

A NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF  
PERSONS 60 AND OLDER  
IN RAMSEY COUNTY, MINNESOTA

Volume I

Survey of Residents in the Free Community

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Amherst H. Wilder Foundation

September, 1981

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by

Paul W. Mattessich, Ph.D.

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## PREFACE TO SECOND PRINTING

Since September of 1981, when Volume I of Wilder's Needs Assessment Study of the Elderly was first printed, the report has received wide circulation. Its users have included human service agency administrators, government staff, government officials and leaders, planners, researchers, teachers, church groups, civic groups, long-term care facilities, staff in business organizations, task forces, advisory committees, advocacy groups, and others. The information it contains has been applied in the preparation of agency service plans; the development of budgets and grant proposals; testimony before the legislature; the development of county plans for the elderly; educational classes on the topic of aging; and lectures, workshops, and symposia for local, regional, and national audiences. An independent survey has demonstrated the usefulness of the study in many of these applications.<sup>1</sup>

Demand for this volume has been strong and continues to be so three years after its initial publication. Therefore, the Office of Research and Statistics<sup>2</sup> has reprinted the volume and reiterates its commitment to distributing information which can be helpful to those who design, plan, and implement human services. Since completing this study of the aging, the Wilder Foundation has undertaken additional studies which have focused upon specific groups, their living conditions, and their needs. Other studies have included a survey of terminally ill patients and their families (1981), a study of young adults (1983), a study of single parents (currently underway), and a proposed study of children (to begin in January, 1985). The ultimate goal of each of these community studies is to improve the conditions under which we all live and to assist people in adapting to changes which they are experiencing individually or which confront the community as a whole.

The effort to make community study results both accessible and useful has led O.R.S. to produce research newsletters which portray study findings in practical formats for the non-researcher. It has also led us to develop brief

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<sup>1</sup>Chapin, Rosemary K., Needs Assessment of the Elderly: Focus on Utilization, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1984.

<sup>2</sup>In this volume, the Office of Research and Statistics is referred to by the name it had in 1981, the Planning and Development Office.

presentations for in-person delivery to a wide range of audiences. Individual and group consultations are also available to help service professionals identify the key implications of the studies. We encourage additional collaboration and invite readers to contact our office with questions, comments and suggestions for future work.

Paul W. Mattessich, Ph.D.

St. Paul, Minnesota

June, 1984

## FOREWARD

This volume reports the methods and results of a survey of 1,228 Ramsey County residents aged 60 and older. The survey was one part of a study undertaken by the Planning and Development Office of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation in order to document the living conditions and needs of Ramsey County's older population. This report is intended for use by all individuals with a professional or personal interest in the aging process, including especially, service-providers, foundation representatives, government officials, and other citizens who have a responsibility or a commitment to serve the aging.

Some of the data from the survey of aging residents of the county have already been presented publicly at meetings of service-providers and other interested groups. This volume expands those oral presentations with additional results and analyses; and it constitutes a reference document with facts and figures about Ramsey County's elderly. The Planning and Development Office staff are committed to continued involvement with any individuals or groups whom the staff could assist to interpret and use the survey findings presented in this report. In addition, many analytic results (listed in Appendix D) which could not be included in this volume are available for use in the Planning and Development Office, where staff are willing and able to help users.

The completion of this survey report has resulted from the collective effort of a large number of individuals who, in paid or voluntary capacities, contributed their assistance to the study. Representatives (whose names and affiliations appear in Appendix A) from local human service organizations, foundations, universities, and government gave generously of their time and talent by participating on project advisory committees and offering counsel to the project staff.

From throughout Ramsey County and from the ranks of the Wilder Foundation, a group of volunteers responded generously to our request for interviewers. The activities of these volunteers rendered the study truly a community endeavor--not just the work of one organization. Moreover, these volunteers performed their duties with a dedication, sensitivity, level of care, and finesse which could not be surpassed by any group of "professional" interviewers and which has produced survey results of high quality. Many of these volunteers were senior citizens themselves. Among them was Mr. Thomas Chittenden

who responded loyally when we found ourselves under pressure and who carried out 56 interviews--more than any other interviewer. (The names of all of the volunteer interviewers appear in Appendix B.)

Within the Planning and Development Office, many people who were not formally part of the project staff contributed productively to the work required to accomplish the survey. Dr. David Berger, who initially established the study goals, wisely counseled the project staff, providing suggestions, advice, support, critiques, and commendations in whatever measure and admixture these resources were necessary. His insight often sustained the project during difficult times. Other members of the Planning and Development Office who donated their skills to the data collection and data processing activities for the survey include: Vicki McCown; Frank Popplewell; Ellen Bauer; Colleen Foley; and Mary Sontag. Linda Grohoski served as data coordinator during the study's early stages. In addition, Liz Finn was ably assisted in manuscript preparation by Janet Nitti and Cate Countryman.

Dr. Reuben Hill, from the University of Minnesota improved the quality of this report by reading and commenting upon early drafts. Ellen Longfellow, who worked only briefly on the project, contributed significantly to the survey results by canvassing the "hard-to-canvass" neighborhoods.

It goes without saying that this study could not have been undertaken without the financial support of the Wilder Foundation, the St. Paul Foundation, and the United Way of St. Paul. Mr. Leonard Wilkening, President of the Wilder Foundation, has emphasized that sound program planning requires good needs assessment research.

Finally, our appreciation is expressed to the 1,228 individuals who allowed us to visit them in their homes and to conduct the survey. Their participation provided the fundamental building blocks upon which this study is established.

Paul W. Mattessich, Ph.D.

St. Paul, Minnesota

September, 1981



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This volume reports the methods and results of a survey of 1,228 Ramsey County residents aged 60 and older. Respondents to the survey were selected in such a way as to represent persons 60 and older who live in the "free community"<sup>1</sup> within every census tract in the county.

Major domains covered by the survey, and significant findings associated with each domain, appear below.

Knowledge and Use of Services

- A large number of older people are unaware of the "services for the elderly" available to them,<sup>2</sup> with the greatest insufficiency of knowledge existing among people who are in their late 70's and 80's, living in a residence with someone other than a spouse, or residing in a central city neighborhood.
- Large proportions of older people do not know how to find out about or make use of available services, especially those who are "old-old" who are living alone or in the care of others, or who have low incomes.
- Most older people do not take advantage of the "services for the elderly." Even among those with higher than normal amounts of problems or with unmet needs, for whom service might be beneficial, the majority are not service users.

Health

A. Activities of Daily Living

- Of nine activities of daily living, it was grocery shopping which the largest proportion of older people (17%) were unable to accomplish without help. Inability to do grocery shopping was most likely to be a problem for the very old (51% of those 80 years of age and older), females,

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<sup>1</sup>That is, persons living in their own houses or apartments, not in institutional settings, such as nursing homes.

<sup>2</sup>Such services include: meals-on-wheels; congregate dining; senior clinics; home nursing service; home help/chore service; transportation; and senior centers.

people living with someone other than a spouse, residents of the Downtown, Highland-7th and East Side neighborhoods, and persons with low income and low education.

-----Housecleaning is the second most prevalent disability (13%). Other activities, and the percentages of persons who could not accomplish them without help are: going for walks (8%); using the bathtub (7%); preparing meals (5%); climbing stairs (5%); taking medications (3%); using the phone (3%); and dressing (2%).

-----Overall levels of difficulty with activities of daily living are greater among older age groups, persons living with someone other than a spouse, females, and persons with low income.

#### B. Health Problems

-----Most older people, even many of those with severe disabilities or functional impairments, consider their health to be good or at least average; six percent consider their health to be poor.

-----Most older people see their health as better or the same as that of other people of the same age.

-----Most older people do not consider health to be a major problem; but at least sixteen percent do report health problems or physical disabilities as their major problems.

-----Sixty-three percent of the older people interviewed reported having at least one chronic illness or chronic health problem. The illnesses most often reported were high blood pressure, arthritis, and heart trouble.

-----Twenty-nine percent of the older people interviewed felt that their health prevents them from doing things which they would like to do.

-----Health related problems or complaints tend to be more frequent among older age cohorts and among persons with low education.

#### C. Health Care

-----Most older people maintain contact with health care providers, although a noticeable tendency exists for individuals with unmet needs related to social isolation, knowledge insufficiency, and household vulnerability (especially if those individuals are aged 75 or older) to lose contact with the health care system.

-----Persons likely to have less contact than others with health care providers are those with significant difficulty accomplishing activities of daily living, residents of Mt. Airy, Thomas Dale, Rice Street and Downtown,

Dayton's Bluff, Riverview, Battle Creek neighborhoods, and persons with low income or low education.

- Most older people feel that they have someone to take care of them in case of sickness or disability; and many have, in fact, relied upon family members for care during periods of illness or rehabilitation after a stay in the hospital.

#### Family/Social Ties

- Eighty percent of Ramsey County's older population have at least one living child; seventy-one percent have at least one child who lives in the Twin Cities area.
- Ninety percent of the older individuals with children have contact with one or more of those children at least once per week. The majority of persons with children report involvement in social activities and exchange of aid with their children.
- Most older people have one or more "close friends."
- Persons more likely than others to be socially isolated are: persons living alone, persons living with someone other than a spouse, residents of Summit-University, and persons with low income and/or low education. Feelings of social deprivation are greater among persons living alone, persons living with someone other than a spouse, and persons with low incomes than they are among other persons.

