Second Draft 75¢

On Organizing Macroanalysis Seminars
a manual

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February 1973

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Contribution: 75¢ each for 1 – 9 copies; 60¢ each for over 9 copies; plus postage costs of 14¢ for the first manual and 2¢ for each additional manual

ON ORGANIZING MACRO ANALYSIS SEMINARS

CONTENTS

This is the second draft of a working manual on how to devise, organize and facilitate macro analysis seminars. This manual's chief advantages stem from the fact that it is a composite of many process techniques and reading references used by about a dozen seminars over several years. At the time of writing, it is being used in 15 to 20 macro analysis seminars currently functioning in different parts of the country. It is a working manual in that it is only a beginning reference point to be used as much or as little as needed. The ideas and information, therefore, should not be considered sacrosanct, but used as guide posts, helpful to the extent that knowing what other groups have done can be a take-off point for those just starting seminars. It is also a working manual because we hope that others as well as ourselves will continuously participate in developing the processes, reading references and organizing ideas in this manual. One way of doing this is by periodic revisions based on all of our seminar experiences. This second draft has benefited from much of this kind of input.

The "we" in the text refers to a group of about 8 to 10 people who have been actively organizing social change seminars during the past three or four years. We are American humanitarians who have been active in the nonviolent civil rights and peace movements for some years, and who now put much energy into organizing macro analysis seminars.

We would like to mention a few criticisms of this draft and some proposed changes for the next. First, we hope that a future draft will be better organized for comprehension and use and will include illustrative cartoons. Second, we hope to include an extensive list in the appendix indicating readings which would be especially good for those just beginning to read in the various areas. Third, we might attempt a section on discussing criteria for choosing direct action which some of the seminars and direct action groups in the Movement for a New Society have been developing.

Finally, we strongly encourage people to constructively criticize this draft of the manual. We encourage people not only to point out the limits and faults of the draft, but also to make concrete suggestions for improvements. Please let us hear from you!

A final word of caution. Although this manual's purpose is that it be a tool for the development of the macro analysis seminar movement, this movement is itself merely a tool or a method whose purpose is to improve the effectiveness of our humanitarian actions for social change. Our word of caution, therefore, is to be on guard that the seminars do not become an end in themselves, and to evaluate the seminars primarily on the basis of their influence on our social change activities, and on our personal lives.

II. MACRO ANALYSIS

A. What is Macro Analysis?

Macro analysis is a term for the process by which humanitarians who are interested in working towards a just society study the big picture of social reality and try to apply their findings to their social actions and personal lifestyles. The group process has been developed to be democratic, honest, and encouraging of real sharing and genuine seeking of root causes of problems by participants. Since these principles are part of our vision of a better society, we feel they must also be part of our day-to-day struggle to build that society.

Humanitarian social change agents too often have either ignored the innumerable larger realities of the big picture, or they have uncritically accepted the mainstream worldview, or some established radical view. Some examples of the macro realities that we must scrutinize are: the limits of the world's resources and the environment; political-economic causes of war; the United, States' political, economic and military relations with Third World countries; the relationship between US domestic problems and its economic system based on private profit; the role of the government in redistributing wealth and income disproportionately to the rich; visions of a good society, social welfare programs, cultural systems, political systems and models for change already in use in other countries which might serve as guides, models or inspiration for change in the United States; and theory and history of change.

In Appendix A, you will find a list of questions asked in seminars which indicate the kinds of issues we must face as we look at the realities of our world.

B. Why Macro Analysis?

In the early 1960's, few of us felt the need for macro analysis. We believed that social problems were either exceptions or accidents within a basically sound US political, economic and cultural system. The ecological crises were not yet recognized. Our basic goal was to bring everyone into the mainstream of American progress and to spot irrationalities and call them to the attention of our national leaders.

Today, however, our situation is quite different. During the past decade, it has become increasingly clear to many humanitarians that it is not enough to do good. Many of our humanitarian goals, assumptions and programs are now in serious question. Too often well-meaning but ill-informed acts have exacerbated unjust and inhuman conditions — sometimes by blaming the victims, sometimes by ignoring structural causes, sometimes by ignoring our own participation in the basic causes, and sometimes by pursuing goals which are either unachievable or undesirable.

As an example, let us consider programs to end Third World poverty by fostering Western-type "economic take-off" while raising the consumption level for America's poor to $6,500. Although this strategy to end world poverty has been adopted by most American humanitarians, it is contradicted by increasing numbers of scientists who say that the limited resources of the planet are not enough even to maintain present levels of production, consumption, and ecological deterioration. A fully "developed" Third World, tripled consumption by America's poor, and greatly increased consumption/pollution by those already affluent might lead to a quick death for the whole world. We must account for these ecological considerations as we develop our strategies to fight poverty. One clear implication, and the one over which we have the most control, is the need for our reducing our own personal high level of consumption and influencing other affluent North Americans and Europeans to do the same.

A second example is the Food for Peace Program. It is supported by humanitarians wanting to end world hunger, but it may be causing more hunger than it is alleviating. First of all, the FFP program often depresses local prices and profits by "flooding the market." Local farmers then stop growing that food product and switch to a more profitable cash crop (like coffee) for export to the over-fed nations. Consequently, the availability of locally grown food is decreased, and dependency on the U.S. for food is increased. The official purpose of FFP, however, is achieved, which is not to feed the hungry, but to increase U.S. farm exports. Of course the food is still sold for money in the under-fed countries, and those who cannot afford it still go hungry. Finally, FFP also provides military weaponry to the dictatorships in these countries protecting our interests at the expense of the hungry poor.

