The Troops May Be Home, But Do Wars End for Families? 
Perspectives From Pauline Boss

War and Families

The war in the Persian Gulf has not only increased the stress on military families, it has also heightened the sense of helplessness and anxiety in all kinds of families. In this short space, I will highlight just a few points.

There are always two victims when someone is hurt by war or terrorism: the person directly involved and the family back home. Only recently have we been paying attention to the loved ones of soldiers, prisoners of war, hostages, and those still missing in action.

Unless we study and support these families, the trauma they experienced will have a lasting impact on subsequent generations. Having lived with a hostile environment, with torture, with danger and with killing, the returning soldier brings home accumulated stress and memories which are inconceivable to those at home. Coming home requires adjustment for both the returnee and the family.

Wars are, for many families, never over. When someone you love is still missing in action, there can be no real closure. When someone you love comes back home but is no longer the person you knew before they went, there is also an unclear loss.

While there are many theories about family loss, separation and stress, my work differs because its central focus is on ambiguity. It is not the loss that causes the most stress for families, but rather the ambiguity about the loss. Families can handle almost anything if they know the facts about the event. But if there are none, if they are in limbo, it is much harder to cope.

Finally, it is important to note that this model for working with families stressed by war and its aftermath is not a model of pathology. It is instead a family stress model. The assumption is that the families are stressed by a situation that is crazy. This is a new approach to working with traumatized families and one that fits well within the mission of Family Social Science and the College of Human Ecology.

Perspectives From Constance Fabunmi

From Nicaragua

Wars are never brief, no matter how few the days spent in physical combat. In addition to the physical trauma of combat, hunger, exhaustion, and bodily misery, those who participate in wars, even peripherally, are victims of an onslaught of intense emotions, responses to the horror of being surrounded by death and the bloody mutilation of bodies, of being compelled to kill others in order to survive, and other emotions which must be suppressed in order to survive. During the war, families of combatants live in constant fear of “bad news.” The end of the war is cause for elation and relief. Yet the psychological aftermath lasts for years, for generations. It is these long-lasting effects which I address here.

My direct experience of war has been in Nicaragua, working with an emotional health project in a rural war zone. This low intensity conflict differed from wars of the past, where, presumably, targets were military and it was considered a “crime” to kill civilians intentionally. The Contra attacked schools, health clinics, farming cooperatives, food warehouses, and they ambushed public transport vehicles. Often victims were mutilated and their bodies left where their families could find them.

In December, 1988, I found myself in El Cua, a small rural town, made up mostly of families displaced by the war. Many had fled remote farms (often after a family member had been kidnapped) for the relative safety of a town with a small army unit garrisoned nearby. Within the town there was a sense of “we’re all in this together and we must help each other to go on,” a sense of collective effort and purpose.

According to the results of a survey completed in 1989, the war had a devastating effect on the emotional health of the people. Results indicated that over 90% suffered from extreme anxiety, acute depression, feelings of

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The results of a 1990 survey are similar to those of 1989: 95% suffer from extreme anxiety, 89% suffer from acute depression, 95% say they have lost interest in living, 47% have had thoughts of suicide (23% of the those had thought of an actual plan).

Children are as devastated by war as are adults. Although they were not interviewed as part of the above surveys, I saw several troubled children in the clinic, usually with their mothers. I had many conversations with groups of rural school teachers who have daily contact with traumatized children. From these sources, as well as from informal observations, I learned much about the potential insidious effects that war can have on the lives of children.

Many of the children, traumatized by their experiences related to the war, developed symptoms of anxiety, aggressiveness, bed-wetting and phobias. An 8-year old refused to leave the house, so great was his terror of leaving the "safety" of home. An 11-year old had "spells" when her hands clenched into fists, so tightly locked that it was impossible for anyone, including herself, to unbend her fingers. Sometimes this symptom lasted for days, leaving her incapacitated. The teachers cited learning problems and said that traumatized children often appeared to be "retarded." The children seemed to be "nervous" and "worried," and were unable to sit still or to concentrate. They often forgot things. Some isolated themselves from other children as well as from adults. Some children cried often.

Desperation, and 58% had thoughts of suicide.

