WHAT DOES 'CAREER' MEAN:
A REVIEW OF THE CONCEPT AND PRELIMINARY CROSS-SECTOR COMPARISONS

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CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of career is a particularly problematic one when we talk about career paths in the community sector. Indeed a great many community sector workers claim there isn't one. This kind of statement can mean one of two things. Either there is a commonly agreed form of career and the community sector doesn't offer one, or the kind of career that is offered is conceptually quite different within the community sector. This paper attempts to explore some aspects of this puzzle. In the first part, the paper reviews the concept of career as used in the mainstream literature. The purpose of the review is to explicate the concept of career in general to see to what extent the concept is applicable to the community sector. I conclude that while the dominant concept of a linear career track is inappropriate, other concepts of career may be more useful.

Part B of this paper then adds another piece to the puzzle. Part B presents preliminary findings from a small pilot comparative study of community sector and private sector employees. The purpose of the pilot is to explore the possibility of empirically different approaches to career between community sector and private sector workers. The findings of that study are related back to some of the career literature.

PART A: THE CONCEPT OF CAREER

Career Theory

Women often express discomfort with the use of the term 'career' and may deny that they have one, or want one. Indeed the very concept of career is problematic, especially for women. Career has been typically defined as 'an ordered sequence of development extending over a period of years and involving progressively more responsible roles within an occupation' (Slocum, 1966, in Dex, 1967). Underlying this definition is an assumption of linear upward progression, ie. a continuous movement from a position of relatively low status, responsibility and remuneration to a higher position. The image is usually one of 'climbing a career ladder'. Also assumed is the centrality of paid work. It

is clear that few women expect, or attain the kind of extended full-time paid employment during their adult working life that offers opportunities for progressively more responsible roles within a single occupation.

However, career theory is much richer and more diverse than this simplistic approach would imply. Indeed career theory, and the empirical test of various approaches has received considerable attention in the mainstream literature.

Sonnenfeld and Kotter (1982) provide a historical overview of the development of career theory. They identify four major approaches to career. The first is identified as the social structural approach, which rests on the sociological tradition of such theorists as Durkheim, Marx, Weber. The second tradition, beginning somewhat later, is identified as the individual trait approach. This is based on the psychological tradition of trait theory, and has been most influenced by the work of Holland (eg. 1972). The third approach is the career stage approach, developed more recently, and is represented most strongly by the work of Super (eg. 1980, 1986). Finally, the fourth, or Life cycle approach, is represented most clearly by the work of Levinson (eg. 1984). Each of these theoretical developments, according to Sonnenfeld and Kotter, provides an increasingly dynamic view of the individual and the environmental context in which he or she operates.

The social structural tradition, according to Sonnenfeld and Kotter, focus primarily on the relationship between social class and individual career attainment, both of which are assumed to be rather static, unchanging phenomenon. They explore the largely American literature that attempts to trace that relationship, and conclude in part:

> *'This work has made one very important contribution; it has rather clearly demonstrated that there is a relationship among parental occupation, education and wealth and the occupational status and income attained by children. But it is still unclear after nearly a century of work exactly how strong the relationship is, and exactly why this relationship exists.'* (p22)

The American work, even within the social structural tradition, tends to be concerned with the individual consequences of social class, rather than the structural dynamics of class within the workplace. The British tradition, on the other hand, attempts to explicate the structural dynamics by which disadvantage is reproduced. Important is this respect is

the work of Fox (1974) who analyses the distinction between low-discretion and high-discretion work, the way these forms of work are used and the implications for the way work is structured. Essentially low-discretion work is usually (but not necessarily) associated with manual semi-skilled, or clerical work, and is controlled through bureaucratic structures and processes. High discretion work is usually (but not necessarily) associated with professionalism, personal initiative, and opportunities for advancement.

This kind of structural approach had lead to a focus on labour market analysis rather than on career per se.