The under-nourished countries are, after all this, net exporters of protein to the over-fed countries. Rather than support Food for Peace, after some study, humanitarians might oppose American protein imports from hungry nations while opposing US support of their dictatorships.

These few examples are indicative of a long list of issues and questions with which we must concern ourselves in order to make our social actions more responsible. Through macro analysis, we would not only be searching for answers to old questions but discovering new questions.

As well as macro-analyzing our goals, assumption, and programs, we must continually re-evaluate our overall strategies in light of the big picture. And in order to have a strategy for action, one must have a vision of a better society. Although neither casual dreaming about, nor detailed blueprints of the good society we want are very helpful for social change action, a general framework of values, goals and organizational principles is important because if we don't know where we want to go, we can't have a strategy for getting there. Efforts toward vague or nonexistent goals are frustrating and difficult to evaluate.

C. Macro Analysis Requires Social Action

The purpose of macro analysis is to maximize the effectiveness of our humanitarian social change efforts. Macro analysis is not an ivory tower exercise concerned merely with improving mental capacities. The macro-analysis of a problem is successful to the extent that it changes our personal lives and lifestyles; evokes creative social actions; and undermines inhumane political, economic, and cultural systems. Lastly, it envisions and builds toward political, economic, and cultural systems and values of the good society.

A word of caution is necessary here. We must be careful not to be trapped in what Dr. King called the "paralysis of analysis". That is to say, we could spend forever studying the issues and questions, and never get to act. Our suggestion is to do both. Bernard Lafayette tells us that we have to act our way into thinking, that our actions can help us to find the questions for which we must seek answers. Our sisters and brothers in the Latin American movement for social change use the word praxis, that is, action with reflection. Gandhi, one of the world's most notable social activists, took time for analysis and reflection, a time known by some as "Gandhian Mondays". Macro analysis seminars are one way in which social activists can spend their Gandhian Mondays together.

III. MACRO ANALYSIS SEMINARS

A. What are they?

Although many people recognize the need for a macro analysis perspective in their social change activities, they are at a loss as to how to begin. One way is to organize an education-action seminar among interested friends or in an already organized group. Macro analysis seminars are a particular kind of education-action seminar which is being developed to help humanitarians study the big picture of social reality and apply their findings to their social change activities. We say it is "being developed" rather than has been developed because macro analysis seminars are relatively new (to us, anyway) and because discovering the best seminar process and content is a never-ending task. The people in every seminar have discovered new literature and ideas for group process. Consequently, what is offered in this manual is not the ideal or ultimate seminar in either process or content. It is rather a candid snapshot, originally taken in the summer of 1972 and updated in February 1973. It is the result of a cumulative experience of over a dozen seminars over the past four years. As will be seen later, a process for changing the seminar itself is built into the proposed seminar format. Hopefully, during the coming years, as more seminars occur in various parts of the country, a communications network will help the various groups benefit from each other's creative discoveries.

B. History

During the 1960's, many of us were active in the civil rights and peace movements, and we clung to the American dream. Bu by 1968, the US government's reactions to the Poor People's Campaign and its involvement in the Vietnam war revealed that the social problems that concerned us were not accidents or mistakes, but manifestations of a deep sickness ingrained in the fabric of American society. The barbaric involvement of the US in its support of oppressive regimes in Vietnam over so many years could not be construed as either a mistake or an accident. As for the needs of the poor symbolized by the Washington Campaign, the government showed little concern. But perhaps more important, we did not understand the causes of poverty in America or its solutions. When we questioned poverty in America, we unwittingly questioned the political economic organization of the nation. When the government in Washington was unwilling — and more important, perhaps unable — to respond to such obvious violations of what we construed to be the American dream, we realized that meaningful social change in the future required a deeper understanding of the causes and solutions to social problems than we had. In the winter and spring of 1969, a group of about 15 Philadelphia movement-related persons held a 16-week seminar on social change with particular emphasis on the political economy. The following year, two "movement" organizations in Philadelphia and an ad hoc group of concerned citizens in Berkeley, California, undertook revised versions of the seminar. Three more occurred in 1971 and between the fall of 1971 and the spring of 1972, seven seminars were held in the Philadelphia area. By January 1973, 15-20 seminars were functioning across the country and many others were forming.

C. Relation to Humanitarian Social Change

Macro analysis seminars are a tool which can be utilized by people in the movement for social change in three ways: analysis, action and organizing. First, the most obvious use of the seminar is self-education through analysis of the big picture of social realities. The seminar outlined in this manual covers five topic areas: ecology, US relations to the Third World, US domestic problems as they relate to the political economic system, visions of a better society, and theory and ideas about social change — all of which are important considerations in integrating the big picture into our social actions.