On returning to El Cua in 1990 (post-war and post-election), the situation was different. Consumer goods were in abundance, but almost no one had money to buy them. The return of the Resistance and their families, in addition to creating problems for towns, municipalities and local governments, also engendered daily conflict and tension on an interpersonal and familial level. The problems of "national reconciliation" were being enacted in the microcosm of the family. It became obvious that nearly every family in this area was split, divided between the Resistance and those who had supported the Sandinista government. The Contra war had in fact been a civil war, one in which brother had fought against brother.

With the end of the war the conflicts did not disappear. Some made an effort to bury the tension, but it continued to resurface, erupting in conflicts that tore at the fabric of both families and the community. In El Cua, as well as in other parts of Nicaragua, people tend to focus on the immediate problems of providing food and clothing for their children, rather than deal with past traumas. In general the attitude is, "The war is over, let's get on with our lives."

Unfortunately, it's not so easy. Despite this determined effort to "bury" the war, its devastating effects remain, including loss of energy and will to participate in rebuilding of community, to engage in hope for the future.

Perspectives From Dan Detzner

"Their Face is Full of Tears All the Time"

President Bush recently declared with great pride to the United States Congress and the American people that the war in the Persian Gulf was over after only 11 hours of ground combat. I was startled by that statement since my own research on elderly refugees from Southeast Asia has so clearly demonstrated that, for the persons who live through armed conflict in their homelands, the war is never really over.

It has been 16 years since the last American soldier left hurriedly from the rooftop of the embassy in Saigon, yet the ripple effects of that conflict continue to reverberate through the lives of countless families from Southeast Asia. More than 36,000 of those persons have come to Minnesota seeking asylum from the strife which continues today in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. The dangerous problems of adjustment in a modern Western country means that the fight for survival from the last sustained American armed conflict continues today right here on our doorsteps.

Some would make the ethnocentric argument that these refugees are the fortunate ones since they now live in a wealthy nation that has historically made room for the wretched castoffs of many lands. The life histories of the elderly refugees gathered in our research show a very different side of the Indochinese war and the resettlement process. Many of the 40 persons we interviewed have family members scattered on 2 or 3 continents. They are unsure of the whereabouts of kin and do not know whether they are alive or dead. Confucian traditions require ancestor worship rituals which ensure that deceased

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Focus on Cultural Diversity

Drs. Harriette and John McAdoo.

McAdoos Offer Insights When Visiting University

In April, Dr. Harriette Pipes McAdoo and Dr. John McAdoo were hosted by the College of Human Ecology, Department of Family Social Science and the School of Social Work for a week focusing on cultural diversity and African American families. The week’s highlight was a day-long workshop featuring the McAdoos delivering the Biester-Young and the Stegeman lecture series. The lectures, “Family Values Expressed by African American Adults” by Harriette McAdoo and “The Family Roles of African American Fathers” presented by John McAdoo, were the basis for the day which also included question/answer sessions and small group discussions. Small groups were facilitated by graduate students in Family Social Science and Social Work. The Family Social Science facilitators included William Allen, Celvia Dobbins, Julie Palacio and Wilma Ruffin. Over 250 people attended the workshop which attracted faculty, staff, and students from the University of Minnesota as well as a wide range of human service practitioners from agencies in the Twin Cities area.

Dr. Harriette Pipes McAdoo is a professor in the School of Social Work at Howard University in Washington, D.C. Her book, Black Families, is in its second edition and seventh printing (Sage Publications). Dr. John McAdoo is Associate Professor in the School of Social Work and Community Planning at the University of Maryland. His chapter in Fatherhood Today (Bronstein and Cowan, Eds., 1988) discussed the role of the father in African American families. Both have numerous other publications and are involved in a wide range of research projects and professional organizations.

The following are comments by two Family Social Science students who participated in the workshop and were small group discussion leaders.

Student Perspectives on the McAdoo Visit

Celvia Stoval Dobbins

The McAdoo workshop on black families opened the doors to a refreshing opportunity for educational awareness. It challenged and hopefully dispelled many of the myths and misconceptions surrounding black families. The workshop also provided an excellent opportunity for researchers, educators, and practitioners to engage in dialogue about theories, practices, and perspectives relating to black families. They stimulated our thinking process.

Three key areas were discussed in our small groups following the presentations. The first two were demographics and intergenerational values of black families. It seemed apparent that many in the group had never considered the economic factors that come into play when looking at the demographics of black families. Too often we are led to believe that many single parent families exist because males and females do not desire marriage; this myth is further compounded by two additional myths which suggest blacks prefer unemployment and dependency on social service programs. Dr. Harriette McAdoo’s demographic information and research findings indicated that a strong work ethic and independence from the larger society are important intergenerational values of black families.

