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California Caucus of College and University Ombudsman
UCI Ombudsman: The Journal 1990

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rrwilson@uci.edu

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Acknowledgement

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Shirley Crawford

It is with sincere gratitude and appreciation that the California Caucus of College and University Ombudsmen acknowledges the contribution that Mrs. Shirley Crawford made to our Asilomar Conference by way of the support services she delivered toward the completion of this publication. Without her diligent and nurturing assistance, our Journal would not have been possible. Mrs. Crawford is the Administrative Assistant to the Assistant Executive Vice Chancellor-University Ombudsman at the University of California, Irvine.

rrwilson@uci.edu

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INTRODUCTION

**California Caucus of College and University Ombudsman
UCI Ombudsman: The Journal 1993**

Ron Wilson

University of California, Irvine

Once again, ombudsmen from the United States and Canada convene in Asilomar to honor the Seventeenth Anniversary of the California Caucus of College and University Ombudsmen - CCCUO. Our purpose is to provide one another with support and encouragement in the fulfillment of our common mission -- service to universities, colleges, and the communities in which they are located. We bring our good will, our camaraderie, our unique experiences, and, some of our colleagues bring their writings which are published in this Journal.

As the articles in this Journal attest, the ombudsman role is expanding and the ombudsman profession is becoming more intricate (and integrated) in its position within the system of higher education. As the problems and issues on the university and college campuses become more complex and enigmatic, so must the ombudsman's skills evolve and develop to conquer these new challenges and unresolved conflicts.

This Journal is meant to serve both the needs of the ombudsmen in their ever-changing roles, and those of the institutions that rely on their ombudsmen to keep pace with the varied changes with continue to surface in mutated forms. Consequently, we compiled these articles as our small contribution to the grand efforts of our fellow-ombudsmen as they strive to be "all things" to "everyone".

Ron Wilson
Assistant Executive Vice Chancellor-University Ombudsman
University of California, Irvine

Editor of the CCCUO Journal

rrwilson@uci.edu
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THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY OMBUDSMAN IN A DYSFUNCTIONAL SYSTEM

California Caucus of College and University Ombudsman
UCI Ombudsman: The Journal 1993

Ferdinand A. Ermlich

State University of New York College at Oneonta

Most commonly, the term "dysfunction" refers to the abnormal or incomplete functioning of a body organ. When one applies the adjective form to organizational structures, such as institutions of higher education, the academic world of distinctions assumes added importance. For the sake of this paper, the only distinction I would make is between the large university systems, mostly public, which exist throughout the United States and the self-contained college and/or university, public or private which dominate the intellectual landscape.

Within the institutions of higher education (the major public university systems like the California State University system and the State University of New York and the City University of New York systems), one encounters publicly supported state-wide, or in the CUNY example, city-wide administrative systems which rely upon their respective tax base and legislative budgets for their institutional existence. These major institutions can be organizational monsters that appear to the uninitiated as veritable corporate bodies whose only life are the parts which make up the whole.

In the late sixties when the ombudsman role began to appear on university and college campuses throughout the United States and Canada, ombudsman offices were established not too frequently at the system level of these major institutions, but at the local unit or campus, e.g., SUNY/Oneonta established an Office of the College Ombudsman in 1970. The responsibilities of the local college ombudsman were to the local unit or campus, and only to the broader system where it might impact directly on constituents at that campus. Thus began the gradual institutionalization of the ombudsman role at the university and college level. Any analysis of the ombudsman role and function should really deal with the impact upon the university or college campus primarily and only peripherally to the wider system. It is, crucially important for any study of the ombudsman within American higher education to first understand the nature of the institution under study before one can grasp or analyze the consequences of the college or university ombudsman upon it.

The Nature of the Beast

John Masefield waxed poetic about the university:

There are few earthly things more beautiful than a University.

It is a place where those who hate ignorance may strive to know; where those who perceive truth may strive to make others see; where seekers and learners alike, banded together in the search for knowledge, will honor thought in all its finer ways, will welcome thinkers in distress or in exile, will uphold ever the dignity of thought and learning, and will exact standards in these things.

They give to the young in their impressionable years, the bond of a lofty purpose shared, of a great corporate life whose links will not be loosed until they die.

They give young people that close companionship for which youth longs, and that chance of the endless discussion of the themes which are endless, without which youth would seem a waste of time.

There are few earthly things more splendid than a University.

In these days of broken frontiers and collapsing values, when the dams are down and the floods are making misery, when every future looks somewhat grim and every ancient foothold has become something of a quagmire, wherever a University stands, it stands and shines; wherever it exists, the free minds of men, urged on to full and fair inquiry, may still bring wisdom into human affairs.

But is this always the University that the student, faculty member, or staff employee encounters as they traverse the halls of academe? Many clients of a college or university ombudsman have specifically contacted the ombudsman's office because their individual experience has not been the one described in the Masefield portrayal. These clients have perceived the ombudsman as a "helper" within the larger institutional bureaucracy of university administrators and teaching faculty.

Historically, college ombudsmen do correct individual mistakes and generally utilize a broader

perspective to hasten policy changes or institutional reforms. They may even act as a "watchdog" to correct bureaucratic malfeasance. Whatever form the ombudsman function on a campus takes, there is one common denominator which must be taken into consideration if there is ever going to be any effective influence by the ombudsman on the various constituents of the campus. The ombudsman must be well informed about the university structure and key appropriate administrative and faculty personnel with whom she/he must regularly interact. In addition, the ombudsman must know the policies and procedures which lubricate the administrative and academic machinery on the campus. Without this information and knowledge, the ombudsman is hampered in the ability to really be an effective "helper." The most effective ombudsmen I know have developed good working relationships with the various academic and administrative offices on campus. Some critics would view these relationships as the ombudsman becoming too involved with the system's bureaucrats. But from the perspective of organizational behavior, the effective ombudsman understands the institutional "beast" which sometimes must be confronted and at other times encountered in a less stressful situation.

Any university ombudsman does not have to be on the job for any great length of time before she/he realizes there are segments of the collegiate institution which suffer from a variety of institutional stress (read dysfunction). In as much as these problems can be isolated, examined, investigated, and analyzed by the ombudsman to determine both the nature of the problem as well as the various remedies to improve a more smoothly functioning segment of the college, the resolution of the problem can begin.

The Approach

University and college organizational structures can be very confusing to the uninitiated. Even some of the smaller institutions publish organizational charts of their administrative and academic departments that are not easy to follow. Frequently one wonders whether there is a deliberate effort at obfuscation. Especially in terms of university governance, attempting to understand who has authority over what area can be a difficult task. Academic departments and their relationship with the academic deans and various college committees tend to further the problem of identifying areas of dysfunction as well as responsiveness to individual disputes, conflicts and grievances.

In this academic world, the problem of responsiveness is not an easy one to assign. If administrators, staff, and faculty experience anxiety over where to go for help, so much more the student population level of stress and consternation grows proportionately. It never ceases to amaze me that a colleague will call the ombudsman and ask for help about how to approach a problem or another colleague to only discover that the answer can be found on page 35 of the Faculty Handbook or College Catalog. The same is certainly true of the undergraduate student who has not read the Student Handbook or College Catalog about payment of late fees and becomes enraged only to learn about them at the Bursar's office after standing in line for an hour.

The most effective approach is clearly the one which deals with the problem at the lowest level possible. The prevalent attitude on campus, as in the wider society, is "I'll call the College President and my congressman." This approach can be effective if efforts at the lower levels have been ineffective or

unproductive. It is not surprising to see previously unresponsive administrators, staff or faculty respond to a call from the President or Chancellor or Senator.... Most frequently, there will be an effort to address (read: redress) the problem at the appropriate level and within the appropriate grievance handling mechanism. With effective conflict handling grievance machinery at hand, there is a reasonable presumption that the collegiate institution is a functional system. People are being served; conflicts are being settled. Is there still a role for the ombudsman in a system which is functioning effectively at various levels?

Over the last twenty years, I have observed various collegiate structures in which the grievance handling procedures are effective and in which the ombudsman still has an important role to play within, or ancillary to, the operating governance system and administrative structure. A great deal will necessarily depend upon the local history of the institution's effective or ineffective ways of handling stress. The hallowed halls of academe and their learned occupants have long memories. Some of the most bitter internecine struggles take place on college and university campuses.

I believe students, faculty, staff, and administrators have come to respect the role of the college ombudsman once it is known and appreciated by the various student and faculty groups. Many of these men and women who pioneered in the ombudsman role on campus appreciate the various dimensions of the job. Some of the conflicts and struggles between students and faculty over the years which previously had been handled on an ad hoc basis, have only been resolved because the ombudsman has assisted in a way which demonstrated to the individuals themselves and the wider campus community that anything is possible when there is an effort to seek viable solutions.

Some of my colleagues have occupied their position for more than a decade and have performed with distinction. These are some of the most respected people to whom others come for careful analysis and assessment of their institutional anxiety. The ombudsman in higher education frequently is perceived by his or her academic colleagues as a "trusted other." As Masefield stated: "...wherever a University stands, it stands and shines; wherever it exists, the free minds of men, urged on to full and fair inquiry, may still bring wisdom into human affairs." I have been impressed with the men and women who have occupied the ombudsman role. They have helped significantly to "bring wisdom into human affairs."

For many years now I have preserved a pithy statement on top of my desk. It reads: "Where amenities are lacking, so is civility." It reminds me daily of my obligation to assist those who come to me in a manner that breathes objectivity and concern as a base line for all else that might be necessary in helping members of the university resolve disputes and conflicts.

A Unified Effort

It took a number of years for college and university ombudsmen to gather together professionally. Six years ago a small group of us met at Wayne State University in Detroit and discussed and approved bylaws constituting ourselves "The University and College Ombudsman Associate" or UCOA as we are more frequently known. It took us a few more years to develop a professional code of ethics, copies of

which have most recently been circulated among UCOA's membership. This ethical code of professional behavior demonstrates the attitude UCOA's members have toward what they do and how they do it. Whether institutions of higher learning are perceived as functional or dysfunctional, the role played by the ombudsman has served and will continue to serve his or her constituency in an effective manner.