Much of the available discussion has drawn on the concepts of dual labour market theory, which posits a segmented, binary labour market. As defined by Barron and Norris (1976):

> '1. There is a more or less pronounced division into higher paying and lower paying sectors;
>
> 2. Mobility across the boundary of these sectors is restricted;
>
> 3. Higher paying jobs are tied into promotional or career ladders, while lower paid jobs offer few opportunities for vertical movement;
>
> 4. Higher paying jobs are relatively stable, while lower paid jobs are unstable' (p.49).

While secondary employment may appear relatively permanent and secure in good economic times, it reduces to temporary, insecure or part-time status as economic circumstances deteriorate. One of the more obvious marks of the primary labour market, is the relatively high levels of entry qualifications, combined with access to inservice training and other resources that ensure and enhance high levels of recognised skill. Those in secondary employment may be valued for specific abilities such as manual dexterity, or 'a caring attitude', but they are nonetheless regarded as basically unskilled, and readily replaceable. Binary labour market theory, and other social structural approaches, assume the imperatives of capitalist labour demands to be paramount; individual careers are simply a by-product of structural imperatives, and not open to individual choice.

By contrast, the psychological tradition in career theory has almost totally ignored the social or structural context in which career operates, and focussed instead on individual differences in motivation, and the implications of these differences for career counselling. Foremost in the field is Holland (1972). Choice of career, according to Holland, is a function of personality type, these personality types drift towards one of six identifiable occupational environments. They are:

1. Realistic - requiring aggressive behaviour, physical skill, and strength (eg. farming, trucking).

2. Investigative - requiring cognitive processes rather than action, or social interaction (eg. mathematics).

3. Social - typified by interpersonal rather than intellectual or physical activities (eg. teaching).

4. Conventional - requiring a great concern for rules, self control, respect for power and structure (eg. accounting).

5. Enterprising - requiring verbal skills, persuasiveness, and power aspirations (eg. sales, politics).

6. Artistic - allowing for the expression of emotion and aesthetics in an unstructured environment (eg. music).

Some attempt has been made to integrate the personality trait approach and the social structural approach. For instance, Gottfredson (1981) constructed a cognitive map of various occupations, drawing on the published literature. She constructed a typology which locates each of Hollands six occupational fields in terms of prestige level (a rough indicator of social class status) and sex type. 'Realistic' is predominantly low status and male 'Investigative' occupations tend to have the highest prestige and are somewhat male typed or neutral. The most female typed occupations are located within the 'conventional' and to a less extent 'social' fields; these tend to have moderate prestige ratings.

Other theorists have generated their own typology of personality orientations to work, based more on motivational orientation than personality type. An example of this approach is that of Derr (1986). He identifies five career orientations which he labels as 'getting ahead', 'getting secure', 'getting free', 'getting high', and 'getting balanced'.

While these career orientations may determine the direction of individual choice, actual career decisions will be modified by perceived (and actual) constraints imposed by other demands and lack of social supports.

Driver (1980, 1986) has developed a career concept model which identifies four basic but different concepts of career held by people. In this, he is not explicitly adopting a personality typology or motivational approach, but is rather concerned to identify the definitional problems associated with career, for people, including career researchers. According to Driver, there are two basic issues concerning the definition of career, and they are the extent to which career choices change over time or stay constant, and the extent to which career choices are externally generated or internal processes. Driver's four career concepts are:

> 'Steady state-career choice is made once for a life-time commitment to an occupation.
>
> Linear-career activity continues throughout life as one moves up an occupational ladder.
>
> Spiral-career choice evolves through a series of occupations (7-10 year durations) where each new choice builds on the past and develops new skills.
>
> Transitory-career choice is almost continuous-fields, organisations, jobs change over 1-4 year intervals with variety the dominant force.'

Of these, the linear model reflects most closely the earlier definition by Slocum, and appears to match current US cultural values. However a number of recent American authors have noted the decreasing appropriateness of the prevailing preoccupation with linear upward mobility, as changing demographic and economic conditions, and shifting organisational practices, make fewer and fewer positions at the top available (Brousseau, 1990, Leach and Chakiris, 1988).

