

fer. Attitudes may be shifting toward the position that a man is entitled to work if he needs to and wants to—it is his money and his life; but that retirement may free man from work that was not particularly exciting, so that he can at last do as he likes.

Donahue likened the retirement process to bereavement, a loss of the symbols of coping ability, youth, achievement drive and one's career. Eisdorfer expressed some of the meanings of work: it structures the day; produces a product; and gives status, identity, a means of self-expression, money, a full life, social contacts, and perhaps, power. Britton (Pennsylvania State University) asked if the participants could assume that substitutes were needed in all of these areas.

Shanas (University of Illinois) suggested that the group's movement toward a substitution theory be shifted to a discussion of a possible resolution theory of retirement. The problem of retirement, concluded Donahue, is how to quit caring about what you've been caring about and how to start caring about what can still be.

Eisdorfer postulated that one must substitute for the components of work. Some substitution can be in the form of memory; residuals may be dealt with by resolution of conflict. Any remaining would be handled by constriction of life space. Regardless of the coping process, the personality is under stress, with a heightened propensity for aberrant behavior.

Gutmann (University of Michigan) applied Erikson's postulation of alternative resolutions to the retirement crisis. Two ideal life styles emerge from retirement, according to Gutmann: one is alloplastic, a denial of the conflict, an attempt to remain active and deny the lessening of vigor and strength. The other style is receptive of the change, with an autoplasic internalizing, a relaxation of the ego, a reliance on memory and perhaps religion. The former life style can cause more depression and pathology. The latter gives a sense of release from the demands of the society. They are not mutually exclusive. Americans value activity, not passivity and receptivity, Gutmann remarked. One's ego involvement in his job determines, in part, his sensitivity to retirement.

Britton suggested the group separate the correlates of aging from those of retirement and each of these from the interaction of the two. The question

arises, said Eisdorfer, of whether there is a developmental stage consisting of reduction in life space and a desire to give up certain activities in order to conserve energy. If such a stage exists, retirement occurring before this stage is undesirable; after this stage, retirement is desirable.

One researchable question is the environmental theory that aging is a series of failures eventually involuted, said Eisdorfer. Lowenthal (Langley Porter Neuropsychiatric Institute) and Taylor (Pennsylvania State University) cited evidence that problems of aging are very individual; that traumas in the aged occur in those persons who experience traumas over other situations earlier in life.

Tibbitts (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare) identified topics needing further consideration by the group: employment trends of the future; implications of retirement for financial support; the role ascribed to older people; and the physical environment of the community. Lowenthal added to this the developmental aspects of the individual's perceptions of the social context.

Eisdorfer suggested that study is needed of the extent to which the older person is able to live in his context. The disparity between his context and society's causes a measurable stress.

Gutmann pointed to age-grading as a researchable area of retirement. Shanas reminded the group that women had not been looked at yet—the career woman, the housewife, and the woman who is both.

Participants were expected to return with afterthoughts and further considerations of these and related questions about retirement when they met again 15–17 May 1967 for part two of the conference, at Pennsylvania State University. The two-part workshop will be followed by conferences and working groups in fiscal years 1968 and 1969, which will clarify the formulations of the workshop and move toward development of an active research program in retirement under the NICHD's Adult Development and Aging Branch.

The workshop was sponsored by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Bethesda, Maryland.

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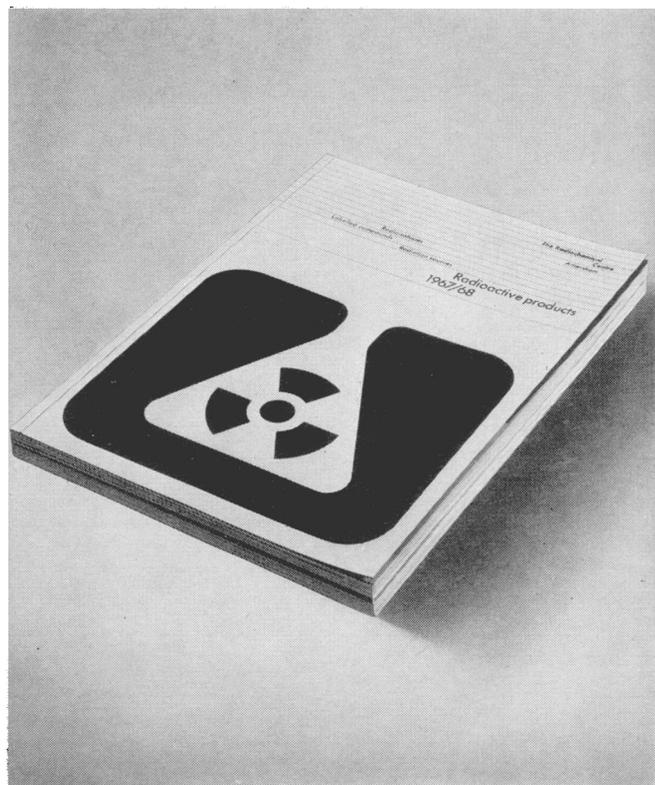
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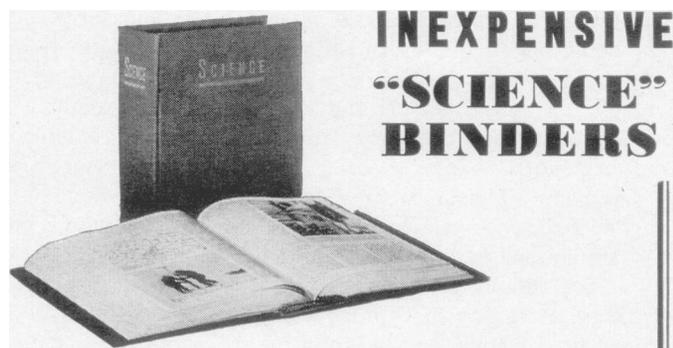
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