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CHAPTER ONE

## BECOMING A SOCIAL WORKER

(1966–1970)

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I WORKED IN the social work field for 40 years. Now I am retired because of ill health, and I want to look back on my experiences and the thoughts I developed on the profession, its theory, and practice.

I worked in a number of agencies and did many kinds of work. All of it was fairly conventional social work practice—public assistance, child welfare, and medical social work in an emergency room and in home care. All of it was interesting, despite the frequent frustrations of working within the American social welfare and health care systems.

I entered the field almost by accident. In 1966 I graduated from college in New York City and needed a job. I was a bit unusual in this respect—87 percent of my graduating class went on to some form of advanced education. This was only partly a consequence of the broad love of learning. Many wanted simply to avoid the draft, and the Vietnam War. I, however, had a six-month medical deferment, which I hoped would persist. I was free, as it were, to embark on full adulthood.

I did not want to work in business, and I took a series of civil service examinations. The results came in rather slowly, but then I received an indirect hint from my family that I return to the Midwest. I was in therapy at the time, and the thought of leaving treatment and returning to a place where I had never been very happy galvanized me into taking what I knew to be the most accessible civil service job—the New York City Department of Welfare's caseworker position.

Having passed the not-very-challenging examination, I reported to Personnel, where they processed me at breakneck speed. At the time, the department was opening a new center every few weeks, to cope with the swelling caseload. They told me to report to a training center in Manhattan.

The training lasted a few weeks and introduced us to the basics of public assistance as it existed at the time. I learned that there were several categories. Most of my clients would be receiving Aid to Dependent Children and would be single

mothers with one or more offspring. Then there were other federal categories, partially subsidized from Washington, DC, including Aid to the Disabled, Aid to the Blind, and Old Age Assistance. This latter category was for people who had not been included in the earlier formulations of social security—domestic and farm workers and self-employed people. I even had a client so old that he had retired before the first social security check went out in 1940.

Then there was Home Relief, a local expense. It included a variety of people in miscellaneous situations, mostly single, low-functioning adults. There also were a few two-parent families in which the earned income was below the level of eligibility.

The trainer, Mr. Weinstein<sup>1</sup>, tried to convey some of the emphasis on services that the most recent amendments to the Social Security Act had established. Congress, we learned, hoped that the services we would provide would help clients become more functional and enter the workforce. Hence, at the end of our dictation of each recertification visit, we had to write a “social study,” to summarize the family’s situation and “individualize the children.” Mr. Weinstein also introduced us to some of the hundreds or thousands of forms we would be using.

He also outlined some rudiments of interviewing and the way we should conduct ourselves on home visits. The last week or so of training alternated between the classroom and our training units in our assigned centers. I recall sitting in the Central Park Zoo at lunch with a fellow trainee, whom I dated for a while, and comparing notes.



MY ASSIGNMENT WAS to the Kingsbridge Welfare Center at 260 East 161st Street, in the Bronx. This was at the eastern edge of the neighborhood surrounding Yankee Stadium, in a former telephone company building overlooking the New York Central Railroad’s Mott Haven Yards.

The immediate neighborhood was “changing”—a loaded word at the time—but still mostly Jewish, especially closer to the Grand Concourse. To the east was Morrisania, an area that had become substantially African American even in the 1930s. In some ways, its atmosphere was like parts of Harlem. To the west, by the Harlem River, was the still Irish area of Highbridge. The center’s territory ran from about One Hundred Sixty First Street up to One Hundred Seventieth Street, and from Stebbins Avenue (now partly renamed Reverend James A. Polite Avenue) on the east, over to the Harlem River. It also included all of Manhattan above 115th Street, comprising a little of upper Harlem, Washington Heights, and Inwood. These were very diverse areas.

My supervisor, Lucius Nickerson, was experienced, serious, and conscientious; he worked very hard to help me and the other four trainees learn how to handle a caseload. "Controls" was his watchword. We needed to develop our own controls to keep track of the innumerable tasks. I later became very good at this kind of thing but was slow, at first, to pick it up. Perhaps it was because my strongest initial interest was in the new experience of encountering my clients.

I received 15 ongoing cases and was told to read the narratives. They dated back years and followed the families' lives through many vicissitudes. They were human documents, reflecting both the clients and the many workers' idiosyncrasies. I read them with fascination, and even today, opening and reading a case record or chart is an exciting experience.

