem to favor re-centralizing children's services, in direct contrast with earlier priorities. Such decisions will mean that those children who are most mobile on their own (or who are taken places they want to go by adults) will be the principal clientele for these child-serving agencies. Issues of need will be relegated to secondary status and there will be increasing inequality in

terms of children's access to and use of facilities and programs. This is ironic given that the intention of many of these services is to address equity concerns.

Staff Reductions and Program Consolidation

Many communities have stopped short of site closings, instead reallocating staff in mays which have significantly redefined the nature of the service. Here, actions have been of four types:

1) discontinuing specialized programs directed specifically at young clients;
2) reducing full-time professional children's staff;
3) increasing the number of "non-specialized" part-time staff;
4) reducing the amount of adult supervision at facilities (e.g. on playgrounds).

The logic of this approach to the new austerity is that children can still have places to go, even if, once they get there, the scope or intensiveness of programs are much more limited than in the past.

There are a great many examples of successful, specialized children's services that are now being phased out. Young adult or teenage collections in public libraries are being combined with general collections. Mobile vans used by museums, recreation and library systems to reach young people "in the neighborhoods" are being eliminated despite their documented success. And outreach projects generally, even when funded mainly through federal or foundation grants, are in jeopardy when any amount of local funding is required (e.g. for insurance).

This diminution of programs designed specifically for young people is reflected in staff-related changes as well. As a consequence of continuing funding reductions, in many agencies there are now fewer experienced professionals trained in children's programming. For instance, many specialized sports programs have been downgraded such that one leader now runs a whole range of activities at the same time (e.g. baseball, basketball and soccer). The quality of instruction invariably declines, for few leaders are prepared to effectively run all of these programs. Similar examples abound in fine arts programs where separate classes in drawing, painting and sculpture give way to "art classes" which cover the gamut--less well to be sure, it is argued, but better than nothing. Children's library programs have suffered a somewhat similar fate. There are in most communities fewer trained children's librarians on staff than before, while those who remain have more general responsibilities and are less accessible to children.

Virtually every one of the services discussed in this monograph has suffered severe diminution of trained children's program staff. The consequencies of this "de-professionalization" are many. To begin with, the quality of children's public sector experience cannot help but suffer. Even though we cannot say that programs in the past were of uniformly high quality, it is clear that children are receiving relatively less specialized assistance today. This takes its toll particularly on children who use the public sector as a place to learn new skills. Given the relative dependence

of children from poor families on these free public sector services, the impact of staff reductions is likely to be profound.

While some may argue that even a reduced staff with less motivation for and experience in working with children is better than total elimination of programs, our data demonstrates that these decisions have thoroughly inequitable consequences, principally affecting those with the fewest options.

Staff reductions have meant not only less specialized programming but, generally reduced supervision as well. In the earlier chapter on children's use of facilities and services the importance of safety as a factor influencing children's play patterns was briefly noted. Supervision, even just non-instructional watchfulness by adults, makes for safer facilities or at least makes children (and their parents) feel less threatened. Oakland provides a good example of the tension here. For several years the city's Parks and Recreation Department has, in its own budget messages proposed discontinuing adult supervision at elementary schoolyards after school hours. Each year the City Council has overruled the Department and directed that supervision be continued. Our data indicates the wisdom of this decision, even though that supervision may not be as highly skilled a professional activity as other endangered staff functions. First, we have noted the popularity of schoolyards as centers of after-school play and we note that safety considerations influence how children feel about using the schoolyard as a play area. Second, many parents simply will not allow their children to play in areas that are not supervised. Equally important, as experience in San Francisco has shown, when playground supervision was discontinued for budgetary reasons the number of accidents dramatically increased. This

can, in part, be attributed to diminished supervision. Furthermore our data suggests that the impact of reduced supervision is especially severe for girls, who are less likely than boys to use unsupervised facilities whenever safety is in doubt.

So, while local elected officials and agency staff may try not to close facilities, their approaches to trimming program and staff have affected children's experiences at least as much, albeit in more subtle ways.

User Fees

Of all the local government responses to the new austerity, the imposition of user fees has been most widely adopted. The logic here is to continue providing services and let the user bear some or all of the cost. Since services are not discontinued, the illusion is created that "little has changed" despite declining budget allocations.

The user fee issue is complicated by questions of equity. In some communities the imposition of fees may have little effect on families or children, while in other communities it might significantly affect children's access. The free art class now charges $2.00 for materials; the recreation center soccer team charges $5.00 for transportation to and from games; the library charges an annual registration fee, and so forth. In a wealthy community, such "pay your own way" policies may not be problematic. On the other hand, our Oakland data suggests that this is not the case in a city with a large poverty population. Here we hit upon one of the especially powerful impacts of Proposition 13 that can be detected only by exploring program changes as they affect particular populations within communities. In Oakland, the intro-

duction of user fees is sufficient to drive away a significant number of potential clients. The data on use of recreation center programs in Oakland (Chapter II, Table 5) makes the case clearly. Children from lower income families constitute a very large proportion of users of free services. When fees are charged, a different profile of the clientele emerges. In Oakland, while a sufficient number of clients may be found to warrant providing a fee charging recreation center program, the children who are most dependent on free access may be excluded. Hence, one of the more insidious consequences of the new austerity is the degree to which the traditional commitment to the less privileged is being undermined. From our data it is quite clear that as services with large low income clientele introduce user fees those children are less likely to continue to participate. While it may then be the case that there is "no change" in the number of programs offered (i.e. that classes, activities and programs are maintained) there is likely to be real change in the composition of the clientele.