Second, and the most important role of the seminars, is to help groups and individuals develop more meaningful social action. The seminars are geared to help us evaluate old goals, assumptions, strategies and programs as well as to develop new ones. One social action thrust which is very much a product of the macro-analysis seminars is the Movement for a New Society and the Philadelphia Life Center. (For information, write MNS, 1006 South 46th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19143). The 1971 blockading of Pakistani freighters delivering materials to Yahya Kahn's murderous army in Bangladesh grew directly out of a macro analysis seminar which was discussing US relations to Pakistan and the theme of US support of dictatorships in the Third World. When the group brainstormed ideas about what we could do about the US support of the Pakistani army if we were going to do nothing else for the next six months, the idea we liked most was blockading freighters in US ports with a flotilla of canoes. Within a few days, we were blocking the freighter Padma in Baltimore harbor, and for the next 3 months such ships were being blockaded in 5 different ports. None of the five freighters scheduled for Philadelphia were able to pick up materials.

Third, seminars can be used as a tool for organizing new social change groups or to rejuvenate existing groups. A Seminar in a local organization or among a previously unorganized group of concerned friends can help develop unity and solidarity within the group, and new action ideas sparked in a seminar can give vitality to groups paralyzed by frustration. A great deal of enthusiasm can be released when members of a group begin to discover that they have the information with which, for example, to refute myths about welfare "bleeding the country dry" or the "progressive" nature of the income tax system.

D. Who

The macro analysis seminars are primarily geared to those humanitarian activists who see the need to relate the big picture of social reality to their actions for social change. The seminars can be utilized by established groups such as church and synagogue social action groups, community organizations, or local chapters of national organizations such as Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Movement for a New Society Nonviolent Revolutionary Groups, Life Centers and regional offices of the American Friends Service Committee. Also, previously unorganized, but informally related persons, can come together around a seminar through which a more permanent organization and/or some social action tasks might develop.

IV. HOW TO RUN A MACRO ANALYS IS SEMINAR

A. Introduction

This section (IV) is the "how to do it" part of the manual. We first (part B) give an overview of content, process, resources, and group responsibilities. In part C we give a rough outline of a typical session. The techniques used in every session are explained in part D; the process for each topic area (covering 3 or 4 sessions) is given in part E. In part F, we describe what happens in the first, introductory, meeting.

Remember that these "instructions" are not meant to be followed rigidly. Since a mechanism for change is built in via the evaluation part of each session, it is possible to start with this model and then to experiment with changes, even drastic changes, from the beginning.

B. Overview

1. Content

The macro analysis seminar described here is of a general-introductory type designed to last from 17 to 20 sessions of three hours each. The seminar covers five subject areas, averaging 3 or 4 weeks each, in the following order: (1) Ecology, (2) US relations to Third World nations, (3) US domestic problems as they relate to larger political, economic and cultural structures, (4) Visions of alternative orderings of society, and (5) Social Change — How to get from Here to There.

We urge groups to have a general-introductory seminar of this type before settling more intensively on any one area, because the causes and solutions to any social problem relate in an important way to all of these five areas. Rather than just three or four sessions, many months or even years would be required to adequately cover each one of these five topic areas. However, the purpose of the introductory seminar is merely to acquaint the participants with these subjects, raise key questions; get some basic general facts, and particularly to begin to see some of the key relationships between these topics, social change activities, and personal life style.

For example, we cannot adequately work on solving problems of poverty in the US without considering: the possible ecological limitations on economic growth, the relationship between US growth and third world poverty, alternative political and economic structures which would optimally solve the problems, and alternative social change methods which might help us achieve our goals. An important limitation of many social change efforts has been the lack of a wholistic perspective; consequently, programmatic analysis and goals are often piecemeal, with little connection to basic change and too often in diametrical opposition to basic change.

The seminar's five topic areas are each subdivided into more specific topics. These subtopics are especially prone to change with the needs of a particular seminar group. The topics and sub-topics now are:

1. Ecology

a. world mineral resources
b. world food resources
c. energy
d. environment
e. population
f. poverty - development
g. values, political economics and culture

(2) US Relations to Third World nations

a. historical background
b. development and underdevelopment
c. aid, hunger, and the green revolution
d. resources
e. American multi-national corporations
f. militarism
g. business and US foreign policy
h. Africa

i. maintenance of oppression
j. Latin America
k. business strategy in the Third World

3. Domestic Problems

a. poverty
b. economic inequality
c. economic inequality – welfare to the rich
d. corporations' concentration of economic power
e. corporations' concentration of political power
f. role of the state
g. capitalism
h. militarism and the political economy
i. employment and unemployment
j. racism
k. education
l. sexism
m. alienation and the political economy
n. irrationality and the political economy
o. some solutions to social problems

4. Visions of a Better Society

a. utopias
b. alternative society theory
c. alternative society theory and practice
d. China
e. Cuba
f. US and the Third World
g. Yugoslavia
h. planning vs. the market
i. de-developed society

5. From Here to There

a. US historical perspective
b. electoral approach
c. nonviolent movement approach
d. conscientization
e. Third World
f. some ideas for strategy and tactics
g. social change organizations

There will be reading material and discussions on each of these subtopics. Time should be allotted in each session to relate the readings to social change actions, including our own, with particular emphasis on trying to develop creative new goals, strategies and projects for humanitarian social change.