Brousseau (1990) has extended the analysis further, demonstrating that in fact many people, given the choice, prefer to use other than the linear career concept. Each concept is associated with a different pattern of workvalues. So, while Linear career is desired by those who value prestige, Management skills, high income, power and achievement, those who prefer a steady state concept of career value expertise and security. A spiral concept career is desired by those who value personal growth, creativity, and developing others,

while a transitory career is desired by those who value variety and independence. Each career concept carries with it a different pattern of rewards, or work 'motivation'.

The theoretical approach of Driver, Derr and Brousseau do not necessarily pertain to choice of occupation but rather to a general orientation to work the way it is structured and the rewards it provides.

The other main approach to career involves some sort of developmental approach. This work either focuses on the developmental processes of making a career choice in early adulthood (eg. Gottfredson, 1981), or the stages that can be identified in any career, regardless of the time of life at which it occurs (eg. Super, 1986), or the lifecycle developmental processes encompassing the adult lifespan (eg. Levinson, 1984). These approaches have in common a recognition of change within the person over time, as well as a recognition of the embededness of career within the larger lifespace.

Gottfredson (1981) argues that career choice is made through a series of steps during childhood and adolescence. Each step involves the elimination of a particular class of occupations deemed inappropriate in terms of a particular criteria, and a gradual narrowing of the field of realistic choices. She notes in part:

> *'Occupations that are perceived to be inappropriate for one's sex are first eliminated from further consideration. Next youngsters begin to rule out occupations of unacceptably low prestige because they are inconsistent with their social class self-concept. At the same time they rule out occupations requiring extreme effort to obtain in view of their image of their general ability level. Only in adolescence do youngsters turn to their more personal interests, capacities, and values as criteria for further narrowing their choices.'* (p 549)

Super (1980, 1986) sees a career as involving a number of roles, including that of child, student, citizen, worker, and homemaker. The simultaneous combination of life roles constitute the life-space. Time and circumstances limit the number and extent of involvement in each of these life roles. Nonetheless the performance in each has an impact on the performance of others. The sequence of roles over time comprise the life cycle. Super's work focussed on the typical life stages of "growth" (birth-14) involving the development of interests and capacity, "exploration" (15-24) which involves making tentative choices, entering the labour market, and starting work on a trial basis,

"establishment" (25-44) which involves trying to stabilise the career, "maintenance" (45-64) which involves holding on to what one has, and "decline" (65 on) which involves slowing down and moving out of career. However, while these career stages normally occur in chronological order, any major life or career changes may involve a recycling through the four major career stages of trial, establishment, maintenance, and decline. The stages then may be, but are not necessarily linked to chronological age.

The other major career developmental theorist is Levinson (1984). His developmental stages are specifically linked to biological age, and the life tasks associated with each age. Early adulthood extends from 20 to 40. This era is broken down into the following stages: "early adult transition", with associated life tasks of separating from parents and school and testing initial life choices; "entering the adult world" with associated tasks of developing a personal identity; "thirties transition" with associated tasks of evaluating accomplishments, and making necessary adjustments; "settling down" with associated tasks of making strong commitments to work family and community and working towards personal and professional goals. The next era of life is from 40 to 60. This is broken down into the following stages: "Mid-life transition" which involves a review of earlier life decisions, a recognition of mortality and associated issues; "entering middle adulthood" which involves developing greater stability, "fifties transition" which raises questions about previous life structures; "culmination of middle adulthood", which may require further life choice adjustments. While these stages are primarily concerned with work orientation, the choices are made within the context of other roles and commitments.