#### Life Satisfaction

- Older people tend to be relatively happy and satisfied with their lives; but overall dissatisfaction is a problem for about eighteen percent of them.
- Dissatisfaction tends to be higher among low income groups than it is among other people.
- Thirty percent of the older people interviewed reported that some particular aspect(s) of their lives worried them. Worries were most often related to health.

#### Spiritual Status

- Eighty-three percent of the older people interviewed reported membership in a church or synagogue. Contact with churches is high, with the average frequency of attendance at services being 45 times per year, and with more than half of the respondents reporting weekly or more frequent attendance.

- At least fourteen percent of the older people interviewed have trouble attending services as often as they would like; about three percent feel that available religious activities in their neighborhoods are inadequate.
- Problems attending religious services are more often expressed by persons 75 and older, women, people with low incomes, and people with low education than they are by other persons.

#### Transportation

- About five percent of Ramsey County's older population leave the house no more than once per week. About half of these people would like to get out of the house more often.
- Getting out of the house is a greater problem for persons 80 and older, women, persons living with someone other than a spouse, residents of several city neighborhoods, and people with low income and/or education than it is for other persons.
- Driving a car is the favored means of transportation for older people, especially males and persons in their sixties.
- Transportation is highly problematic for about sixteen percent of the older people interviewed.
- Transportation problems are more likely to exist among persons 75 and older, persons living alone, persons living with someone other than a spouse, women, and persons with low income and/or education than they are to exist among other older people.

#### Safety

- Vulnerability of older persons' households to crime, fire, and other unsafe influences is relatively high.
- The greatest vulnerability exists among older persons who live alone, residents of center city districts of St. Paul, and low income individuals.
- Dissatisfaction with safety is higher among women than among men, higher in the Summit-University area than in other areas, and higher among the poor than among the wealthy.

#### Legal

- Forty-one percent of the older people surveyed had used a lawyer since turning 60. About one-third reported that they do not have an attorney whom they would contact if legal problems arose.

-----Knowledge of a lawyer to whom to turn for needed assistance is least likely for residents of the Downtown, Dayton's Bluff, Riverview, Battle Creek area, for low income individuals, and for persons with low education.

#### Housing

- Most older people are satisfied with their neighborhood and housing arrangements; about one-sixth would prefer to live in a different residence.
- Dissatisfaction with present residence is greatest among residents of Summit-University and the outer suburbs.
- Sixteen percent of the older people interviewed had experienced problems doing repairs, remodeling, or redecorating of their homes or apartments.
- Problems with repairs, etc., are most likely among females, persons living alone or with someone other than a spouse, and persons with low incomes.

#### Economics

- Social Security, wages, and other pension benefits are the most common sources of income for persons 60 and older.
- Nine percent of the older people interviewed felt that they lack enough money to meet everyday needs; about twenty-two percent are uncertain about their ability to meet future financial needs.
- Inability to meet everyday financial needs is most likely felt by persons living with someone other than a spouse, persons living in the Summit-University area, and persons with low incomes.

#### Employment/Volunteer Activities

- Most older people do not work full or part-time for pay; and most have no interest in finding employment.
- Persons in their early sixties are more likely than older persons to be employed for pay.
- Twenty-two percent of the elderly individuals interviewed served as volunteers; nineteen percent would like to find new or additional volunteer work to do.

#### Nutrition

- At least sixteen percent of the older persons interviewed had difficulties related to eating or diet.

-----Nutrition problems are greater among women and among persons with low incomes.

#### Education

-----About fifty-four percent of the people aged 60 and older who were surveyed had at least a high school education. Only ten percent had completed college.

-----Fifteen percent of the older persons interviewed had taken a course during the year previous to the interview.

-----Twenty-seven percent of the respondents felt that some obstacle had kept them from taking a course which they wanted or needed to take.

#### Recreation

-----About sixty-three percent of the older population have a favorite hobby or pastime.

-----Virtually all older people watch television at least occasionally. Reading, gardening, and crafts are also popular, recreational pursuits.

#### Relationships Among Domains

-----Transportation problems and nutrition problems appear highly related to many other types of problems among the aging.

-----At least twenty percent of the individuals with unmet needs related to health and mobility, nutrition, and/or social deprivation have other unmet needs. Thus, transportation, nutrition, and levels of social contact appear to be significant elements in the adjustment of aging persons.

Recommendations from the study are:

1. That greater information about human services for older people be made available. That every human service agency consider public education about its services to be a definite organizational responsibility.
2. That volunteer programs receive greater emphasis within the system of service delivery to aging persons.
3. That mutual help groups for aging persons be organized on a broader scale.
4. That prevention of problems among the aging, not just cure, be a major part of the orientation of the service delivery system.
5. That churches be more fully utilized for providing information and human services to older persons.
6. That special, innovative techniques be developed for reaching and serving disadvantaged groups among the aging in Ramsey County.
7. That conjoint agency activity be fostered for testing innovative techniques for providing services to the aging.
8. That the Wilder Foundation and other local foundations support the innovative and experimental aspects of the recommendations which emanate from this study.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

#### 1. Purpose of the Needs Assessment Study/Overview

During May 1978, the Wilder Foundation's Planning and Development Office launched a study of Ramsey County residents aged 60 and over. The major purposes of the study were: (1) to develop and disseminate contemporary information about the needs of the aged; (2) to organize corollary information about the local programs of service and opportunities for satisfying the needs of the aged; (3) to stimulate within the staff of the Wilder Foundation and other local agencies an expanding commitment to the purposeful use of information in planning services for and with the aged; (4) to improve the accessibility to, and quality of, human service activity for the aged; (5) to evolve productive planning alliances across local agencies working with the aged; and (6) to develop, refine, and evaluate data collection and data treatment methods which would have application in future needs assessment studies of other populations.

Given these challenging purposes, a selective series of orienting questions emerged in the early planning which helped to shape the overall scope and character of the study. These questions are displayed here. Associated with each, is the specific volume of this four-volume report in which the question is examined.

1. What are the demographic attributes of persons 60 and older in Ramsey County? For example, what are the size and composition attributes of households of older persons? (Volume I)

2. What are the living conditions of older people in Ramsey County with respect to each of 14 adjustment domains (that is, 14 aspects of their day-to-day lives--as listed below)?

a. Housing:

Do the dwellings in which older people reside suit the needs and preferences of older residents? What preferences, if any, do older people have for alternate housing? (Volume I)

b. Safety Status:

To what extent are the living quarters of the elderly safely equipped? To what extent do the elderly feel secure in their homes and on the street? How many of them are victims of crime? What are their responses when crimes occur? (Volume I)

c. Family-Social Ties:

To what extent are older persons integrated into networks of family, friends and neighbors? What functions do these networks serve? How satisfied are older people with the quantity and quality of their interaction with family, friends and neighbors? Do older people feel they have someone in whom they can confide and someone who will care for them in the event of serious illness or disability? (Volume I)

d. Transportation:

What are the predominant modes of transportation among persons 60 and over? How satisfied are they with their mobility and ability to travel? Do older people feel that transportation problems inhibit them or limit their ability to participate in community life? If so, in what ways? (Volume I)

e. Legal:

What are the legal problems which confront older people? How do they solve those problems? Are they satisfied with the solutions available to them? (Volume I)

f. Spiritual:

What is the extent of formal religious participation among older people? What sorts of contacts do they have with church-related organizations and with clergy? How satisfied are they with the forms of religious expression available to them? (Volume I)

g. Education:

Do older people participate in formal programs of instruction? Are there programs (available and unavailable) in which they desire to participate? What barriers exist to their pursuit of learning opportunities? (Volume I)

h. Employment:

How many older people participate in the labor force? What is the nature of the participation? Do the employed consider their jobs

financially satisfactory as well as personally fulfilling? Do barriers exist which prevent older people from obtaining employment? (Volume I)

i. Volunteer Work:

What are the levels of participation among older people in volunteer activities? What additional volunteer opportunities would they like to have? (Volume I)

j. Recreation:

How do older people spend their leisure time? Are the nature and quantity of recreational activities available to older people adequate to meet what they consider their needs for amusement and enrichment? (Volume I)

k. Health:

How able are older people to perform activities of daily living? What are the physical conditions which they consider impediments to optimal functioning? What are their health care practices? What are their prevailing chronic illnesses? (Volume I)

l. Life Satisfaction/Happiness:

How satisfied and how happy are older people with the circumstances of their lives? What sort of conditions produce worries or depression? How lonely and how deprived do they feel? (Volume I)

m. Nutrition:

Are older people satisfied with the foods and eating facilities available to them? Do they have eating problems which are related to other health or health care problems? (Volume I)

n. Economic Status:

What are the sources and levels of income among the older population? To what extent do older people believe that their income can meet current and future financial needs? In what ways do financial problems hinder participation in community life? (Volume I)

o. Knowledge and Use of Services:

What do older people know about social services for the aging in their community? What services do they use? How do they go about finding assistance if they need help? What characteristics distinguish the knowledgeable from the uninformed? What distinguishes service users from non-users? What shortcomings of

individuals or of agencies do older people feel restrict their access to services? (Volume I)