After a few days, in late September 1966, I made my first visit, to a woman whose case had been active most of the time since her first application at the age of 13 or 14, in the year before my birth. She was in her mid-thirties and had seven or eight children. The record did seem to indicate some impulsivity and weakness of judgment, particularly in her relationships with men.

She lived in a shabby building to the east of the center. I went to see her, wearing the white shirt, tie, and jacket that I still thought was necessary, though I could have seen that most of the workers dressed more casually. One of the children admitted me and directed me to the living room, where I sat primly on the davenport. The client came, smelling slightly of alcohol, and sat beside me, rather invading my personal space, and clutched my wrist, asking my age. I admitted to being 22, and she exclaimed: "Now I have to tell my son that I finally got an investigator that's younger than he is!" This made me feel properly put in my place, but we went on to discuss the usual business of a recertification visit. I never met this son, who had moved out on his own. However, he has become a notably constructive community activist in a certain New York neighborhood.

As I met more clients, I discovered that most of them were sounder than the first, some of them impressively so. One, for example, who had eight or nine children, lived in a meticulously clean apartment in an otherwise shabby building. Once, when I was there, I saw her executive skill in action. She noticed a barely perceptible bit of dirt or disorder in the living room, but did not clean it up herself. Nor did she tell one of the kids to clean it up. No, she called an older boy to supervise his little brother in cleaning it up. Evidently, a rigorous staffing pattern prevailed. I am sure her children must have gone on to be effective members of society.

I decided that the primary problem most of my clients faced was lack of money, and I tried to distribute as much of it as I could. This was a complex process, because money for more than the basic "food, rent, and other," that is, for clothing,

furniture, and other necessities, required specific, detailed grants, with individual approvals at various levels of supervision. These approvals followed complicated formulas that balanced the amount of the grant and the time since the last grant. At first, I was not very good at this, and many of the clients may have felt I was the pleasant fellow who did not come through with the money as fast as would have been desired.

Most of these women had lots of children. Quite normal mothers had six, seven, or eight. Why? At least in part because caseworkers were forbidden, on pain of dismissal, to discuss birth control with them. But this changed. In 1967, we received a memorandum allowing us to respond to clients' requests for information, and the following year we were instructed to initiate and document such discussion. Luker (1992), in *Dubious Conceptions*, detailed the evolving social policy that let this happen. I saw this happen on the ground. With family planning available, the birth rate plummeted among poor women. After about 1970, most women with large broods of children either were members of idiosyncratic religious sects like the Chassidim or the Black Hebrew Israelite Nation or were personally dysfunctional.

I found field visiting exhilarating, not only because of the contact with clients, but also because of the experience of getting to know the several diverse neighborhoods where I worked.

I tried to engage my clients in discussion about their lives, so as to know them better, of course, but also because I found their experiences fascinating. Gradually, I developed a sort of receptivity that prompted people to talk freely, with me asking only a few questions. I already had a fairly good historical and sociological sense and tried to see the clients as part of the human social process, though I did not consciously think of it that way at the time. This was the beginning of what became one of my great professional concerns—the application of social theory to social work practice. Many of my clients responded to my interest, and our conversations became comfortable.



ANOTHER NEW EXPERIENCE was the Social Service Employees Union, which represented caseworkers and some other titles. It had won a representation election, replacing Local 371 of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, which still represented our supervisors. It had then gone on to win a strike the previous year, with emphasis on professionalization of the caseworker function, somewhat in line with the service amendments to the Social Security Act. The union was militant, its membership mostly young and single, and it operated

on a very participatory basis. There were frequent membership meetings, and leaflets and the union newspaper appeared on our desks every few days. I became an active participant, went to all the meetings, and got to know the delegates and activists in the center. There were intense arguments and disputes, partly involving the various left sectarian groups that had joined the union. These, I found interesting, but I found their pseudo-populist appeals to suspicion and paranoia about our leadership difficult to take seriously.