A Distinct Role

Dysfunctional parts will always arise in whatever the setting. After all, colleges and universities are only human institutions. What happens when a particular individual or office does not provide the needed remedy to a problem will always depend on the parties' ability to assess the problem and be creative in the problem-solving. The ombudsman's office on campus should not be just another office or place to seek remedies for an institution's ills. The ombudsman's office should be the place where problems can be aired without fear of reprisal and with the reasonable hope that the problem presented will become the problem resolved. After all, a "full and fair inquiry" is not just another of those phrases of consolation. It is the level of responsiveness that should become "de rigueur" on our campuses, particularly on the part of the ombudsman.

Conceptual and analytical precision is necessary at every level of the university enterprise. Out of its infancy and into its youth, campus ombudsmanry has grown increasingly uneasy with the ways in which it has conceptualized its role in higher education. To its credit and frequent uneasiness, the campus ombudsman has seen its role to be a mission on the margin. Institutionalized in so much as the office now more frequently appears on organizational charts with a specific position of importance, but still perceived as one function which must, by necessity, remain institutionally parallel to other offices and functions.

W. H. Auden once said that the difference between the tragic hero of Greek drama and the tragic hero of dramas written in the Christian era was as follows: the Greek hero was a man of necessity, whereas the hero of Shakespeare's tragedies, for instance, was always a man of possibility. It strikes me that this not only is suggestive of the differences between two eras and two forms of drama but likewise indicates the sense of contemporary society in general and higher education specifically. In this post-modern age and final decade of the century, there is the need for relief from the imperative of necessity, and a greater awareness of the meaning of possibility. Not only is this the mission of the functioning university, but it is the mission of the campus ombudsman to facilitate that direction.

Years ago, I read a book by Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Genius of American Education* (1966), in which the author insists that education be defined in terms of hope: "the deliberate, self-conscious pursuit of certain intellectual, ethical and aesthetic ideals." To hope is to feel a tension between what is and what ought to be the glory of our society and its institutions. Such hopes are the ground of strategic action. Dysfunctional institutions will continue to exist within our society and ombudsmen may or may not provide the required remedy to resolve the complex causes of that illness but I would urge there should always be hope, mostly born out of creative tension between what is and what ought to be.

Paper delivered at the 18th Annual Conference of the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution, Dearborn, Michigan, October 25-28, 1990. The author is a Charter Member of SPIDR.

rrwilson@uci.edu

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REMARKS PRESENTED AT THE 1990 UCOA CONFERENCE

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Howard Gadlin

University of Massachusetts

The following remarks were presented at the conclusion of the 1990 UCOA Conference on April 7, 1990 at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor: The chance to present a farewell address provides me the opportunity to reflect on the state of our profession as well as to sum up some of the most salient aspects of this year's meeting. Two things come to mind. First, I was struck by the contrast in tone and mood between the last presentation on foreign students and the first session on the legally frustrated efforts of the University of Michigan to implement a racial harassment policy. The discussion of foreign students and their problems was relaxed and almost playful as we contemplated the misperceptions, insensitivities and miscommunications that often characterize interactions between foreign students and their host institutions. By contrast, the discussion of racial harassment and policies intended to control or eliminate it were guarded and tense, each of us being cautious lest we reveal that we too share in the misperceptions, insensitivities, and miscommunications that characterize interactions between different races in this country.

Second, while listening to papers during this year's annual meeting, I was also thinking about the growth in the number of ombuds offices over the past few years. Although it is satisfying to see the expansion of the notion of the ombudsman, it is with some concern that I contemplate the missions that are being destined for these new offices, as well as the changes in the functioning of long established offices. Many of the new programs have been set up in direct response to the outbreaks of racial and ethnic harassment and strains in race relations that have been polluting the atmospheres of our campuses. And although I feel passionately about these problems of race and ethnicity, I have some concerns about the ways in which Ombuds Offices are being used, and ombudsmen are being co-opted, in the effort to develop adequate responses to racial tensions.

Briefly my concern is that the ombudsman is being transformed from an internal watchdog and critic to a member of the team committed to institutional maintenance and stability. In the course of this change the ombudsmen become problem solvers serving institutional goals rather than principles of justice, fairness, and morality. Now clearly ombudsmen are, among other things, problem solvers. But it is not effectiveness at problem solving that differentiates us from others on campus; rather it is what we do that makes us different. Let's remind ourselves of what that is.

1. We stay outside -- we are independent.
2. We respond to grievances.
3. We are not on the team, even though we may feel deeply committed to the institution.
4. We help people and the institution frame matters differently.

Throughout this meeting, people gave presentations illustrating the way in which helping others reframe an issue was the first and often crucial step toward a satisfactory solution. In addition to conceptualizing problems along different dimensions there is another way in which we frame things differently than those with administrative responsibilities -- they see issues against a backdrop of cost effectiveness; we see issues in a spotlight of justice.

These differences become especially important when we examine the role of the ombudsman in relation to racial incidents and the development and implementation of racial harassment policies. In offering these cautionary remarks I am not suggesting that we, as ombudsmen, should not be involved in responding to issues of racial harassment. Indeed, some of the complaints we receive are about unfair treatment for reasons of race, ethnicity, sexual preference, gender, etc. Nor am I implying that we ought not be participants in committees drafting racial harassment policies, or programs designed to assist those who are subjected to racial harassment. Each of us has to make decisions about such activities in the light of the social and political dynamics of our own campus and our own sense of what is appropriate for our ombuds office. But I want to urge that we be wary of the way our institutions frame their understanding of the problems they have and the means available to address these problems.

Let us look, for example, at policies of racial harassment. We are told that these policies are intended to create a campus climate free of harassment; that they are expressions of the school's commitment to multiculturalism and civility. And we are told that this commitment justifies rethinking freedom of speech and academic freedom, not only for responding to malicious and intentionally harmful acts, but also for reacting to actions that reflect a lack of sensitivity to what some people consider offensive. All well and good, if we accept the intent of these policies as they are framed by their proponents.

But I do not believe our schools recommitted to creating climates free of harassment. And I do not believe harassment policies are intended to create climates free of harassment. Let us remind ourselves of the history of sexual harassment policies on campuses. Sexual harassment policies did not come into place because colleges and universities were sensitive to the problems of women students, faculty, and employees whose educations and careers were disrupted and undermined by widespread practices of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment policies did not come into place because colleges and universities wanted to create an environment where women were equally at home as men, and where women had the same opportunities as men. Sexual harassment policies came into place because the law required it, because schools without policies were more vulnerable to lawsuits than schools with policies and

because schools did not want to look bad in the eyes of women employees and students who were becoming more assertive about their rights to equal opportunity. Let me be clear -- I am not saying that schools were in favor of sexual harassment or that they were opposed to having sexual harassment reduced or eliminated but rather that it simply was not a matter of enough concern to warrant the policies, programs and personnel necessary to change the basic campus culture that sustained sexual harassment. It is the same with racial harassment.

It is not that administrators want it to continue. It is not that they condone racism. It is not that they would not be pleased to see racial incidents eliminated. But colleges and universities are not prepared to do what it takes to move toward the creation of campuses that are genuinely multicultural. What schools want is to avoid incidents that present them in an unfavorable light and make them vulnerable to legal action; to meet their own quotas so that they can appear to be integrated; and to avoid criticism from minorities and guilty liberals. Again, let me be clear. I do not believe that limitations are the fault only of administrators. Neither the faculty, nor the students, nor the employees of colleges and universities have distinguished themselves through programs and efforts to create multicultural campuses. Each of these groups has been more adept at laying blame than creating change. And this leads me to a further concern about the racial harassment policies and my hesitations about ombudspeople participating in their creation and implementation.

Harassment policies organized around disciplinary and punitive sanctions allow us to locate social ugliness in the deficiencies and pathologies of the other. They allow us to ignore the larger problems associated with moving toward truly multicultural organizations. Such policies also allow us to ignore the fact that we do not live in an integrated society, we live in a society where there is some limited mixing. Most of our institutions are committed to sustaining their identities, functions, and power hierarchies in the face of pressures to change, even while they profess to be on the cutting edge of change.

The institutions' understanding of the problems that confront them are very much a part of the problems themselves. To be sure there are racists and hooligans out there and they cause more than their share of difficulties. But the problems of race and ethnicity on campuses cannot be attributed only to trouble makers. As ombudspeople, I believe we have the responsibility to resist the temptation to frame issues in the same way as the rest of the campus community. After all, part of the reason we exist is because of the way issues are framed by the rest of the campus community. If they haven't learned to do it right with respect to grade disputes, disciplinary procedures and a whole host of other administrative and academic issues, there is no reason to believe they have got it right when it comes to issues of race.

rrwilson@uci.edu

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A Process Model of Academic Ombudsing - Lois Price Spratlen

Not in Archive

COMMENTS ON PANEL "The Tension between Freedom of Speech and Freedom from Harassment: The Evolving U M Policy"

California Caucus of College and University Ombudsman
UCI Ombudsman: The Journal 1993

Carolyn Stieber

Michigan State University

-- It is dismaying that in the Spring of 1990, with so many startling and mostly welcome political developments in the rest of the world, we need to address this topic at all -- but we do.

-- The echo of what occurred at this great University has resonance across the continent. A sense of community is a myth on most campuses despite the shouts of solidarity at basketball and football games. Far from community, a feeling of "license" to hurt feelings seems rampant.

-- At the same time that students delight in ethnic food or music and thrill to the accomplishments of black athletes there are chilling reminders that prejudice -- if not hatred -- is alive and well, grist for mindless "jokes," slurs, and other acts of outright intimidation. No racial or religious or ethnic minority is immune. The world events to which I alluded add their own dismal reminder; when controls are lifted in a police state, all the old animosities are free to surface, even those rooted in events of past centuries.

-- In listening to the account of what U of M tried to do and was told in court it could not do, there are the classic elements of tension between freedom of expression, however offensive, and civility, however fragile. It is the familiar cautionary tale that crisis and hard cases make bad law, especially frustrating because the rules were so well intentioned. (I read the judicial opinion carefully and would have liked Judge Avern Cohn present this morning to hear our frustrations. There has been a lot of criticism of his opinion. I am in no way speaking in his defense but I would rate him high among federal judges in Michigan. He did point to examples of students having to meet with administrators and answer for classroom remarks. While the students were not sanctioned, they had to submit to the process. The judge stressed that one could not know what would violate the policy.)

