CHAPTER VI

Administrative Years

Catherine returned to the Polk County Welfare Department with her credentials, a Master's Degree in Social Work, in July of 1965. With her "rite of passage" achieved, Catherine was promoted to Social Work Supervisor II, upon her return. Catherine did not hesitate in turning her talents into action on this new rung of her social work career ladder.

In this position, Catherine took on the creative tasks of establishing the first training plans with the Des Moines School System for "educable children" from Woodward State Hospital School; organized a foster parents group for Polk County foster parents of Woodward children; and established a foster parent resource system. These projects were the outcome of working with "Beatrice Garret, a federal person, on foster care. I started working with her on a task force, developing foster care regulations and guidelines."

Also during her 14 months as a Supervisor II, and involvement in Des Moines School System and foster care, Catherine found time to become involved with the American Public Welfare Association (APWA). In April of 1966, Catherine prepared a paper for a penal discussion at the APWA's Central States Regional Conference entitled "Three C's of Interprofessional Relationships: Contributions, Conflicts, and Confusion." In the paper, Catherine stressed that "While stimulated by the flow of new ideas and methods to combat poverty, and wishing them to succeed, we must maintain our faith
in the contributions we have made and will continue to make toward meeting the needs of individuals and families through greater understanding of the relationships of their total needs to the several specialized professional fields undertaking to meet their needs and problems."

Summarizing the inroads made by social workers in gaining acceptance by other disciplines, such as Medicine, Education, Religion, and Law, Catherine commented on how "conflict and confusion most often arise from poor (professional) relationships which may come into being in two ways: A. Professions come together to achieve a common goal, but the methods are different and B. Goals are different but we work together in the common over-all tasks, and use our characteristic method to obtain our goals."

Catherine then suggested that before these professional relationships (disciplines) can work toward their mutual goal "of contributing to the best solution of the person's problems" they are seeking to help the professions need to understand and recognize "some of these relationship factors." Among these Catherine stated are:

1. A narrow view of another's area of focus, and a possessive attitude toward one's own (profession).
2. Permitting an unfortunate experience with one person to cause unfavorable generalization of his/her profession as a whole.
3. The "no trespassing" signs of one profession which exclude the real cooperation of other helping agencies.
4. The rejection of a profession's definition of function and criticism of its eligibility requirements and procedures as useless paper work, leads to conflict.
5. Maintaining mutual support at the price of reducing the work of one profession to be a sub-profession level as far as openly recognizing the contributions made are concerned.

Catherine went on to state that if these conflicts are not resolved through "honest discussion to clarify the function of each profession, ignorance, prejudice, and improper generalization will continue to flourish." Catherine also expressed concern that clients are left confused by the "jungle of abbreviation" and "our professional jargon." Catherine concluded this paper by suggesting six things social workers needed to do to "improve inter-relationships:

1. Continue to move toward a clear and sharp definition of our function through research, reflection, and cultivation of differentiated knowledge. We must not be apologetic as we pursue this course; failure to do so leads to more confusion. We must know where we stand as a profession and be counted.

2. Engage in active relationships with others in the helping profession.

3. Cultivate that language which leads itself to translation, speaking literally and figuratively the language of others. There are few concepts that have no partial counterparts in other professions.

4. Learn to identify common characteristics of modern day professions.

5. Examine the aspects of relationships between social work and other helping professions, and work toward the basic foundation of all--helping others. The only justification for intervention lies in the fact that the professions are socially qualified to bring about change, and should work together toward needed goals.

6. Be secure in ourselves, and firm in our beliefs that as individuals we have something to give to the ultimate good of all society." (Williams, Catherine, 1967)

Within six months of the previous paper's presentation to the APWA, Catherine was promoted to a position as a Social Work Supervisor IV in the Central Office of the (then) State Board of
Social Welfare. This advancement on the Social Work Career
ladder, was a two rung climb, i.e., Catherine went from a Super-
visor II level to a Supervisor IV level. In reflecting on this job
change, Catherine remembered "Oh, they kept after me. Ray
Sundberg, a field representative, kept after me about coming to
staff development. We had continuing education staff development
classes we would do after work (at Polk Co.). I always was in
for anything that was offered, always interested in more education
and knowledge. I don't know really how I was chosen, but finally,
I agreed to go."

The first thing Catherine did after moving to the Central
Office and learning her new role as a "Training Specialist,"
in the staff development unit, was to go to Washington, D.C.
for staff development training. "Then we had staff development
training in Washington, D.C. I had to go for two weeks. Then,
we had to come back (to Iowa) and write a project and carry it
out. After six months we went back for two more weeks in
Washington D.C. This was under Mary Switzer (former Secretary of
Health, Education, and Welfare). The HEW building was named after her."

After her staff development training, Catherine "had
responsibility for child welfare training, and did adoption and
foster care." It was during this time that Catherine developed
and "set up the foster parent training" program, the first state
wide training program for foster parents of retarded children
and wrote a manual for training foster parents. Catherine's
co-workers in this area were LaVon Hamiester, Owen Franklin, and Ross Wilbur. "Ross was the head of child welfare."

In a personal interview, LaVon Hamiester recalled and described Catherine the following way. "I first met Catherine in 1967. We worked together until 1975. Catherine was always a self-starter and never a complainer. She was a considerate, caring, kind, and capable person. Catherine believed in people, always kept the focus on people, and presented things in a positive fashion." In addition, Catherine was an "excellent listener," able to "think on her feet," and was "constantly dedicated to the ideals of helping people." Through all of their working years together, LaVon remembers that Catherine "treated all people with dignity and adhered to Social Work principles by putting the client in the forefront."

In terms of how LaVon views the imprint left by Catherine on the department, it would be her "loyalty to the department, people, her fairness and honesty, and that Catherine was not a 'games person.'" She made, according to LaVon, "contributions at all levels of Social Work."

LaVon is now in her 25th year with the Department. Her position presently is Continuing Education Coordinator in the Training Section of the Office of Personnel and Training, the Hoover Building, Des Moines, Iowa.

Two years following Catherine's advancement to the Central Office, a major reorganization took place in Iowa's Social Welfare Department. The department went from a three person appointed
board which had been in existence since 1937, to the appointment of a Commissioner. All appointments are by the Governor. Also, the Board of Control (overseer of Iowa's institution) and the Board of Parole, along with the Board of Social Welfare were integrated into a Department of Social Service (DSS) in January of 1968. "There was not a lot of change in the infrastructure at that point. New people were brought in, new to the system, at that time. That's when Joe Coughlin came with Mr. Harmon (the first commissioner). Shortly after he (Joe) was responsible for some corrections and institutions. We moved along pretty well without a lot of change. I was still hangingover into staff development."

It was around this time (in 1968) that Catherine "started training in supervision and administration." This training had to do with "the whole business of Management by Objective. Under Mr. Harmon, we had our first introduction to Retha Wiley,* who came as a representative of the Upjohn Institute. She was the consultant and the trainer for the Upjohn Institute "which taught management system" a way to set goals and develop objectives and work towards those. We did a lot of work with that in the department. It was really not 'bought' at that time, bought in quotes, by the entire administration. But, it was something I really liked. Joe VeeHoff, LaVon Hamiester, and I went to Denver for follow-up training with the Upjohn Institute in Management by Objectives (MBO). And, from that point on, I was just sold on it.

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*Wife of George Wiley, an individual "who was a great advocate for welfare rights. In fact, he really was one of the first organizers of the welfare rights movement."
Catherine became sold on MBO because "it was a systematic way to approach our work, a way to measure what we were doing, and it was a way to evaluate our outcome. Plus, the fact that I felt people in services really never felt they could account for what they were doing. And in some instances, certainly a stretched position, that it was just not fair to ask for accountability when you were helping people, that this was nebulous, and there was no way to measure that. Therefore, it was an in-justice to try to compare it to another profession.