3. What distinguishes the good from the poor adjusters in each of the domains listed above? (Volume I)

4. How does adjustment in the above domains vary across geographic regions of the county? (Volume I)

5. How are problems and maladjustments in one domain correlated with problems and maladjustments in other domains? (Volume I)

6. What do those who provide services to aged persons know and feel about older people in Ramsey County? (Volume II)

7. What do service providers see as the top priorities for services to the aging in Ramsey County? (Volume II)

8. What do service providers see as impediments to service delivery within individual agencies and within the system of service delivery as a whole? (Volume II)

9. What do service providers feel could make their work more effective for clients and more satisfying for them as staff? (Volume II)

10. How well do agency staff cope with the demands of their work, and what do they consider their biggest problems? (Volume II)

11. How do the views of service providers concerning the living conditions and needs of the aging compare with the views of older people themselves on these issues? (Volume II)

12. How do adult children of aging individuals view:

- a. the living conditions of their parents; (Volume III)
- b. their parents' ability to adjust within the various domains discussed above; (Volume III), and
- c. the needs which their parents will likely have in the future? (Volume III)

13. With respect to interaction between adult children and their aging parents:

- a. What types of contacts occur? (Volume I, III)
- b. What types of aid are exchanged from child to parent or vice versa? (Volume I, III)
- c. How satisfied are children with the nature and level of interaction which they have with their parents? (Volume III)

14. What pressures do adult children experience as a result of interacting with, or providing assistance to, their older parents? (Volume III)
15. How do the knowledge and opinions of children with regard to parents' needs compare with parents' reports on the same issues? (Volume III)
16. How do residents of long term care facilities differ from residents in the "free community" with respect to:
  - a. adjustment to the demands of living in group quarters: How well (or poorly) do long term care residents cope within each of the adjustment domains discussed above? (Volume IV)
  - b. social and physical characteristics: What are the social and physical traits, if any, which distinguish nursing home residents from persons living independently? What are residents' feelings concerning reasons for nursing home entry? (Volume IV)

By providing the answers to these questions, it is expected that the project can provide a comprehensive, accurate portrayal of the ways that older people live in Ramsey County. However, the outcome of this project should be more than the simple revelation of a set of facts about the aging population. The project should produce a basic core of methods which can be set into action periodically to ascertain the salient questions held by service providers and the general public concerning the condition of the aged, and to obtain answers to those questions. It should provide impetus for the continued improvement of our knowledge about the community and about the social services available in the community. In this light, the dissemination of findings from the study is not a terminus. Rather, it is part of a long-term process with immediate results (e.g., the development of a body of knowledge about the aging); with middle-range results (e.g., improvement of existing services, start-up of new programs, etc.); and with long-range results (e.g., the continued monitoring, assessment, and ultimate enhancement of the quality of life of aging residents of Ramsey County).

## 2. Components of the Study

The Wilder project includes four major components. Each component taps a different source for obtaining information on the living conditions of older people and on the contemporary system of service delivery for older people in Ramsey County.

1. A survey of 1,228 Ramsey County residents age 60 and over provides perspectives of older people on their present and future needs, problems, and expressed concerns. For example, this initial project component enabled older people to express their ideas and opinions with respect to contemporary community life; and it also gave them the opportunity to describe how they "make it" within their community contexts. The residents' survey also reveals the extent to which Ramsey County's older residents know about services available to them and the extent to which they take advantage of "known" services. In the design of this survey, questions were formulated systematically to cover a large number of adjustment domains (e.g., health, transportation etc.), all of which were thought to be important for describing, assessing, and understanding the living conditions and needs of older people.

2. A survey of 132 staff in agencies which serve the aged yields service deliverers' judgments of the needs of Ramsey County's older population. It also identifies major impediments to effective service delivery as perceived by service workers, and it summarizes their suggestions for improving the performance of both individual organizations and the service delivery system as a whole.

3. A survey of 100 adult children of a subsample of the older people who took part in the large, community survey provides another perspective on the living conditions and needs of the elderly. It provides information collateral to the initial survey of 1,228 older people on the extent of contact between older people and their children. It also reveals the interplay of special stresses and satisfactions experienced by a younger generation of individuals who are under pressure, of one sort or another, to supply care to their aging parents--care which is not typically considered in formal appraisals of service delivery to the aged.

4. A survey of 156 nursing home residents parallels the large survey of residents in the free community.<sup>1</sup> The nursing home survey has particular relevance because of its exclusive attention to aging persons living in institutional arrangements in Ramsey County.

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<sup>1</sup>It is, however, shorter than the survey of residents in the free community; and it is designed to pertain to conditions of institutional life.

Reports of the results of these study components appear in four volumes. The major portion of each volume is devoted to consideration of one component. In addition, Volume I contains a comprehensive overview (in the present chapter) of the entire study; and the other volumes contain brief overviews of the study in their opening chapters. Volumes II through IV contain, in their concluding chapters, descriptions of some of the relationships among the results from the four different components; and Volume IV contains a final, global summary of the whole study.

### 3. Progressive Stages in the Four-Part Study of Ramsey County's Older Residents

The Wilder study progressed through several stages from proposal formulation to dissemination of the research findings. During the first stage, prior to May 1978, the Planning and Development Office of the Wilder Foundation prepared a study proposal and submitted it to three project funders: The Wilder Foundation; the St. Paul Foundation; and the United Way of St. Paul. Joint funding was established, along with a recommendation for a Governance Committee to set general policy, to provide oversight for the project, and to advise in hiring staff. This committee consisted of representatives from the funding organizations, from local social service agencies, and from government.<sup>2</sup>

During the second or implementation stage of the project, a Technical Advisory Committee was constituted to advise project staff on the multiplicity of scientific/technical issues which had to be resolved. This second committee consisted of representatives from social service agencies, government, academic institutions, and local foundations. Its members became involved in examining and commenting on project plans and in offering counsel on the development of data collection strategies, data treatment, and interpretation. To ensure that the data gathering components of the study would fulfill the major project objectives, input was solicited from a range of social service agency staff members concerning their informational needs with respect to the aging residents of Ramsey County. Accordingly, in May of 1978, all agencies known to provide services to persons aged 60 and over re-

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<sup>2</sup>Names and affiliations of members of two project committees, the Governance Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee, appear in Appendix A.



received a mailing which described the project and which invited their participation in the processes of study design and implementation. At the same time, all agencies were alerted that the results of the study would be completely available to them for their planning purposes. Project staff met with agency representatives who expressed an interest in discussing their data needs and the ways in which the study could meet those needs.

The third stage of the Ramsey County study involved the development, refinement, and application of data-collection procedures. For each of four separate surveys (i.e., the four surveys introduced in the previous section), interview forms were designed and pretested, samples drawn, and interviews conducted. It should be mentioned, again, that advice and suggestions were repeatedly requested from knowledgeable persons in the community concerning the development of the data collection methods.<sup>3</sup>

A fourth stage of the project involved processing and analyzing the collected survey data. The large body of data had to be readied for computer entry and placed into a computerized file. The data were aggregated and packaged in formats convenient for analyzing and interpreting results of the surveys.

The fifth, and final, stage of the project, that of dissemination of study findings, began in the Spring of 1980. From the very beginning of the project, there existed an explicit commitment to disseminate all findings widely and thoroughly. Beyond the written reports, such as this volume, which describe project results, dissemination activities included conferences and seminars for agency personnel and the general public as well as consultation or technical assistance to groups with an interest in special portions of the study's findings.

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<sup>3</sup>All of the surveys were not conducted concurrently. So, for example, design and pretesting of the agency survey were carried out while interviews were being conducted for the survey of older people, and before the design and pretesting of the adult children and nursing home surveys had begun. The period of time during which interviewing occurred for any of the four surveys was November 1978 to June 1980, although the length of time spent on each particular survey was considerably shorter than this total period.

#### 4. Contemporary Interest in Aging

Although aging is an inherent property of the human condition, comprehensive efforts to understand and deal with the process and its possible consequences for individuals, families, and the community have only recently been undertaken. Old age is now viewed variously as a political, social and economic problem of crisis proportions (Estes, 1979). Indeed, there is an ever growing supply of reading material which testifies to the problems that older people actually have as well as to those that experts claim for them (Rosow, 1967). Professional journals and books depicting the conditions of the aging with respect to both health and welfare issues occupy stacks of any university library. "How to" and "self-help" articles offer abundant advice to older persons and their families in apparent testimony to the hunger for guidance in dealing with the disabling impacts often associated with retirement, the loss of loved ones, declining physical (especially sensory) capacities, increasing leisure hours, and decreased ability to live independently. Clearly, the process of aging has come of age, and, in its multiple connections, it is claiming the attention of professional practitioners, legislators, the health and nursing home industries, and American families, both individually and collectively.

Indeed, hardly a week passes without some, major, popular publication offering a story on the plight of the elderly, highlighting such issues as inadequate medical care, economic hardship, loneliness, societal neglect, etc. Almost as often, stories appear about social changes produced by shifts in the age composition; that is, by the "graying" of the nation's population. These changes have had, and will continue to have, profound implications for the issues of mandatory vs. voluntary retirement, the Social Security system, the marketing and consumption of goods and services, the labor market and worker productivity, and virtually all aspects of contemporary social life.