-- I would like to pose some questions to the panel and/or the audience for comment, and to sketch, very briefly, a different way of handling such matters which has worked reasonably well at my institution -- not to say for a moment that we are exempt from the problems.

First the questions:

1. The March 28 Chronicle of Higher Education describes a dozen or so universities that now require or soon will require students to take courses on racial/cultural diversity. There is controversy regarding such issues as a menu of choice among courses, whether enough faculty are sufficiently qualified to teach these subjects, and the length of time which ought to be devoted to them. (Bowling Green, Florida State, Haverford, Penn. State, SUNY-Cortland, U. of Minnesota, U. of Vermont, U. of Cincinnati, Berkeley, Williams, U. Wisconsin at Madison and Milwaukee.) Stanford also. Would this do any good? U of M faculty in the Literature, Science, & Arts School voted NO last year.
2. Is homophobia as disturbing and as pervasive as racism, or even more so?
3. Is all tension that plays out as racism necessarily deserving of that label? or that handling? Example: Drunken behavior easily becomes ugly, mean, abusive.
4. The MY Times, on January 15, 1990, gave big coverage to U of M's week-long symposia/lectures -- across the whole campus -- commemorating Martin Luther King. To an outsider it sounded exciting. Was this considered successful and how many actually participated? Will this be repeated, as an annual event?
5. If the underlying problem is prejudice -- stereotyping, intolerance, lack of historical knowledge, lack of sensitivity to what wounds others, is a broad spectrum of faculty and administrators beyond the President making the most of their opportunities to challenge beliefs? Do they condemn vigorously, expressions of bigotry, or racial and ethnic slurs, in and out of the classroom? or, does this activity fall almost exclusively to the affirmative action office, the human relations department, or the student affairs officials, few of whom may carry faculty rank and status and who already are alert to such issues? (Somewhat as in police departments, if only the community relations officers are sensitive on racial matters, police attitudes in general will never change.)

-- At Michigan State University there has been in place, for 23 years, a broad code of conduct which we call the Academic Freedom Report. The Vietnam war protests were the catalyst plus an "alternative newspaper" which offended a lot of people. It is a student-focussed rights/responsibilities document, approved by our governance system. Students helped write it. It has a number of different provisions, including one which established the ombudsman's office. The main thrust is a due process procedure enabling students to deal with threats, intimidation, or other allegations of unfair conduct directed at individuals. Conduct is regulated, not thoughts or words which are specifically protected. Before the due process procedure commences, a variety of informal efforts occur. There is also provision for academic misconduct, such as dishonesty.

-- Under very strict conditions, this same document affords the opportunity to challenge a grade if there is evidence of non-performance factors affecting the grade (such things as race, sex, age, political opinions, or any aspect of discrimination).

-- A separate, very formal mechanism is available for anyone at the university to deal with harassment and discrimination. It is fairly miserable and makes the parties amenable to other forms of resolution.

-- Within residence halls, there are more extensive codes of conduct by which students can call each other to account -- all within the same Academic Freedom Report framework -- if informal means of resolution do not work.

-- You cannot be removed from a residence hall for remarks but you can be for threatening actions. Even then your status as a student at the university is not affected unless you are judged too violent to be on campus at all.

-- If there is any judicial hearing, a "hold" will be placed on registration or graduation until the hearing is dealt with.

-- Administrators do not energize our process -- students do.

Administrators would never be involved with what happens in the classroom unless there is violent behavior. Thus a student who feels victimized is empowered to initiate action at any several levels, with a variety of options and support mechanisms from informal to formal. If necessary, they are assisted in filing criminal complaints on or off campus.

-- Harassment by faculty is grounds for abrogation of tenure. We have lost a few. Our documents and procedures are not perfect and would never win a Pulitzer Prize for literature, or in U of M terms, a Hopwood prize. Nonetheless, I believe they do help students connect with other students and obtain redress when there is evidence of actionable wrong.

-- Universities need a high degree of civility to function properly; they cannot function at all without freedom of expression. That freedom on the campuses helped to end the Vietnam war and promote South African divestiture. Civil rights are crucial to a just society. Equality of opportunity and equal protection of the law are fundamental civil rights. But civil liberties, protection against official restrictions, are also fundamental. Elevated above all other civil liberties, because it undergirds the others, is the First Amendment freedom of speech and expression.

-- It would be a cruel irony if, in the name of civil rights, civil liberties are curbed. There are a good many would-be censors out there who would, if they could, impose their own standards on the rest of us in every aspect of life. Minorities -- anyone different -- would be the first to suffer from tyranny of the majority. Thus, I see the tension we are discussing as necessarily having to come down on the side of free speech but I do not think universities are powerless to deal with threats and intimidation.

04/05/90 UCOA Conference, Ann Arbor, MI

rrwilson@uci.edu

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1989 SURVEY OF BURNOUT LEVEL & STRESS COPING TECHNIQUES AMONG UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE OMBUDSMEN

California Caucus of College and University Ombudsman
UCI Ombudsman: The Journal 1993

M. Katherine Uetz

University of Cincinnati

SUMMARY

A survey of burnout in a sample of 79 University and College Ombudsmen was conducted in 1989, using the standard Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). Respondents' scores on MBI subscales suggest that ombudsmen experience lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization than other caregiving professions (teachers, social service workers, etc.), and enjoy a higher degree of personal accomplishment. Demographic comparisons reveal that male and female ombudsmen have equal burnout levels, but that level of burnout varies with race/ethnicity, education, age, and marital status. Respondents reported a diversity of examples of stress sources in their work life, and revealed a number of activities that help them cope with stress.

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INTRODUCTION

I became interested in the phenomenon of "burnout" among Ombudsmen in 1988, when I conducted a study with Dr. Gail H. Friedman to assess levels of burnout among University and College Ombudsmen in the United States and Canada. The 1988 study was designed to collect demographic information, measure burnout, and catalogue methods of relieving stress.* A number of questions raised about the methods used to measure burnout prompted a second survey, which was conducted during the Autumn of 1989 to further explore burnout among ombudsmen.

METHODS

The 1989 survey, similar to the 1988 survey in design, but differing in method of burnout measurement, was sent to 160 University and College Ombudsmen in the United States and Canada. The demographic questions were expanded, and 22 questions from The Maslach Burnout Inventory were included. (See Appendix 1 for a sample of the survey instrument.) Demographic information gathered included title in institution, gender, ethnic background, age, length of time in position, highest degree, geographic location, current salary, population served, type of staff assistance, number of students on campus, location in organizational structure, description of role, number of annual cases, estimate of effectiveness as ombudsman, stress relievers utilized, possible career changes considered due to burnout, and who assumes primary responsibility for home and child care. Questions were added to gather information regarding symptoms of stress and occupational stressors.

*Note: The complete article was published in the California Caucus of College and University Ombudsmen - Fifteenth Anniversary Journal 1988. Copies of the 1988 article are available upon request to:

M. Katherine Uetz, University Ombudsman, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio 45221-0180.

In order to compare ombudsmen burnout with previous studies of burnout levels in other caregivers, the standard Maslach Burnout Inventory was used (with the publisher's permission). This is the primary difference from the 1988 survey, which used a modified MBI method developed by Golembiewski, Munzenrider, and Carter (1983).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Data

Seventy-nine surveys were returned for a response rate of 49.4%. Since not all respondents answered each question in the survey, the sample size (N) varies with the question under statistical analysis.

Thirty-six of the respondents were male (47%), and 40 were female (53%). The ethnic background of the respondents is predominantly Caucasian (67), with African American (7), Asian American (1) and Mexican American (1). Ages ranged from under 25 to over 65. Fortysix percent of the respondents' ages were in the 45-65 range (Table 1). Table 2 shows the geographic locations of the respondents. Sixty-three percent of the respondents indicated that their ombudsman duties were full-time, and 37% part-time.

Most respondents reported a title at their institution which included the term Ombudsman. Table 3 provides a list of the respondents' titles at their respective institutions. Respondents indicated that they served the following populations: Students (26) 32.5%, Faculty (3) - 3.7%, Staff (1) - 1.3 %, and all three (50) 62.5%. When asked which best describes their role, 39% of the ombudsmen responded that they acted both as neutral mediator and client advocate. Thirty-nine percent indicated neutral mediator, 10% indicated client advocate, and 12% indicated other roles as well. The average number of years in the ombudsman position was 6.0 + 6.04 (S.D.). Table 4 shows the distribution of the length of time served as an ombudsman for 76 respondents.

Seventy-six individuals reported degree status, with 78% of those responding holding a Masters or above (Table 5). Current salary ranges reported are shown in Table 6. Eighty-seven percent of the respondents indicated some type of staff assistance (Table 7).

Institutional size varied from less than 5,000 to more than 50,000 students (Table 8). Annual caseload was estimated from less than 100 to more than 2000 (Table 9). The mean annual caseload for this group of respondents is 478 + 440.23 (S.D.). The high level of variation in caseloads among institutions is related to the size of the institution and possibly to the manner in which respondents report caseload. For example, some respondents may have reported a total for contacts and cases rather than cases only. In general, a contact is an inquiry which is quickly answered or addressed, and a case requires investigation, mediation, or problem resolution which may take considerably more time to resolve.

Burnout

The respondents' scores on the burnout questions (page 2 of the survey) were analyzed following the MBI method. Totals for Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP), and Personal Accomplishment (PA) were determined from the answers given on a frequency scale (how often I feel this way). According to Maslach and Jackson (1986), levels of burnout can be measured as follows:

- * A high degree of burnout is reflected in high scores on the EE and DP subscales and in low scores on the PA subscale.
- * An average degree of burnout is reflected in intermediate scores on the three subscales.
- * A low degree of burnout is reflected in low scores on the EE and DP subscales and in high scores on the PA subscale.

Table 10 shows the distribution of low, moderate, and high scores for 76 respondents. Using this method of interpretation, 60% of the respondents are experiencing low levels of burnout, 29% moderate, and 11% high. Personal accomplishment is not included in this determination because 95% of the respondents ranked high on that subscale.