We struck again in the summer of 1967, for six weeks, and with little success. I was arrested once, when the woman walking in front of me on the picket line said "Shame on you David!" to a scab walking into the building. We happened to be at a gap between the police sawhorses. David, whom I didn't know, lunged down and pushed her, and me too, because I was so close to her. All of us got arrested. The officers took us to the Forty First Precinct, where we were booked. I helped my arresting officer, Jim Fenton, with the paperwork, and he was quite grateful. After some hours in a cell, they loaded me into a paddy wagon, picked up other prisoners from other precincts, and took us to the Tombs, where I got into a conversation with a man who was there for stealing some dresses. I was reading a then very popular book, Kenneth Keniston's *The Uncommitted: A Study of Alienated Youth in American Society*, and he asked:

"Is that a socialistic book?"

"Not exactly. Are you a socialist?"

He said he hadn't really thought about it.

The strike was an emotional high for a while, and then a letdown, but, for me, at least, not a complete one. After the strike, I became more active and participated in a secondary way in the effort to rebuild.

Another new experience was my first participation in a left organization, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). In college, I had been sympathetic to the civil rights and then the anti-war movements but too diffident to actively participate. In January 1967, however, one of my coworkers invited me to an SDS meeting. I went, and I found that it was the New York At Large Chapter, anomalous because it was not based on a campus. Its leaders were among the founders of the national organization, having been much of the New York delegation to the SDS founding convention at Port Huron, Michigan, a few years before. They were what I learned were called "red-diaper babies," meaning they were from old left families. One, in fact, was the child of parents who had been prominent Communist Party officials until Nikita Khrushchev's revelations about Stalinism in 1956.

The chapter functioned mostly as a discussion group. At first, we read several of Lenin's books. The discussions mostly had to do with the difficulties in applying his thought to contemporary American reality. Though I came to think Lenin had

been a leader of genius and principle, I thought these difficulties insuperable. Of the books, the only one that seemed very relevant was *Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, mostly because it made an essentially psychological argument about a sort of mindless militancy that I was already seeing in the union. Ironically, I perceived it especially in those groups which professed a Leninist orientation—the Progressive Labor Party and the bitterly divided Trotskyite Workers League and Spartacist League.

Thus, Leninism never attracted me. I began to read Marx just a bit later and found his theory much more broadly illuminating, of course. Even so, it always seemed doubtful to call myself a Marxist or to see any particular theorist as the one source of enlightenment. In 1968, or so, when I gave some thought to calling myself a Marxist, I encountered that remark of Marx himself, who told one of his sons-in-law that he wasn't one—“*Ce q'il-y-a de certain, c'est que moi, je ne suis pas marxiste.*” (One thing that is certain is that I am not a Marxist.)

As time went on, our readings became more eclectic. At my suggestion, we read Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*, a book still well worth anyone's attention. The At-Large Chapter lasted until the dissolution of SDS in the fall of 1969, but I retained contact with some of the members. We helped found the New American Movement in New York, in 1973.



A FEW MONTHS after I started working at the center, I had an encounter with the Selective Service that made me think of parallels between my own life and my clients'. My first physical examination in May or June of 1966 had resulted in a deferment, but I had only been lucky. I came equipped with a letter from my psychiatrist and presented it to the army's psychiatrist, an elderly man with a middle-European accent, who looked at it and merely wrote: “Letter from Dr. Lerner noted,” on my forms. Another doctor deferred me because I also had hearing loss and labyrinthitis.

About six months later, I got another call for a physical. I had no confidence that the same fortunate result would come out of my ear problem for a second time. After all, it hadn't kept me from working at a job. I had determined that I would not participate in a criminal war of aggression, and I decided I had to make the psychiatric letter work this time.

I reflected on my previous experience and the way I, the other examinees, and the staff had behaved. I thought about this in relation to what I now knew, from my brief experience in the welfare center about people with severe psychiatric illness. One was a woman who had decompensated after her second semester

at a respected school of social work. I found her difficult because at first I tried to reason with her, never having met anybody with formal thought disorder before. I knew I could not convincingly imitate her, and then thought about other clients who mostly seemed sad, depressed, and ineffectual.

I also thought about my earlier encounter at the induction station in the light of a book I had just read, Erving Goffman's *Asylums*, a valuable work, unfortunately now mostly forgotten.