When such professional and journalistic images blend with prevailing myths and stereotypes of the aging process, it can become enormously difficult for interested observers to feel that they have a secure grasp of the problem of the elderly. This study attempts to counteract this problem by supplanting stereotype and myth with accurate, comprehensive data on the personal characteristics, living conditions, and needs of persons 60 and older in Ramsey County.

However, before we leave this general introduction to the study and turn to the factual data, it may be useful to review briefly some of the currents of responsible thought and research which relate to the elderly in today's America. Consideration of three questions will assist us to establish a context within which the results of the Needs Assessment study can be interpreted: What are the present conceptions of aging as a process? What has research demonstrated with respect to the present and future demography of aging? And, how has the political system responded to the presumed needs of older people?

A. What are present conceptions of the aging process?

Aging is recognized as a life long process: everyone is constantly aging. Although this statement sounds prosaic, it has not always been taken for granted. Throughout history, many societies age-graded their members on the basis of rites of passage. Movement from one age-grade to another was viewed as a discontinuous, step-like process. One simply stepped from one social category with particular rights and duties into another category with different rights and duties. No notion existed that physical and mental abilities develop in a continuous fashion; and no notion existed that early life events influence, or set limits upon, later life events. An inability or reluctance to conceive of aging as a continuous process has remained even within many scholarly circles in the twentieth century. Researchers who have examined one or another age group (e.g., the aged, adolescents, infants) have often failed to note that many of the processes which they observed occur throughout the life span. Even today, most people associate the term, gerontology, with the study of "older people" (e.g., those 60 and over). Most "gerontologists," however, have come to take the position that they focus upon "aging"--a term that includes everyone.<sup>4</sup>

An implication of the fact that aging is a lifelong process is that throughout the life span critical developmental tasks arise as one's changing physical and mental capacities demand alteration of one's activities,

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<sup>4</sup>Interest in life span developmental psychology has heightened among researchers and practitioners in many fields. Notable volumes in this regard are Baltes and Schaie (1973) and Baltes and Brim (1978, 1979, 1980). Reinert (1979) offers a brief overview of the fusion of various developmental psychologies (infancy, adolescent, etc.) into the study of a general life span developmental psychology.

and as society places expectations upon individuals who have passed certain age markers. The successful mastery of these tasks facilitates or determines an individual's ability to further develop more advanced skills. The present research does not investigate in systematic depth the relationship of past experiences to the present conditions and needs of older people.<sup>5</sup> It is likely, however, that the ability to adjust within each of the domains explored in the study's surveys is related to adaptations mastered in previous years.<sup>6</sup>

Of particular relevance when planning human service programs is the fact that all people to some degree shape their later years long before they reach them. Neither innate capacities nor environmental factors determine exclusively adaptation in later years. Successful adaptation among the elderly depends greatly upon the extent to which they have accommodated themselves, since their earliest days, to the demands of living. The overall impact of human service programming might increase substantially if younger age groups were to be targeted for education in effective future aging. This study's survey of adult children (reported in Volume III) reveals that many people who have aged parents do, in fact, think about the implications of their parents' experiences for the organization of activities in their own lives.

Second, aging is recognized as a multi-dimensional process. As a person ages, changes occur at a variety of levels: cellular, physiological, psychological, and social. Thorough understanding of the aging process requires analysis at all four of these levels. Although changes on each level are often correlated with changes on other levels, they are not necessarily dependent upon one another. This study explores the physiological, psychological, and social dimensions of age through the data collection techniques of survey research. No study will ever examine all four dimensions in their entirety. The amalgamation of findings from diverse studies with different

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<sup>5</sup>For examples of this type of research, see: Witt and Cunningham (1979); Keith (1979); Cicarelli (1980); and other research articles which appear in social scientific journals.

<sup>6</sup>As mentioned earlier, the 14 study domains include family/social ties, health, transportation, education, housing, and others.

focal points will, however, provide convergent data necessary for global descriptions of how aging occurs.<sup>7</sup>

Since the various processes which constitute "aging" occur neither at a uniform rate nor in synchronization with one another, older people manifest many different mixes of skills, abilities, and other attributes. A representative group of several people in their seventies might, for example, include: one who jogs and water skis; one who has lost a great deal of sensory capacity, but who remains mentally sharp; one who suffers severe, acute mental lapses, but who can otherwise accomplish effectively the basic activities of daily living (eating, walking, etc.); and one who has lost the ability to accomplish any activities of daily living, requiring constant personal and mechanical support. Indeed, the aged cannot be understood as a homogeneous group. The stereotype of such homogeneity--older people who are incapable of caring for themselves, dependent upon society for fulfillment of all of their needs, rapidly deteriorating both physically and mentally--is essentially absent from gerontological thoughtways, although it does persist in some elements of popular culture. Research has demonstrated the existence of great variety in the life styles, interests, ability levels, and problems of the aged. While the susceptibility to, and incidence of, chronic, debilitating conditions may be greater among persons 60 and over than among some other age groups, most older people are neither infirm nor incapacitated.<sup>8</sup>

The research conducted within the Wilder project delineates the life styles of persons who differ widely one from the other. Some are healthy, active, and independent. Others are quite disabled, inactive, and withdrawn. Attention to this wide variety of persons and investigation of their levels of adjustment within the many important domains discussed previously suggest that the variety of living conditions and needs of the entire aging population can be accurately and adequately portrayed.

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<sup>7</sup>One recent classificatory scheme (by no means the final word) for aging behaviors is that proposed by Miller (1979). Interested readers may wish to consult Miller's article to increase their understanding of the complexities involved in attempting a parsimonious description of the multi-dimensional process of aging.

<sup>8</sup>Maggie Kuhn, convener of the Gray Panthers, suggests that, since it is the strongest and the healthiest of the human population who survive to old age, we should cast all of our questions about aging in positive, rather than negative terms. For example, rather than asking, "What produces disability?" we should ask, "What enables people to live and to adapt to their environments to the ages of 70, 80, 90, and even 100?"

A third principle worth noting is that the process of aging for a human being does not transpire in isolation from the larger society. The developmental task notion, mentioned above, is one clear illustration of the interplay of internal and external forces which impinge upon the aging process. The "symbolic interaction" approach to understanding aging is a formal theoretical framework which posits that persons acquire, within their interactions with others, sets of expectations and norms which then guide their attitudes and activities (Stone and Farberman, 1970). A significant corollary of the fact that aging doesn't occur in isolation is that many of the problems of aging may not be inherent to the aging process itself, but rather that they may arise from society's responses to, and treatment of, those who are experiencing that process.

In this regard, William Bevan (1972), writing in Science, asserts that "the key in the problems of aging is not natural resources or the know-how of the medical and behavioral sciences. It is a fundamental change in attitude." Carroll Estes (1979) bluntly and pessimistically predicts that the contemporary system of service delivery to older persons will fail unless it is recognized that the causes of problems which older persons face lie in social and political systems rather than in the individuals themselves. Bevan, Estes, and others are adamant in their attribution of the causes of problems among the elderly to the larger society. Thus, the results of the Needs Assessment cannot be interpreted within a framework which focuses solely upon the individual and which denies the contribution to personal disability which deficiencies in the larger social structure may make. Accordingly, this project gathers data not only about aging individuals themselves, but also about their families, neighborhoods, the organizations they join, the services they use, and so on. The data are gathered from people with differing vantage points: older people, service providers, adult children.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the user of project data can feel secure that he or she has a reasonable view of older people in their social contexts.

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<sup>9</sup>As mentioned previously, the later chapters of this volume present data only from the survey of 1,228 Ramsey County residents. The other vantage points are represented in subsequent study volumes.

B. What has research demonstrated with respect to the present and future demography of aging?

Profound change has occurred in this country's age composition as a result of the increased life expectancy of human beings and as a result of twentieth century birth rates. Between 1900 and 1970, average life expectancy, for both sexes at birth, increased from 47.3 years to 70.8 years (Hendricks and Hendricks, 1977). Siegel (1979) predicts that, by the end of this century, average life expectancy will be 74.1 years (70.0 for males and 78.3 for females). Because of the higher average life expectancy, and because of a decline in fertility, the proportion of the United States population who were aged 65 and over rose from 4.1 percent in 1900 to 10.9 percent in 1977. Depending upon the fertility rate, it is expected to be no lower than 12.5 percent and possibly as high as 22.8 percent by the year 2040 (Siegel, 1979).<sup>10</sup> In Ramsey County, the proportion of the total population who are aged 65 or older is expected to rise from ten percent in 1975 to 11 percent in 2000 (Minnesota State Demographer, 1975).

Economists and other social scientists have noted the significance of the effects of "population aging" (i.e., the increase in the proportion of people in the older age groups) upon economic and social characteristics of a society (Clark, et al., 1979). Siegel (1979) outlined several implications of demographic change which are especially relevant for social service providers to consider.