2. Process

The dynamics of group process are considered as important as the content of a seminar. The format of the seminars has been developed to give maximum participation and control to the participants — no "heavy" is necessary to divulge the "right" solutions or latest ideological fad. Techniques of democratic group process are invaluable to achieve equal participation by all and to overcome the tendency of groups to be dominated by a few individuals. Conscious group process is also helpful in overcoming superficial fact manipulation, in achieving a personal relationship with the subject matter, in internalizing the intellectual learning, and in integrating our intellectual learning and reflection with our social practices. We have been trying to use Paulo Freire's idea of conscientization in developing group processes. That is to say, we have been trying to maximize our own awareness of the world, our place in it, and our deliberate social actions. We suggest special study of Freire's book, PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED, and various articles about his methodology.

Some specific techniques for group process which various seminar groups have developed will be described in this Chapter. Since they are different from the usual teacher-student methods, these techniques may seem awkward and artificial at first. After a few sessions of consciously trying them, however, they become more comfortable, and groups can decide how much they want to use them.

3. Resources

The material resources needed for a seminar are (1) books and articles (see section VI. B), (2) large crayons (or felt marking pens) and large pieces of paper in a "Flip chart" arrangement, and (3) this manual.

Flip charts play a central role in the seminars. They are large sheets of paper on which we record many of the decisions and thoughts of the group. For example, at the end of each meeting we develop a tentative agenda for the following week. This agenda is recorded on a flip chart. The following week, we use the same sheet to remind us of what ideas we had for this week's agenda. The flip chart sheets are also used to record questions and ideas brainstormed by the group. Throughout the seminar, participants develop lists of social change goals, assumptions and programs. These lists are all recorded so that ideas can be added to them weekly. They are hung on a wall during each session so that they can serve as a memory bank for the group. All of the used flip chart sheets are stored throughout the seminar in case they are needed for reference.

A flip chart might consist simply of large (about 27" x 34") pieces of paper (perhaps scavenged from a friendly print shop) taped on the wall. We have cut fiberboard backings for the paper, so that the flip chart can be put on an easel or a chair for greater visibility. Newsprint is another, relatively cheap, kind of paper to use for a flip chart. Newsprint pads can be purchased from office supply or art supply shops. Using both sides of the paper, one seminar usually uses less than 50 sheets.

4. Individual Responsibilities

The success of a seminar is the responsibility of all of the participants and is largely determined by the amount of collective input of time, energy and concern. Group democracy is enhanced to the extent that all members are familiar with the various techniques and processes in this manual, because then everyone — not just some leader or specialist —is familiar with the alternative processes.

Each participant should (a) have a copy of this manual to use throughout the seminar and read it critically before the first meeting, (b) be committed to reading a fair amount of material each week (an average of 25 pages), (c) assume responsibility for giving a brief report to the group about every second week, (d) participate in the discussions without oppressing others, (e) cultivate the role of attentive listener, and (f) overcome the "groupthink" (the tendency of individuals to accept the Ideas of the majority, or of the most dominant personalities, without adequate analysis, reflection and testing) by respecting a diversity of opinion.

Since the reading matter is generally organized in non-overlapping sets, it is important that participants do all of the reading for which they have volunteered.

5. Process Roles

Three specific roles have emerged: convener, facilitator, and assistant facilitator. The task of recording is the duty of the assistant facilitator, or it may be a separate role.

The convener is the person(s) whose initiative is responsible for the seminar taking place. S/he gets the group together for the first meeting, takes ultimate responsibility for arranging time and place of meetings, and provides reading materials and flip chart materials. S/he may take responsibility for facilitating the first few meetings and may attend inter-session planning meetings when needed.

The facilitator's task is to "chair" the meeting. This is primarily a job of facilitating group process. The facilitator should:

a) Get the meeting started on time, and suggest when it is appropriate to move on. This suggestion will usually be based on time limits the group has set for itself, for covering specific agenda items.

b) Be sensitive to the feelings of the group, expressions of emotion, types of questions being asked, and the general mood of the group may indicate that some variation in process is called for. (An important source of failure and frustration in a group is hidden agendas people may be holding back from the group; i.e., needs or wishes about things they wish would happen (or wouldn't happen) in the group, but which they aren't sharing with the group for any number of reasons; fear of ridicule, losing friendships, being considered conservative or too

radical, etc. This can be coped with directly, by encouraging people to express where they are really at early in the first meeting, and point out the dangers of a persistent refusal to be really honest with the group.)

c) Carry out communication guidelines:

1. Keep reports, discussions and brainstorming sessions within agreed time limits. Remind the group when they have strayed from the agenda, perhaps by asking them if they want to return to the agenda.

2. Ask persons to paraphrase each other when communication is critical or when hearing seems not to be occurring.

3. Help everyone share in discussions; keep discussions from being dominated by a few. Be sensitive to shyer people trying to talk but being cut off or intimidated by more extroverted folk. It is often good to say partway through a meeting, "I wonder if any of the people who haven't said anything yet have something they would like to share?", or words to that effect.

4. Call for a few minutes of silence or suggest a short break when appropriate.

The assistant facilitator helps the facilitator tend to group process by:

a. Meeting with the facilitator before the meeting to plan the meeting,

b. Assuming some of the responsibilities of running the meeting, in particular I keeping track of time.

c. Being particularly aware of the group process during the meeting and making appropriate suggestions to the group.

d. Acting as "recorder" for the day.

The recorder has the task of recording on the flip charts items which the group wants to make use of, including, at different times, salient facts from reports, social change action ideas, brainstormed ideas, and criticisms of reports and projects, the agenda and important items from the evaluation. Because a high degree of sensitivity in recognizing important items for recording when they come up may wax and wane in different individuals, it is good to maintain an "open flip chart", encouraging everyone to record items when they feel something important has come up.