User fees are not new to local government. Fees for such things as business licenses, zoning permits and adult recreation have long been standard practice, and have been increased in the wake of Proposition 13. This recent proliferation of fee charges is touching many children's services, both in and outside of school for the first time. The level of concern this has generated is illustrated by the request by the California State Assemply for a report from the Auditor General on the Extent of fee charges by

schools and local government agencies for programs involving children.[3] Implicit in this inquiry was a larger problem raised in a report by the League of Women Voters of California: "Are government services gradually shifting to programs only for middle and upper income residents?"[4] The issue is less that user fees result in programs explicitly designed for wealthier residents, but rather that the programs are really only accessible to them--thereby creating implicit provision biases.

Private Sponsorship and Privatization

As cities have struggled to maintain credible children's programs they have at times made direct appeals to private enterprise to take some responsibility for actually funding services. At best, this strategy has temporarily saved programs and at the same time given visibility to "public spirited" corporations, business and philanthropies that fill the breach.

Several examples of these sponsorship efforts are as follows: The East Bay Regional Parks District found several companies (many fewer than hoped) to "adopt-a-park" by paying their maintenance expenses (closures were otherwise threatened); concert impresario, Bill Graham, organized a benefit rock concert to "save" the San Francisco Public Schools Interscholastic Sports program; and the Bank of America contributed funds to the city of San Francisco to keep playgrounds open and staffed during the summer of 1978. There are, of course, many other examples that could be recounted. One problem, however, is that these sorts of contributions tend to be on a one-time basis, so that the services themselves remain in a continuing state of limbo, not knowing how or whether they will be maintained. There is

a great amount of effort required to solicit donations, and public agencies have not had the staff capacity to utilize these possibilities extensively. Also, greater reliance on corporate donations shifts some decision over program priorities to the private sector. This move, however unintended, could eventually have serious consequences for the kinds of opportunities available to children and the degree to which parents and residents have any control over the nature of offerings.

Reductions in services and staffing, uncertainty about future funding and the imposition of user fees have resulted in a degree of privatization in children's out-of-school time use, particularly among wealthier families. The issue is in part one of options. If a child from a higher income family is taking a painting class in a public recreation center and a fee is introduced or the class is discontinued, his or her parents can, if they want, either pay the fee or find a comparable private sector offering. The key is that these families have the resources with which to make choices. Others do not. From the data presented in Chapter II, it is clear that materially advantaged children are less dependent on the public sector as a source of after-school programs and activities (regardless of their use levels).

In a sense, encouraging privatization solves certain problems for local government agencies. If potential clients who can afford to pay fees turn to the private sector for programs, a drop in demand can reduce the cost-effectiveness of the public programs and provide a reason for no longer offering certain programs at all. The distinction between those who can pay for services and those who cannot, those who have choices and those who do not, is likely to be exacerbated in the future. While higher income suburban communities, with

more homogeneous populations, may find that the introduction of user fees does not undermine the demand for services, our data indicate the heterogeneous big cities are faced with a far more complex provision problem, given the breadth of personal circumstances that characterizes their clientele. If fees are introduced or program specialization reduced in the public sector, numbers of potential clients may look elsewhere for services. Rather than the historical relationship of complementarity betweeen public and private cultural programming, competition, with the public at a disadvantage, may become more common. Price parity or near parity may, in the end, turn those who can afford to pay for services to the private sector, leaving a leaner set of services more costly than ever, to children from families that are less able to afford them.

Short-term Responses to the New Austerity Summarized

This brief survey of current strategies to combat the new austerity suggests an uncertain future for children's services. Of special concern is the equity consequences of these decisions for children as a group and among children of different circumstances. The public sector has had, as a fundamental mandate, provision of services for those least able to find alternatives. Evidence indicates that in the short run, the adverse consequences of this reorganization of services have fallen most directly on children and families with the greatest need and the fewest alternatives.

The Changing Political Environment of Children's Services

This period of fiscal stress is profoundly effecting the politics of children's services. We can identify three broad aspects of that environment and outline some of the possible impacts and consequences of the ongoing austerity.

The politics of the budgetary process pose serious limitations on activists committed to changing the nature of children's services. Most parental political involvement with children's out-of-school services today is defensive--intended to protect or conserve existing programs, nothing more. In most cases the objective of this activism is to conserve the integrity of a single program or preserve a single facility. At times, as we have seen, the issue can become very big indeed, as when library workers and supporters in Alameda County were forced to defend their entire service. This is not to say that many parents and service professionals do not worry about the quality or the substance of the programs that they do provide. But in these difficult times the issue of simple survival has necessarily received most attention.

The new austerity has highlighted important differences in types of political activism. Responses to the current crisis in the communities that we have focussed on here tends to diffuse conflict and reduce the possibility of fundamentally changing the nature of a service. Large problems (are the available services meeting the needs of child clients?) give way to small or narrow ones (is the money there to continue providing what is now available?),

public input and critical legislative examination focus on a narrow range of "tradeoffs," and organizing around larger demands or needs is virtually suspended.

As long as advocates for children's interests respond in this way, they will be unable to alter--or successfully cope with--this new political reality. As long as the principal issue is conservation of existing services there will be no careful consideration of the goals, objectives or actual impacts of programs and agencies. Perhaps more problematic, to an extent the fiscal crisis has persuaded some parents that it no longer makes sense to look toward the public sector for meeting certain everyday needs of children. Indeed, some fortunate few have "withdrawn" to seek services exclusively on the private market.On the other hand, there has been some healthy reorganization of political coalitions. For example, we have seen how public employees and parents in Alameda County worked together in a kind of issue based effort that helped to overcome some of the traditional structural barriers inherent in urban politics.