One implication is that the societal and familial dependency ratios will rise. The societal dependency ratio (computed by dividing the number of people aged 65 and over by the number of people aged 18 to 64) reflects the balance of older "dependents" to "producers."<sup>11</sup> It rose, nationally, from .08 in 1920 to .18 in 1976. By 2000, it is expected to rise to approximately .20. That will mean that 16 percent of the population in the

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<sup>10</sup>Siegel (1976) predicts that nationally, between 1976 and 2000, the number of people aged 65 to 74 will increase by 23 percent, the number of people aged 75 to 84 will increase by 57 percent, and the number of people aged 85 and older will increase by 91 percent.

<sup>11</sup>As the earlier discussion indicated, of course, the group of persons older than 65 is not homogeneous. Many of them are active producers. Nonetheless, this formula, is used by analysts as a rough means for estimating the size of the dependent population.

United States will be dependent upon those who are younger. Some dire predictions have been made concerning the inability of programs such as Social Security to handle such a large, dependent group.<sup>12</sup> In addition, there is some apprehension that the demands of caring for this large, older population may produce resentment or enmity among the young (Planning and Development Office, 1976). The familial dependency ratio (computed by dividing the number of people aged 65 to 79 by the number of people aged 45 to 49) offers a rough indication of the ratio of elderly parents to children who would support them. This ratio rose from .76 in 1920 to 1.56 in 1976. It is expected to remain at approximately its 1976 level throughout this century--meaning that the typical middle-aged individual can expect to have "one and a half" parents concerning whom a support decision will have to be made.<sup>13</sup>

Another implication of recent demographic changes is that ever-increasing shares of efforts and resources in the area of health care will be directed toward the elderly (which is already the group which uses health care specialists extensively). Siegel predicts that health care demands of older people will rise not only because there will be more older people but also because new cohorts of aging individuals are better educated than their predecessors and will demand service which they feel they deserve. In addition, demands may increase due to more comprehensive coverage of medical costs.

A third implication of demographic changes arises with respect to sex differences. The difference in life expectancy between men and women has increased. Some informal predictions have been made that current moves to "equalize" the roles of men and women in society may diminish sex differences in mortality, but it is clear that we lack an adequate understanding of the etiology of this difference. Therefore, it may remain at its present level or even rise. The imbalanced sex ratio, produced by the male-female

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<sup>12</sup>See, for example, the New York Times, July 7, 1981.

<sup>13</sup>Thus, the present study's attempt, reported in Volume III, to gather information regarding the nature of this support decision (which may involve as much or more social support than economic support) is timely.



difference in life expectancy, probably has very significant effects upon family relationships, marital and household patterns, life satisfaction, use of services, and much else of interest to those concerned with the needs of the aging. (See: Clark, 1964; Emlen, 1970.)

C. How has the political system responded to the presumed needs of the aging?

American interest in aging and in the amelioration of living conditions of the aged appears clearly in the actions of government, especially with respect to the Social Security system which provides a measure of economic security to large numbers of retired workers. Enacted in 1935, that system has undergone modifications during the past 45 years to the extent that virtually every paid job in the United States is now covered by Social Security. In addition, the system expanded in 1967 to include Medicare, that is, hospital and medical insurance protection for persons 65 and over (U.S.D.H.E.W., 1979).

Also in 1965, one of the most significant pieces of legislation affecting the elderly in the United States was enacted: The Older Americans Act. This act (and its many, subsequent amendments) defined a role for the Federal Government with respect to funding, coordinating, and planning services which had previously been funded and delivered by much smaller governmental entities, by private organizations, or (in many regions of the country) by no one at all. Area agencies on aging, established under the 1973 amendment to the Older Americans Act, exist in all of the 50 states. In 1978, these agencies channelled approximately 200 million dollars per quarter into services which were used by an estimated 4,686,000 older people each quarter (U.S. Senate, 1979). These services include nutrition programs, senior centers, transportation, information and referral, legal services, and others.

By 1980, an "aging network" (as this system of area agencies and other organizations funded through the Older Americans Act is called) became well entrenched, offering the promise of comprehensive services to older people in the free community and the promise of efficient coordination of those services. The extent to which those promises can be fulfilled is an issue which has provoked some debate. (See, for example, Estes, 1979.)

In fact, some of the often-repeated adjectives used to describe service-delivery systems for older people are "uncoordinated" and "fragmented."

O'Brien et al. (1973) note that the autonomous operation of community service agencies produced situations where older people frequently cannot obtain service or obtain inappropriate service.<sup>14</sup>

Concomitant with the evolving governmental commitment to services to the elderly in the free community has been a momentous increase in government expenditures intended to benefit the small percentage of older people who reside in long-term care facilities. From the late 1940's to the present, significant pieces of federal legislation have affected the developing nursing home industry: authorizing loans and mortgage insurance; establishing standards of care; and underwriting, in whole or in part, the costs of providing residential services.

The contemporary network of services for older people is not, of course, completely novel or revolutionary. It had its precursors in the non-profit and philanthropic organizations which for many years were the only institutions to assume responsibility for care of the aged. However, the size and comprehensiveness of the tasks which government and other organizations have assumed with respect to services for older people have made planning for the elderly an extremely difficult undertaking.

##### 5. Uses of Volume I

This first volume contains the results of a needs assessment which employs an individual orientation to appraising met and unmet needs. In effect, this approach implies an effort to look intensively at a representative sample of older residents of Ramsey County to learn from them directly how well they may be adapting to the various circumstances of their individual life situations.

The procedures described in this first report are not, of course, the only recognized means for accomplishing the needs assessment task. Data gathering technologies for needs assessment have been varied: the analysis of census data; surveys of community "influentials;" surveys of social service providers; surveys of clients receiving service; and surveys of representatively

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<sup>14</sup> Responding to these issues, some funders are setting aside money to underwrite demonstration projects aimed at the coordination of services to the elderly. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has funded eight sites (program operations and evaluation research) in eight different states for activities intended to integrate service strategies and to foster cooperation among community agencies which serve the health-impaired elderly. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services also has an interest in these issues.

selected residents of a community.<sup>15</sup> Most often, a select (and generally small) group of "influentials" and/or service providers has been asked to give opinions on existing needs. Major problems with an approach which relies exclusively upon informants are that such informants may not have adequate information on conditions in the community and that the informants' definitions of "need" may not correspond to other persons' definitions of "need."<sup>16</sup> In the present study, the process of interviewing older persons (as described in this volume), as well as family members and service providers (described in later volumes), brings into focus the information available to each of these groups and the subjective opinions which each group holds concerning the needs of the aged. This study is premised on the belief that any worthwhile attempt to assess needs must include a thorough, accurate representation of the perspective of those whose needs are to be assessed. This perspective can then be complemented by other, legitimate perspectives such as those of family members and/or service providers.

This volume (Volume I) is first intended as a resource document, that is, an informational reservoir that contains accurate and representative data on personal attributes, on behavioral disposition and activity, on opinion and belief systems, and on expressed needs for a better life and greater satisfaction of aged residents in Ramsey County. The data can be used to examine problem domains (family-social ties, health matters, spiritual issues, etc.) one-by-one or as they relate to one another. The data can also be used to examine domains of problems on the level of the census tract, the city of St. Paul or Ramsey County; the data can be used to examine a population stratum (e.g., males over 75 years old in the Midway community); and the data can be used to examine theoretical issues, such as disengagement theory or leisure theory. In a word, the data are available to be used. They can exercise their utility only through use. The Wilder Foundation is, therefore, not only prepared to share them but can help users to organize, reassemble or disaggregate them in accordance with any number of data-related needs.

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<sup>15</sup>For overviews of needs assessment techniques consult: Attkisson *et al.*, (1978); Warheit *et al.*, (1977); and Minnesota State Planning Agency (1977).

<sup>16</sup>As Volume II demonstrates, service providers' impressions of the conditions of older people can differ greatly from other measurements of those conditions.

Readers of this report are strongly encouraged to comment on the extent to which the report was able or unable to assist them with specific pursuits. What should have been added to this report, or to the study as a whole, to increase its value to the community? How could the report better profile the living conditions and needs of older persons in the community? How could the report better explicate the process used for acquiring knowledge of those living conditions? How could the research process itself be improved? These important questions, and others, are ones which only the many users of the report, each with his or her own specific focus, can answer.

#### 6. Planning of This Volume

The remainder of this first volume is designed to provide the reader a thorough understanding of the mechanics and the results of the survey of 1,228 persons aged 60 and older in Ramsey County. The format should satisfy the needs of those who wish to select segments of information for their use, those who wish to examine entire subject areas, and those who wish to perform detailed inspection or analysis of the entire data set. Chapter 2 describes the development of the survey of older people and of the sampling plan. It also describes the success of that sampling plan by documenting the characteristics of the older persons who participated in the survey and by reporting the extent to which these characteristics reliably reflect those the survey sought to include. Chapter 3 unfolds the interview form, item by item, indicating the profile of responses to each item. It is Chapter 3 upon which the reader should focus for a solid, fundamental grasp of the material covered by the interview and of the nature of the aging individuals' responses.