Rotate roles. The roles of facilitator and assistant facilitator should be filled by as many of the participants as is possible. These roles can be rotated at each meeting by having a "new" person volunteer to be assistant facilitator; this assistant moves on to become facilitator for the next session. (The "old" facilitator bows out.) Thus, at every session, a new person volunteers to be assistant facilitator for next time, and automatically becomes facilitator for the session after the next one. This gives each person the opportunity to acquire a feel for what it's like to have some special concern for group process before taking on full responsibility.

C. Outline for a Typical Session

A 3-hour session of a macro seminar will generally include most of the following items and in the order given.

(1) Excitement Sharing 10 minutes
(2) Agenda Review 5 – 10
(3) Choose the Assistant Facilitator for Next Time 1
(4) Brainstorm Questions on Topic 0 – 20
(5) Reports and Discussion 20 – 120
(6) Break 5 – 15
(7) Relate to Social Change 20 – 120
(8) Evaluation of Today's Session 10 – 15
(9) Plan Next Session 5 – 20

The middle part (items 4, 5 and 7) will vary the most as the group moves through a topic area. Brainstorming questions about a topic area will generally occur only at the beginning of a new topic area. Reports and Discussion can obviously begin only the session after the reading materials have been distributed. Social Change ideas will be explored in every session but will be the major part of the last session on each topic area. This middle will be explained in part E. The other items are explained in the next section (D). An outline of the first 4 sessions is given in Appendix B.

D. General Process Techniques

Group process techniques that are used frequently are described below. They are listed roughly in the order in which they might occur in a session.

1. Excitement Sharing. Each meeting begins with the facilitator saying something to the effect, "What is new and exciting in our lives since we last met?". Anyone who feels like it then briefly shares with the group any new and exciting experiences, insight, feeling, etc. Each individual should be very brief so that many people can tell their experiences to the group. Questions or comments in response to people's sharing should be discouraged in order to avoid squelching enthusiasm and for the sake of time. Some advantages of excitement sharing are: since it is enjoyable, it encourages people to arrive on time; it helps participants to get to know each other better. Caution: One danger is that excitement sharing could go on for hours, therefore, don't go beyond an agreed upon time limit, say 10 minutes.

2. Agenda Review. Near the beginning of every session, the agenda should be reviewed so that it can be changed to accommodate new ideas and different priorities. In particular, the facilitator and her/his assistant may have changed or developed the agenda that was planned at the end of the previous meeting. The agenda should be recorded on a flip chart in view of the whole group.

3. Choose the Assistant Facilitator for next week. This should be done near the beginning of the meeting so that s/he will be able to more closely observe the group process this week. (We don't have to choose a facilitator for next week because this week's assistant facilitator will assume that role next week.)

4. Brainstorming is a process used to generate quickly from a group of people a large number of creative ideas or questions on a given subject. Before beginning to read on any topic, the group may brainstorm questions in response to the facilitator's request, "Let's brainstorm a list of questions about Ecology (or whatever the topic is) that we need to explore in order to work more effectively for a better society". It is also good to brainstorm ideas for projects; for example, the facilitator can ask; "What can we do to end US economic exploitation and military involvement in Guatemala?" People are encouraged to speak out whatever idea comes to mind, no matter how wild or impractical. The facilitator should urge people to speak briefly, (with no defense or explanation of their ideas until after the brainstorm) so that everyone can contribute to the brainstorm and so that ideas can flow. The reporter should write all ideas down on a flip chart. There is no criticism of ideas by anyone; consensus is not a goal of brainstorming. The process is intended to encourage people to draw on their own purely creative resources, rather than their critical-intellectual faculties. Reflection, criticism, and sorting out the good ideas comes after the brainstorming.

What do you do with a brainstormed list? That depends on the purpose of brainstorming. For example, the purpose of brainstorming questions on a topic, such as ecology, is essentially to (1) raise group consciousness of individual concerns and (2) encourage individuals to verbalize their concerns, so that the reports and discussion can be more meaningful. Since it is impossible, in the short time allotted, to give a complete report on any one reading, each reporter should try to report information related to other's questions as well as her/his individual concerns. Thus, when questions are brainstormed on a new topic area, a little time (5 to 10 min.) should be spent, after the brainstorm, in clarifying questions and looking at (perhaps underlining or *-ing) questions that are of most interest to the group. Then, the question sheets can be hung on the wall as a memory jogger, during this and future sessions on the topic.

On the other hand, when brainstorming is used as part of a decision-making process, more time and attention will necessarily be spent in criticism and consensus reaching. When brainstorming is used to generate project ideas, the group may decide that it is sufficiently interested in developing tactics for one project that it may either (1) seek unity among the whole group on one project or (2) divide into smaller groups, each focusing on one project.

5. Paraphrasing one another is a very effective way of sharpening the ability to listen. If, during a discussion, someone's idea is unclear to you, try to paraphrase what you hear by saying, "I hear you saying …", rather than by asking, "What did you say?" Then the person with the "unclear" idea can rephrase that idea until it is understood.