"I used to say true, but we are the only profession that is expected to have a cure at the end. No lawyer is expected to win every case, nor is every doctor expected to cure every patient. No one holds them responsible. It is only in our business that if you don't deliver that finished product which is represented by the person contributing to society, you have failed! So, I thought that that end of it was unfair. But yet, I felt that we, ourselves, had never done enough to combat that. We were really using that as an excuse for not getting serious about what we were doing. Many people felt that if you can report time spent, and people run through the system, that was enough. But, they told you nothing about what happened to those people. So, I really liked it (MBO).

"I felt also, in terms of administration, it was a far more objective and fair way to deal with the supervision, i.e., you sit down with your person and you set goals and objectives. Then, everyone should be working toward a common purpose. Every
division would have its own way of handling their piece of that, but it clearly states where the agency is supposed to be going and who was responsible for developing a piece of that. And, you had a way to measure that, as a person set his/her milestones to get there. The other part of it was that you did not impose that, it was negotiated, so that each person who had a responsibility for that, knew what he/she could do. Then, when it came time to evaluate it, it was purely, well this is what you said you were going to do. And, if you felt you weren't going to do that, we had plenty of time to renegotiate that."

With the integration of this new knowledge base and skill level, of MBO, Catherine moved into her first position with the term administrator in her job title, Associate Administrator in the Bureau of Family and Children's Services. This major advancement up the public social work ladder came within three years of her arrival to the Central Office. When the first Commissioner came, in 1968, Kevin Burns also "came about that time." Catherine first met Kevin "at either a Child Welfare or APWA Conference, because he was in Illinois. He called me to be on the program. I agreed, and I'd never seen him before. When he came (to Iowa), he was the Director of Children's Services or Community Services, and that's when he moved me into the Bureau of Family and Children's Services. I was responsible for adoption, institutional interstate compact and foster care." It was during Catherine's tenure in this position that she authored the first Iowa Department of Social Services Foster Care Study and established the first subsidized
Department of Social Services Adoption Program.

The first Commissioner, Maurice A. Harmon, of the newly created Iowa Department of Social Service did not remain long. "I can remember 'Buck' Harmon was always good with beautiful notes to people about good things. He was a stroker--very positive--really. I have some little hand written notes, one from him commending me on my work. He left, as it took them (the senate) so long to confirm him. When they finally did, he quit! Resigned. I always thought that was a classic move." Harmon's tenure was from January, 1968 to August, 1969.

At the same time Catherine became an Associate Administrator in the Bureau of Family and Children's Services, James N. Gillman came in as the new Commissioner and Kevin Burns became his deputy. It was "under Mr. Gillman when we again reactivated and got very serious about doing the MBO and first started into the whole business of development."

"That's when we really started talking about reorganization within the department. Lots of meetings, to decide what reorganization should look like. Bill Ketch had a lot of responsibility for those meetings...the organizational structure. I'd work with Bill at Polk County. Anyway, the managers, the cabinet, and the division directors went away for many weeks to work on the overall mission statement. That took a lot of hard work. It sounds very easy, but it really was not, because you had to be very sure you were saying exactly what you could do. The one thing we learned was that you did not promise more than you could do. You could
not assume that you could do things with people."

"I found this so valuable when I started working with the institution around developing theirs(MBO). I said, 'You have children in institutions. You cannot guarantee what's going to happen to them when they go back out into the community.' It was learning how to separate out those things. It was also learning that you could not, for example, say you are going to improve housing for all the people who receive assistance for 1990, because you don't have the final say. You've got to deal with the housing markets, you've got to deal with HUD,* and you have to deal with the legislature. If you're secure about this thing, some of your objectives have to tie in or relate with others. So, I think all that (training) was very helpful in our agencies and departments to start looking at it in that way."

Catherine took her training in MBO back to her department and worked with her people through it, i.e., the process of MBO. "I think they found as we went through it, it wasn't difficult, but saw it as being tedious. Some people saw it as being tedious, to go through the process. But, once it was done, and they could see that, we would set those milestones, interviews and conferences, so that if they had to change, and wanted to change, that they would. But for others, it left them with nothing to talk about if they hadn't done it. And, they saw that it was not at all subjective, that it was something that they had said and all their other excuses were unprogrammed activities, and there was always a place for that. But I said, 'Unprogrammed activities aren't

*Housing and Urban Development
getting us to our goal. They are fine, but that is not what we said we were going to do."

"I guess I still feel very strongly about that. I'd say, 'O.K., we say we have a mission up here, and yet whether it's an institution or whether it a division, anything they should be doing, should be going back to this overall objective," i.e., the Mission of the Department of Social Service. The implementation period of Catherine's teaching MBO covered "several years, and then I think I probably wound up being the only division that carried it out. Nobody else cared. I was just simply doing it because it was a good control for me, as a manager."

In February of 1973, James Gillman stepped aside as Commissioner of the department. Kevin Burns, the Deputy Commissioner took over, and shortly after this (August, 1973) Catherine was promoted to Bureau Chief, Family and Adult Services, which later became Bureau of Community Services (now known as the Division Director of Community Program).

She remained in this position for two years, and three months. During this time period a major impact in the department and throughout the State of Iowa occurred. It actually started in September of 1972 when Jack Kirkland, a professor from St. Louis University was brought in as a consultant to the Iowa Department of Social Services.

"During that period, I remember the whole Goal Oriented Social Services (GOSS) came into being. I was Chief of the Family and
Children Services, and Harold Templeman was the Director of Community Services. Jim Rowen, from Administrative Services and Cleo Green, from Data Processing talked to us and said, 'We have read through the federal regulations' and asked, 'How do we want to go, and What are you doing?''

"I worked out this scheme, in how people were spending their time and how you evaluate and measure this. We drew up this scheme. We had brown paper stretched all over the administrative offices. We brought in regional people to look at it. They said, 'It made sense.' We had to argue over the quality and quantity kind of measurements, but finally convinced them that what we were saying was the way to get that done. When you open a case, you know what the movement was. Regional thought this was good."

After meeting with the Regional representatives, and explaining their approach, "we got an order from Washington, D.C. (Secretary of HEW). We rolled up all our paper, and Jim, Cleo, and I went to Washington with our little package. The man we dealt with there was the Acting Secretary of HEW, a James Dwight, who was an accountability man. They (HEW) thought we were so good (our ideas), they wanted to give us a grant. We held a meeting out here. Missouri and Kansas joined with us in that meeting. What they (the federal people) wanted us to do was really change our system. They were 'keying' in on Iowa, as they sent this guy out here."

What the federal people wanted was for Iowa to "develop
books on the whole business of GOSS." Catherine convinced the department to hire Edith Zober (Catherine's graduate school research project coordinator) on contract to produce the information. "She put together all the assessment of the services (in Iowa), and also a service inventory. We had two big volumes of books developed. We took these books to Kansas City to a regional meeting. They decided that this was 'too much work for anybody to do. We could do it in Iowa, because we were a small state.' I remember talking to a black guy who was in research. He said, 'Catherine, if you were in California, Texas, or New York, they'd pay some attention to you, but you're in Iowa!' So, anyway, we decided we were not going to change our system, because we were not doing it only to meet federal regulations. We were doing it because we thought this was a good way to tie service and accountability together. So, when the whole business of developing goal oriented social services came, in order to meet requirements that were a part of the service components of Social Security Titles 4A, the AFDC Programs and 4B, the Child Welfare Program, we developed this whole concept of GOSS in Iowa."

"Initially, Jack Kirkland was hired as a consultant "to do group processes, with the staff. He did it with field operations, and tried to help them with that. We had sessions all over the place."