A number of studies have attempted to test the relative merits of these developmental theories in terms of the predictions derived from them. For example One study by Ornstein, Cron, and Slocum (1989) specifically tested the relative predictive capacity of the Levinson and Super models, and found some support for both. Levinson's model more closely predicted career decisions, while Super's model better predicted job attitudes. Predictions for both appeared better for earlier than later life/career stages. Findings consistently show that the beginning phase of a career, whether defined by age or psychological adjustment, is the one most distinctively different from the others. Career choices made from the late 30's onward appear to be more diverse, and to increasingly reflect a preoccupation with the integration of career and personal life

(Sonnenfeld and Kotter, 1982; Ornstein et al, 1989). Mid career choices and changes usually reflect an attempt to restore a balance, to redress aspects of work and personal life that had hitherto been neglected (Wolfe and Kolb, 1980).

Critique

Despite the welter of theoretical and empirical work on "career", there are some serious problems and omissions. Indeed, most reviews of the field point to some of these (Sonnenfeld and Kotter (1982), Collin and Young (1986), Driver (1988).

Collin and Young (1986) list the following criticisms of the career literature:

1. Most of the career literature lacks rigorous definition and clarification of basic concepts.

2. The design of research which informs career theorists has limitations, particularly in the choice of samples.

3. The major thrust in career theory has been centred on individual rather than on contextual factors.

4. The literature is concerned primarily with objective rather than subjective career.

5. Career theories have been conceived within the orthodox philosophy of the social sciences, ie express a positivist rather than a constructionist view of the world.

As Sonnenfeld and Kotter (1982) point out, early approaches to career theory were static, and either focused on the social class structure at the exclusion of personal choice, or focused on individual traits, to the exclusion of structural constraints. Both approaches assumed a constant and unchanging person living out an unchanging lifetime in an unchanging world. More recent approaches have acknowledged the real complexity of career in a changing world, but have difficulty, within a positivist paradigm of controlling and measuring the many relevant variables. Thus, the developmental work of both Levinson and Super specifically address the changing needs and interests as people mature and gain experience, but while they acknowledge the importance of various other life experiences, they do not deal with them in any depth, and entirely ignore the larger social structure in which all career choices are embedded. Sonnenfeld and Kotter (1982) develop a model of career development which specifically includes three levels of the life space over time: the work/occupational space, the individual/personal space, and the

nonwork/family space. Each of these interact and change over time to create the actual career.

However, such a model still expresses an objective reality, that has little to do with the individual's lived experience. Collin and Young (1986) make a plea for the importance of the subjective. Subjective and intersubjective meanings are constructed by the individual. They develop organically and arise out of the rich context of lived experience. No theory of career is meaningful without reference to the persons own experience.

Yet ironically, it is a constructivist perspective that also permits a thorough exploration of the larger social and structural context in which career choices are made. The bulk of the literature, particularly the empirical studies that are shaped by a positivist epistemology (and are therefore concerned with objective reality) are almost exclusively concerned with middle class, young or middle aged, anglo males living in U.S. It is this group that defines "the reality" of what career is about. The implication, which is rarely examined, is either that other people (women, working class, older people, people living in other cultures) don't have a career, or else that the same conditions and effects apply equally to them. Both assumptions are clearly false. Indeed some of the conceptual work of people like Super represents an attempt to broaden the concept of career to include all aspects of the life space, and so render the concept intelligible to other categories of people. Within the bounds of organisational psychology, this broadening is rarely deemed relevant.

The few studies that include women find that they do not follow the pattern of results demonstrated by men; those that focus largely on women are mainly concerned with the continued constraints to womens progression (Gutek et al, 1986).

Most studies of work orientation and career patterns, refer explicitly or implicitly to men. If women are mentioned at all, it is either assumed that the obtained patterns are gender neutral, or else that the concept of career does not apply to women because of their homemaker role. Segmentation theory tends to locate women in the secondary labour market, with implications of systematic exploitation. While the evidence in part supports this (Barron and Norris, 1976; Walker, 1989), it is a somewhat simplistic view. Burchell and Rubery (1990) found that women were distributed across three clusters; 24%

of their (British) sample were in the primary segment, 49% were "stickers" and 29% in the "female descender group". This latter group appeared to comprise those who were trying to juggle work and family commitments; they were often part-time and employed at a lower status than their previous position.