Chapter 4 is organized around the fourteen adjustment domains; and survey items relevant to each domain are examined for their relationships to demographic and neighborhood characteristics. In Chapter 5, the relationships among domains are explored, and an effort is made to understand how the ability to meet needs is related to the use of social services. The concluding chapter reviews important need or problem areas revealed by the survey as well as the correlates of those needs and problems. It offers a summation of the staff's conclusions and recommendations based upon the results of the survey.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE SURVEY OF AGING RESIDENTS OF RAMSEY COUNTY

#### 1. Goals of the Survey

The survey of aging community residents was intended to produce detailed information on the living conditions, opinions, and needs of persons aged 60 and over in Ramsey County. It was premised on the belief that any worthwhile effort to assess needs must include a thorough, accurate representation of the perspective of those whose needs are to be assessed. Results of the survey can be used, in and of themselves, to describe attributes of the population 60 and over in Ramsey County. They can also be analyzed in conjunction with data from the survey of service-providers and of adult children in order to gain an understanding of how different groups, each of which has some stake in the care of the elderly, perceive the needs of the elderly.

In learning about older people directly from older people themselves, the intention was to focus upon their needs, problems, and concerns in a way which would enable agency professionals, advocacy groups, and others to identify the programs or services which could optimally benefit the aging population. However, the intent of the survey was decidedly not to focus exclusively upon maladjustments and shortcomings of older people; nor was it designed solely as a tool for detecting critical, acute needs for immediate service. Rather, in addition to identifying the service needs of the aging population, the survey was designed to reveal strengths and vitality among older people. In this connection, it was hoped that the potential contributions which older people can make to their community could be perspicuously defined and recognized. The harnessing of such competencies in the older population should, it was reasoned, promote self-sufficiency and postpone conditions that provoke dependency, the reduction of adaptive capacity, and the need for intensive social service.

It is noteworthy that many needs assessment studies have omitted one of the major components of the present study--the approach to older people directly for information. Such studies have relied, instead, upon service providers and other "key informants" for data about aging persons and their adaptation. The problem with such a strategy is that the impressions of

service providers constitute only one perspective on need--not an invalid one; but certainly a limited one. Moreover, many service providers can operate only from a base of ignorance or error when they attempt to discuss the general population in the community, apart from their own clients. For example, in Volume II, of this study, we show that many service providers report that they don't know the basic social and demographic characteristics of older people in Ramsey County. Among those who feel that they do know some of these population characteristics, there is such variance in their ranges of estimates that it is difficult to justify the construction of a portrait of community needs based solely upon their impressions. Hence, the survey strategy of obtaining information directly from aging persons was seen as an essential element of this study.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Development and Content of the Interview

The interview questions were written and pretested by project staff specifically for application in Ramsey County. In composing questions, project staff made use of many instructive comments and suggestions from professionals in agencies throughout Ramsey County. Attention to these comments and suggestions was intended to ensure that output from the project could be transformed into practical applications. The project staff also consulted materials from studies of elderly populations in other parts of the United States.<sup>2</sup> These studies revealed what seniors in places other than Ramsey County consider their principal interests and concerns.

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<sup>1</sup>Even this strategy, of course, has its limitations. It is expensive and time consuming; and some older people may be poor judges of their conditions. Hence, as already indicated, the total study combines multiple survey strategies for examining the living conditions and needs of the older population.

<sup>2</sup>Studies consulted by the project staff included: Guttman, et al. (1977); Washington State Office on Aging (1978); Chicago Office for Senior Citizens (1974); Human Service Coordination Alliance (1976); Bultena et al. (1971); and Minnesota Governor's Citizens' Council on Aging (1971). Questionnaires also examined were The Older Americans Status and Needs Assessment Questionnaire disseminated by the Administration on Aging (March, 1975, version) and the OARS Multidimensional Functional Assessment Questionnaire developed at the Duke University Center for the Study of Aging (April, 1975, version).

The comprehensive set of questions to be asked in the survey was, for the most part, organized in terms of "adjustment domains." Performance in each of these domains (e.g., health, transportation, housing, etc.) was conceptualized as a separate facet of human experience. Within each domain, it is possible to obtain descriptive information about behavior, such as frequency of visiting neighbors, number of persons with whom a person resides, frequency of church attendance, etc. It is also possible to obtain evaluative information within each domain, such as satisfaction with visiting, level of loneliness, satisfaction with church attendance, and so on. With these two types of information, one can classify individuals with respect to their level of adjustment (or maladjustment) within each domain. In the present work, indices are constructed for specific domains, when appropriate, so that users of project data can easily and quickly refer to "adjustment scores" when they wish to discover how many respondents were doing well or poorly in particular domains. These indices receive detailed description and analysis in later chapters.

The domains investigated in the survey are:

Housing	Transportation
Family/Social Ties	Education
Safety	Employment/Volunteer Work
Legal	Recreational Activities
Knowledge and Use of Services	Health
Spiritual	Nutrition
Economics	Life Satisfaction/Happiness

In addition, the survey produced information on demographic and household characteristics of the respondents.

In order to elicit sound information which would reliably portray the respondents' status and needs, a mix of two types of questions was employed. Open-ended questions enabled respondents to express their feelings and ideas in their own words.<sup>3</sup> Questions with structured answer options offered respondents the opportunity to place their answers into categories which fall along readily identifiable continua (e.g., level of happiness) and which are more easily suited than answers to open-ended questions to many quantitative analytic techniques.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>An example of an open-ended question is: What do you consider the biggest problems in your day-to-day life?

<sup>4</sup>An example of a question with structured answer options is: How often do you feel lonely: very often; sometimes; or never?

### 3. Interview Format

Interviews were conducted face-to-face in the homes of the respondents. (A limited number of interviews were conducted over the phone for special reasons, e.g., when respondents were willing to be interviewed but did not want anyone to visit their residence.) Most interviews were conducted by volunteer interviewers. Others were conducted by the project staff and by paid canvassers.<sup>5</sup> Interviews generally lasted about an hour or an hour and a half. The shortest took 40 minutes; the longest took two hours and ten minutes. All interviews were conducted between November, 1978, and November, 1979. In some cases, two household members age 60 and over took part in the survey. In those cases, each person was interviewed independently by an interviewer.

Interviewers reported no major problems carrying out interviews in the respondents' homes. In three cases, some event in the home made it necessary to interrupt the interview and to return at a later time for completion. In only one case, did a respondent become upset with the survey questions and ask the interviewer to leave the residence. While it was expected that the presence of family members, friends, or neighbors in the household might interfere with the interviewing process, this was rarely the case. Indeed, many respondents had no fellow household members. When they did, the others were almost always quite happy to leave for the duration of the interview.

### 4. Interviewers

The interviewing corps consisted of five project staff members, 98 volunteers, and eight paid canvasser/interviewers.<sup>6</sup> The volunteers came from the general community and from operating elements of the Wilder Foundation not directly involved in the project. Forty percent of the volunteers were, themselves, 60 years of age or older. Twenty percent of the volunteers were between 40-59 years of age; and forty percent were 39 years old or younger. Three-fourths of the interviewers were female; one-fourth were male. The Retired Senior Volunteer Program of St. Paul recruited and referred most of the older volunteers.

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<sup>5</sup> Percentages of interviews conducted by the three types of interviewers are: volunteers (70%); project staff (15%); and paid canvassers (15%). A description of the interviewers appears in the next section.

<sup>6</sup> Most interviewers conducted interviews for which appointments had previously been established by survey canvassers. In the last stage of the project, however, several paid canvassers were trained to conduct interviews with individuals at the time of initial contact. These canvassers then became "canvasser/interviewers." (A detailed discussion of canvassing procedures appears in the next section.)



Other recruitment channels for volunteers were: The Voluntary Action Center; the University of Minnesota Faculty Women's Club; the Hamline University Department of Sociology; and personal acquaintances of project staff.

All interviewers attended a half-day training session which introduced them to the Wilder Foundation, to the project, and to their job as interviewers. The training session covered general interviewing techniques, the handling of special problems, and methods for efficient recording of interview information. Interviewers received an interviewer manual specially prepared for this project. This manual aided the presentation/discussion during the training session. It also served as a reference which interviewers could consult during the course of their work for information about the project, rules and procedures of interviewing, etc. The training session also included practice with the survey form, observation of performance during the practice, and discussion of questions which arose during the practice session. Results of each interviewer's first few interviews were closely examined by the project staff. Each interviewer received positive feedback for accomplishments as well as suggestions for improvement where errors or omissions in technique or performance were detected.

Interviewers were encouraged to ask the project staff questions as necessary throughout their association with the project. Project staff maintained close contact with them. In addition, about eight percent of the aged respondents were selected at random and were called after their interviews to ascertain whether the interview had gone smoothly and whether they had any problems or complaints with respect to the interview. The post-interview debriefings of respondents increased our confidence about the quality of the interviewers' performance. They also revealed the great enjoyment and positive feelings which respondents ascribed to the interview experience.

At the end of the interviewing phase of the project, interviewers filled out a questionnaire intended to elicit their feelings about the interviewing experience and their comments for improvement of the interview process. Ninety-four percent of the interviewers reported that they liked their experience. Only six percent said that they "disliked" or "had no special feelings about" the experience. All of the interviewers reported that they enjoyed meeting the respondents. About 75 percent of them said that their work as interviewers was valuable for learning about the life styles of persons age 60 and over; and

40 percent said that their work changed their impressions of older people. (The results of the survey of volunteers are described in greater detail in a special report prepared by the project staff.)