The 1988 survey showed that university and college ombudsmen had higher levels of burnout than their corporate counterparts (Uetz 1988). In this study, burnout levels experienced by university and college ombudsmen were compared with levels reported for other occupational subgroups by Maslach & Jackson (1986). Ombudsmen had lower mean EE and DP scores than teachers, social service workers, doctors, and mental health workers, but higher PA scores than all of these caregivers. This suggests that Ombudsmen experience lower levels of emotionally exhausting and depersonalizing burnout than members of other helping professions, and they enjoy a higher degree of personal satisfaction in their work.

Relationships Between Burnout and Other Variables

In addition to assessing burnout levels among this group of respondents, I was also interested in whether other (demographic) factors such as sex, race, age, marital status and responsibility for home and child care are correlated with burnout level.

Although the 1988 survey suggested sex differences in degree of burnout (measured in phases - females had later phase burnout than males), an analysis of this group by sex indicated that male and female ombudsmen experienced similar levels of EE and DP. However, male scores showed a higher percent of moderate burnout and lower percent of high burnout when compared to female scores which were equal with respect to moderate and high levels (Table 11). A comparison by race/ethnicity indicated that the Asian American and Hispanic/Mexican American respondents reported the highest levels of burnout. Caucasian scores were higher than African American ombudsmen, who reported the lowest levels of burnout for this group of respondents (Table 12).

Comparison of scores by marital status indicated that divorced and married ombudsmen have lower burnout levels than single ombudsmen (Table 13). This result contrasts with the studies of Maslach and Jackson (1986), which found divorced people have higher burnout. Table 14 shows burnout levels correlated with home/child care responsibilities for categories of self, shared with spouse, spouse only, or not applicable. Ombudsmen who assume primary responsibility for home/child care or who share this equally with spouse reported higher levels of emotional exhaustion than those whose spouse assumed these responsibilities. Burnout varies with level of education, with Master's and Ph.D. holders having lower scores than ombudsmen with a baccalaureate degree (Table 15). These results are similar to results of Maslach and Jackson for other groups.

There was a significant negative correlation between emotional exhaustion and age, salary, and length of time in position (Table 16). This suggests that, in this group, older, better-paid, and long-term ombudsman had lower Emotional Exhaustion scores. There are several explanations for these relationships. One could be because some (or all) of the variables are inter-correlated (e.g., older ombudsmen, in positions longer, have higher salaries). Another may be that, because some ombudsmen leave positions with time, those remaining are the least burned out or the best at coping with job-related stress. A similar relationship was seen for burnout levels of other caregivers: burnout levels were lower in older respondents (Maslach and Jackson 1986). Perhaps these individuals have learned with experience the key to creating and maintaining balance in their lives, and to utilize stress relievers to combat stress symptoms.

Ombudsmen were asked to estimate their effectiveness on a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high). Ninety-one percent of the respondents rated their effectiveness at seven and above, with a mean of 8.06 + 1.1 (S.D.) (Figure 2). Only 25% have considered career changes due to burnout.

Stress Symptoms

Respondents were asked to identify their symptoms of stress. Common stress symptoms include headaches, irritability, muscle tension, ulcers, insomnia, overeating, smoking, and drinking (Table 17). Other symptoms reported were: hypertension, stomach problems, fatigue, creation of stress for others, confusion and sense of losing control, anger, nervous movement, frustration, feelings of inadequacy, difficulty concentrating, grinding teeth during sleep, stuttering, inarticulate speaking, weepiness, many mild illnesses (colds, flu, sore throats), and weariness. The respondents were asked what occupational stressors -- e.g., events, policies, places, people, etc. -- trigger uncomfortable feelings. The wide range of occupational stressors reported are shown in Table 18. Twenty-one percent of the respondents indicated that policies are occupational stressors, and 28% reported people who were unreasonable, unpleasant, rigid, nasty, angry, defensive, confrontational, and mentally or emotionally unbalanced. In general, multiple, simultaneous, competing demands of many types cause stress for ombudsmen.

Stress Relievers

Ombudsmen reported a significant number of methods utilized to reduce stress (Table 19). Sports/exercise, positive thinking,

and long walks are the methods most frequently used by this group of respondents to relieve stress. Many respondents offered comments regarding other feelings and perceptions concerning stress and burnout (Appendix 2).

One individual indicated that ..."I love my job and feel rewarded by the reactions of the people and by bringing most cases to a satisfactory conclusion. I, of course, cannot say I shall feel like this forever. I hope it lasts a while longer!"

Others achieve balance by not being full-time ombudsmen:

"A high level of satisfaction and effectiveness is due, in part I think, to the part- time nature of my position. I have been encouraged to work full-time but have chosen to remain at 75% time and hire additional help." "My career involves teaching, research, writing, and serving as ombudsman."

Some find that a multi-faceted career relieves their work as ombudsmen.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Studying burnout among university and college ombudsmen has been extremely interesting and rewarding to me personally. I believe that burnout can happen to anyone, including those who attempt to be "Super Ombudsman." I also believe that severe burnout can be avoided if we listen to our body, mind, and spirit when stress symptoms occur. We must then try to regain balance in our lives. Personally, I think it is very important for us to communicate with our colleagues, families, and friends when those "stressed-out feelings" come over us. Although we sometimes work in isolation in our respective institutions, we are not alone and must maintain connections with other ombudsmen and our support networks. It is O.K. for us (as ombudsmen) to pamper ourselves (Hansen 1986), and we should.

A close friend reminded me of the following quote by Jazz/Blues singer, Nina Simone:

"You can use up all you've got trying to give people what they want."

We must save something for ourselves so we can continue being the kind of caregivers we want to be.

Table 1
Age Ranges

Age	Total	Percent
Under 25	1	1%
25-35	12	16%
35-45	24	31%
45-55	20	26%
55-65	15	20%
Over 65	5	6%

Table 2
Geographic Location of Institution

Location	Total	Percent
Eastern U.S.	16	21%
Western U.S.	17	23%
Northern U.S.	11	15%
Southern U.S.	5	7%
Midwest U.S.	13	18%
Canada	12	16%

Table 3
Institutional Titles

University Ombudsman
 Associate University Ombudsman
 Assistant Ombuds
 Assistant Ombudsperson
 College Ombudsman
 Campus Ombudsman
 University Ombudsperson
 Director, Office for Women in
 Medicine
 Associate Ombudsman
 Asst. Univ. Ombudswoman
 Student Ombuds Staff
 Ombudsperson
 Ombudsman
 Student Advocate
 Asst. to Academic Ombudsman
 Director, Ombudsman Office
 Coordinator for Student
 Judicial Affairs
 University Ombudsman and
 Professor
 University Ombudsman for
 Students
 University Disciplinary
 Officer
 Special Asst. to the Pres.
 Information Officer on
 Appeals/Grievances
 Asst. Vice Chancellor and
 Univ. Ombudsman
 Professor Emeritus
 Ombudsman for Students

Table 4
Length of Time in Ombudsman Position

No. of Years	Total	Percent
--------------	-------	---------

1-3	24	37%
3-5	10	15%
5-7	9	14%
7-10	6	9%
10-15	10	15%
15-20	5	8%
Over 25	1	2%

Table 5
Ombudsman Degree Status

Degree	Total	Percent
BS/BS	8	10.5%
MA/MS	29	38%
MEd	3	4%
PhD/EdD	27	35.5%
Other	9	12%

Table 6
Ombudsman Salary Ranges

Range	Total	Percent
Less than \$10,000	7	9%
\$10,000-\$20,000	8	10%
\$20,000-\$30,000	6	8%
\$30,000-\$40,000	10	13%
\$40,000-\$50,000	16	22%
\$50,000-\$60,000	10	13%
\$60,000-\$70,000	15	20%
More than \$70,000	4	5%

Table 7
Types of Staff Assistance (Both Full and Part-time)

Other Professionals: Assistant and Associate
Ombudsmen
Administrative Assistant
Secretary
Graduate Assistants and Associates
Undergraduate Student Assistants

Work Study Students
Office Coordinator
Peer Advisors

Table 8
Size of Institution

Students Enrolled	Total	Percent
1,000-5,000	7	10%
5,000-10,000	9	13%
10,000-15,000	8	11%
15,000-20,000	11	16%
20,000-25,000	16	23%
25,000-30,000	10	14%
30,000-35,000	3	4%
35,000-40,000	2	3%
40,000-50,000	3	4%
More than 50,000	1	2%

Table 9
Annual Cases

No. of Cases	Total	Percent
Less than 100	11	16%
100-300	17	25%
300-500	21	31%
500-1000	13	19%
1000-1500	5	7%
1500-2000	0	0
More than 2000	1	2%

Table 10
MBI Score Frequency

EE (%) DP (%) PA* (%)

Ranges:

Low	0 - 17	0	- 5	>40
Moderate		18 - 29	6	- 11 34 - 39
High	>30		>12	0 - 33

Results:

Mean	15.62	4.88	22.36		
Standard Deviation		9.97		4.43	6.019

Frequency of Respondents:

Low Score	47	62%	51	67%	2	3%
Moderate Score	21	27%	18	24%	1	2%
High Score	8	11%	7	9%	73	95%

*PA scores are an inverse index of burnout (high PA = low burnout)

Table 11
Comparison of Male and Female Burnout

Sex		EE	DP	PA	Composite	
Male	Mean	14.61	5.58	23.11	1.53	
	SD		9.2	4.45	5.28	0.64
Female	Mean	16.94	4.62	22.73	1.54	
	Sd		10.84	4.55	5.55	0.79
			Male		Female	
Low		19 (55.8%)			23 (65.7%)	
Moderate	12 (35.4%)			6 (17.15%)		
High	3 (8.8%)		6 (17.15%)			

Table 12
Comparison of Burnout by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity		EE	DP	PA	Composite
Caucasian (N=66)	Mean	15.31	4.9	22.98	1.46
	SD	9.26	4.24	5.56	0.66
African Am. (N=7)	Mean	9.83	2	19.33	1.16
	SD	8.19	1.15	3.09	0.37
Asian Am. (N=1)		39	19	27	3
Hispanic/Mexican Am.	41 12 25 3 (N=1)				