There is growing evidence of the disadvantage suffered by women due to career breaks taken for child care; they are the ones who become the "descenders". For the majority of women, childrearing means a move from stable, well paid, challenging jobs to part time, low paid, "deskilled" jobs typically associated with the secondary labour market (Dex, 1987). Some return mobility back into the primary labour market does take place, but the majority suffer long term disadvantage. What is becoming clear is that almost all women now return to the labour force after time out for child care, especially in the UK and US, suggesting the concept of the bimodal career (Ward and Silverstone, 1980). There is considerable debate in US management circles and elsewhere, about the advisability of offering a special "Mommy track" as opposed to the conventional "career track" as a viable option for women who wish to combine career and childrearing (Schwartz, 1989). Nonetheless, even for professionally trained women, the return to work is usually at a reduced status level, with long term negative implications for career advancement (Silverton and Ward, 1980; Dex, 1987; Bird and West, 1987).

Nor is the restriction on womens career simply a result of childbearing. Many studies have identified the effects of what Gutek calls "sexrole spillover" (Gutek, Larwood and Stromberg, 1986) which suggests that female dominated jobs take on a passive, home-oriented stereotype. Women are assumed thereby to be disinterested in career progression, a perception that is then used to justify reduced career opportunities.

Relevance to Community Sector

While much of the literature cited above is concerned with choice of occupational area, especially among the young, there is almost no evidence concerning choice of sector. To what extent, and on what basis do people choose to work in the private forprofit, the public, or the nonprofit (community) sector.

The shape of careers within the community, or nonprofit sector, is likely to be different from that prevailing in the corporate sector in particular, and for a number of reasons.

To begin with, the community sector is dominated by women (Preseton, 1990; O'Donnell, 1985; Onyx and Maclean, 1993), so it is likely that gender career issues are likely to be particularly salient. Secondly, the prevailing organisational structures and labour market structures within the nonprofit sector are likely to discourage linear career progression (Onyx and Maclean, 1993, Walker, 1989). Thirdly, it is likely that a different pattern of motivation prevails in the community sector, one that stresses social values rather than personal advancement.

Preliminary work in U.S. suggests that people working in the nonprofit sector are at least to some extent driven by ideals of service and the creation of a better world (Jeavons, 1992, Mirvis, 1992). It appears that people who are attracted to value - expressive organisations and have a commitment to the mission are, to a certain extent prepared to forego financial rewards in order to achieve these social goals (Preston, 1990).

A previous study by the author (Onyx and Maclean, 1993) explored the career paths and work values of community sector workers. The findings from that study painted a very different picture from that normally assumed in discussions of career, and normally associated with a linear career model (Driver, 1988; Brousseau, 1990). Prestige, salary, secure tenure were of low priority when applying for a particular position. Over a third of respondents had accepted a salary drop, or moved sideways for the sake of a new challenge. This points to the importance of other nonmonetary work goals.

In the Australian study, the dominant motivation, both for entering the community sector, and for seeking particular jobs, related to strong social values and a desire for personal development. There was a very strong commitment to making the world a better place, either by helping other, disadvantaged people, or by working towards social change at the broad political level. These findings support the US studies cited earlier.

Together, the findings suggest that there may be fundamental differences between sectors, both in terms of motivational work patterns, and in terms of fundamental career concepts. The pilot comparative sector study explores this possibility.

PART B: THE PILOT STUDY

The earlier study (Onyx and Maclean, 1993) reported the results of a survey of some 200 community sector workers in NSW. A questionnaire was developed initially from interviews with 20 community sector workers, and contained 128 questions. A detailed description of the methodology and results can be found in the CACOM Working Paper 12 (Onyx, Maclean, 1993).