### 5. Sampling Procedures

Why sample? There are two strategies other than systematic sampling of individuals which could be used to obtain respondents for a survey. One strategy is to interview every member of the population under investigation. Such an approach has, however, a prohibitive cost for any population as large as the population of people 60 and over in Ramsey County (approximately 69,000 individuals). The other strategy is to select people who happen to be conveniently accessible to the researcher (for example, members of some clubs, clients who receive a particular service, or users of a particular center.) This strategy has the serious drawback that one never knows to what extent people drawn in such a haphazard manner sufficiently represent the general population.

The project staff and the Technical Advisory Committee realized that, if the results of the survey were to be useful, they would have to be based upon a sample drawn systematically to include people from all regions of the county, at all levels of need, and with differing amounts of contact (ranging from heavy to none) with the formal human service delivery system. Many sampling methods were considered. The particular technique employed is called an area probability, block sampling method. This means that residential blocks (i.e., the standard four-sided city blocks with which everyone is familiar) were selected at random and that persons 60 and over on those blocks were considered eligible to participate in the survey.

More specifically, the procedure worked as follows: Ramsey County is divided into 117 census tracts (See Figure 2-1). It was desired that the proportion of people in the survey sample who came from a given tract would be equal to the proportion of people 60 and over in Ramsey County who lived in that tract. So, for example, if two percent of the older residents of Ramsey County lived in Tract 350, then approximately two percent of the survey respondents should live in Tract 350. All census tracts are divided into blocks (See Figure 2-2). Each of these blocks has a number. Within each tract, numbers were drawn at random, and the blocks corresponding to those numbers were then canvassed for eligible residents.

Figure 2-1  
RAMSEY COUNTY CENSUS TRACTS

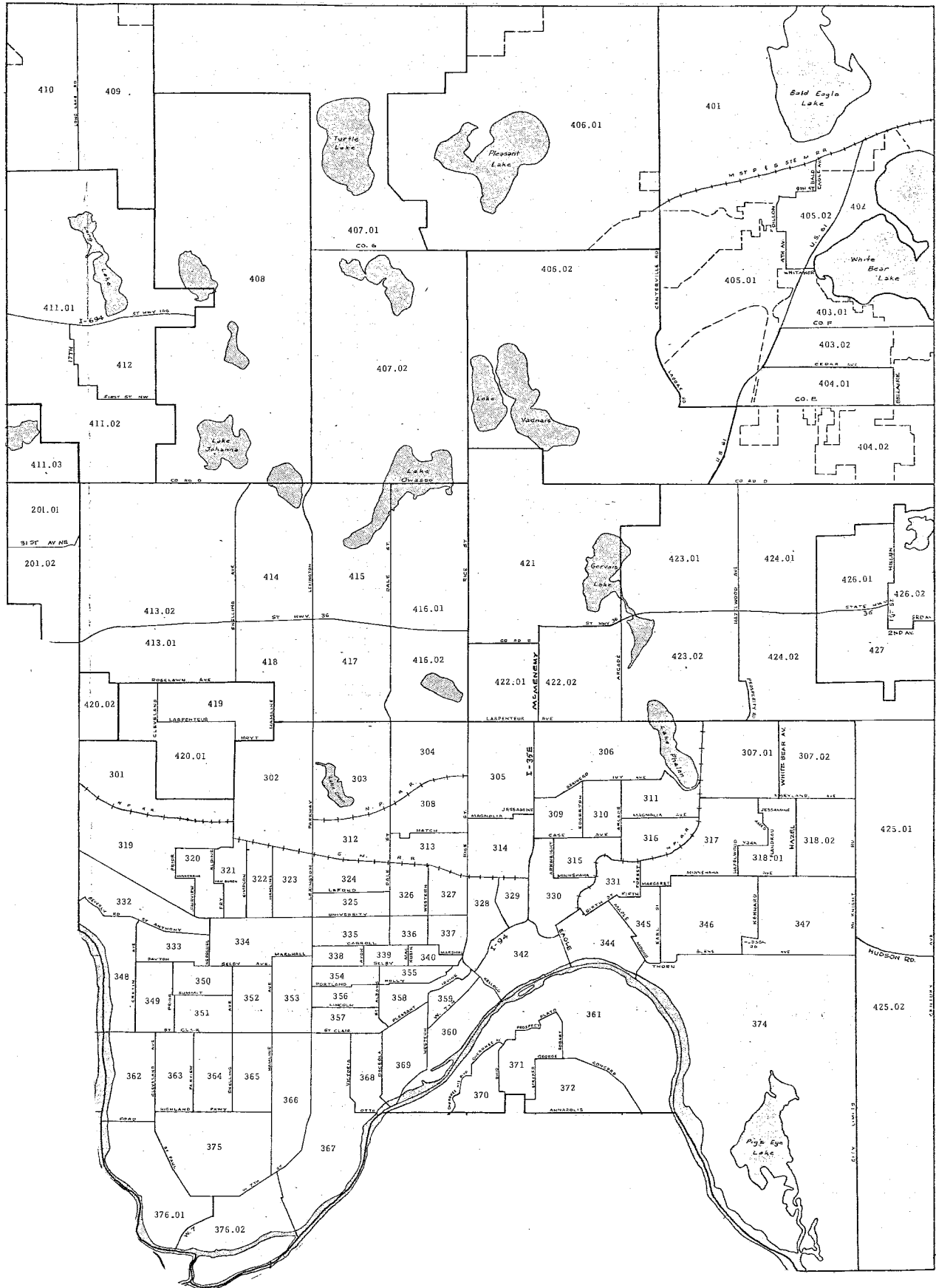
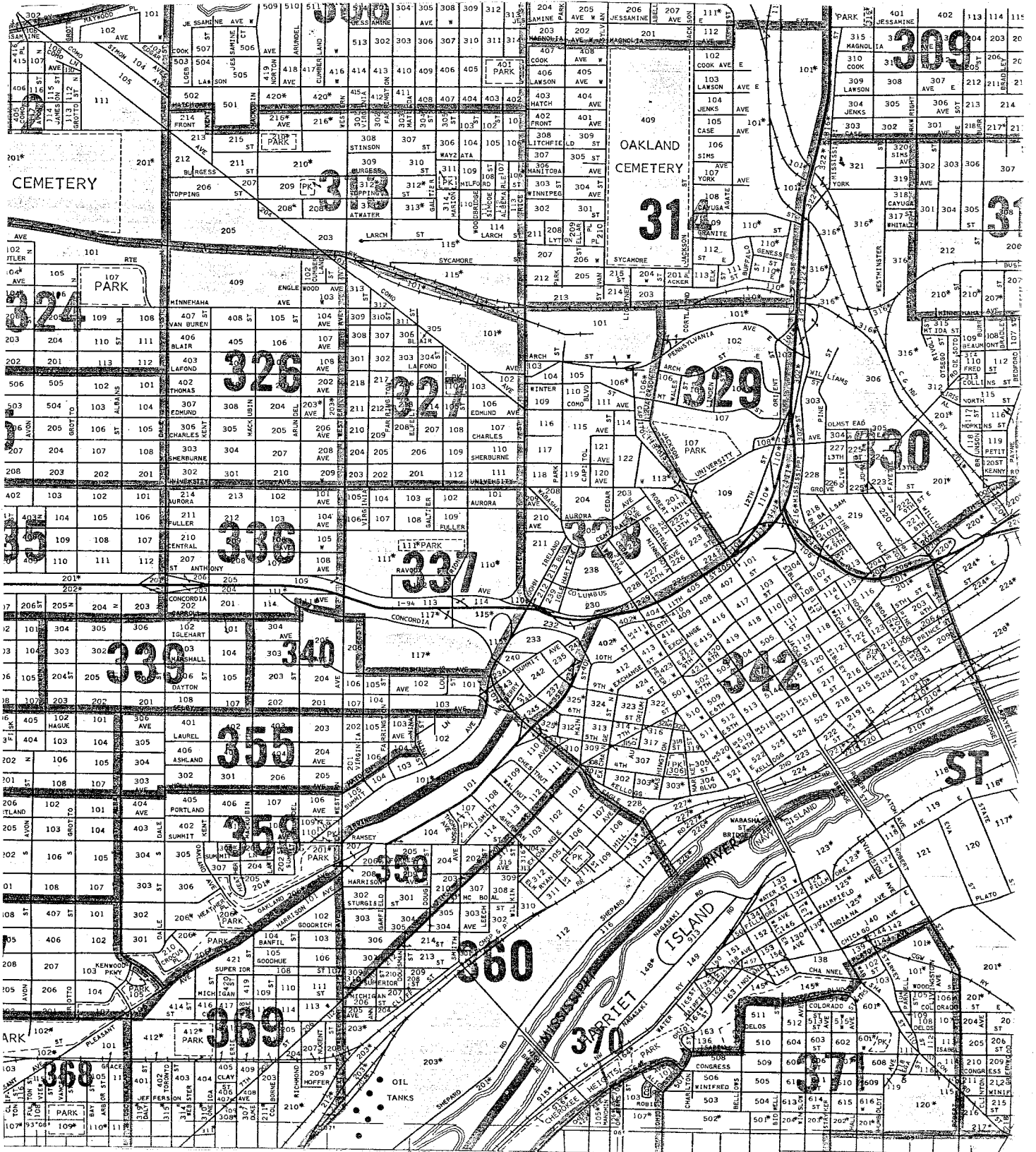