Table 13
Comparison of Burnout by Marital Status

Marital Status		EE	DP	PA	Composite
Single (N=15)	Mean	21.31	6.125	23.81	1.875
	SD	11.33	4.94	5.84	0.85
Married (N=47)	Mean	14.06	5.11	22.75	1.409
	SD	9.74	4.53	5.72	0.61
Divorced (N=10)	Mean	13.5	3	21.5	1.2
	Sd	5.2	2.79	2.91	0.4
Widowed (N=1)		18	5	24	

Table 14
Comparison of Burnout Levels and Home/Child
Care Responsibilities

Home/Child Care		EE	DP	PA	Composite
Self	Mean	17.61	5.14	22.2	1.52
	SD	7.62	4.7	5.3	0.66
Shared With Spouse	Mean	15.65	5.27	22.0	1.48
	Sd	11.43	4.48	4.38	0.72
Spouse Only	Mean	12.55	5.44	25.44	1.44
	Sd	7.65	4.34	6.41	0.49
Does Not Apply	Mean	14.35	3.92	23.64	1.57
	Sd	10.56	3.79	6.13	0.82

Table 15
Comparison of Burnout Levels and Level of Education

Degree		EE	DP	PA	Composite
BA/BS (N=7)	Mean	20.63	5	22.5	2
	SD	9.17	4.18	7.5	0.71
MA/MS/MEd (N=21)	Mean	14.28	3.88	22.09	1.34
	SD	3.56	3.34	4.44	0.59
PhD/EdD	Mean	12.96	4.72	23.12	1.4

(N=26)	SD	9.50	3.97	5.63	0.63
Other	Mean	24	10.38	25	2
(N=9)	SD	11.27	6.12	5.12	0.86

Table 16
Comparison of Burnout by Age

Age Class		EE	DP	PA	Composite
Under 25 (N=1)		39	19	27	3
25-35	Mean	23.25	7.66	24.58	2
(N=12)	SD	9.21	5.76	6.65	0.707
35-45	Mean	18.91	5.64	22.32	1.76
(N=22)	SD	10.65	3.93	3.74	0.75
45-55	Mean	11.84	4.05	21.7	1.157
(N=19)	SD	5.76	3.52	2.63	0.36
55-65	Mean	10.36	3.29	24.21	1.142
(N=14)	SD	6.48	2.28	8.18	0.349
Over 65	Mean	6.8	1.4	20.2	1
(N=5)	SD	7.21	2.79	8.26	0.45

Table 17
Common Stress Symptoms

Symptoms	Total	Percent
Headache	19	14%
Irritability	32	23%
Muscle Tension	30	21%
Ulcers	3	2%
Insomnia	11	8%
Overeating	10	7%
Smoking	9	6%
Drinking	5	4%
All of these symptoms	6	4%
Other symptoms	15	11%

Table 18
Occupational Stressors

People who are unreasonable, unpleasant, rigid, nasty, angry, defensive, confrontational, mentally or emotionally unbalanced. Campus policies and politics. Workload, deadlines, unscheduled pressing work.

Events

Attitudes

Strong personalities

Students who are (the) cause of their own problems (that I can't do anything about).

Counseling

No clear terms of reference.

Student problems related to faculty insensitivity.

Interacting with people who I must tell are wrong.

* Department Heads unwilling to compromise, accept recommendations from another area or woman.

* Faculty who don't want to understand Ombudsman's role.

* Not enough time to keep organized.

* Perceived lack of support from Executive Vice Chancellor.

* Difficulty with University Counsel (attorney) and Affirmative Action

Director.

* Inadequate funding.

* Having to answer to the administration.

* Lack of staff support.

* Promising something and then having to break the promise.

* Lack of effective grievance/oversight process to deal with grade course-related conflicts.

Stubbornly unfair instructors.

* Close friend on campus is involved in complaint.

* Unrealistic (and conflicting) expectations from others. Conflicts between educational and business values within institution.

Events in which positions are more important to dispatch than solving issues/concerns.

* Being told to do something by higher-ups that I don't believe in.

* Administrative paperwork.

Disagreements with other offices over how to proceed with a case.

* Hardheaded faculty members and academic administrators.

* Defensive decision makers, confrontational individuals.

* Dealing with mentally or emotionally unbalanced clients.

* Badly unbalanced angry people.

* Some meetings where I know a lot is riding on how I handle the meeting.

* People and the way they behave in positions of power.

* Bureaucrats stuck in a particular mind set with no ability to solve problems creatively.

* Sheer quantity of work.

* Justified but unresolvable complaints.

* Recommendations not accepted.

* Unsolvable complaints and unfinished tasks.

* Consistent resistance to function of office on campus.

* Obstacles and resolution at a snails pace.

* Too busy, but assistance is not possible due to budget constraints.

Liars, scoundrels, tyrants.....

* People do not understand role of the ombudsman.

Table 19

Methods Utilized to Reduce Stress

Activity	Total	Percent
Sports/Exercise Activity	45	26%
Smoking	11	6%
Prescribed Medication	2	1%
Meditation/Yoga	8	4.5%
Long Walks	29	17%
Counseling/Therapy	3	2%
Coffee	16	9%
Alcohol	8	4.5%
Positive Thinking	28	16%
Prayer	11	6%
Support Group/Network	14	8%

Other Stress Relievers

Candy
 Humor
 Reading
 Therapeutic Massage
 Understanding Spouse
 Deep Relaxation Techniques
 Family Involvement
 Movies
 Bird Watching
 Flying
 Other Ombuds Playing Musical Instruments
 Photography
 Writing Poetry
 Quiet Time Alone
 Other Recreational Activities
 Volunteer/Community Activities
 Jacuzzi
 Singing
 Writing
 Listening to music

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APPENDIX 1

1989 Survey of University and College Ombudsmen Conducted by Dr. Gail H. Friedman and M. Katherine Uetz Please complete and return in the enclosed envelope by September 15th.

1. Title:
2. Gender: Male Female
3. Marital status: Single () Married Divorced Widowed
4. Ethnic Background: () American Caucasian () African American () Native American Indian () Asian American Latino, Hispanic, Mexican American Other (please specify
5. Age: () Under 25 25-35 () 35-45 45-55 55 65 Over 65
6. Length of time in current position: years
7. Highest degree: () BA/BS () MOMS MEd PhD/EdD Other
8. Geographic location of institution: State in U.S.A., Other than U.S.A.
9. Employed full-time basis less than full-time
10. Salary: Less than \$10,000 \$10,000-\$20,000 () \$20,000-\$30,000 () \$30,000-\$40,000 () \$40,000-\$50,000 \$50,000-\$60,000 \$60,000- \$70,000 () More than \$70,000
11. Population served: () Students Faculty Staff
12. What type of staff assistance (other professional and support staff) do you have?
13. Do you serve in a dual-role or have other responsibilities? Yes No If yes, please specify
14. How many students are enrolled on your campus?
15. To whom do you report?
16. Which of the following best describes your role? Neutral Mediator Client Advocate Combination of These Two () Other
17. Estimated annual inquiries: Cases Contacts
18. How many hours per week do you devote to career? Hrs /week
19. What is your estimate of your effectiveness as Ombudsman? Rate 1 (low) through 10 (high).
20. What are your occupational stressors (events, policies, places, people, etc.) that trigger uncomfortable feelings?
21. What are your symptoms of stress? () headache irritability muscle tension () ulcers insomnia overeating smoking drinking () Other
22. Do you now use any of the following regularly to reduce your stress? Check those which apply:

Sports/Exercise Activity Coffee
Smoking Alcohol
Prescribed Medication Positive Thinking
Meditation/Yoga Prayer
Long Walks -Support Group/Network
Counseling/Therapy
Other (please describe)
23. Have you ever considered a career change due to feeling burned out? () No () Yes, to
24. Who assumes primary responsibility for home and child care (if any)? self spouse shared equally with spouse

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The following are 22 statements of job-related feelings. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, write a "0" (zero) before the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by writing the numer (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

HOW OFTEN: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 Never A few Once a A few Once A few Every times a month times a a times day year or or less month week a week less

How Often Statements:

0-6

1. I feel emotionally drained from my work.
2. I feel used up at the end of the workday.
3. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.
4. I can easily understand how my clients feel about things.
5. I feel I treat some clients as if they were impersonal objects.
6. Working with people all day is really a strain for me.
7. I deal very effectively with the problems of my clients.
8. I feel burned out from my work.
9. I feel I'm positively influencing my clients' lives through my work.
10. I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.
11. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.
12. I feel very energetic.
13. I feel frustrated by my job.
14. I feel I'm working too hard on my job.
15. I don't really care what happens to some clients.
16. Working directly with people puts too much stress on me.
17. I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my clients.
18. I feel exhilarated after working closely with my clients.
19. I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.
20. I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.
21. In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.
22. I feel clients blame me for some of their problems.

Other Comments:

Thanks for participating in this survey.

APPENDIX 2

1989 Ombudsman Survey Comments

General Comments:

Opportunities [for other jobs] in this region are few.

I have recently handed in my resignation to practice law.

I did consider [a career change] but instead dealt directly with certain stressors.

* I have no more [symptoms of stress] than before I became an ombudsman.

* I do some of these things I've circled [to relieve stress], but no more than when I wasn't an ombudsman, when I was strictly a professor.

Comments on Burnout Section:

- * Because I only do this job 20 hours a week, I don't feel totally identified with it, and so I don't get too attached to outcomes that would result in burnout.
 - * I like my job!
 - * These questions seem to sort out people who are well-suited to the role from those who should seek other callings, thus the 6 or 0 pattern.
 - * I love my job and feel rewarded by the reactions of the people and by bringing most cases to a satisfactory conclusion. I, of course, cannot say I shall feel like this forever [has worked 5 years as ombudsman]. I hope it lasts a while longer!
 - * I think working alone really increases the stress, as well as if the office is not recognized by the administration. It increases the frustration because you can't be as effective.
 - * I love my job--90% of the time.
- I've become detached and regard that as healthy. You have to leave it at the end of the day--unless your clients really need you after hours, e.g., they are facing a formal hearing the next day and new information suddenly crops up.
- * I have had much the same feelings as a teacher. It ain't the job, it's me. How do you control for that?
 - * Only one year's experience--not yet on "stress syndrome."
 - * These questions assume far more personal contact than I experience. Question 22 may be misleading because people may use one or more of the listed items irregularly or for other reasons.
 - * As this is not a full-time job for me, I know my answers will screw results. Also, a big stress I deal with is having to answer to the administration and treat them with kid gloves in order to achieve results. Our efficiency is slowed down because we have to wade through the bureaucracy. Because we are a private university, the problems my office works with are much less severe than faced by universities of similar size.
 - * It's difficult to make qualitative judgments into quantifiable scores.
 - * A high level of satisfaction and effectiveness is due, in part I think, to the part-time nature of my position. I have been encouraged to work full-time but have chosen to remain at 75% time and hire additional help.
 - * My tenure was 4 years, so I fulfilled it and have recently left. A fewer year time horizon made the job easier to handle.
 - * My career involves teaching, research, writing, and serving as ombudsman.
 - * Since I am a full-time graduate student (working on a Ph.D.), it's hard to separate work pressures from school pressures.
 - * Working with problems which involve staff and faculty, sometimes I have to step on some toes in my role as an impartial. This drains one emotionally--they feel like I betray them when I do my job.