From meetings with Kirkland, Catherine and her co-worker learned about his social services model, which was built on a six-step outline of a problem solving process. The six steps

Kirkland's principles and ideas for his model tied in very nicely with Catherine's training in MBO. They were integrated with MBO and a model developed. "I really internalized the whole process, because I saw again, here it was being applied. You decide what it is, where you are, you decide what it is you want to do, and you set out to implement that. At the end of that, you evaluate, did you or didn't you do it?"

"When we finished GOSS, and we did it, we worked out our model for delivering the service. I was able to help our folks, first of all, look at a process. Cleo Green, Jim Rowen, and I went to Washington together and presented GOSS. Then, we were responsible for getting out and doing all the training around the state. Cleo, Jim and I traveled almost like a team. We went around this state delivering the material and training GOSS. We would load up Cleo's station wagon with books, and off we would go...We said,'O.K., we are not messing around', we will get it done. And we did. That put us ahead, in a sense, of meeting federal regulations. Because we were dealing with auditors, management people, and people in Washington who were writing rules and regulations, I knew everyone was concerned about this whole business of outcome."

Irl Carter provides some insight as how Catherine dealt with the federal government during the whole GOSS process, as he was there.
"In October of '72, I got an opportunity to go to Washington. They were promoting the new goal oriented social services concept. Jeanie Williams, Catherine and I had gone in. What I do recall was Catherine with a little bit of glee I think, sort of subdued, would periodically say, 'Now how we've done it in Iowa is...', and the feds, by the end of that week whenever they would make one of those grandiose statements about how... would just automatically turn to Catherine and say, 'Well, now how have you been doing it in Iowa.' And she would just very factually and very calmly say, 'Well, now we have dealt with this particular issue and here's how we've done it in Iowa.' Iowa had advanced beyond what the federal people were talking about. Clearly she was so familiar with it that she could just rattle off."

During her tenure as Bureau Chief, and Catherine's involvement with making Iowa a "model state," in a service delivery system utilizing GOS, Catherine also was instrumental in obtaining the first budget for "homemakers services" in Iowa, and had a major role in the "business of the district administration." Catherine was involved in all the interviewing and screening for the 16 district administrators. She felt that by design "the whole purpose was to bring the services closer to the people."

Catherine took on new and additional responsibilities from 1974 until October of 1975, as the direct supervisor of the newly created 16 district administrators, as Division Director. In this position, Catherine was also "responsible for program and policies related to Bureaus within the Division." These bureaus included
1) Income Maintenance, 2) Family and Adult Services, 3) Medical Services, 4) Community Correction, 5) Mental Retardation and 6) Youth Services, and five institutions: Training School for Boys, Training School for Girls, State Juvenile Home, Iowa Veterans Home and Riverview Release Center. "Within the Division under the Bureau of Family and Adult Services were the units of Adoption, Foster Care, Protective Services and Day Care—all with strong child welfare components."

One of Catherine's favorite individuals, out of the large number she supervised, became Jack Dack, Commandant of the Iowa Veterans Home. "I think the world of him. Jack is really tops! He is like the 'Music Man.' He starts rattling off and he's got every piece of data you think you want to know about the Veterans Home. Just like that...he's developed that place, till it is just a model in the county. Jack is a great advocate for Veterans, because he knows his business."

In October of 1975, Catherine was promoted to Deputy Commissioner of the Iowa Department of Social Services. In just a little over ten years, after receiving her Master's Degree in Social Work, Catherine achieved the rung next to the top of her public service career field in Iowa. This growth process in ten years was the culmination of applying new knowledge, she was always open to, into it's practical application.
CHAPTER VII

Deputy Commissioner Tenure

In October of 1975, President Gerald Ford signed into law Title XX* of the Social Security Act. During this same month, Catherine was appointed by Governor Robert Ray as Deputy Commissioner of the Iowa Department of Social Services, a position she would hold for over five years.

When Title XX was enacted, Iowa was in the forefront of meeting the requirements to it, because of the development and implementation of GOSS by Catherine and her co-workers.

A man named Jim Bax "was the deputy administrator then for HEW. We sat and talked with him about our GOSS Model. And, he was sold on what we were doing. Then they (HEW) sent out a consultant to deal with us on our model. We would go to regional and

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*This title "did not introduce a new program into the Social Security Act, as previous Titles had done. Instead, it was intended to basically redefine the role of the federal government regarding social services programs in the following ways:

(1) Places responsibility on the states rather than the federal government for assuring that federal/state social service programs meet the needs of the state's citizens. 'Each state could develop its own blend of services appropriate to its constituency, and experiment with different systems,' and

(2) Defined HEW's involvement as one of monitoring and assisting states in the development of their social service plan (Lough, 1978, p. 16).
have meetings. Then regional folks, well, some of them would go
to Washington D.C. with us. As opposed to some states, we had a
very good working relationship with our region. Particularly on
the service delivery side. They were always coming to visit us.
I remember some of them arguing over this whole business of being
able to quantify what we were doing. We would finally convince
them, and then they would go to Washington with us. (In
Washington) they just sat back and let us run our mouths."

The four states in the region were Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska,
and Iowa. "Missouri was really with us. Kansas held back a
little. I don't think they were quite sure. I remember we even
met down here at the Holiday Inn (in Des Moines), and we almost
had a battle with the 'feds.' Kevin (Burns, the Commissioner) would
say 'get them Catherine.' At that point, they were trying to tell
us the way we set up our model had to do with day care. They were
saying, 'What's the objective?' Well, the objective for day care
was to get a mother to work. But, we had a 'kid' in day care, and
that's service to that child. That is not service to a parent.
You folks keep confusing things, and where you are headed...that's
why people have trouble with it. I said,'The service goes to these
kids.' And in a family, you can have many services. You don't
give day care to the mother. You give it to the kid. I can
remember we really argued about that. They wanted us to change
that for some reason. Wanted us to change..."
Prior to the enactment of Title XX, Caspar W. Weinberger had been the Secretary of HEW. It is highly probable that some of the conflict with the 'federal government, for example, on day care were a carry over of his policies. Weinberger "was a chopper...there wasn't any question...people in the regional office (in Kansas City) would tell us 'he is going at things with a meat ax.' We used to have a banner that said, 'Send him back to California, elect him Governor of California.'"

Out of his "chopping" of programs, Weinberger either by the press or human services providers was given the nickname of "Cap the Knife."

After Weinberger left as Secretary of HEW, relationships between the states and federal governments improved. These improvements continued over into the Carter Administration, which began in January of 1977.

Iowa remained in the forefront of meeting Title XX requirements and became, according to many, a "model state" for other states to model their human service delivery systems after.

In December of 1977, Catherine experienced Iowa's fourth Commissioner change within a nine year span of time. "I was in Kansas City at one of the midwest federation meetings, when Kevin called me. We were in a meeting; it was lunchtime break and a telephone call came for me. I went to the phone and Kevin asked, 'Are you sitting down?' I said, 'No, why?' He said, 'Well, Vic Preisser is going to be the Commissioner. I left the meeting and
got an early flight (back to Iowa), because Vic had called a 4:30 P.M. meeting of all the division heads. I got back in time to walk into that meeting."

Catherine recalled when Vic Preisser came to the Department as "a very interesting and exciting time. I felt it was something that I had told Kevin was going to happen. Because, prior to that time, he (Kevin) had suggested that there be this exchange of staff between state agencies. Kevin arranged for a staff person to go to the Department of Transportation (DOT) to work. Then, at this time, we were getting ready to present a budget. DOT had this, what we learned to call "The Pipeline." Vic had developed "The Pipeline." It had to do with every departmental agency and how the dollars flowed down. It was very graphic. Our presentation was not as clear as that (The Pipeline). Vic offered his help, and his staff to help us develop graphics and all the rest. I remember saying to Kevin once 'the camel is in the Arab's tent.' (This camel went out in the desert and he says, 'It's so cold, could I just stick my head in the warmth of your tent?' The Arab said, 'Yes,' and soon the Arab was on the outside). But anyway, the thing of his (Vic's) appointment as acting commissioner, was a complete bombshell, as far as I was concerned."