The present study seeks to identify any differences in the work values or orientation to work patterns between community sector and private for profit sector employees in NSW. For the purposes of this study, the original questionnaire was reduced to 64 items deemed relevant to employees of all sectors. The shortened version was administered to a sample of 44 Post Graduate part-time students in the School of Management, at UTS. These students were predominantly drawn from the for profit sector, though several (8) also had some public sector experience.

The results were compared with the responses of the 162 community sector employees to the same questions in the earlier study.

Personnel data concerning the respondents in the two samples was also obtained in order to identify what variables, other than organisational sector, may also discriminate between the two samples.

The Samples
The samples were clearly not comparable.
While the community sector sample comprised 79% female, the private sample comprised 71% male.

The age distribution is also very different. (See Table 1). The private sample was, on the whole, much younger than the community sample.

TABLE 1

	COMMUNITY		PRIVATE	
	Female	**%**	**Female**	**%**
Young	38	24	31	71
Middle (35-44)	61	39	12	27
Old (45+)	59	37	01	02

While all the private sample are currently undertaking post graduate study, only some of the community sample are currently undertaking post graduate study (45% have degree or higher qualifications).

The private sample had an average 10.48 years paid work experience. (This question was not asked of the community sector sample.)

Over the past 10 years, the community sample had a mean total of 3.6 different positions, while the private sample had a mean total of 4.3 different positions; the difference is not significant. However the community sample were likely to have stayed in their current position significantly longer than the private sample.

$$(\bar{X}\ 4.15 \text{ years community}, \bar{X}\ 2.30 \text{ years private},$$
$$F = 10.12, p < .002)$$

The samples also worked in different kinds of organizations. For example, 48% of community but only 18% of private worked in small local organisations. On the other hand, 43% of private but only 8% of community worked in the central office of large state/national organisations.

Community sector employees taken as a whole are more likely to work part-time, (29% vs 5%). However the difference disappears for males, all of whom are full-time in both sectors.

Community sector workers are more likely to have higher status positions than are private sector workers, and the difference for the sample as a whole, and for males, is significant ($X^2 = 18.22, 4, p < .001$). This may be a reflection of the age difference.

Given the differences in gender composition of the samples, and the likelihood that gender and not sector of employment may be the determining factor, all results have been analysed both for the samples as a whole, and for males only.

Upward Mobility

TABLE 2A

TOTAL SAMPLE

| | PERCENT INCREASE | | X^2 | P |
	Community	Private		
Salary	58	75	4.33	Non sig.
Budget responsibility	61	65	.85	Non sig.
Staff responsibility	59	66	1.03	Non sig.
Access to decision making	72	78	.90	Non sig.
Prestige	51	75	7.3	< .03

TABLE 2B

MALES ONLY

| | PERCENT INCREASE | | X^2 | P |
	Community	Private		
Salary	53	84	7.3	< .03
Budget responsibility	66	67	1.36	Non sig.
Staff responsibility	71	71	.56	Non sig.
Access to decision making	67	78	.97	Non sig.
Prestige	48	78	6.53	< .04

In moving into the present position from the previous one, workers from both sectors were equally likely to experience an increase in budget responsibility, staff responsibility, and access to decision making. While there was no significant difference in the overall sample, males in the private sector were significantly more likely to experience a salary increase than were males in the community sector. Both males and females in the private sector were significantly more likely to experience an increase in prestige.

The implication is that, while males and females in the private sector experience an increase in prestige, only the males are better off financially than their community sector counterparts. Put the other way around, females in the community sector are less disadvantaged relative to males than are females in the private sector. This confirms Prestons finding in the U.S. (Preston, 1990).

Reasons and Choices

There are interesting patterns of motivational preferences that distinguish community sector and private sector employees, as shown in Table 3.

As expected, private sector employees are far more likely than community sector employees to seek positions for personal gain, ie higher salary, secure tenure, greater prestige and future career opportunities. All these differences are highly significant for the sample as a whole, and for males.