The Future of Local Government

We have emphasized the fact that out-of-school services for children have long been provided principally by local government agencies. Now that tradition is being tested--pulled in several directions at once. On the one hand, the state and even the federal government are assuming more financial responsibility for these services. On the other hand, there is an increasing number of

privatized alternatives, from commercial to not-for-profit programs. And there is also pressure on parents, mainly mothers to become more "self-reliant" and take responsibility for managing their children's out-of-school time. Ironically this is occuring just when more families with two working parents, or single parents, are demanding publicly provided care and publicly sponsored children's activities. These developments could lead in any number of directions.

For one thing, we must ask whether there is anything inherently sacred about the provision of children's services by local government, especially if state bureaucracies or decentralized private entrepreneurs could do much the same thing. For instance, would state or federal funding for libraries (as has been proposed) overcome the fiscal dilemma and promote service equality and high quality service? Would a voucher system for out-of-school culture and recreation services promote pluralism and greater efficiency in service delivery.

These are, at the moment, more theoretical questions than urgent issues demanding resolution. The State of California, for instance, has expressed very little interest in managing out-of school programs, even programs to which it now gives support. The state fiscal bailout has been organized along the lines of revenue sharing, with few mandates. However, there is every reason to expect that as state funds become more scarce, these programs will come under ever closer scrutiny as the competition for

monies grows. As we have noted, various children's services have been lobbying for earmarked shares of state revenues, and out-of-school services do not currently have the political base from which to argue for these kinds of funding assurances. As for the voucher concept, it will probably not emerge until the fate of current school voucher plans are decided. Since the services are basically voluntary to begin with this would be a much less dramatic, if more practical voucher experiment. Also, the market for profit-making out-of-school programs has not proven to be especially vigorous as yet (although it may be too early to tell). Experiences with day care and summer school (see Appendix A) show that private sector ventures often overestimate the potential profitability of children's programs.

At the very least leadership among children's services professionals must learn from their school counterparts and become more aggressive entrepreneurs themselves. For the fact is that whether these kinds of activities remain serious endeavors of the public sector at all will be one of the significant questions facing local government officials in the next few years.

Finis

Out-of-school children's services have been a major casualty of Proposition 13. After two years they are just now beginning to respond to its challenges. We can only understand the

immediate impacts of fiscal constraints by looking at how particular populations have been affected; and also by recognizing that some families and children are more reliant on the public sector, hence more vulnerable to the consequences of service reorganization or diminution. The long term challenge for children's out-of-school services should not be merely to survive the attrition that Proposition 13 has accelerated. There should be renewed committment to the largely unfulfilled promise of these programs: to improve the quality of children's lives; to enhance children's individual life chances; and to meet the increasingly complex and pressing service needs of families today. At their best, these services can contribute toward these ends. And indeed, this is what must be encouraged.

Despite rough maintenance of the status quo, Proposition 13 has nonetheless been called a mixed bag for children, in part because out-of-school childrens programs have suffered severely. At the state level, libraries, parks and recreation, cultural institutions and summer school had few effective advocates. Even a small legislative appropriation ($18 million) earmarked for public libraries was vetoed by the governor, despite their having suffered two years of serious cutbacks. While there is clearly a role for the state in supporting these kinds of services, to date, with the exception of summer school, almost all the relevant decisions have been made at the city, school, special district and county level. Consequently the rest of this chapter will describe actions taken at these levels of government since the passage of Proposition 13--focusing principally at developments in three localities. Supported by an exhaustive review of reports and interviews concerning children's out-of-school programs in scores of California communities (see Appendix C) we are persuaded that the analysis presented below reflects most of the actions and responses to Proposition 13 at the city, county and special district levels of government.

Chapter Five

Footnotes

1. Victor Rubin, "Living With Less: Proposition 13 and Children's Services," in Kathryn Cirincione-Coles, editor, The Future of Education: Policy Issues and Challenges (Beverly Hills, Sage Publications, 1981), p. 134.

2. Oakland, California, Office of the City Manager, "1979-80 Budget Reduction Alternatives." Mimeo

3. California Legislature, Joint Legislative Audit Committee, Office of the Auditor General, Report 932, December 7, 1979. In this report many of the issues concerned the constitutionality of requiring public school students to pay fees for participation in school programs and activities (required or not). By way of example, various related, publicly provided out-of-school activities were also examined.

4. League of Women Voters of California, State-Local Government Relationships: Study Guide II (San Francisco: LWV, February, 1980), p. 20.

Appendix A
Summer School in the Wake of Proposition 13: Ancillary Educational Services under Fire

[While much of the post-Proposition 13 research has concluded that its overall impact on the provision of human services has not been as severe as anticipated, there is agreement that California's public summer school program has suffered severe cutbacks--virtually all state monies for the program were withdrawn in 1978. This appendix explores the history of the California summer school program before Proposition 13, comments on its current status and examines who has been affected by the diminution of services.

Between 1952 and 1977, in twenty-five years' time, the State of California built a large, formidable summer school program serving well over one million elementary and secondary school age children annually. In 1978, in one trip to the polls California voters passed a tax initiative which, among other things, led to the complete dismantling of the program.

How and why this happened, and what the impact has been on children and families is the subject of this appendix.

Summer School in Historical Perspective

Although summer school rests comfortably in the world of the educator it has an uncertain tradition marked by imprecisely defined objectives and poorly documented impacts.

The first summer school programs date to Boston in 1866.* These "vacation schools" were originally viewed as a way to keep children from the dangers and temptations of the streets. "Their chief function... was to keep the children who attended, pleasantly and perhaps profitably occupied so that they would be removed from undesirable influences to which they would otherwise be exposed."[1/]

*Through the middle part of the nineteenth century, principally for economic reasons, the length of the school year declined from 225-250 days per year (in other words nearly year round) to 180-200 days.