The role of black fathers in the family sparked some interesting discussions. The role of black men in the family is often misinterpreted or de-emphasized. The black father is usually seen as an invisible man who is not active in and has no power, control or interest in the socialization of his children. This leads to the misconception that black families are based on a matriarchal family system, thus setting the stage for society to paint a bleak picture of the black man while neglecting factors within the infrastructure that impact on these men. During group discussion, social service professionals indicated that this presentation helped them to view the role of black fathers in a more positive manner. Many asked for suggestions on ways they could more positively approach black men in family therapy situations.

The McAdoo workshop was only a beginning to viewing black families with a positive perspective. It is my hope that participants left the workshop with the understanding that although black families are similar to other ethnic groups, they are also different, and these differences should be both recognized and respected.
fathers neglect the reality of sexism and the fact that not all African-American fathers abandon their wives and children. Such statements also miss the roles of extended family members (e.g., uncles and brothers) in the lives of African-American families. Rather than excusing the very real issue of single-female households, new and clearer views are called for to help us better understand how many families have attempted to cope under stressful conditions.

Another series of observations concerned the many obstacles which prevent African-American families from obtaining adequate health and mental health services. One of the questions which surfaced was “Are these services being provided informally within the African-American community now?” As there were many service providers in the group, we attempted to explore how the current delivery system would need to change in order for more individuals and families to use these services. The seminar gave us all an opportunity to consider what each could do to move forward in understanding African-American families.

Multiculturalization of the Curriculum

Paul Rosenblatt

Last summer I was one of 21 University of Minnesota faculty members to participate in the second annual intensive month-long workshop on incorporating multicultural and feminist thought into the curriculum. The workshop, sponsored by the University of Minnesota’s Center for Advanced Feminist Studies, connects the University to nationwide efforts at curriculum transformation. These efforts are intended to change what is taught and how it is taught so that the realities, experiences, and achievements of people of color, women, the poor, and others who are not well treated in the standard curriculum can be given full recognition and respect. The intent is a curriculum that speaks to all and that allows all to speak.

For years, I have been teaching from culturally sensitive and feminist perspectives, but the workshop experience has challenged me to move much farther in dealing with racism, sexism, ethnocentrism, classism, and homophobia in myself, in the theories, research, the curriculum of the family field, and in the ways I have been teaching. My experience in the workshop has moved me into a process of changing everything about what and how I teach. Changes that big are exciting and difficult. I feel at times a clumsy beginner despite 30 years as a faculty member. But the changes I am making must be made. The family field must be alive to diversity, deal with the realities of all families, and connect with all students.

Professors Shirley Zimmerman and Dan Dettzner from Family Social Science will participate in the workshop this summer.
Alumni Profile

Susan Hartman
By Roger Light

I am occasionally given the pleasure of interviewing someone who has done what I dearly hope to do someday: become a successful professional involved in interesting cultural projects. Susan Hartman has done this with flying colors—the colors are red, white and blue and red and gold. Susan is co-director of Connect US-USSR.

Driving to Connect US-USSR on East Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis, I couldn't imagine being any further from Soviet culture. Everything around me was Midwest Americana to a tee: the Mississippi River, the convenience stores, the auto repair shops. Once inside Susan's office, however, my perspective was dramatically altered. I found myself surrounded by works of Soviet art. Small, yet intricately detailed porcelain sculptures, vases, tea sets and serving items of all kinds adorned every surface of the room. Despite the splendid distractions, I managed to ascertain at least a sketch of how Susan arrived at her present position.

After receiving a Masters degree in Family Social Science, Susan began working for Family and Children Services. Troubled by the high rate of recidivism among the abusers in the domestic abuse program, Susan became instrumental in developing domestic abuse programs that emphasized learning alternative, constructive interactions. "It's important to teach replacement behaviors that are non-violent—it isn't enough to simply say 'don't do this'." In 1983, Susan received an M.A. in Counseling from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul.