Catherine also remembered thinking about this time period "here is a fast-track man, maybe he can bring some order out of this thing. And so he came to do that. His plan was that every day he brought in all these people, these six or seven folks that we would call 'torpedoes.' They were assigned to all the different
departments. Of course, they were simply going to be there to learn the business, and help him. But everyday, at the end of the day, he had this closed door session with all these folks. This immediately upset the whole department. Here are these smart assed folks who know everything, with all their briefcases to match, who feel they are the tops of the walk. Walking around here knowing absolutely nothing about our business, but who are going to tell us what to do."

But, during this "trying time," Catherine remembered that Vic "had a good record with DOT. I had been impressed when I saw him on television. I thought he was somebody who knew what he was going to do."

"My office was next to his. I was assigned a woman, who was going to see what I did. She was very nice." At that time, Catherine was involved with "new hires" to the department, still keeping a hand in staff development. "We would have this orientation program for 'new hires.' I would show them 'here's federal and here's state,' and here is how the whole thing fits together. Then, I would give them the pitch on 'good' social work. So, she came out to the meeting and observed my presentation. She said, 'Well, there is nothing I can suggest here, you are doing fine.'"

Although having an office next door to Vic Preisser, Catherine "would send him notes. I didn't say anything to him, unless asked. Sometimes he would speak, and sometimes he wouldn't. Finally, she (this woman) came to me and said he wishes you would
talk to him and stop writing these notes. I remember one day, there was something I needed to talk to him about. We had had a meeting, that you just could not forget. He kept me waiting for about four hours because he forgot our appointment. When I did get to him, I told him he would have to help me deal with my anger at having been kept waiting. He was very apologetic, and we began to get along fine."

It was during Vic's tenure as Commissioner that Catherine was able to implement a "liaison in our department with federal and with our state legislature." This liaison was given the acronym ACT (Assess, Coordinate, and Track) and was used "so that administratively, when rules and regulations came down, we had a clearing house in the department. Those persons would be responsible for getting that to the legislature in clear form." This same liaison work was used "when bills would be proposed in the legislature. They would come back and clear through every department that had some responsibility for that particular bill. They would scrutinize it and see what it meant for them."

"So that's when we began to build these things, and we developed what region said was one of the 'greatest things' that ever happened. That was a meeting at the beginning of the year, between regional people with the legislature invited. We would have the workshops built around all the various issues that dealt with DSS services."

Even though Catherine "never liked a political job," she
cherishes this liaison (ACT) development as a much needed part of a function within the department. In addition to coordinating and supervising the ACT unit, Catherine as Deputy during Vic's term, was responsible for six other department heads. They included Appeals and Fair Hearings, Legal Services, Medical Consultant, Personnel, Public Information, and her much admired friend Jack Dack of the Iowa Veteran's Home.

John Terrell, Head of Appeals and Fair Hearings in an interview remembered Catherine as a person and a boss the following ways. "Catherine was a broad leader. It went beyond boss and worker. She was spontaneous, had a compassionate heart, used a direct approach with a firm hand, able to get to issues by cutting through jargon, was always a good listener, and interpreted policies to clients." John also recalled "pet names" that Catherine used occasionally. For example, when Catherine called him "Jonathan," he knew that he had "messed" something up, or there was a "situation to resolve." According to John, Catherine was also the type of person that "didn't hesitate to resolve problems, got the best out of everyone, or moved them where they would be productive."

Other noteworthy descriptions that John felt about Catherine are that "she is hard to follow in giving speeches," as she is an "excellent speaker." Also, John believes that Catherine "wore the pressures of the job" as Deputy Commissioner "without carrying over to others." Sometimes, her style "irritated a lot of people," because she gave "good explanations." Others saw her as a "task
master," John said. But, "being with Catherine is to be embodied with the department, social life, etc..."

On one such social event, John remembered asking Catherine to dance. As they started dancing, Catherine began leading, then "apologized for leading, and said she couldn't help it." In summation, John views Catherine as "the wheel that turned the cog," during her tenure with DSS.

Another individual interviewed who was supervised by Catherine for a number of years is Personnel Director Tom Maudsley. Tom recalled Catherine as a "demanding person with high expectations, a no-nonsense approach," who had the "intensity to perform what needed to be done." She was completely "dedicated to what the agency is about," and "when she took over, "she used "common sense," with "direct goals" and "no hidden agenda" stated Tom.

Probably the main thing about Catherine is there is a "presence and carriage about her when she comes in a room," and Catherine was the "conscience for everybody," in the department, concluded Tom.

In March of 1979, Vic Preisser stepped down as the Commissioner. Catherine reflected back. "He did a lot of good things. Vic had his goal book. I thought it was just terrific! I took it to Washington when Califano was Secretary of HEW. At that meeting, President Carter came. That was the first time I ever had to go through security, to go into this meeting. I presented the goal book to a workshop there. And so I carried that on. I really liked it, and I really worked with that. I was responsible after Vic left, for those meetings every month."
Following Vic's departure, Catherine was appointed by the Governor to Acting Commissioner of the Department. Initially Catherine didn't "think much about" applying for the position as full time Commissioner. "But, somehow, at this time, I guess that I felt that if I had been acting, and I had been acting for four months, and that was not a pleasant term," as she was "dealing" with some of Vic's "torpedoes" who were still around, she should indeed apply. So, Catherine submitted her application, "directly to the Governor, because I didn't want it floating around..."

When the Governor called Catherine over for an interview though, she was prepared for the fact that she would not be chosen for the post. A friend "somehow on the inside track" had informed Catherine that it looked like a person from Syracuse, New York had been offered the Commissioner position. This was after Catherine had submitted her application.

Catherine agreed to continue on as Deputy Commissioner, a position she had held for four years. So, after doing the job as Acting Commissioner for six months, Catherine gave complete assistance to Michael V. Reagen's entry as the fifth Commissioner for the Iowa Department of Social Services. As Michael recalled in an interview, "Cathy although disappointed at not receiving the appointment to Commissioner was very gracious." "She knocked herself out to be helpful" to me, stated Michael. "Her fingerprints are all over the agency and the state," and she has "tremendous character" according to Michael Reagen.
With all of Catherine's excellent qualities, none matched the way Catherine remained poised during the critical time of meeting Michael Reagen in the Governor's office. Catherine remembers it well. "I said to myself, 'well, this is the day you look the very best you can and if your voice wavers once, I will kick you in the rear myself.' I went on a 'high,' because I knew this was really a test that day. I never shall forget that day. I had brought a dear friend, from Tom's office to help me. And that morning she came crying, feeling for me. And by that time, some of the 'torpedoes,' now on regular staff, were in my corner. They really, those who were there, liked me, and learned how I was."

"Betty brought me these little beautiful roses. One was very tiny, a very pale pink thing. I had worn a white blouse and skirt that day. So, I pinned this little rose to my lapel. I went over to meet Mike at the Governor's Office. When I got over there, this rose had fallen off. Mike came in, and I was messing around with this rose. He took it and he told one of the girls in the office, he said, 'Get Mrs. Williams a pin.' Then he pinned the thing on." He too, could be very gracious.

After meeting with Governor Ray and Mike, Catherine took Mike back to the Department and introduced him around. Then she hooked him up by the phone system (C.I.D.) to all the institutions and districts throughout the state and introduced him. This was the start of a good working relationship that was to last for the
next 18 months, until Catherine officially retired from the Iowa Department of Social Services.