Early summer programs were not, for the most part, actually provided by the schools. Rather, with a kind of welfare spirit, urban social and charitable organizations promoted summertime services, in large measure to provide clean, healthful environments for children growing up in tenement housing and in unsafe areas of cities. The vacation school movement spread quickly through the Northeast and by 1899 twenty cities in the U.S. operated elementary level programs.[2] A major shift in locus of control and sponsorship occurred during the 1890's. As the movement took root, private and quasi-private agencies often found that space requirements exceeded their facility capacities (churches, settlement houses, etc.). Public school officials were called upon to assist. In the space of a few years, this collaborative relationship became commonplace. By the turn of the century many cities were not only providing space, but they were also contributing funds to help support summer school programs.

As with the recreation movement at the turn of the century, initially programs were sponsored by private sector agencies, but were incorporated into the public sector as they grew and matured--in this case they came under the control of the public schools. By 1925 it is estimated that 20% of school districts in the more populated states had elementary level summer programs[3].

In the early 1900's the provision of summer programs was justified on many grounds, not solely for the purpose of providing children with a safe place to go during the day. The arguments in favor of summer school were often based on assumptions about the positive effects of increased exposure to schooling, although

there was little corroborating evidence. Many school districts introduced summer school with this explicit educational agenda--to help "backward" students catch up and to give "bright" students a chance to get ahead[4]. Refinements of this proposition underlie most summer school efforts today. Many school officials speculated that summer programs could diminish summer learning loss, which was recognized as a problem even early in the century. But even at athat time there was little or no data available with which to demonstrate that summer school was supporting the regular year program in this manner[5]. Even so, by the 1920's the intellectual underpinnings of summer school were well in place and the objectives had shifted from amelioration of the conditions of urban life and to enhancing or remediating children's learning skills.

Growth in summer school programs continued through the 1920's; however, its popularity declined drastically during the Depression years. Many cities eliminated programs to reduce spending indicating that the relative marginality of summer school was already quite clear. In addition concepts of educating the young were in transition and the idea of summer school was no longer in vogue. In fact, it was not until the post World War II baby boom that a significant public demand for summer programs re-emerged, coupled with renewed interest among professional educators.

Program Growth in California

As in other parts of the country, the early summer school movement in California was dominated by urban interests when a significant

commitment emerged in the decade 1910-20. From the beginning virtually every community adopting a program did so at public expense and exclusively in public settings (unlike the Eastern history). Fresno has operated a program continuously since 1921, longer than any other city in the state. It should be noted, however, that because the summer school movement developed at a late date, it was linked philosophically to prevailing educational objectives more than it was to any social welfare agenda. Since there was no uniform reporting system until the early 1950's, it is difficult to know how many districts had programs although growth appears to have mirrored the national experience for the three decade period 1920-50.

In the context of California educational history, summer school matured as the postwar baby boom triggered extraordinary growth in the state's schooling programs. In political terms it was not a controversial issue, viewed as a reasonable elaboration of schooling services supported by the state education bureaucracy, administrator and teachers' groups and legislators (bi-partisan) alike.

Ironically, however, it was not educational but fiscal factors that stimulated widespread program growth. In 1953, as part of an effort to encourage districts to sponsor educational summer programs legislation was passed which permitted school districts to count summer school a.d.a. (average daily attendance) in calculations of total attendance, on which state revenue contributions were determined. In other words, school districts could run summer programs--

a reduced day schedule with comparably reduced costs--and count each a.d.a. as equal to a "regular" school a.d.a. for revenue purposes. The advantages here were rather clear and its impact immediate. It was a fiscal bonanza. (An extensive literature search and discussions with several legislators in office at that time did not shed much light on the purpose of setting the formula in this way. Without doubt, however, the legislature did not expect districts to utilize the program specifically for fiscal reward, although this was obviously an inducement.)

In 1954 (the year after the State adopted summer school reporting and application procedures) 119 districts operated summer school programs. This grew to 147 in 1956; 174 in 1957; and 237 in 1958. The number of schools with programs increased 119% during this period. In one survey of 129 districts 69% that had programs in 1957 established them between 1952 and 1956. By 1970 an extraordinary proportion (nearly 20%) of all enrolled K-8 public school students attended a summer session in their community. This rapid growth was attributed not just to the availability of state monies but also to post-war suburbanization (children's summer recreation needs were not well met by many fast growing cities); and to growing recognition among educators that many children had learning problems and needs that could be attended to, often in unconventional ways, outside the regular school year[6/].

There are few studies of California summer schools and their relationship to the larger educational system. One of the more comprehensive analyses, a survey of 147 districts was conducted

in the late 1950's[7]. Among other things this study documented the reasons why districts started programs; it explored the curriculum of summer programs; and it described how administrators felt about the programs and their impacts (see Tables 1, 2 and 3). The author concluded that the activities, services and curriculum were broad, tending to promote the social, physical, emotional as well as intellectual growth of children. There also was some evidence that districts used the time to develop curriculum and experiment with innovative teaching methods.

There is little evidence that either the nature or purpose of summer programs have changed very much since the time of the survey. They have, however, grown a great deal. In this regard ESEA Title I offered many districts an important opportunity to expand their summer school efforts, particularly around remediation and enrichment opportunities for the disadvantaged[8].

The more recent history of summer school in California cannot be understood without reference to the changing fiscal conditions of the public schools. Through the early 1970's, as school enrollments and tax rates peaked, summer school became a very important revenue-producing vehicle. In California 660,000 children, K-8 grades, attended in 1972--rising to 860,000 in 1977, or 30% of all K-8 public school students. In 1977, 33% of K-8 public school students were enrolled in summer programs.