Susan made her first trip to the Soviet Union with her good friend Paula DeCosse and their children in 1984 (prior to Glasnost and Perestroika). By the time they returned, each had started what would become an enduring connection between their professional lives in America and the lives of professionals in the Soviet Union. In 1984 they joined forces to create the non-profit organization Connect US-USSR. Susan's first project with the Soviet Union was the Symposium on Family in the US and USSR. "Although this was still prior to Glasnost, people were willing to develop family projects." Countless exchange projects have followed. Since 1984, Connect has grown from an all-volunteer organization to a professional agency with a four-person staff in Minnesota and staff in the Soviet Union.

The last thing I asked Susan was to tell me about one of her favorite memories concerning her work with the Soviet Union. She pointed to a series of photographs of mountain landscapes and told me about flying by helicopter into the Altai Mountains to visit a farm village. "Landing on a farm in the mountains where people hadn't seen Americans since World War II—staying with an extended family and breaking new ground with them was tremendous--I would say that epitomizes the mission that we seek to accomplish."

Candyce Russell Endowed

Dr. Candyce Russell has been awarded an endowed chair, named in honor of Vera Mowery McAvinch, at Kansas State University. She received her Ph.D in Family Social Science with Dr. David Olson. Dr. Russell is the Director of the Family Therapy Program at Kansas State.

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family members will protect them and that they will not be forgotten after their own death. Having left their homes without photographs or other cherished objects that help them to celebrate these important rituals, the traditions are being lost by elders and forgotten by young Asian-American children who have little interest in ancient family traditions. Filial piety traditions, which have historically structured virtually all relationships inside and outside the family, are seriously strained in this modern Western environment where individualism and self-realization are valued over ancestral practices.

We should not be so glib as to declare the war a victory for our side and begin to cheer the conquerors. The war in the Persian Gulf will never end for the hundreds of thousands of families who lost a family member in the conflict and for those who are displaced refugees. An old Vietnamese woman we interviewed summarized the feelings of millions of distraught war victims when asked how her peers were adjusting to life as refugees when she said, "Their face is full of tears all the time."

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while others became easily angered; many see-sawed between the two.

Children whose families had returned from Contra camps in Honduras had no memories of life in Nicaragua to draw upon to help them in "resettling." The teachers saw these "refugee" children as "more disturbed" than the local children who had also lived through war traumas.

Administrative Staff News

Pam Videen and Sue Payette received "Outstanding Professional Development" awards at the College of Human Ecology 1990-1991 Civil Service Awards Recognition Ceremony. Dorothea Berggren was also honored for her 15 years of service.
Graduate Student News

The following students completed their final Ph.D. orals during the past academic year. Many congratulations to them on their fine work.

Wayne Caron  
*Dementia of the Alzheimer’s Type: Influence of Caregiver and Family Outpatient Behavior*  
Pauline Boss

Donna H. Christensen  
*The Use of Self-Report In Understanding Perception During Transition to Parenthood: A Multimethod Approach*  
Geraldine Gage

Steve Erickson  
*Families of Children with Well Managed Asthma: A Family Interaction Study Based Upon the Circumplex Model of Family Systems*  
David Olson

Ann Williams Garwick  
*Shared Family Perceptions of Life with Dementia of the Alzheimer’s Type*  
Pauline Boss/Dan Detzner

Dale Hawley  
*Enriching the Transition: An Evaluation of Three Marital Enrichment Programs*  
David Olson

Barbara Gahnz Lonsdorf  
*Effect of Expressed Emotion, Role Strain, and Parenting Mastery on the Behavior of Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder*  
William Doherty

Wilma Jean Ruffin  
*Paternal Involvement of Divorced Fathers Related to Marital Status, Custody Arrangements, and Perception of Adequacy of Child Support Paid*  
Kathy Rettig

Joyce Stockton  
*Circumplex Model and Families With an Emotionally Disturbed Child: A Multi-Method Evaluation*  
David Olson

Jeanette Truchsess  
*Family Sexual Abuse: Correlations Between Sexual Abuse, Interventions, and Victim and Family Status*  
Jim Maddock

Other Graduate Student News

Deborah Frawel received the Twin City Home Economists in Home and Community graduate scholarship for the 1991-92 academic year.

Julie Palacio was recently selected to serve on the President’s Chicano-Latino-Hispanic Committee at the University of Minnesota. Julie also spoke as member of a University wide panel on Cultural Diversity Issues last fall. She was one of five students who received the Dean’s Leadership Award from the College of Human Ecology this spring.

Debbie Smith was recently inducted into Kappa Omicron Nu, a Home Economics Honor Society.