6. Time Limits. A major source of frustration in study groups is a laissez-faire approach to the time allotted for items on the agenda. The time limits which we suggest are based on the experience of seeking a balance between too little time for substantive reports, and so much time that people lose interest. We have found it best to allot a maximum of ten minutes to a report of an entire book and a maximum of 5 minutes to a report on a set of articles or a chapter of a book. The person reporting can be given a one minute warning. Leniency on one report leads to leniency on the next, and so on to heightened frustration as the session gets longer and longer.

There may well be particular reports of sufficient interest to the group that a decision may be made to suspend the "rules" and spend more time on that report. On the other hand, some reports may be of such little interest, that less time will be spent on them. We urge, however, that such decisions be made consciously. The group should make its own ground rule as to when it will consider suggestions for suspending time limits — during the agenda review, at the time of the report, or after all other reports have been given.

In a very similar way, setting time periods in which specific sections of an agenda will be dealt with and giving a definite person the clear responsibility for bringing the end of those time periods to the group's attention will facilitate progress through the agenda, and increase the group's sense that it really can accomplish tasks it sets for itself.

7. Evaluation of a Session. It is important to have an evaluation near the end of every meeting not only to recognize the positive and exciting things you liked about the meeting so that you can repeat them next time/but even more importantly, to identify those things about the session which participants didn't like so that you can invent creative replacements for them for next meeting. The process of the group thinking about exciting ways to overcome negative aspects of the session can be a most rewarding time for the group. It is often helpful to brainstorm, for a few minutes, optional ways of overcoming a problem, and then try some of the more promising new ideas over the next several weeks.

During evaluation time, then, the group should brainstorm and/or talk about:

a) What was accomplished in today's session?

b) Positive and negative reactions to today's meeting. People who have negative reactions are encouraged to suggest a remedy which might be tried next time.

c) Suggestions for the next meeting which might help overcome concerns raised by negative reactions. Select out the most promising suggestions and agree on concrete proposals for future meetings. The details can be worked out by the facilitator and assistant facilitator before the next meeting.

8. Planning and Preparation for next meeting.

a) Set the agenda for next meeting. (What ground to cover and how)

b) Participants choose a set of readings which they will be responsible for reporting back to the group. Specific individuals should assume responsibility for reporting on specific readings at the next session. This selection process will take little time if the materials are grouped according to report # before the session begins.

c) The facilitator, assistant facilitator, perhaps the convener and other interested participants should meet between sessions when it is necessary to detail and develop the plans for the next meeting.

E. Process for each of the 5 major topic areas.

Three to four sessions should be spent on each of the five topic areas. (See Appendix B for session outlines.) The following process will be repeated for each area:

1. Brainstorm questions. (15-20 minutes)

The whole group brainstorms questions which participants have about the topic. As participants state their questions aloud, the recorder writes them on the flip chart. As sheets are filled with questions, they are ripped off and hung on the wall. These "question sheets" should be hung on the wall during future sessions on this topic. They will remind us of questions the group has about the topic, people giving reports can refer to the questions, and participants can add new questions at any time. (See IV. D.4)

2. Reports on Readings and Discussion. (1 to 2 hours)

Participants share information and insights from their readings by giving a 5 minute verbal report to the group. Others are asked to withhold their questions and comments until after the report is given. Following the report, ten minutes are given to group discussion, beginning with questions to the reporter for clarification. Then, another report can be given. In choosing which report will be next, the facilitator might ask, "Whose readings would be appropriate to where the group's discussion is now?" Usually, at least one person will feel that their readings would be good to share at this time. The "report and discussion" part of the agenda, therefore, takes the form of a long discussion in which every 15 minutes, there is five minutes of input in the form of a report which is somewhat appropriate to where the discussion is at that time.

The reports might include:

a) Topic of the readings. (Refer to the report # so that the others can scan the titles.)

b) Brief statement of the most important points (1 to 5) made by the readings or of insights the reporter got out of the readings. The reporter might relate some of the facts or insights to some of the specific questions which

people had which are listed on the "question sheets" hanging on the wall. The reports should not summarize whole articles or books, but just lift out what points were important to the reporter.

c) Criticize the reading. Are important points backed up by hard reliable data? Were the ideas and inferences of the authors logical?

d) Relate to Social Change. What implications, if any, does the reading have for what social change groups are now doing? What new goals and/or projects might social change groups adopt, according to the reading? The recorder should write these ideas on "permanent" flip chart sheets as reports are given and during group discussion. (See Appendix C)

If a report is not finished when the facilitator calls time, any key points remaining might be mentioned during the discussion period. It is important to keep the reports to a maximum of 5 minutes (1) to stimulate the reporter to think about the reading material and select out best ideas and insights rather than give a long re-hashing of the readings, and (2) to allow time for full group discussion of the issues.

If the report did not end with implications for social changer the facilitator can give the reporter an additional minute to give some ideas for social change which come to his/her mind as a result of the readings. The reporter might be asked, "What if we in the seminar stopped everything else for the next six months to work on this social problem area; what should we do?"

3. Relate to Social Change.

In addition to the time spent during each report and at the end of each session, several hours at the end of each topic area should be allotted for the process of relating the information we have learned to actions for social change. We urge you to use your ingenuity in planning this part of the seminar.