The substantial expansion of summer school in the 1970's is clearly shown in Table 4. Not only did the proportion of K-8 children enrolled more than double, the real a.d.a. increased by 31%

TABLE 1

Reasons for Starting First Summer School in District

Reason for Summer Schools	Number of Districts	Percent
Help children needing additional basic educational experiences	28	21.7%
Enrich regular program	26	20.2
Remedial problems	19	14.8
Parental request	17	13.2
Give needed summer supervision	11	8.6
Help children with reading problems	11	8.6
Staff and community interest	8	6.2
Provide additional use of buildings	5	3.9
Give emergency teachers and student teachers experience	4	3.1
Eliminate much retardation	3	2.4
Help pupils behind in school work due to illness or transfer	3	2.4
Needs of gifted children	3	2.4
Provide a continuing program	2.	1.6
Started when district eliminated mid-term promotions	1	.8
Offer laboratory for summer conference	1	.8
To provide for experimentation	1	.8
Provide additional opportunities for children who want to learn	1	.8
To meet the needs of children	1	.8
Nutritional and recreational needs	1	.8
Number of Districts	129*	

*Seventeen districts listed two reasons

Source: Ronald E. Notley, "The Status of Summer School Programs for Elementary School Children in California" (1959).

TABLE 2

Subject Offerings in the Summer School Enrichment Program

Subjects		Number of Districts	Percent
Physical Activities		58	39.4%
Physical Education	34		
Swimming	17		
Folk Dancing	5		
Rhythms	1		
Interpretative Dancing	1		
Music Education		57	38.8
Instrumental	34		
Music	13		
Vocal	10		
Art Education		36	24.5
Arts and Crafts	29		
Art	6		
Photography	1		
Science Education		16	10.9
Science	11		
Nature Study	3		
Science and Nature Study	1		
Elementary Physics	1		
Creative Arts		12	7.6
Dramatics	7		
Stories and Poems	3		
Library	2		
Education of Exceptional Children		8	5.4
Cerebral Palsy	4		
Mentally Retarded	2		
Deaf	1		
Physically Handicapped	1		
Handicrafts and Home Arts		8	5.4
Shop	3		
Foods and Homemaking	3		
Home Mechanics	1		
Social Living	1		
Foreign Language		5	3.4
Spanish	4		
French	1		
Typing		3	2.0
Number of Districts		147	

*Source: Notley (1959)

TABLE 3

Chief Strengths of Summer School Program

Nature of Strengths	Number of Districts	Percent
Improves general academic achievement	34	26.4%
Enrichment opportunities	29	22.5
Concentrated remedial program	23	17.9
Helps special or individual children	17	13.2
In-service training for teachers	13	11.0
Parents like and want it	10	7.8
Improves reading	9	7.0
Worthwhile recreational activities	9	7.0
Relaxed atmosphere between pupil and teacher	5	3.9
Provides for gifted	4	3.1
Change in pupil attitudes	3	2.4
More use of school plant	2	1.6
Aid to slow learners	2	1.6
Children come because they want to	2	1.6
Provides worthwhile summer activities	1	.8
Helps solve adjustment problems	1	.8
Provides teachers with opportunity to earn more money	1	.8
Assists in social adjustment	1	.8
Number of Districts	129*	

*Thirty-seven districts listed two strengths.

Source: Notley (1959)

TABLE 4

Growth in Summer School Program Provision and Attendance in California (1971 - 1977)

	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
Number of Counties with Programs	52	50	52	50	52	54	54
Number of Districts with Programs	380	411	436	462	511	503	535
a.d.a.* (statewide) (by grade level)							
K	21833	12628	28823	17538	27457	29715	34723
1	111888	99447	84478	97500	114887	119118	117842
2	97921	96017	92730	102195	113594	119493	126780
3	97376	93434	93454	101679	109974	112957	124671
4	98858	95884	95318	102146	119971	113594	118313
5	93471	95602	97708	105529	113349	112090	117205
6	58668	68354	72506	97586	109739	108393	106811
7	41185	46663	48341	54877	60449	63477	64448
8	19883	30611	32788	36904	43868	48503	48933
Total	654,760	662,366	679,714	738,114	825,787	841,818	859,726
Percent of K-8 a.d.a. enrolled in summer school	20.7%	21.3%	22.2%	24.6%	30.9%	31.7%	32.9%

*a.d.a.= average daily attendance

Source: California, State Department of Education, California Public Schools: Selected Statistics (1971-77).

in this seven year span. During these years, well over half the total summer school enrollment was in the K-3 grades. We can attribute these increases to at least the following factors:

1. Parents and school professionals generally were beginning to support the idea of an extended year school program. The reasons for their support were many and varied--sometimes educational, sometimes not. Furthermore, attachment to the ten-month school year waned as fewer parents argued that children "needed a rest," or that schooling during the summer made family vacation planning too difficult.

2. Increasing maternal employment made summer school opportunities for children attractive to many parents. It was a healthy, safe place for children to go at little or no cost to families. This may account for the high proportion of young children (K-3) attending programs. These children, after all, are less likely to be attending by choice and relatively few were enrolled by parents specifically for remediation.

3. Although working with little hard data, school professionals remained persuaded that summer school offered a supportive climate in which to deal with problems of learning loss and remediation. This became a near universally accepted premise underlying the program.

Despite these factors--each helped to increase the state's summer school enrollment--through the 1970's some legislators charged that districts were principally interested in boosting attendance only because of the generous a.d.a. policies.