On the other hand community sector females (but not community sector males) are more likely than private sector workers to seek jobs with convenient location, a good group of people to work with, and a good organisational philosophy.

Both community sector and private sector workers, male and female regarded "more interesting, challenging work" and the chance "to extend personal skills" as the most important reasons for applying for a new job. Between 58% and 67% of all samples endorsed these as key personal reasons influencing the choice of job. There was no difference between sectors in this respect.

Other reasons were of moderate concern to people of both sectors, but again with no difference between sectors. These include such reasons as more staff or budget responsibility, management structure, training opportunities, being involved in policy development, creating a new service.

TABLE 3

JOB INFLUENCES

PERCENT "STRONG ATTRACTION"							
	COMMUNITY		PRIVATE		X^2	P	Sig. for male
	Female/ Male	Male only	Female/ Male	Male only			
Salary rate	19	(18)	39	(42)	9.88	<.02	✓
Secure tenure	17	(15)	30	(42)	13.44	<.004	✓
Greater prestige	15	(18)	32	(36)	20.33	<.0001	✓
Future career opportunities	25	(24)	64	(74)	28.21	<.0000	✓
Flexible hours	18	(12)	7	(3)	5.90	Non sig.	x
Convenient location	31	(24)	14	(10)	8.06	<.045	x
Good group of people	54	(47)	21	(23)	17.79	<.005	x
Organis. philosophy	47	(38)	23	(29)	13.18	<.004	x
More staff respons.	25	(24)	25	(23)	.05	Non sig.	x
More budget respons.	22	(27)	28	(19)	.95	Non sig.	x
Access to decision making	42	(44)	41	(39)	.72	Non sig.	x
Management structure	31	(27)	30	(36)	3.68	Non sig.	x
Independent work	45	(41)	39	(39)	4.91	Non sig.	x
Extend skills	67	(65)	64	(58)	.18	Non sig.	x
Training opps.	22	(24)	25	(29)	1.53	Non sig.	x
Interesting/challenging	67	(62)	66	(65)	1.06	Non sig.	x
Policy development	35	(32)	25	(19)	2.12	Non sig.	x
Social change	53	(59)	9	(3)	37.95	<.0000	✓
Create new service	38	(41)	25	(23)	3.27	Non sig.	x
New client op	46	(44)	25	(26)	9.99	<.018	x
Networking	36	(26)	16	(17)	25.81	<.0000	✓

However the largest significant difference between the sectors refers to the opportunity "to contribute to social change". This was one of the strongest reasons for community sector men and women in their choice of a job (over 50% endorsed this) but one of the weakest reasons for private sector men and women (less than 10% endorsed it).

TABLE 4

REASONS OUT OF WORKFORCE FOR TWO MONTHS OR MORE

PERCENT RESPONSE				
	Community	Private	X^2	P
Unemployment	17	16	.05	Non sig.
Childrearing	19	5	5.48	<.019
For study	15	14	.04	Non sig.
For travel	16	23	1.06	Non sig.

Both samples were asked whether they had been out of the workforce for more than two months, and why (Table 4). Numbers were too small to permit a finer analysis for the male sample. However, there appears to be no difference between the sectors in terms of likelihood of experiencing unemployment, or leaving work to pursue study or travel. The difference in childrearing simply reflects the predominantly female community sample compared with the predominantly male private sample.

TABLE 5

DOING UNPAID WORK

PERCENT RESPONSE							
	COMMUNITY		PRIVATE				
	Female /Male	Male	Female /Male	Male	X^2	P	Sig. for males
With employment	71	(68)	66	(61)	.42	Non sig.	x
M.C.	46	(53)	16	(19)	13.33	<.0003	✓
Service delivery	20	(21)	0	(0)	10.29	<.001	✓
Political action	22	(21)	7	(7)	5.35	<.02	x
Clubs	20	(24)	16	(13)	.44	Non sig.	x

Another important indicator of non monetary work orientation is the extent of voluntary activity (Table 5).