Goffman was a sociologist, and his book rests on participant-observation research at Saint Elizabeth's Hospital in the District of Columbia, supplemented by wide research into literature on other total institutions, including boarding schools, religious orders, concentration camps, prisons, and so forth. This is how he defined a total institution:

A total institution may be defined as a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life. (Goffman, 1961, p. xiii)

Obviously, the armed forces fit this definition. Goffman (1961) also described the process of entry into a total institution:

The recruit comes into the establishment with a conception of himself made possible by certain stable social arrangements in his home world. Upon entrance, he is immediately stripped of the support provided by these arrangements. In the accurate language of some of our oldest total institutions, he begins a series of abasements, degradations, and profanations of self. (Goffman, 1961, p. 14)

This too, was an apt description of my experience the first time I went to the Induction Station at 39 Whitehall Street, at the bottom of Manhattan. After my first, unsatisfactory, meeting with the psychiatrist, I had spent the day stripped to my underwear, my shoes untied, and, carrying my shirt and trousers, following shouted orders to go from one place to another. As I recall, the climax of this undignified process came in two rooms, the first with lines painted on the floor defining a central walkway and with stalls, so to speak, to the sides. We had to stand in these spaces and face the wall, put our outerwear on the floor, drop our underpants, while an official shouted: "Awright, bend over, spread the cheeksa yer ass apart!" A medical team then went along examining the many rectums for hemorrhoids.

The second room, for the hernia examination, was similarly humiliating. We stood in single file along a wall, and a doctor went along, seized our testicles, and told us to cough. He did not use gloves or wash his hands. His appearance and

bearing contrasted with most of the doctors in the station, who were young men just out of medical school. He, however, seemed to be a lifer with the army. He was older, fat, slatternly, looked like he drank. The choice of this unappealing character for this particular assignment seemed hardly fortuitous.

Goffman's (1961) book answered many questions about the way the induction station treated us. I reviewed my reaction to the experience and remembered that I had joked nervously with my fellow victims in a mutual effort to bond and allay our anxiety. Goffman described this kind of camaraderie as one of several typical responses. It occurred to me that this was quite normal behavior, but that now, when I wanted not to look normal, I must behave in a radically different manner.

I arrived at the induction station dressed more or less conventionally except that my blue corduroy shirt was very old and its collar conspicuously frayed. I carried a book, on the advice of someone who had taken a Latin-English dictionary. I surveyed my library and chose Martin Heidegger's *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, an extremely obscure book I thought I might expound on to anyone that asked. Nobody did.

I maintained a fixed, unemotional facial expression, a flattened effect. I slumped when I sat, spoke to none of my fellows, and gave muted, mostly monosyllabic responses to questions from officials. When seated I kept my right hand in my crotch, as if guarding my genitalia; standing, I kept it more or less in front of my fly.

My first stop was with the psychiatrist, a new one this time. I had filled out the questionnaire claiming night sweats, enuresis, homosexuality, and perhaps other negative features. He read it and looked at me sharply: "Are you actively a homosexual?" I winced, and, in a strained, but still muted voice, said "Well . . . No." For some reason, he wanted to check my reflexes. I allowed him to take my right arm, but then, when he was done, it went back into my crotch.

The psychiatrist decided I wasn't military material and told me to go. I didn't even have to undress. They sent me to a person, a social worker, perhaps, who asked me what I was doing to rehabilitate myself. I mentioned my therapy. I left the induction station elated but maintained my flattened effect for at least 10 blocks' walk. I had a nice lunch at an Italian restaurant on Broadway near the old police headquarters and then took the subway home.

This experience made me identify, in some ways, with my clients, in their relationship with the welfare system. True, the welfare center was not a total institution, but the client confronted it at an extreme disadvantage. I had felt frustrated at not knowing just what went in on the thinking and procedures of the Selective Service and had had to proceed on guesswork, aided by some discussions with people who conveyed folkloric knowledge of uncertain reliability and, of course, my readings of Goffman.

I determined that it was the soundest ethical stance to be as forthcoming as possible with clients about the reasons for the center's decisions and the laws and procedures that applied. Since then, in all the places I have worked, I have tried to follow this general precept.



FOR THE FIRST year that I worked at the center, I found the paperwork of the caseworker job onerous and difficult. Mr. Nickerson was supportive, as was his successor, Mr. Henry. My third supervisor was not. He was an Israeli immigrant, with a college degree, if I recall, in agronomy, depressed because his wife was dying and leaving him with a small daughter. He was quite impatient with my failure to get all the forms right, and I developed an intense resentment of him. There must have been some pretty strong transference elements in this, though I do not recall all this too clearly. I recall discussing my anger at him a lot in therapy. However, in the fall of 1967, something seemed to come together, and I suddenly found these tasks easy, familiar, and comfortable. My relationship with my supervisor became harmonious, and we traded questions about the more arcane forms. I looked in old case records to find obsolete ones to ask him about.