In June, 1978, Proposition 13 appeared on the ballot. The election took place just days before summer programs were scheduled to begin in school districts throughout the state. The legislature, preparing in advance for the possibility that Proposition 13 would pass, had amended the Budget Act of 1978-79 to read that, if the initiative was approved, the broad guidelines under which school districts organized summer programs were no longer operative, and state supported summer classes were to be limited only to courses for high school seniors needing credit for graduation and special programs for the handicapped[9/]. Under Proposition 13, districts were to be prohibited from counting 1978 summer school a.d.a. for state revenue unless sessions were completed by June 30,1978. As a consequence of this action, when Proposition 13 passed, almost every school district in the state discontinued general summer services. Attendance dropped to a miniscule 7,380 a.d.a. statewide. In effect, the state terminated its support of summer school and services disappeared virtually overnight. This raised some important questions:

1. Who was affected by the termination of summer school services, and in what ways?

2. Have communities filled the breach with other services?

3. Why was there no effective lobby for summer school in anticipation of Proposition 13? How deep was public support for the summer school program?

4. Was summer school particularly vulnerable to Proposition 13, or are there larger, more fundamental considerations at work that might also affect other school/cultural/recreational services for children in the future?

On the Question of Program Impacts

For all practical purposes there is no longer a summer school program in the California public schools. In 1978, because classes were cancelled just days before they were to have begun, parents who had organized their children's vacations around it were confronting especially troublesome dislocations. In contrast, in 1979 there was no such upheaval. The public knew there would not be a program. In the Post-Proposition 13 era, summer school was no longer a free, community-provided service for children. But to understand the responses in 1978 and 1979 more detailed consideration of impacts and community actions is necessary.

1978: Dislocation with Unexplored Implications

In 1978 summer school classes were cancelled because districts could no longer be able to claim summer a.d.a. as a part of the state aid calculation. Provision of programs would be a 100% cost item, generating no revenue. Of all community services, summer school had the dubious distinction of being hit first and hardest by Proposition 13. Across the state classes were promptly cancelled. Not surprisingly, at this very late date, many families had difficulty finding summer activities or programs for their children. A major question raised by school officials and parents throughout the state had to do with alternatives--or lack of them--for children during the summer.

In Los Angeles, 371,000 young people were affected, (and 7,300 teachers were without jobs for the summer).[9a] Some legislators responded tnat these concerns demonstrated that summer school really was a kind of "frill." Summer school, they argued, was little more than organized babysitting at public expense, hardly central to the educational enterprise.[10] They viewed the dislocation--a consequence of sudden cancellation--as a problem for parents only in that they would be forced to find other care arrangements. The instructional dimension of summer school, according to this logic, was of secondary or tertiary import to most families. To these legislators, the estimated savings ($107-180 million) was significant and certainly in the "spirit" of Proposition 13.

In the Bay Area only 9 of 110 school districts proceeded with summer school plans. Generally, where programs were held under public school sponsorship, attendance was limited to graduating seniors who needed one or two credits in order to complete required course work. Some communities attempted to organized fee-for-service summer schools, provided under the auspices of school districts using public facilities. Wealthier suburban districts were somewhat successful at organizing part-day programs for one month to six weeks, at fees ranging as high as $75 per class. A pay-as-you-go program in Los Altos drew 1,100 children for example.[12]

But fee-for-service plans fared poorly in the cities. Organized at the last minute and at a high cost, many parents simply could not afford it. In Oakland, for example, several

church groups planned a summer session of five weeks at a fee of $58 per child. One thousand children were needed for the program to break even. Only 26 children enrolled--parents would not or could not pay the price and the program was cancelled before classes began. A high school program sponsored by the University of California attracted 250 seniors at $55 per class. This, however, was far below the annual summer school attendance rate in Oakland in past years[11]. The school district had anticipated an a.d.a. of 17,000 for a regular, free summer session.

Little is known about the summertime impact of Proposition 13 on children and families, beyond the basic attendance count. Clearly, many thousands of children were denied schooling opportunities, and it is not known what they did instead--or what the impact on the loss of educational offerings may have been. The Hayward, California newspaper interviewed children and families and found that at one point or another during their student years almost every child in the community had attended summer school. Furthermore, most of those who had planned to go in 1978 were either behind in credits or had failed a class[13]. This was consistent with other reports and suggested at least that labelling summer school a frill was based on a less than objective assessment of its role and import.

The first year consequences of Proposition 13, then, can be summarized as follows. (See Table 5 for additional details.) Communities that tried to provide school programs turned to fee-for-service plans. They were, however, hastily organized and except in some suburban areas failed to attract significant numbers of children. The impact of the loss of service was not studied, and no one really knows what the million plus children who normally attend summer school did instead. The state viewed the first year's experience as "successful." Following an initial outcry (which was attributed to the late date at which summer school cuts were made rather than to the fact that summer school was discontinued) there was little ongoing pressure to assure full state funding for these programs in future years.

The 1979 situation seemed to provide further evidence that summer school did not attract the kind of visible support that might have been expected.

1979: Where were the Children?

Nineteen seventy-nine saw an elaboration of the fee-for-service model. With time to plan, more communities instituted these kinds of programs.[14/] In addition, profitmaking institutions began offering summer school "packages" to communities, with an eye toward filling the void that emerged as public agencies other than schools also began dropping summer programs for children.

Some communities promoted the fee-for-service plan and found ready constituencies. Others found that parents would simply not bear the cost of enrolling children in summer activities, no matter what the program might offer.