Mildred Snider perhaps summed their relationship up the best when she stated "I watched her work and interact with Mike. I am very proud of Catherine, the way she did that. She gained the respect of Mike Reagen."

For the next one and a half years a great deal of respect and appreciation were shown to Catherine. She received a variety of honors. This list of honors along with her participation in seminars as a speaker, National Committee Work, Professional Memberships, Civic and Services, Church Activities, and Special Projects can be found in the Addendum of this oral biographical sketch.

Prior to Catherine retiring, she accomplished some things that had been on her mind since childhood. "To see all these places I had read about. See all these places. There was always this impatience, because I said if I don't do it, I realize there would come a time in my life when it couldn't be important to me. I wanted to do it while I was still eager and enthusiastic about it. Near the end of my social work years, well, I guess I started. We went to Jamaica and to Montigo Bay and did that tour. The next thing I did was, I still had this Europe in my mind. I wanted to go to England. I wanted to go to Statford on Avon and see where Shakespeare had lived. I wanted to go to Paris. That's all I had ever read and dreamed about. My oldest brother had done a lot of traveling, so he said, 'Well, if you want to go, we'll go.' So Jeanette Bethel, my brother Herb, his wife, and I went. We went
to England, Paris, Italy, and Switzerland. Probably three years later, I went to Brazil with a couple of other women. Then I said, 'I think I've done most of the things that I wanted to do.'

Catherine's decision to retire came about 18 months after Michael Reagen took over as Commissioner. Catherine saw Mike wanting "to go a different direction." "When I was in that dilemma of staying or going, I told Mike of my 'gut reaction.' Some folks call it instinct. I said, 'I know that I feel things are changing and it isn't fair for you. You're trying to deal with me, and you want to go a different direction. And, why should I be here making you, me, and everybody else neurotic.' On February 13, 1981, Catherine Gayle Williams retired from the Iowa Department of Social Services after a career in public service that has touched four decades, so far.

In ending this chapter of Catherine's public career, it seems only appropriate to do so with comments made by an individual who is in a position similar to Catherine's first (Stenographer/Secretary). Joni Current served as Catherine's secretary from January of 1980 until January of 1981. She observed Catherine quite closely for this year and offered these comments in a personal interview. "I had mostly a working relationship with Catherine, but we did go to lunch on occasion." Joni viewed Catherine as a "good example for a boss," because of the way she "conducted herself, said the right things, took on little things, like the problem with the restroom." Joni remembered Catherine as "always wanting to
do good work and having high expectations." According to Joni, Catherine emphasized "It's never too late!" The quality that sticks out most in Joni's memory of working for Catherine, was "she always made time to listen." Lastly, Joni recalls Catherine giving "advice on how to move up."

The opportunities for entering the social work field are good because of its broad base at this point in our social institutions. However, one would need to be willing to begin at the bottom and build an ever increasing and meaningful work experience in order to qualify...

Catherine Gayle Williams
CHAPTER VIII

The Essence of Catherine

Through this chapter, some of Catherine's thoughts on a variety of subjects will be expressed. Catherine will also share some of her perspectives on social work, both past and present. The chapter will conclude with a look at Catherine's present life and her endeavors since her retirement from the Department of Social Services.

Families have always been one of Catherine's main concerns. Looking back to her childhood, Catherine "was secure in love." She felt secure in her family relationship. That is the most important asset a child should receive, that is the basis of a child's future, "that's where it is going to happen. One of the big problems is that half the kids don't know what family means. That is why I am so committed to a family and the strengthening of the family. If you don't receive (as a child) what is acceptable and unacceptable then society will go to pot, which is what we are seeing. There has to be rules. I was never afraid to give credit to a good family. I know darn well that what I am didn't start with me. Your ability to be here isn't you by yourself, it's what you got as a child. That's where it started. If I'm really listening, to that inner ear that says, 'You know better,' that is my own conscience. And it is all through your life."

A strong, secure family background is also what Catherine considers as the foundation that enables young adults to make
choices. "As you grow, choices and options get limited. As you get older, your chances for changing, and the ability to handle opportunities can get very limited."

Catherine also believes that families should continue, through succeeding generations, to "pull together. If a family can show that each generation has made some move, then you have justified your being here. If you start off poor, O.K. But if you don't do anything to lift your family out of that, you have not done what you should have. If one member of a family does something that is noteworthy and makes it, that member should then move the family along. Families should pool everything together. They should help every member get an education. At present, families only gather around to help and support (its members) when a crisis occurs."

In addition to the help and support of a family, individuals must work toward a goal. "You have to work on that. It isn't always luck. You put yourself in that environment, the way you want to go. Other people realize that, and they will help you. They are out there. If people read you clearly, they are not going to do anything to hurt you, doors open up, because they know you are trying to do something."

To reach a goal, a person must "challenge yourself against the world, in a sense. I see it as a responsibility, it is not self grandism. It is the responsibility to do what you think you can. I don't think anybody can tell you that but you. There is an inner guide that says 'Are you really doing all that you can do?'
Now there comes a time when you may fool yourself about what you are capable of doing. But if you are honest, I think you can test that. I don't recognize any limitations. I think a person has talent and also has responsibility. And unless you stretch that to its end, you really haven't been responsible for your life with what God has given you. People worry about the limitation, but when you reach it, I think you will know it. Worrying about limitations keeps you from doing a lot of things that you are capable of doing."

Along with the inner guide, "there is something else that helps you through this world. I have certainly felt that God has helped me. I thank God everyday for my good fortune. If you don't know what you are doing, somebody has arms wide around you. To keep you out of trouble. I do believe that if I try to do the things that are right, things will work out. You just keep working toward that end. It's not a trade-off."

Catherine has often looked back at her own family relationships. Catherine and her brothers "have talked about many times" their "differences in character. Now the first two see their parent-child relationship much differently than I do. And I see mine much differently than Paul does. So, when we sit and talk we can hardly believe we had the same parents. That is how things change. When you talk to Maxine and Herb, they had everything. As the family increased, it probably got split, there was less and less. Paul felt that by the time it got to him, both in resources and
emotional investment, there wasn't that much for him. My oldest brother (Herb), with his talents, he could build, he could have been a contractor." Herb did not pursue a formal education. Catherine's youngest brother, Paul, is now a psychiatrist. Catherine gets together every year with her brothers and sister, Maxine, a retired registered nurse. They continue to maintain a strong family relationship.

One of Catherine's main goals, throughout most of her life, was to get an education. "I loved school, that was never out of my mind. I knew I was going to get back to an educational path." Catherine was 51 when "I got my masters. And that is why I'll tell anybody 'Don't tell me that you get too old.' I tell them to start. If you want to do it, you do it." Catherine regrets her late start in social work. Looking back, she would have given up her dancing years and "worked hard to go to school directly from high school. I feel that if I had gone to school earlier, that I would be really at the top in terms of my profession, a woman. And that would have been national. But by the time I reached those opportunities, I was too far down the line." Age seems to be the only limitation Catherine has encountered in her career.

Catherine considers her life, in terms of two careers, as "kind of a wavy line, but I think, on my part, there has been some direction to it--a need to keep it focused. When I say wavy, there was always that feeling (during her dancing years) that you are going to have to get back to that educational task sometime. Educationally, there were goals to be met, make some achievements in that area because I think there is a potential to do that. Moving
into the other career pattern, your view is at first limited. As things open up for you, you see more and more things that can be done. As you go higher and higher you begin to see that there are other things out there that you can do. I feel, at this point, the focus would be in terms of more education in learning the profession, for planning a further career. Time is against me."