“Mr. Dykema, what’s a W654?” He chuckled to himself with slight smirk in anticipation of my ignorance.

“Mr. Kashdan, the W654 is a form maintained in the Control Units of non-EDP centers to record each disbursement.” (Ours was one of a few centers in which Electronic Data Processing, a primitive form of computerization, prevailed.) “But Mr. Kashdan, what’s a PA15?”

He didn’t know.

So: “It is a form that became obsolete in 1951, and was the predecessor of the W664.” (The W664 was another form our center didn’t use.)

Resolving my issues with the unfortunate Mr. Kashdan was probably central to my improved adaptation, but there was also an intellectual and theoretical component that has stuck with me ever since—an attitude toward bureaucracy that sets me apart from most social workers. I began to look at the workings of the center in a different way and try to understand how my work intersected with the clerical units’ operations. My relations with those workers improved too, as I took an interest in their work. And this led to a significant theoretical development.

At some point in this period, I picked up Max Weber’s essay on bureaucracy in Gerth and Mills’s *From Max Weber* (Gerth & Mills, 1958; Weber, 1972). I had read this piece in college, and now its soundness seemed unassailable. Basically, Weber argued that bureaucracy is an example of the triumph of bourgeois legality

and justice. It operates according to written and fixed rules that are known. It follows precedent, so that its actions are predictable. It maintains records so that its acts are verifiable. And it works with a qualified professional staff.

Obviously Weber describes an ideal here, an ideal honored often in the breach. But I found that success in advocating for my clients often depended on appeals to what I now understood as the ideals of bureaucracy.

It is true, however, that the ideal Weber (1972) described is more of a European than an American phenomenon. In fact, the aspects of bureaucracy that most social workers, and other Americans, deplore are an American problem, one that social workers need to see as a central issue confronting us as a profession trying to address social needs. Mills (1953) commented that dominance of the business model corrupts government bureaucracy in the United States:

Most of the waste and inefficiency associated in popular imagery with 'bureaucracy' is, in fact a lack of strict and complete bureaucratization. The 'mess', and certainly the graft, . . . are more often a result of a persistence of the entrepreneurial outlook among its personnel than of any bureaucratic tendencies as such. Descriptively, bureaucracy refers to a hierarchy of offices or bureaus, each with an assigned area of operation, each employing a staff having specialized qualifications. So defined bureaucracy is the most efficient type of social organization yet devised. . . . Government bureaucracies are, in large part, a public consequence of private bureaucratic developments, which by centralizing property and equipment have been the pace setter of the bureaucratic trend. The very size of modern business, housing the technological motors and financial say-so, compels the rise of centralizing organizations of formal rule and rational subdivisions in all sectors of society, most especially in government. (p. 78)

Since then I have always thought of bureaucracy as an ambiguous ally, sometimes on my side and sometimes not, but always with at least some tendency toward what is appropriate.

This was probably my first really important theoretical insight about my work. Much later, when I supervised students, I encouraged them to read Weber's essay before starting their field placements with me.

The part of Weber's conception that least affected me at the time was the notion of a professional staff. This was characteristic of the time. Like many progressive people affected by new left ideas, I was suspicious of what we saw as elitism. The more positive side of professionalism was not so easy to see. But the problem

was not just with my limited thinking. There were attitudes from people in authority that tended to reinforce this populist kind of thinking. An event that influenced me for some time came one day when I came to work to find a union leaflet on my desk describing an incident of professional consciousness at its least attractive.

A caseworker, it appeared, had gotten robbed on payday and found himself temporarily destitute. As was his right, he went to the Emergency Assistance Welfare Center and applied for one-time public assistance so that he could sustain himself. The director of the center where he worked found out and tried to pressure him into resigning on grounds of “unprofessional conduct.” Obviously, the director’s notion of professionalism depended primarily on maintaining a boundary between worker and client. This was not a professionalism I could respect, as I wanted to recognize but not fetishize the differences between myself and my clients. It took some time until I could see the elements of skill and accountability that legitimately go into professionalism. Partly, too, this was because the graduate social workers I met at times seemed to have little to suggest that would help me with my day-to-day work. Moreover, they often were patronizing in annoying ways.