TABLE 5

Effects of Proposition 13 on a Selected Set of School Districts

Summer Programs

	118 Districts and Counties			54 Elementary Districts			27 Districts with a.d.a. $10,000			35 Districts in Lower Third Expenditure Per a.d.a.			33 Districts in Upper Third Expenditure Per a.d.a.		
	No Impact	Increased Numbers	Decreased Numbers	No Impact	Increased Numbers	Decreased Numbers	No Impact	Increased Numbers	Decreased Numbers	No Impact	Increased Numbers	Decreased Numbers	No Impact	Increased Numbers	Decreased Numbers
Teachers (Employment)	5	0	84	3	0	30	0	0	26	1	0	27	3	0	23
Instructional Aides															
Full time (Employment)	12	0	29	3	0	9	3	0	11	4	0	9	3	0	8
Part time (Employment)	12	0	47	3	0	19	4	0	15	5	0	15	4	0	16
Volunteers	23	0	12	6	0	5	10	0	3	10	0	5	5	0	4
K-3 Programs (a.d.a.)*	6	0	48	3	0	21	1	0	15	2	0	15	3	0	14
4-8 Programs (a.d.a.)*	4	0	53	2	0	22	0	0	18	1	0	17	2	0	15

* a.d.a. = average daily attendance

Source: California, State Department of Finance, A Study of Local Government Impacts of Proposition 13, Supplemental Report--K-12 School Districts (March 1979)

On the public sector side, in 1979 most school districts stuck to the letter of the law, providing summer school classes only for the handicapped and for high school seniors needing units in order to graduate. In Los Angeles attendance was 13,000 total as against 341,000 in 1977[15]. Oakland put together federal, state and local funds to support programs for 5,000 youngsters (compared with 18,500 in 1977). These included ESEA Title I reading clinics for 4,400 children at 17 schools; tutorial clusters for low achievers, utilizing CETA funds to pay for instructional aides; and summer youth employment/education programs, utilizing city funds to provide jobs in tandem with career development programs in high school classrooms. Only the Title I reading clinics drew any substantial a.d.a.

On the matter of user fees, community experiences were quite different from the previous year, but the reasons for the differences were not always clear. For example, the Los Altos program mentioned earlier drew only one-third as many children in 1979 as it had in 1978. Another program, in suburban Belmont, attracted 390 children in 1978 but only 38 in 1979 (and was cancelled). Cupertino experienced a jump in summer program enrollment for its "voluntary fee" programs--from 1,000 in 1978 to 1,500 in 1979. But this compared poorly with the 10,000 a.d.a. (of a possible 16,000) for the regular public summer school session held in 1977[16].

There were some legal problems associated with these programs, that kept many districts from offering anything at all. It was not clear that public schools could actually charge tuition for classes, hence some communities collected voluntary "donations," with a

"suggested level of contribution" for fear of otherwise running afoul of the law. In fact, no legal actions materialized, but public school officials expressed concern that citizens might go to court to prohibit the schools from charging fees for service and that, inthe worst case, districts would have to bear the entire cost of the summer program (once completed) and forfeit the state aid they had received. Partly as a result of these unresolved legal issues, many communities simply chose not to offer programs.

Private enterprises were more in evidence in 1979 than the previous year. The American Learning Corporation signed contracts with 38 school districts to operate 25 programs throughout the state.(Programs were not designed to serve individual school districts but larger "markets" instead.) Charging substantial fees, however, only 12 generated the necessary a.d.a.to warrant provision of the program. Other enterprises proposed or ran programs with fees as high as $144 for five week, one-half day sessions. While rapid increase in the size and number of these fee-charging non-public school offerings had been predicted, in fact their growth was slow and their attraction limited. At this point, summer school does not appear to interest more than a small number of universities, colleges and private corporations who are hoping to make a profit providing fee-for-service programs to school districts and communities. By and large, their focus seems to be on remediation and although there is ittle evidence that it will become a big business as once envisioned (given the size of the summer school population) some profitable small scale efforts may survive in the long run.

The First Two Years in Perspective

The post-Proposition 13 experience can be summarized as follows:

1) Attendance levels at public summer schools have diminished dramatically. Most districts have eliminated all except state mandated programs.

2) Wealthier suburbs have, to an extent, succeeded in introducing fee for service alternatives. Inner cities have not been able to attract substantial enrollments for programs charging fees.

3) Private enterprise has failed to find a significant summer market , as some had anticipated. This may both reflect higher than acceptable fee structures and general disinterest in non-public alternatives among parents and families.

4) To the extent that any documentation is available it appears that summer school is used by students, particularly above grade 4, for remediation, makeup of missed course work and advanced studies. In this sense summer school can hardly be considered a frill, as some have argued.

5) What happened to the children? Only a small proportion of the anticipated 1978-1979 public summer school enrollment can be accounted for after examining attendance records of other (non-school) summer programs. The vast majority of pre-Proposition 13 summer school students remain unaccounted for. In most cities other public agencies (e.g. recreation departments) were severely constrained themselves and had no way of expanding their own summer programs to absorb more participants.

We must view the summer school experience in the context of this larger study. While fully institutionalized, like many other

children's services, summer school rested uncomfortably in the public sector, never really enjoying fundamental support among adult constituencies. The post-Proposition 13 years suggest that this rather shallow support was coupled with uncertainty regarding the mandate and programmatic objectives of summer school. Its history is somewhat parallel to that of other cultural and recreational services for children, hence it is not surprising that the confluence of fiscal and political considerations should so drastically undermine the statewide program.