In looking back, Catherine sees some connection during her dancing years with social work. "I was undifferentiated, I suppose, until I came to a career change. All the time I was in show business, I had a concern for people. I have always been concerned about people. I remember so many times dealing with friends who were in trouble. I can remember one girl who was with the 'Hot Mikado'; she was just one pill. I remember Charles saying, 'I'm not going to be bothered with her. You go on and talk with her or whatever. I'm just not putting up with that foolishness.' But I would do those things. Then when I came back home and started at Polk County as a stenographer, I had my first view of this as a profession. I said, 'This is something that really leads to something.'" When Catherine first started in the ADC area, "I could be manipulated all over the place. I'd get very angry, and then finally I'd settle down and decided you can't judge everybody. Then you are able to begin to look at each individual as a different case. That was one thing I learned and was able to pass on in supervision, stop generalizing and begin to individualize. That was when I began to really put some system behind what I was doing and decided to get prepared to do it. I never felt that
education changed my thinking. Many people go to school and come out and they are just 'fools.' Education should help you to put in perspective what you have and help you carve out what you want to do. In working through the profession you have to have a good solid education. I'm not so sure that all schools provide a good solid education in social work. They provide something, but I'm not so sure that I would call it that disciplined approach to helping people. Sometimes the end is to be able to make money, and involving yourself in a lifetime experience is beside the point. There ought to be a great deal of satisfaction in knowing that you are the very best you can be in your profession. I think that if you are very good at what you do, there is a demand for you. I have a strong belief about this business of internalization, it has to become a way of life. You can't just do it for clients and not do it for your neighbor."

"I was talking to a reporter on the working woman and she was talking about all the things that women have to put up with--kids, that they (the women) don't have the education, etc. I feel it is really that person's responsibility. You can't continue to blame everybody. Right now you can't do anything about the economy, but there are a lot of positives that a person can get out of knowing that they have used every resource they possibly have. You can't change that external, all you can do is to change yourself and how you relate to that external. They may never get a job but they will feel good about themselves in that they have
used every resource they have to try. They can stop blaming themselves. I can't really be a judge because I don't know how to deal with some of those things (having children). I just know that there are men in school who had four and five kids and somehow they got through. I'm sure they had good supporting partners in order to do it. So, I can't make any judgements about those folks. I just know that my drives have been so strong. I have been very blessed. You take this on for yourself. You know that it is going to be your direction and your practice. I guess that is what I mean when I say you have to internalize. Students need to internalize their values. They need to get beyond definitions. Values are down-played. Not understanding the principles of social work is a fallacy of students. Somewhere we are missing the values, their practical application. With Maslow and Erikson you can certainly approach any human relationship, these are the kinds of things that have to be brought into consideration. I can do it with any relationship, one on one or a whole room full of folks, it holds fast. I still teach from Maslow's and Erikson's concepts."

The value of social work is not in the "need for profit. I don't think we can measure our own profit. Our profit is in the value of lives. And that is so nebulous, somebody else's success might be their satisfaction in their functioning, or feeling hopeful about themselves. That is as much as we can hope for."

One problem is "the whole business of taking the profession seriously. That is really the frustration of people who are in the business who really are not true social workers, who somehow got in and
really don't know what it is all about. They don't have the slightest idea of what it is all about. I suppose the frustration is broader than that, it permeates our whole society. There is nobody looking for excellence any more. Our whole society has taken the premium off excellence. I think one reason is that money has become our religion. So whatever makes money is the thing we worship, and never mind how you get there. Another reason is your inner directive. You are not inner directed any longer. Everything is measured against somebody else. Somebody else sets the patterns for your accomplishments. It is only when you reach Maslow's self-actualization that you can be satisfied with yourself. But by that time, your life is practically over, unless you are pretty lucky."

Catherine has rarely been judged by her race. "I never remember any overt kinds of racial things. What you perceive is not always the case. There is always the need to give a reasonable amount of time and assess. Then you begin to think, 'How are you going to deal with it?' That is always with you. There is always some sense of a difference. I always accepted what was. You would get some racial background through the church and through the NAACP. Many blacks got the whole business that they had to be twice as good. It was denial of what was really reality, in a sense, ideas like 'I by myself can change the world...because I'm not going to be like that.' There was a feeling of embarrassment and shame, and you'd see the pictures--stereotypes."
Catherine remembers the assassination of Malcolm X and reading his autobiography. "I feel his reconciliation has never been really played up. They don't even want to talk about that because that would defeat a purpose. I've said this over and over, 'You have to be honest.' We can never get this reconciliation as we are unwilling to admit that there has been change. I think he did beautiful things, his whole movement did, but then it became, again, the thing that happens to most folk. The fact that he was able to make people look at themselves, take responsibility for their own lives, and become independent and highly moral is fine; if it takes that kind of thing to straighten people out. I don't think anybody could object to that because those were positive kinds of things. Yet, he is gone, and the people who ran that system are into it for other reasons. Their hidden agendas always seem to take over. They begin to compromise the idealism."

Catherine believes that much of society has compromised its idealism, such as illegitimacy among black teenagers. "We must realize that we have responsibility for that kind of thing and stop buying into the system of permissiveness which permeates this society. We can't afford that, but you try to be honest with people and you become the villain. Kids need to develop skills to make it in this world. And educators are brushing off our kids' education. We are allowing that to happen...instead of putting our kids in school. If kids aren't prepared to deal with the future, then we can forget it. Kids have to be given the opportunity. We can't say 'You are all right as you are.' There
is no more deliberate way to put them in a caste system, from which they will never emerge. 'Black is beautiful' is a part of that, but carried to an extreme; a hairdo isn't going to make it. It is beautiful if it gets some quality. Also, teachers learn this language, 'This is what kids are used to.' That will get them nowhere. They (kids) are still going to have to go out and deal with the world. I can't understand educators who have bought that baloney. We have become slaves to words, and then you get into stereotypes. The word becomes 'It.' If you are a Pole, then you are all these negative things. If you are a Jew, you are all these things. If you are an Italian, then you are Mafia. The word becomes something."

During Catherine's many years of employment in human services, her most memorable accomplishment is the "feedback that I have touched some lives. People have said 'Well, you really did touch my life.' I can say 'Well, you really did do something.' Whereas the rest of it doesn't mean anything. Touching some lives, that is the most important thing."

In contrast, Catherine's biggest frustrations in social work have "been two. One certainly was trying to meet the needs of people with inadequate funding. The other was our failure of learning how to really be accountable. I think we should do more of that in terms of systems, not in terms of the whole need for profit."

Catherine's views of social work in the past along with where it has evolved to are very concise. "I think social work in the past, that I have read about, was real social work. The
Jane Adams, the whole business of dealing with people who needed the guidance, needed the help, and the supportive systems in the community. There was the value of people working together. The very simple principles came out of that time. Then, I believe, we moved to a time when the profession had to find itself. So, in trying to find itself, it began to specialize and to develop curriculums that dealt with those specializations. A person can go into social work and follow the particular line that they liked. The impact of the other social institutions on every profession, I think, is the same. Social work catches it like everybody else. Principles of philosophies change according to the time. It is tied into the political, the economic, and the whole philosophy of the country. Economics and politics affect history and the changes."

"There has got to be things you grab on. This whole business of new terms, all these heads of social work talking about all the new terms, the impact, the output. I say all you have to do is go back to our principles. I keep chasing everybody back to the principles. It is all the same thing. They just keep giving them different words. When people have trouble translating it back, it is because they have never learned the principles in the first place. There is nothing really new. Those first truths are still the truths. I don't care how you change or reword them, when you really get down to it, they are all the same. Social work is always looking for a home. Social workers are always looking for a base instead of being satisfied with their own."
Everybody keeps picking away at it and using it and pretty soon there won't be anything left."

Following two careers and many years of education, Catherine retired. However, "I have this need to just stay busy. There were many things I wanted to do. It was a matter of which direction I wanted to take. Cecilia and I decided we were going to work on a consulting business." Cecilia Johnson was the Director of Human Rights in Des Moines. She is now the assistant city manager.