* Sometimes I am frustrated by being a "behind the scenes" person rather than a principal actor on the academic scene. At the same time, I enjoy being a behind the scenes person. I do the job well and do not question it. But, should I be doing some

different job instead? Why am I not a faculty dean, a broadcaster, a psychoanalyst, a librarian? Why am I this?

I've had high blood pressure, but it proceeded me in the job. I am more relaxed as an ombudsman than I was as a dean or vice chancellor. My greatest strain and tension comes from supervising clerical employees who do not share my feeling of individual responsibility on the job.

* My equanimity and calm about most of this may be temperamental but it a 'Iso must be said that, as a tenured professor, I have job security which many others do not have. In addition, I do this haltime, which means that I escape more than many other ombudsmen. Of course, I could carry problems around as constantly as any full-time [ombudsman] but I don't. That could be because of my academic security and the way my professorship compels me to do well in that area. And if I do, or if I try, then I'm automatically forgetful of what some ombudsmen are not virtually compelled to forget.

* Having a dual job really reduces the stress level as you are always doing different things. It does sometimes get a bit hairy, but still I find it great.

* Remember how new in my job I am [6 months]. I'll bet a lot of these answers will change in another 6 months.

* My ombudsman's position was created to help relieve problems between the faculty and the administration.

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rrwilson@uci.edu

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THE OMBUDSPERSON AND GENDER-RELATED ISSUES

California Caucus of College and University Ombudsman
UCI Ombudsman: The Journal 1993

Merle Waxman

Yale University The School of Medicine

Since arriving at Yale in the summer of 1986, I have served as Director of the office for Women in Medicine, a unique office which was established in 1975 to promote the academic growth and career development of physicians, scientists and students at Yale Medical School, especially women. In directing this office I have chosen to use my ombudsman skills and to implement the ombudsman concept at Yale Medical School. Interestingly, while Yale Medical School has an Office for Women in Medicine and an office for Minority Affairs, which was established more recently (1989), it has not established an ombudsman office to date. Nevertheless, the OWM functions, in large part, as an ombudsman office. It does this in two ways: First, in terms of its stated mission as a focal point for women in medicine and the medical sciences; in this regard, I have attached a paper describing some of the problems, progress and prospects for women in medicine as viewed from the perspective of the OWM. Second, the OWM serves de facto in a more general sense as a focus for non-litigational conflict resolution. Twenty-eight percent of contacts with the OWM are initiated by men.

Yale is somewhat different from Stanford Medical School, and has provided me with an interesting milieu in which to implement the ombudsman concept. The medical arena, from Palo Alto to New Haven, seems to be a fertile breeding ground for conflict, so there has been no shortage of interesting and important conflict. In implementing the ombudsman concept in medical settings, I have benefited greatly from my associations in Asilomar, and from the lessons that I have learned there.

Waxman, M.

Women in Medicine and the Medical Sciences:

Problems, Progress, and Prospects

MERLE WAXMAN

The past decade has seen a number of striking advances with respect to women in medicine and the

medical sciences. Enrollment of women in medical schools has increased steadily from approximately 6% in 1960 to 34% in 1987.¹ Notably, as measured by most academic yardsticks, graduate-level women students in medicine, science, and engineering perform as well as students as do their male counterparts in graduate school.¹ The number and percentage of women in residency programs have also risen steadily; from 19% in 1978 to 28% in 1987. In some specialties eg, pediatrics, women fill one half of the housestaff positions. Thus, the past several decades have witnessed an increasingly significant representation of women within medicine and the medical sciences.

Despite this, some significant problems remain. In this article I will briefly discuss some of the issues that face women in academic medicine as we approach the 1990s. I will also discuss some of the progress made with respect to women in medicine, and the prospects for future progress. Given the changing climate of medicine and the need to maintain within the medical profession a milieu in which each physician can perform at his or her highest level, these issues have implications not only for women but also for the medical profession at large.

A number of recent consensus reports characterize the academic medical environment as a 'chilly' one for women. One report, "The Campus Climate Revisited: Chilly for Women Faculty, Administrators, and Graduate Students,"³ focuses on the subtle ways in which women are treated differently from their male counterparts. These behaviors create an academic milieu that communicates to women that they are not quite 'firstclass' citizens in the academic community.

While there appear to be multiple causal factors at work in this situation, a number of issues (some of which appear to be remediable) emerge as especially important.

MERLE WAXMAN, Director, Office for Women in Medicine, Yale University School of Medicine, New Haven, CT.

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Role Model and Mentoring

"I had a male advisor. There was only one woman in the department and she did not have tenure ... and I worried about fitting into a field with no, or few women in it."

- Female medical student - fourth year

From my vantage point as Director of the Office for Women in Medicine at Yale, it appears very clear that role modeling and mentoring are very important ingredients in the medical training process, and that these aspects of medical training are less accessible to women than to men. Thus, women medical students have commented, "There is no senior woman faculty member I can talk to about my plans and aspirations"; "It seems to me that it's unlikely that I can succeed in academic medicine-there is no one like me who has really made it on the faculty"; or "I don't think I gained as much from my rotation as

my male partner. The attending always spoke to him as if I wasn't there."

While 34.3% of the entering students in U.S. medical schools are women, less than 19% of the full-time faculty currently are women, and only 9.4% of the women have attained the rank of full professor, whereas 31.5% of men have attained the rank of full professor. The number of women in senior administrative positions is even smaller. The paucity of women in senior positions has an important secondary effect on more junior women, ie, students and junior faculty.

It is well known that mentoring and role modeling are important prerequisites for success in academia.⁵ The need for effective mentoring does not end after undergraduate education. The absence of women in visible positions means that these important role models do not exist, or are rare for women at academic medical centers. While in many cases, male faculty make great efforts to attempt to assume the function of role models, sociological studies demonstrate that members of a minority (such as women) learn best from role models and mentors representing that minority.⁶ It is likely that the paucity of female mentors and role models has historically had an important negative effect in making it difficult for junior women to achieve their full potential. In addition, many women medical students, graduate students, housestaff, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty feel isolated from the networking and collegiality that goes on (and that may be essential for success) in their departments.

An important result is that women are, in part, excluded from the "professional socialization process."^{7,8} This distancing contributes to a slowing of progress in academics, which is manifest for some women at the early end of the pipeline. Progress along the academic ladder appears to depend, in part, upon positive feedback (ie, reward with more powerful and prestigious positions are often more readily available for those who have previously been promoted.)⁹ For the individual whose career is not yet launched, and for whom there is no role model, mentor, or advocate, the first step can seem impenetrable. Thus the situation can be a self-reinforcing one. Looked at in a more positive way, even a relatively brief exposure to an appropriate role model can have a very significant effect on an individual at the beginning of a career in medicine.

Critical Mau

"Everyone in the laboratory tried to be very nice to me, but I was the only woman. The other students spent early evenings on the squash courts. They took their books and I'm glad that they shared their ideas, but I wasn't part of the group."

- Female MD-PhD student

A second factor, which plays a strong role in helping to define the atmosphere for women in medicine, arises from the absence of a 'critical mass.' An important factor in the education, recruitment, and retention of any constituency is being part of a reasonably sized peer group. People are generally more comfortable in situations in which they are not the only one of a kind or one of a few.

This issue has become, for female students, a less pressing one since about one third of each entering medical school class is made up of women. Yet, on the wards, it often remains a man's world. In some cases male physicians have use of a physician's locker room while female physicians must share a locker with nursing staff. In other cases, a woman medical student, in the context of a ward team otherwise composed of men, may find herself being treated differently by the attending, who may ask her different types of questions from those asked of her male counterparts (or may not take her seriously and thus ask her no questions) on rounds. Sociological studies demonstrate that these forms of prejudice occur even in individuals who do not consciously harbor "bias" toward members of a minority, and are observed repeatedly in studies of classroom teaching." Kanter has demonstrated that minority members in a group are more likely to be excluded from informal interaction, not by deliberate choice, but from unconscious processes. Undoubtedly, these biases in teaching style take a significant toll. Interestingly, it appears that many of these biases can be corrected when pointed out to teachers. This emphasizes the significance of educating faculty members about perception bias, stereotyping, and the importance of critical mass.

The "critical mass effect" is especially pronounced, in terms of its gender-related manifestations, at the faculty level, where women are in a distinct minority. In this regard, a woman faculty member may find herself to be the only women on a committee, research team, or clinical unit, and may be subject (or feel that she is subject) to more pressures and a different type of scrutiny from those that are levied on her male counterparts.

The issue of critical mass will be an area of concern to women in medicine until female students, residents, and faculty begin to see more women in the positions that count in academic medicine. The solutions here center on the development of adequate numbers of women in medicine and its various specialties, and on education of all concerned, especially teachers, so that they can try to counteract the subtle but far-reaching effects of the "critical mass" issue.

Flexibility

"When I told my chairman I was pregnant he suggested that I switch to a nontenure track job. He never thought that I might want to combine a tenure track career with childrearing."

- Junior faculty member

A significant set of concerns center on flexibility vis-avis academic progress. Female scholars do not want standards lowered to allow them to progress up the academic ladder. However, granting that rigorous standards will be maintained, it is nevertheless true that women encounter significant difficulties when they try to merge the demands of academia with the demands of family and parenting. Despite trends toward equal sharing of parental responsibilities in our society, parenting is still likely to remain predominantly an activity of women.