As might be expected, community sector employees are significantly more likely to engage in volunteer work than are private sector employees, at least in terms of serving on management committees and direct service delivery. This is true for the sample as a whole, and for males only. Community sector workers are also more likely to engage in political action, but the difference loses significance for the smaller male sample. Similarly the difference in club involvement fails to reach significance.

Of particular interest is the contribution of unpaid overtime to the employing organisation. Roughly two thirds of all samples volunteer their labour for their own organisation.

TABLE 6

LIKELIHOOD OF FUTURE SCENARIOS

	PERCENT RESPONSE						
	COMMUNITY		PRIVATE		X^2	P	Sig. for Males
	Female/ Male	Male	Female/ Male	Male			
In the same position: highly likely unlikely	34 26	(17) (30)	11 75	(15) (69)	29.23	<.0000	✓
In a more interesting job (less pay) highly likely unlikely	24 47	(28) (40)	43 24	(45) (28)	7.65	<.022	x
In a higher position: highly likely unlikely	10 74	(6) (82)	11 42	(12) (44)	14.45	<.0007	✓
Out of workforce: highly likely unlikely	16 66	(17) (67)	0 90	(0) (89)	6.92	<.031	x

Respondents were asked where they saw themselves in two years time. Those in the private sector saw it as highly unlikely that they would stay in the same position, while for community sector this was the most likely scenario. Interestingly, it was the private

sector and not community sector employees who expected to move into a more interesting challenging job even with lower salary, though they also thought it more likely that they would move into a higher status but less interesting job. The consistent picture is one of greater expected movement for private sector employees (males and females). The exception is that community sector workers are more likely to see themselves out of the workforce, perhaps reflecting the greater age range of this group.

DISCUSSION

These results should be regarded as preliminary. Those working in private sector employment differed from those working in the community sector in many respects. For that reason it is difficult to disentangle the relative influence of the variables gender, age, location, education, as well as sector, type of workplace, and so on. It is likely in fact that some of these variables are regularly clustered together. Notably, the community sector across NSW comprises 75% women (O'Donnell, 1985) while private sector managerial levels are predominantly male.

Nonetheless some fairly strong, albeit tentative conclusions can be drawn from the current study, concerning patterns of career motivation.

First, it should be noted that all respondents, regardless of sector and gender were primarily motivated by the search for personal development, learning new skills, interesting and challenging work.

However, there were important sector differences and probably these differences point to two quite different dimensions.

First, the private sector sample is much more likely to be motivated by promise of personal gain in the form of salary, prestige, career opportunities. In this they conform more closely to the linear career model (Driver, 1988, Brousseau, 1990). Even so, most of these reasons were endorsed as strong attractions by less than half the private sample.

Second, the community sector sample is much more likely to be influenced by social values, and, in particular, by the opportunity to contribute to social change. They are also more likely to volunteer their time to the pursuit of social causes or needs. This confirms findings for U.S. samples by Mirvis, 1992.

An overriding question concerns the effect of gender. The different patterns of motivation may be solely attributable to the different concerns of men and women. However, this is not the case. The same differences were found between private sector men and community sector men. They are sector differences and not gender differences. Community sector men appear to be more like community sector women in terms of career motivation than they are like private sector men. The exception is in the need to juggle family and work commitments and therefore the greater emphasis by women on convenient location and part-time work. Women may also be more concerned with the social aspects of the workplace, though these results are inconclusive.

The community sector workers are currently older, in more senior positions, and they perceive themselves as less likely to move or achieve higher positions in the next two yeas. Private sector workers were more likely to have experienced an increase in prestige in their last move, and (for men only) an increase in salary. These results may be an artefact of the age/seniority level. They may however indicate some of the costs associated with a community sector career (Preston, 1990). These possibilities remain for further investigation.

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