In November of 1980 Cecilia Johnson and Catherine started Johnson/Williams Associates. "We got the office set up and going I ordered the carpeting and had it laid and got furniture. It was on 6th Avenue and Rich was not happy with the neighborhood. He said, "You are going to be messing around over there at night, and I just really don't care about that." They gave up the office and Catherine now works out of her home. "When we started the business, my idea was the social work profession has very much to offer the business and the private sector. Over the years, through staff development and through my association with those folks, I saw them using social work principles. I read reams of management material, which was repeating nothing but our whole business of the social work process and the eight stages of life. They are dealing with all kinds of workshops around stress management, conflict resolution, and employee relations. Our profession is the one that can make that marriage between the two. As we move toward really being accountable and using management technique, it is far easier for social workers to pick that up and translate that into
business than it is for people who are trained in business to pick up on the human factor and put that into their bag of tricks. If anybody can do that, it ought to be the people who have been trained to deal with another human being and who understand human behavior. I felt that we had a lot to offer in that area, and still do. The problem is now, with the economy being what it is, there are not a lot of dollars around to handle that. So the whole business is not good now, in terms of consulting. People are making do with what they have. I'm not doing any marketing, in that sense. But whenever anything comes up, we do it. I'm just thankful that it is not a worry that I have. If things remain the same, I would never have to work again, based on retirement income. But, I want to do things. So long as I am healthy and able to, I will work at something. Now I can do what I want to do."

"That is one reason why I picked up on teaching. I wanted to do that." Catherine teaches at the School of Social Work on Drake Campus and at "the women's school. And whatever comes along, I still want to do it. I have just been going along. I have been into consulting and teaching, and am active on the Health Policy Council. I had several speeches to do last year (1981), which were all contract things. I look at the things I carve out for myself to do, in terms of the profession (teaching Social Work at a University), and I don't think that I will get back into that system. I think I'm past that. Because you are going to have to have some investiture and you are going to need to
have published and have a doctorate to really get into that system, to work up. And it is a little late to think about that. So anything I do now is going to have to be an independent effort. And what that will be, I don't know. I'm volunteering for task forces and committees, so I feel that I am contributing. But right now, I'm feeling the need to sit back, to kind of slow down a little bit and take a look at what I am doing. It will be the first time since I left work. A book is still in my mind. And I think I need time to really start pulling that together."

"Right now I am promising myself all over the place. I have not learned to say no, and I'm not sure why. Whether it is with me to always be busy or whether it is the challenge that I feel I want to meet, I don't know. Whatever life brings. But I know that I am going to have to prioritize some things. One morning, I had a lobbying institute up there on the calendar. Rich woke me up. I said, 'I'm not going.' Rich asked, 'Why do you put those things down? You shouldn't commit yourself.' I said, 'That is not a commitment. That was something I thought I would be interested in. But I decided I didn't need to do that. I didn't want to get up and go to that.' Anything I commit myself to, I do."

Catherine watches an occasional television show. She still spends a large amount of time reading. "I was really surprised and honored, when I retired, in the Highland Park Library they had a write-up and pictures of me. The way I used to use the
library!"

Catherine has also renewed some old acquaintances. She attended "our fiftieth high school reunion in May of 1982. They had pictures of our high school graduation. I met some folks there I hadn't seen since graduation."

"One person, Lois Baumgartner Hall, reintroduced herself into my life. I had forgotten all about her, because I was away. Lois called and came up and visited with me and told me who she was and then I remembered. She had talked about our early school days and dancing classes together. She has pulled me into activities, girl scouts and she had me on the Alumni Association program in 1981 for Drake. She is the chair of it this year."

For almost 68 years, Catherine has been a member of, and active in the St. Paul's African Methodist Episcopal Church. At one time, she taught Sunday School. She currently works "with the Board of Christian Education, and is a Steward. For several years I had worked with St. John Lutheran, with Cookie Thomas, to enroll children in vacation Bible School."

Catherine has shared many of her thoughts and her accomplishments. The essence of Catherine Gayle Williams is "forever searching, and hoping in the search that somehow, some good falls out, somewhere."
CHAPTER IX
Reflections On Catherine
by
Some She Touched

After her retirement was announced, Catherine herself recalls letters she received thanking her for her help. People personally thanked her for varieties of past encounters. Many of those individuals, both clients and associates from the past, Catherine was unable to remember. But she was remembered by them, and they were very grateful and appreciative for the part she played in their lives.

Countless individuals have known Catherine, have been helped by Catherine, and have supervised or have been supervised by Catherine. There were far too many to even begin to interview. The few that were interviewed were chosen at random and on the basis of availability.

Irl Carter has been associated with Catherine through a variety of experiences. Irl first met Catherine through Polk County. She was in a supervisory role and he was a case worker. They later were classmates in graduate school, colleagues at the Department of Social Services, and worked together in Iowa's involvement on the federal level with Title XX. Irl is now the Dean of the School of Social Development in Duluth, Minnesota. Irl's description of Catherine follows. "The single word that impresses me as the most characteristic of Catherine is integrity."
She presents herself as a competent person with good experience. I never felt any reason to take her at less than face value. There was never any pressure in Catherine's style. But there was always a kind of persistence exemplifying what she stood for. You saw it in how she related to people, how she treated other people. She gave respect to people. She recognizes other people's integrity, she preserves her own. She has her own integrity as female, as black, overall as a person. That probably is the most important part of what I see about her. For me it is the fact that she is a person who is highly competent, who isn't defensive about it, who is very much at ease with herself, who had exemplified what it meant to be a competent female long before that became fashionable. She exemplifies a black who isn't preoccupied with being black, who feels no need to defend herself. She is black and that is a part of her. But it doesn't come in as an intrusive part of her life. It is an integral part of who she is. She is a person. She is just Catherine, who happens to be female and black. And so, she provides a role model for a lot of people."

Another person interviewed was Mildred Snider. Mildred met Catherine around 1951 when Mildred came to the University of Iowa's School of Social Work. Mildred has been involved in a variety of committees and organizations with Catherine. Mildred was also a Professor at the School of Social Work during 1963 through 1965 when Catherine received her masters degree in social work. Mildred is now retired. Mildred reflected, "In some respects, I feel that there was never a time in my life that I didn't know Catherine
Williams. I have always perceived of her as a person who was truly dedicated to the field of social welfare with special emphasis upon the role of the public welfare agencies, the life of the state, and in support of the clients who used the services of those agencies. On a committee Catherine is really a strength. She makes a real contribution because she knows her subject matter and she can communicate very well. She really has the concern of the program, the people responsible for administering the program, and the people who are using the program, all their concerns at heart. She has high integrity. She really has a very high sense of integrity toward the organization she is working with and the people she serves. That is coupled with a good head on her shoulders and a very good sense of humor. You can always depend upon her. She can modify her ideas and change her ideas when the evidence, the knowledge, and her understanding says that she should do that. But she is also very firm and very stable in the kinds of contributions that she makes. She can pull material together, she can write it, and she can speak it. Catherine can work with people, recognize their strengths and their weaknesses, and give them a lot of support in doing what they are doing. She can make decisions when they need to be made. Catherine had taken on more responsibility as she took on new and different jobs. But there had been a consistency in the way that she performed. Catherine wasn't concerned about winning. She was concerned about doing a good job and seeing that the department fulfilled its mission. You don't always win a popularity contest if you are
doing that. But Catherine did win the respect of the people of Iowa through her long and sustained period of working with them. Iowa can be thankful that we have had her in the role she has been playing, and will continue to have her in that role."