Conflicting needs of family and profession may make it difficult for some women to attain the rigorous standards that we want to protect, unless a more appropriate time-scale is used in evaluating their

progress. Temporal flexibility in the time-line of the academic ladder must be introduced, since women and some men (even welltrained and highly motivated ones) cannot always progress along the academic time-line without interruption. In attempting to correct this situation, it is important to differentiate inappropriately slow progress from satisfactory progress that has been interrupted by responsibilities to society or family. A gap in the activity of an individual who is raising a family should not be confused with a lack of ability, interest, or ambition. The point here is not to lower standards of excellence, but rather to introduce a time-line in which each player has a reasonable chance of displaying his or her best work, so that it can be fairly judged. In some cases, it may be appropriate for judgments to be made on the basis of quality as well as quantity of work. For individuals with active family responsibilities, it seems reasonable to suggest that academic progress (ie, research output) should be judged by high standards, but within a more appropriate time frame. ¹³ This may require "stopping the academic tenure clock" during periods of child-rearing. Flexible schedules (which build upon strengths rather than weaknesses) and effective maternity and child-rearing leave policies should be developed, as well as part-time positions which will capitalize on the potential contributions of women to the academic community.

Perception Bias

"When I needed to limit my on-call hours during the last month of my pregnancy, I was told I wasn't fulfilling my obligations. However when John hurt his knee skiing and needed time off for physical therapy, it was treated as perfectly acceptable."

- Second-year house officer During the past 20 years, women have made progress in entering and pursuing academic careers; however, perceptual sex bias, which is often unconscious and unintentional, continues to disadvantage women in the academic advancement process.

There is considerable evidence that women are perceived as less effective than men when performing at comparable levels in the academic arena. There is a stereotypical view of men as authority figures; this perception often translates into higher status, salary, and prestige. Stereotypes of women in some cases reflect feelings of subordinate position and deference to authority figures. This perception bias can have pervasive effects on academic advancement evaluation. Research has demonstrated:

- that men are promoted and tenured more often and more quickly than women with comparable credentials; ¹⁴ - that in a review of articles identical except for the name of the writer, those with male authorship are rated as being better and more significant than those with female authorship;

- that requests for promotion and support to attend professional development conferences are granted more often to men than to women presenting identical credentials and justification; ¹⁶

- that competent men are consistently viewed as more competent than competent women; ¹⁷ and

- that chairs of academic departments evaluating CVs of PhDs suggested an average rank of "assistant

professor" for women while identical records merited "associate professor" status for men.18

It will become increasingly important, over the coming years, to educate administrators, as well as those serving on appointment and promotion committees,

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With respect to such issues as perception bias and genderrelated discrimination. Training of this type can undoubtedly lead to more accurate assessment of performance. Especially as the number of-applicants to medical school drops, 19 it "I become increasingly important for medical institutions to learn to select the most highly qualified individuals.

Support Systems

"I always wanted to be a surgeon and I know I could have been a good clinician. I wanted to practice in a rural community. But I couldn't find child care. It wouldn't have been realistic to continue surgery." - Third-year surgical resident

We recently carried out a survey in order to gather data as to why female housestaff chose particular career paths. Surprisingly, gender-related prejudice and discrimination, family expectations, and pressures from spouse, played less of a role in discouraging women from entering demanding specialties than the absence of palpable support systems. In particular, women expressed a need for support systems such as adequate child care. There is good news here. This issue does not revolve around philosophical arguments but, on the contrary, is an operational one. The primary issue in solving this problem is the economic cost, which can be large. However, other industrial countries have solved this problem, and established child care centers on a widely accessible basis.

In practical terms, it is essential to turn attention to the interface with the family, and to develop mechanisms which facilitate comfortable and productive movement between home environment and academic workplace. This is being done to an increasingly large degree in the industrial sector, and we should urge the health care industry to keep pace.

Prospects and Suggestions

Some specific ways in which progress in medicine for women can be attained are as follows: * Child care centers can be established in a number of forms, and have been shown to be a cost-effective way to maximize input of women in a professional workplace. It may be necessary to examine and possibly to restructure the present system in order to develop mechanisms that facilitate comfortable and productive movement between home environment and academic workplace. It will be important to develop programs that make it possible for women to remain active participants in their departments during the early childbearing years. In addition, it is important to recognize the fact that work can occasionally be done at home; sometimes productivity at home can exceed that at the laboratory. * The tenure clock

should be set for any given individual so as to take into account special personal, gender-related, and societal needs. This may mean delaying a decision on tenure or 'stopping the clock' when appropriate. It should again be emphasized that this does not imply a lowering of the criteria for tenure. Several universities have introduced 'stop-the-clock- programs which enable women who are raising children to have tenure decisions postponed.²⁰ Changing the tenure clock does not imply a wavering of standards, but it does provide a mechanism so that each individual can perform to full potential prior to being judged. * "Parenting leave" policies should be explored. Given the changing nature of family life in our time, this pertains equally to men (paternity leave) and to women (maternity leave).

Until academic medical centers appoint more women, departments seeking to retain women faculty members must help them combat their professional and social isolation. This commitment must be visible and real.

Chairpersons must signal, in very explicit terms, the commitment of the departments to men and women irrespective of gender. Educational seminars and candid discussion of gender-related issues at department meetings should be encouraged. Administrators, as well as faculty, should be trained so that they can recognize and attempt to deal with perception biases.

Another significant way in which an institution can provide a more supportive working environment for women is by establishing, at a very visible level, a locus where issues of women in medicine can be addressed. The importance of doing this at an institutional level cannot be over-emphasized. The Office for Women in Medicine at Yale, in this regard, serves an important function by its mere presence-it represents, in very visible terms, a clear "statement" emphasizing the institutional commitment to women.

By establishing an Office for Women in Medicine, the administration can play a critical role by providing leadership, legitimizing women's issues and concerns, and setting the tone for others to follow. Some specific ways in which an Office for Women in Medicine can contribute are as follows:

By providing women students and faculty access to advisors and mentors, as well as faculty and other students.

By developing mechanisms to bring leading women in the medical field to the medical center as speakers and to present their research.

* By allowing students and other trainees to have access to professional women in an informal setting. Students will be interested in learning how successful women in medicine balance family and careers, and how they deal with other issues.

By sponsoring regular workshops and seminars to discuss career opportunities and issues of concern to women in medicine.

* By inviting successful alumnae to interact and be role models for students and younger faculty.

Despite significant advances, a number of major problems continue to face women in medicine. Those problems constitute an especially difficult hurdle for women in training in medicine, and this problem has the potential to grow as the number of women in medical training expands. At the same time, these problems should not be viewed as insoluble. As outlined above, there are a number of very effective mechanisms available for bridging the gender gap. Over the next few years, medical institutions will, we hope, begin to implement these mechanisms on a more widespread basis. This undoubtedly will be reflected by increasing opportunities for women to grow and contribute to our medical care system.

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rrwilson@uci.edu

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CONCEPTUALIZING THE OMBUDSMAN OFFICE

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Janis Schonauer & Ron Wilson

University of California, Irvine

In the movie "Excalibur," King Arthur, after enjoying an abundance of peace and prosperity that he attained for himself and his people, falls on hard times due to the wickedness of his half-sister, Morgan le Fay and her son, Sir Mordred. Feeling frustrated, confused, and fatigued after his numerous battles with the wicked twosome, King Arthur (bereft of the wise counsel of Merlin the Magician during these several trials and tribulations) angrily strides to a wall overlooking the French battleground; rhythmically pounds on the cold stone; and sadly laments, "Merlin, where are you? Merlin, where are you when I most need your wise counsel? Merlin, where are you?" Suddenly, Merlin appears and King Arthur asks, "Is it truly you, Merlin, or just a dream?" Merlin nonchalantly throws up his hands; tauntingly replies, "A dream to some, a nightmare to others!"; and, quickly disappears. This poignant excerpt from an ancient fairy tale also describes the modern ombudsman -- a dream to some; a nightmare to others.

In present-day reality, the ombudsman plays two primary roles in a university setting -- that of a "truth teller" and that of an "institutional conscience." Therefore, the ombudsman becomes an advocate for equity who owes allegiance to neither an individual nor a particular segment of the campus, but rather to the whole university community. Thus, the message conveyed in the ombudsman's function may not be flattering or pleasant, (or for that matter, unflattering or unpleasant) but rather an honest attempt to efficiently and effectively provide justice via the policies and procedures of the institution.

Nevertheless, the need for a university ombudsman is clearly visible when the heretofore unspoken or undiscovered issues become easily defined and openly discussed. Topics such as date rape; spousal, drug, and child abuse; AIDS; equal rights for Gay and Lesbian students, faculty, and staff; sexism; sexual harassment; employee whistle blowing; computer thefts; and a host of other flagrant behavior have served to shape the role of the university ombudsman as a necessity more than any other well-intentioned viewpoint purported during the last five years. Moreover, when one considers that cheating, plagiarism, and forgery are common problems among students and that disputes regarding working conditions, evaluations, promotions, salaries, and terminations are universal grievances among faculty and staff, the increased demand to add a university ombudsman to the existing administrators is not surprising. Having cited the university community's recognized need for an ombudsman, two accompanying components can be included: "How should the ombudsman Office operate?" and "What

does the Ombudsman Office need to operate efficiently and effectively?"

It is a time-honored adage that the Ombudsman office must operate under an aura of confidentiality. If the Ombudsman office is to meet the unique challenge of doing "the right thing" regarding a particular issue by finding "the appropriate avenues" to take in facilitating a resolution to complex problems, then, the tenet of confidentiality must be thoroughly understood and fully supported. However, unfortunately, in many cases one finds that confidentiality is most acceptable to those in authority until it directly impacts them or calls into question their actions. For example, if Grievant A complains about the teaching policy of Authority Figure B, but wishes to remain anonymous, Authority Figure B may wish to know the identity of his accuser and cite "due process" as his right to directly challenge or question Grievant A. However, if Grievant A is investigating a matter not directly related to the decisions of Authority Figure B, the tenet of confidentiality will usually be supported without question. In addition, if the tenet of confidentiality is maintained, the ombudsman's investigation runs smoothly and can be focused more on the problem rather than on the credibility of those raising the grievance. If confidentiality can be guaranteed, many individuals prefer to solve their problems in the informal context of an Ombudsman Office rather than through the more formal procedures utilized in the Offices of Affirmative Action; Human Resources; Personnel; or their Employee Union. Indeed, it is often the supportive atmosphere of collaborative discussion (coupled with the objective to assist the grievant in understanding the policies and procedures surrounding the issue as well as the possible alternatives) that makes the Ombudsman Office an ideal setting to resolve personal complaints. However, to realize these goals, certain commitments from key campus control points must be obtained by the Ombudsman Office. And, to assure that the tenet of confidentiality is continually preserved and equally applied, it must incorporate two other entities -- trust and respect.