The Current Debate

State officials and legislators are aware that the initial, post-Proposition 13 response might have been unduly regressive. Even though a major summer school lobby has failed to emerge, important issues linked to summer school can no longer be ignored. Some legislators feel that the political response (or lack thereof) in 1978 and 1979 represents an adequate way of measuring the import of summer school to the populace. The state education department, on the other hand, argues that there is a need for summer programming that can be justified in educational terms and that many constituents, most in need of services, have few or no alternatives to a free public program. Teachers support the education bureaucracy's position and also fear a long-term decline in summer job opportunities for teachers. By this formulation one cannot simply examine the global public reaction to the termination of summer programs and assume that this is a true measure of their import. Rather, it may be necessary to evaluate how different user groups have been affected and, thereby, arrive at an appropriate strategy for future public funding of summer school activities.

To date (in 1980) the California Legislature has not addressed the summer school problem, although several state senators intend to introduce legislation that would re-establish summer school programs of particular groups of children (e.g. children who have failed to pass to the next grade), albeit on a more limited basis. The consensus, however, is that California's summer school program will never again reach as many children as it did in the past. This has implications for parents, for with increasing numbers of mothers employed, there is a serious need for more summer child care and activity alternatives. There are also implications for children, who have lost an opportunity to pursue interests and sharpen skills somewhat less pressured environment that characterizes summer school. If there is a new life for summer school, it will probably be the result of minimum competency requirements being introduced in California. If children must pass examinations each year in order to advance to the next grade, summer programs will be necessary to provide remediation to a large proportion of students who are performing far below grade level in both English and math. Hence, one impact of annual competency testing may be a revitalized summer school program.

The fate of California's summer school program in the wake of Proposition 13 is consistent with a trend away from providing specialized services for young people. Whether this simply reflects general taxpayer demands that agencies pare down their program commitments; demographic factors lessening reducing the problems of the young; a fundamental diminishing of public concern for child; or all of these things at tandem, it is not possible to say. But the dramatic decline in funding for summer school affects a large proportion of children and families who now must cope with the loss of yet another well

Notes

1. Charles W. O'dell, Summer Work in Public Schools (Urbana: University of Illinois, Bureau of Educational Research,1930), p.10.

2. Ronald E. Notley, "The Status of Summer School Programs for Elementary School Children in California." Ph.D. Dissertation, School of Education, University of California, Berkeley, 1959.

3. Ibid., p.14.

4. Ibid., p.14

5. Charles O'dell, op.cit., p.31.

6. Ronald Notley, op.cit., p.18.

7. Ibid.

8. National Advisory Council on the Education of Disadvantaged Children, Summer Education for Children of Poverty (Washington: GPO, 1966).

9. State of California, Budget Act of 1978 (Sacramento: State of California, 1978), Section 316.1.

10. Los Angeles Times, June 30, 1978.

11. Oakland Tribune, July 12, 1978.

12. Palo Alto Times, July 5, 1979

13. Hayward Daily Record, June 24, 1978.

14. While it is difficult to estimate the number of proposed fee-for-service plans, it was certainly in the hundreds although far fewer were actually carried forward to programs.

15. Los Angeles Times, July 2, 1979.

16. Palo Alto Times, July 5, 1979.

Appendix B

Children's Time Study

Setting, Sample, Design

In the Spring of 1976, 764 pre-adolescents (11 and 12 years old) from Oakland, California (population 333,000) and their parents were interviewed as part of a study of children's use of time outside of school.

The sample was drawn in the following manner. Elementary school attendance areas were defined as principal sampling units. Children in Oakland attend the school closest to their home, so school attendance areas are geographic representations of the city's demography. Of the 58 attendance areas, 20 were selected for study by stratified probability sampling techniques to reflect all school attendance areas in the city. Then the names of approximately forty children were drawn randomly from the sixth grade rolls at each sample school yielding a cluster sample of twenty attendance areas, 764 cases (number of cases per area proportional to population). Characteristics of the sample are described below.

Characteristics of the Time Study Sample
Oakland, California
Spring, 1976
(N = 764)

Ethnicity

Black	59.8%
White	24.2
Asian	9.2
Hispanic	4.6
Other	2.2

Income

Less than $4,999	17.4%
$5,000-$9,999	20.9
$10,000-$14,999	16.0
$15,000-$19,999	14.4
$20,000+	24.2
Not Available	7.1

Mother's Education

Some high school or less	22.8%
High School graduate	27.9
Some College	31.4
College graduate and above	16.1
Not Available	1.8

Interviews were conducted at the home of each child between April and June 1976. The completion rate was 87.2%. There were two protocols: a child's interview schedule and a parents' questionnaire (which the parent filled out while the child was being interviewed in another room).

The interviews consisted of both closed and open-ended questions about out-of-school life; things children do alone and with friends; things children do with parents and siblings; chores and work roles outside the home; involvement in organized activities outside of school; and television viewing behavior. Parents' questionnaires focused on family demography and also probed socialization priorities and child-rearing practices affecting out-of-school life.

APPENDIX C

Source Materials for the Analysis of Proposition 13 Impacts

Included in the formulation of the case studies in Chapter IV were materials from the following newspapers:*

Alameda Times Star
Bakersfield Californian
Colusa Sun Herald
Concord Transcript
Contra Cost(County)Times
Davis Enterprise
Dublin Tri-Valley News
Fair Oaks,North Highlander
Fremont Argus
Fresno Bee
Hayward Daily Record
Livermore Tri-Valley Herald
Los Angeles Times
Los Banos Enterprise
Oakland, Montclarion
New York Times
Oakland Tribune
Palo Alto Times
Pittsburg Post-Dispatch
Redwood City, Woodside Country Almanac
Richmond, Independent Gazette
Sacramento Bee
San Francisco Chronicle
San Francisco Examiner
Simi Valley, Enterprise Sun and News
Tracy Press
Woodland Democrat

* All newspapers listed are in California, except the New York Times.