Katy Kruse was also a Professor at the School of Social Work during 1963 through 1965. Katy is still at the school. She first met Catherine in 1963 and has had a variety of involvements with her surrounding the field of human services. Katy describes Catherine as "a very gentle person, soft spoken, and always alert to the impact of working with people. She has always been a very caring person. Catherine has always emphasized the importance of values especially identified with social work. Integrity is one of her outstanding characteristics. There has been a consistency about her all through the years. Her framework for practice has not changed, she has a very strong foundation. That is why she was able to do what she has done, to move up through the various levels of an organization to the point of Acting Commissioner. Catherine always recognized that she was dealing with human beings. She has also always concerned herself with programs that affect children."

"Catherine's race was not an issue in any sense of the word. I think that, in some ways, it didn't need to be, because what she was was so evident. There was such an evident quality there that no one could deny her equality. I think she is really a tremendous role model for all women."
My brother, John Smith, upon learning the topic of this final project, took an immediate interest. He had worked for the Department of Social Services and was encouraged to obtain his MSW at the University of Iowa’s School of Social Work by Catherine Williams. In letters sent to me, some of his thoughts were obtained. His style was through a stream of consciousness. "Those of us who venture forth from the credentials process toward the actualization of the role for which we have so tediously prepared need to heed the lesson which we can gain from the example which Catherine Williams has so aptly displayed before us. For, after all, the only reason for studying the past is the gain it gives us in preparing for future conflict in our lives. Being a helping person is no easy task. Catherine was and is no politician, or zealot, or savior, or bureaucrat. She is a social worker. Under the charismatic leadership of Catherine, an army of (public and private) helping persons helped carve out and design the operational contract of Title XX, which exists today throughout our nation. The impact of this person on social policy, this role model of social work, this distinguished dancing lady, ranks her with Jane Addams, Mary Richmond... and Emily Dickinson, or whoever the hell wrote Social Diagnosis at the turn of the century. The difference is that she is a lady of our times. Catherine demanded the creation of viable service delivery, but in doing so, not one inch of leeway was given to weakening professional ethic and client commitment."

"I started in a county welfare office with the issuance of
the New Frontier Legislation, Title 4-A, and 4-B. There was
tremendous optimism toward the war on poverty, as an attainable
quest. The message was: 'Get to know, understand, and help
the people you serve.' Catherine was running staff development
when I started. All these people kept disappearing from our
county welfare offices, only to show up 'jest' before we went to
look for them (18 months later), wearing strange new clothes and
carrying an umbrella. Now, I got to thinking 'Who the hell needs
an umbrella with all the trees and barns in Iowa?' Before I could
solve that one I found myself joined up as one of those delightful
and different helping persons, gettin' trained as an MSW at
The University of Iowa. Well, by the time I recovered from the
credentials process, I found myself engaged as a 'rainmaker,'
supervisor, and staff developer in Davenport. The war in Nam was
winding down, but the grass roots concern for people of Iowa
sparked off from it, and our battles raged fierce. Catherine
never left her post of staff development, even though she rose to a
much higher service. Instead, she brought everybody I knew,
from commissioners to consumers of our service, to the post.
Thousands and thousands of persons negotiated, learned and carried
out the process. The process was as dynamic, flexible, and
humane as Catherine could make it. Iowa was well on the way to
moving from primitive institutional and welfare practices to
(Iowa Stubborn) new ways of helping people. Other state and local
governments have still not yet caught up to where we were in
Iowa then.'
"I left to follow my dream West. I never did get a chance to solve the riddle of why all those folks came back from school carrying an umbrella." John is currently a Social Services Supervisor with the Department of Human Services in St. Johns, Arizona.

The person that probably knows Catherine the best is her husband of nineteen years, Richard Williams. Richard was born in Des Moines on February 22, 1923. He was raised by his mother.

Richard retired from the post office in 1979 at age 55. He decided to return to work at Fowler and Sons Funeral Home. The funeral home had been owned by his uncle. Richard, along with his second cousin, are now running the family owned business.

Reflecting back, Richard stated "I knew Catherine had a potential of being, I won't say a great lady, but a very outstanding person. I just let her go, I didn't interfere." During Catherine's career, she was occasionally out of town for possibly two weeks out of a month. Sometimes there was very little advance notice of a meeting or trip. "She would come in and say, 'I'm leaving.' I could not, under any circumstances, try to hold her back. Her modus operandus is so unique and so intense that the average person in society would not understand."

Richard continued, "She is the type of person who hates to refuse somebody she can help. She works with people all over the United States. She's a good lady. I don't think she even knows how good she is because she's not egotistical at all. She has done a lot of things that she hasn't got credit for, and she could care less."
When at home, Catherine "never stops learning, never. She reads all the time." Catherine usually sits at the table, eats with one hand, and has a book in her other hand. "She always has had some kind of book in her hand, ever since I have known her in 1949. Social Work, human relations, public relations, management--she's got it."

Catherine and Richard's relationship includes a great deal of understanding. They "discuss" various issues "low key, without a shouting match. Everyone is entitled to an opinion. We have learned to adjust our tone. There is no verbal abusiveness. Very seldom have I seen her angry."

That attitude has also been exemplified in Catherine's career. "She's good at decision making. She sits and listens. I have seen her make one sentence or small paragraph and settle a whole conference. She does not argue too much about anything. She knows exactly what she is talking about. She won't back off. She's not afraid of anything."

Even since her retirement, Catherine has not slowed down. Richard suggests, "She hasn't accomplished yet, I don't think, what she want to accomplish. She never wants to be stagnated."

Richard sums up his views of Catherine with "She's amazing at times!"
"The social worker is a deviant, sanctioned by society. We operate on the boundaries which, necessarily, exist in society between the needs of individuals for survival and the social systems. We define and meet that need and produce data. We interface amongst environing systems defining and solving problems. We make house calls, and if necessary, we do windows. We serve people. There is no "way". There are only people, helping people help themselves. Conflict is always the process. Successful solution produces energy and power, which individuals and families and groups use to further their means toward only one goal—quality of life on earth. If there is any valid criticism of our philosophy, it is that we are too liberal. But liberty is the driving force of the humanitarian social scientist. Often we are dealing with people whom the existing system has tossed into the garbage bin. We foster growth and recycle human potential. We model and self actualize. It is hard work, but very rewarding. With the advent of computer science, the 'new golden role' is operative: "He Who Has The Gold Makes The Rules." "He" needs input (Smith, 1982).

Catherine is not a "he". In my opinion, along with a consensus of opinions, that is the primary explanation for Catherine's not becoming the appointed Commissioner of the Iowa Department of Social Services. Three additional, and possibly inclusive reasons, are: Catherine is black; Catherine does not have a doctorate degree; and Catherine does not participate in partisan politics.
I believe that Catherine was denied the position of Commissioner as a result of a combination of the above four factors. I also believe that nobody, including the Governor, can deny the facts that Catherine was both qualified and competent to fulfill that role.

Although Catherine has retired from the Iowa Department of Social Services, her impact will continue to be felt by both employees and clients of human services in Iowa and possibly throughout the nation, due to her involvement with Title XX. Catherine improved human service delivery. She demanded viable yet accountable services.

Throughout her life, Catherine has been concerned about people. In addition to her own desires for a better life, Catherine has struggled to improve the quality of life for others. She did this by respecting each individual as a unique human being. Catherine never strayed from the basic principles of Social Work. She never compromised those values while climbing her career ladder. Catherine maintained excellence in both Social Work and administration. Catherine is indeed a role model for Social Work.

I am grateful and thankful for the time Catherine gave me to complete this project. I have learned a great deal about Catherine as a person, and about human service delivery. Catherine's refusal to compromise her values provides an outstanding example of Social Work. Those in the human service profession need to occasionally pause and reflect on the values Catherine has demonstrated. We can all learn from the example she has set.