To be sure, the casework counseling model of practice that prevailed at the time did not easily adapt itself to other areas of social service activity. Later, when I was a child protection worker, the occasional trainings we received from people with master’s degrees tended to be diluted versions of beginning casework classes, as casework had been understood when they were in school. The basic theoretical orientation, which I only half understood at the time, was psychodynamic but, of course, did not incorporate some of the insights of such people like Kernberg, Jacobson, and other object relations theorists whose notions of limits-setting and use of authority might have been more relevant. These theoretical developments lay in the future.



IN MAY AND June of 1968, the famous client demonstrations began at most, or all, welfare centers. Clients, by the hundreds, came to the centers asking for clothing and furniture grants. This, of course, came after urban riots in many cities, some of them only a month or so after Martin Luther King’s murder. Some prominent figures in the social work profession had contributed to the thinking behind the demonstrations, and some of the organizers were from Volunteers in Service to America or were workers in other parts of the poverty program, then at its height.

The city responded to the demonstrations by devoting all efforts in the centers to documenting the needs for the clothing and furniture requested and issuing

checks on the spot. In effect, the demonstrations expedited a process that ordinarily was laborious and time consuming. The needs were real and legitimate, and there was no reason not to make the grants. Many caseworkers, including myself, called clients and suggested they come to the center immediately.

However, though many poor people got many benefits, the demonstrations generally failed in their goal of reforming the welfare system. In fact, the reorganization of welfare, separating services from income maintenance, which came a few years later, was a clearly regressive step.<sup>2</sup> Also, the hope of some, that clients would feel their collective power in a self-affirmative way, and that this would lead to a gain in consciousness, turned out ambiguously, at least. I found, in the succeeding years, that many people I encountered in the Bronx remembered the events fondly but thought "a rich lady" had donated the money distributed. There were variations in this folkloric misunderstanding. Some thought it applied only to their own center. Others thought she had given the money only to people in the Bronx. Perhaps the most outlandish variant was that the rich lady in question was none other than Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis.



ANOTHER EVENT THAT profoundly affected me was the student strike at Columbia University in April and May of 1968. I had graduated two years before but still lived nearby. There were many such events in that tumultuous year, and nearly all of them concerned some combination of issues of the war against the Vietnamese, and, as at Columbia, some local issues. Columbia was heavily implicated in the war and could not pretend otherwise. I knew many of the strike participants and did what I could to support it.



BY THE SPRING of 1968, I was doing very well at work and worked doubly hard in response to client demonstrations. I accumulated so much overtime that when I took another job I continued to receive checks until September. Thus my tenure at the welfare center, even after I had physically left, made up a total of two years.

Early that summer I allowed a friend to convince me that I ought to get a job more in keeping with my literary education. I took a pay cut and worked for five and a half months as a copy editor for Appleton Century Crofts, a company with a distinguished history that had degenerated into textbook publishing; mostly business books, which, as the biggest sellers, got the most editing. The textbooks were

trivial to the point of inanity, and I had so little respect for them that I knew I was doing a bad job. Also, I learned that the route to a better position in publishing was through sales and not through copyediting, which was a female-dominated occupation, a modest step up from secretarial work. I decided to quit before I got fired; I left just before Christmas, intending to return to the Department of Welfare. I delayed just a few days too long, however, and found that there was an indefinite hiring freeze.

I had money saved, lived frugally, and paid low rent. I decided to take it easy for a while. In February or March of 1969, the same friend and I began to write a novel, entirely epistolary, set in a helicopter company. We told people it was about racism, imperialism, and sex. Completing it took most of the year, and we tried, unsuccessfully, to sell it.

In December 1969, having nothing to do and needing money, I worked for a few days on shape-up for the Conboy Trucking Company on West 25th Street. My friend, having actually been fired from Appleton Century Crofts, went to work there too. This was my only experience of hard and hazardous manual labor, and any romantic illusions I might have entertained about this vanished. Fortunately, at the end of the month, the hiring freeze ended. I received a letter inviting me to apply for reinstatement, and I did so immediately.

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