Judy Tiesel passed her Master’s thesis in April. Her project was entitled “Adolescent Self-Development and Family Cohesion and Adaptability: A Meta-Analysis.” Her advisor was David Olson.

(Other student activity such as conferences and workshop presentations and prelim exam results have not been listed due to space limitations, but congratulations are extended.)

Undergraduate News

In March, Cheryl Erickson, a Human Relationships undergraduate, presented a paper at the National Undergraduate Research Convention at Cal Tech in Pasadena, California.

**Michele Johnson and Rolando Martinez** were members of the College of Human Ecology Multicultural Center staff who received the Dean’s Leadership Award this year.

Family Social Science undergraduates who were honored as scholarship recipients at the spring Student Recognition Ceremony for the College of Human Ecology included **Victoria Carlson, Cheryl Erickson, Gayle Hasledalen, Anne Johnson, Lynn Marrs, Rolando Martinez, and Cynthia Parson.**

**Interactions**, the newsletter of the Department of Family Social Science at the University of Minnesota, is published twice a year.

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The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, handicap, age, veteran status, or sexual orientation.
Faculty News

Jean Bauer and Kathryn Retting are serving as co-chairs for "Family Economic Well-Being in the Next Century: Challenges, Changes, and Continuity," a conference preceding the Minneapolis meeting of the American Home Economics Association.

Pauline Boss is in the process of writing Ambiguous Loss, a book that will summarize and integrate her research of the past 15 years.

Philip Colgan, Acting Director of the Alcohol and Drug Counseling Education Program, has been appointed as the department's representative to the University Parent Education Advisory Committee.

Sharon Danes served on the Advisory Committee for a conference sponsored by the Minnesota Extension Service entitled: "Empowering the Minnesota Extension Service to Empower Youth and Families at Risk" (May 6-10, 1991).

Dan Detzner is the recipient of a Bush Fellowship during the term of his 1991-92 sabbatical, during which he will conduct field work in Thailand.

Bill Doherty has been granted a single quarter leave for fall, 1991 in order to develop his research on conflict as a mediator of the effects of divorce on children.

Constance Fabumni recently returned from a 6-month leave of absence during which she worked among the recovering families in Nicaragua. During the Persian Gulf war, she was a valuable community resource on the effects of war on families.

Geraldine Gage has been elected departmental Grievance Officer.

William Goodman is completing his first year as coordinator of the undergraduate Human Relationships program.

Hal Grotevant received a $242,403 grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (1991-1992) for his research on relationships in adoptive families. He has also been appointed to the Steering Committee of the All-University Consortium on Children, Youth, and Families.

Janet Macy was awarded first place from the Agricultural Communicators in Education for her interview of Woodrow Wursig, author of I Love You, Too, whose wife lived with Alzheimer's Disease for 13 years. Her entry was judged "Best of the Best" in the category of Electronic Media-Radio. She will receive the Outstanding Professional Skill Award at this year's meeting.

James Maddock recently completed his term as President and Past President of the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors, and Therapists and is now in the final editing phase on the collaborative book, Families in the U.S. and U.S.S.R.: On the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century (Gulford Publications).

Richard Needle remains on leave at the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

David Olson was recently featured as keynote speaker at a conference on Family Strengths at the Pennsylvania State University. During the visit he was presented with the 1991 "Celebrate the Family" award.

Kathy Retting's research was recently highlighted during a visit by Minnesota Senator LeRoy Stumpf to the College of Human Ecology. Her presentation focused on how her research, teaching, and outreach programs serve to further the land grant mission of the University of Minnesota.

Paul Rosenblatt, chair of the department's Diversity Task Force, provided leadership for the development of a departmental policy statement concerning our commitment to diversity. Aspects of the Task Force's work included departmental workshops in January and June.

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Cathy Schulz continues to provide expert consultation to graduate students and faculty on research questions involving microcomputers and University mainframes.

Marlene Stum has been awarded a single quarter leave for winter quarter, 1992, in order to continue her work on long term care and family resource management of the elderly. She is also serving as Local Arrangements chair for the “Family Economic Well-Being in the Next Century” conference.

Susan Su, recently appointed Adjunct Assistant Professor in the department, has received a $1.9 million five-year grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse to study vulnerability to drug abuse in high-risk youth.

Shirley Zimmerman has been reelected to the Senate Consultative Committee for 1991-92.

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