There are several good ways for a group to develop new goals and projects for social change. Some of these are:

a) From Vision to Project. This is a simple procedure for moving from general, perhaps vague, goals to specific practical projects. To begin the process, the group may either (1) collate goals listed in previous discussions or (2) brainstorm a fresh list of positive wishes about a good society. This initial list should be as complete as possible. The facilitator then asks the group to quickly choose one goal which relates to the current topic area. The facilitator asks, "How do we achieve that goal?", or "How do we do that?". The group responds with a brainstormed list. Again, the lists should be positive ideas. When the facilitator feels that the list is complete, s/he again asks the group to pick an item from this newly brainstormed list and repeats the question, "How do we do that?" This listing, choosing, questioning cycle is continued 4, 5 or 6 times until the level of projects do-able by the group is reached. This whole procedure takes from 30 to 45 minutes.

b) Evaluation and Refinement of a Project. This project could either come from the From Vision to Project process described above or be a project someone is actually involved in or seriously considering undertaking. The stages of this process are:

1) Brainstorm, in two columns, social forces (groups, events, etc.) that would work for and against the success of the project.

2) Discuss the brainstormed lists, marking the most important forces. Discuss ways to deal with important negative forces.

3) Brainstorm and then discuss steps for actualizing the project. If any of these steps are unclear, seek clarity by paraphrasing or by brainstorming more specific steps by asking, "How do we do that?"

Option: It may be best to divide the participants into smaller groups of 4 to 6 people each for this process, so that everyone can contribute more fully. Then the whole group can get back together for a sharing "plenary".

c) Rehearsal of a Project. This process should be used to develop a brainstormed project that people are generally pretty excited about — one that they can see themselves actually doing. If you were going to drop everything else you are doing for the next six months and organize a campaign for implementing your new project, how would you go about it? Map out a campaign strategy and write a scenario. You could break up into groups of 3 or 4 to plan different aspects of the strategy. Strategy games and role plays would be very helpful.

F. Process for the First, Introductory, Meeting.

The first session of a Macro Seminar is an opportunity for people to get to know each other better by sharing concerns, to express their expectations of the seminar, and to reach some agreement on how best to proceed.

The convener acts as facilitator for this first session and may ask someone to help with such tasks as time keeping and recording. The convener should see that the flip chart and crayons, reading material and copies of this manual are available at the meeting. (It is best if participants have read the manual before this meeting.)

A suggested agenda for the first session is:

(1) Excitement Sharing	10 minutes
(2) Agenda Review	5
(3) Introduction of Selves	30 – 60
(4) Introduction of Macro	30 – 60
(5) Break	10
(6) Brainstorm Questions on Ecology	20
(7) Give out Readings on Ecology	20
(8) Evaluation of the Session	15
	170 minutes

Except for items (3) and (4) which are explained below, the agenda items are explained in sections D and E.

The suggested agenda should be hung on the wall before the meeting begins. The facilitator should begin the excitement sharing promptly — even if everyone has not yet arrived. Then, the facilitator should review the agenda, briefly explaining what each item means.

The facilitator asks people to introduce themselves. The group takes a few silent minutes to organize their thoughts, then each person, in two or three minutes, will introduce oneself and give a brief statement of why they want to participate in a Macro Seminar and what their expectations for this seminar are. A general discussion can then focus upon expectations of the seminar.

As an introduction to Macro, the facilitator can give a 15 minute summary of this manual, and the group can discuss it for another 15 minutes. The group should strive for agreement on what kind of seminar they want. If there is serious disagreement, another preliminary meeting may be necessary. In this case, the rest of the day's agenda may be scratched in favor of more general discussion. If the group favors major changes in the seminar, it may be helpful to have a small committee work out the details before the next meeting.

OPTION: If the group is not already well acquainted with each other, it may be good to have an extra meeting before plunging into the readings. See Chapter V for suggestions.

V. VARIATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Introduction

This chapter may be skipped on a first reading of this manual. It contains suggestions for (a) modifying the basic macro analysis seminar described in the rest of this manual and (b) what to do after a seminar is completed.

A. Variations for a Seminar

1. From Micro to Macro. A seminar group already engaged in (or just beginning) a common social change project may prefer to begin with readings directly related to that project. Care should be taken to select reading which (1) cover a variety of points of view and (2) put the problem in the context of the big picture.

For example, a G.E. Project (a group concerned to convert General Electric from military to peaceful, useful work while demanding more worker control) could start with a session or two using readings such as:

(a) literature published by G.E., such as its annual report.

(b) government documents especially congressional hearings, about G.E.'s military contracts and labor relations.

(c) literature from The GE Project, 48 Inman St., Cambridge, MA 02139.

(d) union literature.

Likewise, a group could begin with a special interest focus such as sexism, criminal justice, welfare rights, or stopping nuclear power plants. After a few sessions on this special interest, the group could proceed with the seminar as outlined in this manual. It should be fruitful for the group to compare its perspective before and after the seminar.

2. Putting Myself in the Big Picture. A group may want to spend the first few sessions getting to know each other better and relating themselves, as persons, to the big picture. This may be done by using

(a) the procedure, "From Personal Oppressions to Macro Forces", described in Appendix C.,

(b) consciousness-raising techniques (a la the Women's Movement) to explore topics like: "Personal experiences I've had that made me more aware of my need to analyze and reflect upon the big picture (or structural causes of social problems, etc.)", or "Changes I've made (or would like to make) in my personal life (or consumption habits) because of my growing awareness of the interdependence of all human beings."