Trust and respect are essential to the informal process of dispute resolution because they denote both the Administration's confidence in the Ombudsman office and the fact that the Ombudsman office is not required to support the Administration's position on controversial policies and procedures. When trust and respect for the autonomy of the Ombudsman Office exist and are consistently demonstrated, the Administration's posture is usually strengthened. In addition, trust and respect enable the beneficial collaboration (which is required to resolve the dispute between two opposing parties) to happen. Furthermore, a genuine collaborative effort can eliminate the need for costly litigation involving leaves of absence due to work-related stress; monetary awards through workman's compensation for stress-related injuries; or lengthy health reviews of a contentious work environment. In tandem with the precept of confidentiality, is the accessibility the ombudsman possesses to research and investigate the questions brought to the Ombudsman Office. If the broad mandate of the ombudsman is to be truly manifested, the Administration must provide complete and timely access to the information that the ombudsman needs to resolve a dilemma. This principle is best achieved by having the ombudsman report directly to the chief campus administrator. Such a reporting relationship will ensure that the necessary information is readily available. It will also protect the ombudsman's ability to deal directly with the appropriate departments.

Another important facet in the "modus operandi schema" is the availability of the ombudsman. The ombudsman's availability should not be confined to the Ombudsman Office. Rather, true availability is

best demonstrated by the willingness of the ombudsman to meet at "off-site locations" or at "other-than-regular working hours" to accommodate the needs of staff who are seeking assistance, but who wish to remain anonymous.

If the tenet of confidentiality; accessibility to information, documents, and key players; and, flexible availability are imperative in creating an environment conducive to the successful fulfillment of the ombudsman office's mission, what are the material conditions needed to meet these requisites?

Physical setting is absolutely essential for the beneficial utilization of the ombudsman Office. The location of the ombudsman office may seem insignificant until one realizes that on most university and college campuses, space is at a premium. This admission underlies the fact that, often, space is the subject of dispute because "placement" makes a visual statement apropos of the office's importance and the support it receives from the Administration. "Placement" can also determine the office's accessibility to those who will use the services of the ombudsman. Consequently, "placement" can almost predict the success or failure of the ombudsman office because it affects the attitudes of both the clients and the employees who provide client-services. In addition, the office setting must be confidential, secure, pleasant, and mindful of both the visitors and the professionals who work in the environment. Finally, if there is one office where the "stacking of individuals" is highly detrimental to both the services provided and the morale of the staff who provide these services, the Ombudsman office warrants "first place." And, this fact is not to be taken lightly, because the primary function of the ombudsman is to listen to complaints and to actively participate in the resolution of these turbulent concerns and volatile issues. Similarly, these duties are performed on a daily basis; frequently at a moment's notice; and, in situations involving a "real" or "perceived" crisis.

The Ombudsman office also should be allocated specific tangible and intangible resources to realize the goals and meet the demands of the job. While such things as office supplies and workstations are a given, computers that are capable of storing files and providing access to administrative data, a copy machine, and a FAX machine are equally necessary. In addition, such instruments as beepers and an internal alarm system (i.e., a button under the ombudsman desk which can alert the Campus Police to a possible emergency) are excellent devices to prevent major catastrophes. Adequate storage space for files is necessary for efficient and "timely" retrieval. It is noteworthy that some of the concerns and grievances are brought to the ombudsman office by people close to the "edge." Consequently, the ombudsman runs the risk of providing information that can push some of these people "over that edge." The determining factor in "how" the grievant will handle the bad news often resides in the speed and accuracy with which a case can be resolved. To this end, resources such as access to files and records; administrative support; key personnel contacts; and, the knowledge that comes from professional training and development via contact with colleagues are mandatory for the effective usage and full realization of the ombudsman Office. Therefore, this area requires a budget that recognizes the services provided by the ombudsman Office and adequately funds the support materials, workshops, and publicity inherent in conflict resolution and dispute mediation.

Finally, the ombudsman needs a salary which reflects the responsibility of the position. The risks taken daily by the ombudsman in the continuous dealings with the pain, anger, and frustrations of the campus

community must be considered. The salary level should take into account the physical and psychological demands of the job. The elements of controversy, odd hours, and seeing the university members at their worst must be calculated in the same margins as the more traditional means of determining salary. Due to the visibility of the ombudsman and the tendency by others to see this office as "the one" able to solve -- or not solve -- all problems, the ombudsman can easily become a target. In recognition of this, the university may elect to provide additional personal liability and life insurance coverage for the ombudsman.

While all of the above statements seem obvious and logical, many an ombudsman Office will undertake and perform their responsibilities without even the barest of these necessities. Because of their commitment to the community they serve and the commission of their office, they forego the amenities and work with little regard for personal or professional welfare.

Finally, there are many benefits derived by the university from the presence of an effective Ombudsman Office. The ombudsman has the ability to respond to issues quickly and to defuse situations which -- left untended -- would result in prolonged dissension or lawsuits against the university. The ombudsman allows the university to put a human face on what could otherwise be characterized as a cold bureaucracy. The information gathered by the ombudsman allows the university to respond in a way which reduces tensions, dispels divisiveness, and enhances the "community spirit." For these cogent and valid reasons, the ombudsman office deserves the unequivocal support of the university. And, the benefits the university receives will be directly related to the quality of support it provides to the Ombudsman Office.

rrwilson@uci.edu

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THE CONTRIBUTORS

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Ferdinand A. Ermlich

Ferdinand has been the College Ombudsman at the State University of New York College at Oneonta for the past twenty years. Since 1971, he has taught a "Seminar in Dispute Settlement," which studies the use of mediation as an alternative dispute resolution process for conflict in the community sector. In 1983 he founded AGREE (A Center for Dispute Settlement in Otsego County). Recently, he was elected President of the Board of Trustees of the Mediation Service, Inc., a non-profit organization which provides mediation services for Otsego County citizens under the New York CDRC Program (Community Dispute Resolution Centers). In addition, he is a charter member of SPIDR and in 1976 he was appointed a panel member of Mediators and Fact Finders for PERB (Public Employment Relations Board, State of New York). Ferdinand holds degrees from Syracuse University, St. Bonaventure University, and the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations.

Howard Gadlin

Dr. Gadlin is the present University Ombudsman and a Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. As the University Ombudsman, Dr. Gadlin serves on the following committees: Chair of the "University Sexual Harassment Educational Committee"; "Human Relations Council"; and "University Mediation Project." Dr. Gadlin is a former president of UCOA.

Janis Schonauer

Janis was appointed the Assistant Ombudsman at the University of California, Irvine in October 1989. Her prior work experience includes: Social Worker in both Illinois and Michigan; Group Counselor and Probation Officer in Belmont, California; Police/Community Relations Specialist with the Orange County Human Relations Commission; and administrative positions at California State University, Fullerton and the University of California, Irvine.

Lois Price Spratlen

Dr. Price Spratlen began her tenure at the University of Washington in 1972 as a faculty member in the Psychosocial Nursing Department. In 1982 she was appointed the Ombudsman for Sexual Harassment and in 1988 she became the University Ombudsman. Dr. Price Spratlen holds degrees from Hampton Institute, University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of Washington. At present, she is Associate Professor of Psychosocial Nursing and a board certified therapist in adult psychiatric and

mental health nursing practice. Because of her work with hospitals, clinics, and public social service agencies, Dr. Price Spratlen frequently serves as an expert witness in sexual harassment cases and continues to publish her findings on this subject.

Carolyn Stieber

Carolyn is a member of the Political Science faculty at Michigan State University, East Lansing and specializes in state and local politics. In 1974 she was chosen to succeed Michigan State University's first ombudsman and has successfully completed her 16th year in the position. A former president of UCOA, Carolyn recently presented a paper at the Australian ombudsman conference which has been published in *The Arbitration Journal*. Professor Stieber is active in the Canadian Ombudsmen conferences, the International Ombudsman Institute, and SPIDR. Carolyn is presently organizing the session she will moderate at the October 1991 SPIDR Conference.

M. Katherine Uetz

Kitty has been the Ombudsman at the University of Cincinnati for almost ten years. Interested in several ramifications of the stress inherent in the Ombudsman profession, Kitty continues to conduct surveys on the "burn-out level" and other work-related factors upon her fellow US and Canadian ombudsmen for publication in scientific papers. In addition, Kitty devotes a great deal of her time and talents to addressing the national needs of ombudsmen apropos of gaining increased support and opportunities for skill development. At present, Kitty is at-large member of the UCOA Board of Directors.

Merle Waxman

Merle is the Director of the Office for Women in Medicine at the Yale University School of Medicine. In this role, she directs programs aimed at promoting growth and career development of physicians, scientists, and students, especially women. The Office serves as a focal point for a wide spectrum of concerns, both general and specific, from all sectors of the School of Medicine. Merle holds degrees from Boston University and from City College New York. Merle is the author of several papers on the application of the ombudsperson concept to medical settings, on nonlitigious problem resolution, and on gender-related issues in education.

Ron Wilson

Ron Wilson has served as UCI's only ombudsman since coming to the University of California, Irvine. During his tenure, the title evolved from Campus Ombudsman to University Ombudsman to University Ombudsman and Assistant to the Executive Vice Chancellor, and presently, is Assistant Vice Chancellor University Ombudsman. Concurrent with the last change, the Faculty & Staff Assistance Program was placed under the jurisdiction of the ombudsman Office. Active in several professional ombudsmen organizations, this is Ron's second contributing effort as the Compiler/Editor of the CCCUO Journal.

rrwilson@uci.edu

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