3. One Book All Together. The first, introductory, session can be followed up with a session in which everyone discusses one book. At the first session people can take responsibility for reporting on different parts of the book, so that this second session can be done using the normal macro seminar process. We suggest the book, "Revolution: A Quaker Prescription for a Sick Society" (It's in the book list), which was written by people in one of the first macro analysis seminars as a way of communicating a summary of what they had learned in the seminar.

4. Reorder the Content. Some groups prefer to do the Ecology section after the section on U.S. Relations With the Third Word. This is, of course, up to the group to decide. We put Ecology first because there's some logic in looking at the physical and technological limitations to human existence before looking at political and economic problems.

5. Change the Content. Although we do not recommend major changes in the seminar content, we urge you to bring in new readings of several types:

(a) Readings that more adequately deal with the particular concerns of the group. Hopefully these concerns are raised in brainstorming sessions at the beginning of each topic area.

(b) Current newspaper and magazine articles that update existing reports.

(c) Literature from local social change groups, particularly if it relates a local problem to macro phenomena and is a call for action.

(d) Literature (e.g., Statement of Purpose) of humanitarian organizations in which members of the seminar are interested.

6. Make the Vision Section More Visionary. In exploring the topic, "Visions of a Better Society", we suggest that the time routinely allotted to social change ideas be spent instead on developing visionary ideas. Creativity in constructing a vision of the future can be stimulated by temporarily dropping the constraints of practicality. After all, our perceptions of reality might be false; our imaginations are all too often stifled by demands of "reality".

Some methods of exercising visionary thinking are:

(a) After 5 minutes of meditative silence, have a 10 to 15 minute brainstorm of what a good society should be like. Follow this with a discussion looking for areas of agreement and disagreement. Try to avoid any critique of the practicality of the ideas until all ideas are voiced and understood.

(b) Use the Statement Game (see Appendix D), asking each person to write a statement beginning, "An important aspect (or ingredient) of a good (or ideal) society is…"

(c) Use either of the above suggestions, but with a more narrow focus, such as an ideal health care system, world government, local community, etc.

(d) Do any of the above in groups of 4 or 5 people, and then have a full group sharing of ideas.

(e) Use any of the variations on the vision gallery suggested in Appendix D.

7. Suggestions for "From Here to There." The topic From Here to There is essentially concerned with methods of social change. This is a good place to pull together the ideas for social change from previous sections. A record of these ideas is hopefully available on flip charts.

In comparing various social change programs, you might find the following questions useful:

(a) Is the social problem (which the program is intended to solve) accurately and clearly defined?

(b) Are the goals of the program consistent with your own vision of a good society?

(c) What are the assumptions, implicit as well as explicit, about human nature (behavioristic vs. self-actualizing) and about the physical limitations of the earth (finite resources, technological change, etc)?

The group could also develop a list of criteria with which they can evaluate social change ideas and programs. A few good examples of such criteria are:

(a) Would the fulfillment of the program result in people having more (or less) power over their own lives? Would it require more (or less) centralized bureaucracy?

(b) Is success likely? Is success measurable?

8. Share Personal Values, Goals and Assumptions. Some groups have difficulty in developing social change ideas because of unvoiced differences in moral values, goals for social change, or assumptions about such things as "human nature", how change occurs, and the potentialities of technological change. Such differences are rarely resolved by discussion, but the exploration of social change ideas can be greatly clarified once these differences are acknowledged.

Such concerns can best be explored using a procedure that encourages equal participation. See Appendix D for ideas, or simply allot a few minutes for each person to express her/his concern before engaging in a general conversation.

B. What To Do After a Seminar is Completed

After completing a general, introductory Macro Analysis Seminar as described in this manual, some people have wanted to move on to one or more of the following:

1) Research-Study-Action Projects. Some groups may choose a broad topic such as ecology or imperialism for more in-depth study before getting involved in specific social action. Others may be ready to begin an action project on a specific problem and will incorporate ongoing research and study into their campaign plans. The process suggestions and methodology of the Macro Seminars should be useful to such groups.

2) Writing Projects. A follow-up committee of one of the early Philadelphia seminars wrote the book, REVOLUTION: A QUAKER PRESCRIPTION FOR A SICK SOCIETY. Other writing projects could include letters to the editor and/or articles for local newspapers and publications of churches, schools, and humanitarian organizations.

3) Start New Seminars. Help organizations with which you are involved convene Macro Analysis Seminars for their constituents. This may involve a prior dialogue with the organization in which you discuss their goals and assumptions and programs in light of what you have learned from a Macro Seminar.

Convene a Macro Analysis Seminar for your friends and neighbors who may be looking for new ways to become involved in social action.

4) Nonviolent Direct Action. Nonviolent direct action projects are important aspects of social change. Therefore, seminar groups are encouraged to become involved in direct action projects in order to test out and to act upon the new goals, assumptions and programs developed in the seminar. There are a number of nonviolent action training centers which can be called upon to help with training. For information about such training centers, contact the Philadelphia Life Center, 1006 South 46th St., Philadelphia, PA 19143.

5) Work With Your Organization. Initiate a dialogue with groups to which you belong — perhaps by writing a critique, positive as well as negative, of their goals and programs. Suggest new goals and specific program ideas. Perhaps you could help carry out new program ideas for the organization.