Figure 2-2  
BLOCKS WITHIN TRACTS (AN EXAMPLE)



## 6. Canvassing Procedures

Each selected block was canvassed by foot by paid survey canvassers.<sup>7</sup> That is, canvassers walked door to door to determine the eligibility of the residents of each household for participation in the study. Whenever an eligible person (i.e., a person age 60 or over) was contacted or identified, he/she was invited to participate in the survey. In most cases, participation occurred within a few days, at the time of a visit by a volunteer interviewer. In some cases, especially in areas where sampling difficulties were anticipated and/or experienced, the survey canvasser undertook and completed the interview at the time of initial contact. Foot canvassing was repeated for each selected block on different days and at different times of day until it appeared that such canvassing would yield few, if any, additional respondents. (On the average, each block received two to three visits by foot canvassers. However, some blocks required only one visit for contacting residents of all the households, and other blocks required four or five visits before the foot canvassing reached a point of diminishing returns.) If, after the foot canvassing, a block still contained households for which the eligibility of residents to participate in the survey was unknown, the block was phone canvassed. Phone canvassers used phone numbers from the Polk city and suburban directories to call households for which the foot canvassers could provide no information. These calls were made at varying times of day in an effort to catch residents at home.

Canvassers approached each older person with a verbal introduction to the purpose of the survey. They delivered the introduction in their own words, making sure to mention: the general content of the survey; the importance of the selected individual's participation; and the fact that his or her participation was voluntary and confidential. The canvassers usually presented potential respondents with a copy of a letter from the survey director. The letter reinforced the canvassers' verbal remarks and offered the phone number of the Wilder Planning and Development Office which individuals could call for additional information or legitimation of the survey. In cases of diffident or reluctant household residents, canvassers showed potential respondents a copy of a news story concerning the survey. This story appeared in the St. Paul Dispatch.

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<sup>7</sup>At the beginning of the survey process, project staff members did the canvassing in order to establish effective procedures and to gain a good understanding of the problems involved in such an undertaking. Survey canvassers were then hired and trained to replace the project staff for the remainder of the canvassing effort.

Sometimes, canvassers identified eligible respondents who were not independently capable of participating in an entire interview. In those cases, the canvasser obtained the name of a knowledgeable informant. A "second person" interview was then conducted by a staff member, with the informant answering questions for the respondent. Questions answered by informants, however, were limited to easily observable, behavioral and demographic items. Questions dealing with feelings and emotional states were either asked of the respondent, if he or she was up to it, or were not asked at all.

In a few cases, Spanish-speaking respondents could not take part in the survey without an interpreter. The services of interpreters were secured from the Spanish Speaking Cultural Club, Inc., and Spanish-speaking respondents answered the whole set of survey questions.

Canvassers (foot and phone) maintained a list of all contacts made with eligible respondents on selected blocks. Thus, we have assembled a directory on: the number of persons found to be 60 years of age or older on each block selected for study; the number of older persons on each block who participated in the survey; and the number of older persons on each block who did not participate in the survey.

Overall, 60 percent of the eligible (i.e., aged 60 or over) persons who were contacted once or more by canvassers participated in the survey. When the data are examined by health district, however, noticeable differences appear among regions of the county. Thus, the participation rate varies from a low of 40 percent in one district to a high of 100 percent in another district.<sup>8</sup>

As previously mentioned, each region of the county was intended for representation in the sample in proportion to its contribution to the population of persons aged 60 and over in the county. Throughout the process of canvassing for survey respondents, the total number of respondents from randomly selected blocks within each Health District was compared with the desired number of respondents for that District. Districts where the actual number of respondents seriously fell short of the desired number were targetted for intensive canvassing. The correspondence between the actual and desired number of respondents in each district appears in Table 2-1. It should be noted that

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<sup>8</sup>Complete figures for each Metropolitan Health District appear in Appendix C.

Table 2-1  
INTERVIEWS DESIRED AND INTERVIEWS OBTAINED IN  
EACH METROPOLITAN HEALTH DISTRICT (MHD)

MHD	Interviews Desired	Interviews Obtained	Absolute Difference	Obtained/ Desired
601 (St. Anthony Park)	17	14	-3	.82
602 (Como Park)	77	73	-4	.95
603 (Rice Street)	45	54	+9	1.20
604 (Phalen Park)	85	94	+9	1.11
605 (Hayden Heights)	31	29	-2	.94
606 (Midway)	12	12	0	1.00
607 (Hamline)	50	59	+9	1.18
608 (Thomas-Dale)	44	46	+2	1.05
609 (Mt. Airy)	20	18	-2	.90
610 (Dayton's Bluff)	72	73	+1	1.01
611 (Hazel Park)	39	55	+16	1.41
612 (Macalester)	152	159	+7	1.05
613 (Summit-Dale)	130	128	-2	.98
614 (Downtown)	22	16	-6	.73
615 (Highland Park)	75	62	-7	.83
616 (West Seventh)	70	58	-12	.83
617 (Riverview)	54	47	-7	.87
618 (Battle Creek)	6	7	+1	1.17
720 (Falcon Heights/ Lauderdale)	14	20	+6	1.43
722 (Roseville)	53	75	+22	1.42
723 (Maplewood)	41	41	0	1.00
724 (Little Canada)	6	8	+2	1.33
725 (No. St. Paul)	17	12	-5	.71
726 (New Brighton)	17	7	-10	.41
727 (Arden Hills)	7	6	-1	.86
728 (Shoreview)	9	11	+2	1.22
729 (Vadnais Heights)	5	0	-5	.00
730 (Mounds View)	5	7	+2	1.40
731 (North Oaks)	2	2	0	1.00
732 (White Bear Lake)	28	33	+5	1.18
311 (St. Anthony Village)	4	2	-2	.50

shortages, where they occur, are attributable to the inability to locate older residents of particular areas after diligent canvassing efforts. In areas with shortages, blocks were intensively canvassed (albeit to little avail) several times by both foot and phone at different times of the day and on different days of the week.

#### 7. Composition of the Sample

Table 2-2 offers a demographic profile of the survey respondents, including age, sex, race, income, marital status, city/suburban residence, education, and number of persons in the household. With respect to age, 26 percent of the respondents belonged to the youngest cohort, age 60-64; 27 percent were in their late 60's; 19 percent were aged 70-74; and 28 percent were 75 years old or older. The sample includes a sizable number of persons in their 60's, 70's and 80's. It includes only a few people in their 90's, but nevertheless, that age range does have some representation. Most of the respondents (62%) were females.

Fifty-nine percent of the respondents were married. The marital statuses of the others were widowed (30%), never married (7%), divorced (3%), and separated (1%). Seventy-one percent of the respondents, including almost all of the married respondents, lived with at least one other person. (In Table 2-2 the proportion of married persons (59%) does not equal the proportion of persons living in two-person households (55%) because a very few married people were living with children or with others in their household.)

Most of the respondents were white (95%). Three percent were black and two percent were of other races (Oriental, American Indian, etc.). Eighty-two percent of the respondents lived in the city of St. Paul; 18 percent lived in suburban municipalities.

Forty-four percent of the sample had less than a high school education. A high school diploma was the highest degree obtained by 41 percent of the sample; and 13 percent obtained degrees beyond high school. (Only four percent obtained degrees beyond a bachelor's degree.) With respect to monthly household income, a large proportion of the respondents either stated that they didn't know their income or refused to reveal their income. To the extent that it is possible to characterize the incomes of the respondents, however, Table 2-2 does so. Ten percent of the sample reported monthly household incomes of \$300 or less; 25 percent reported \$301-\$600; 13 percent reported \$601-\$900; seven percent reported \$901-\$1,200; and 13 percent reported \$1201 or more.



Table 2-2  
 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE (1,228 RESPONDENTS)

Demographic Characteristic	Distribution <sup>a</sup>		Demographic Characteristic	Distribution	
	N	%		N	%
<u>Age</u>			<u>Marital Status</u>		
60 - 64	322	26	Married	724	59
65 - 69	334	27	Widowed	367	30
70 - 74	239	19	Divorced	42	3
75 - 79	165	13	Separated	5	1
80 - 84	112	9	Never Married	85	7
85 - 89	45	4			
90 - 94	7	1			
95 - 99	4	1	<u>City/Suburban</u>		
			City	1,004	82
<u>Sex</u>			Suburban	224	18
Male	466	38	<u>Education</u>		
Female	762	62	No Degree	540	44
			High School		
<u>Race</u>			Diploma/G.E.D.	499	41
White	1,164	95	Bachelor's Degree	76	6
Black	41	3	Graduate Degree	49	4
Other	25	2	Other Degree/ (Not Graduate)	44	3
<u>Monthly Household Income</u>			<u>Persons in Household</u>		
1 - 300	117	10	1	361	29
301 - 600	302	25	2	670	55
601 - 900	165	13	3	131	11
901 - 1200	89	7	4	36	3
1201+	164	13	5+	30	3
Don't know	173	14			
Refused to Answer	175	14			

<sup>a</sup> Percentages do not total 100% for some items and totals do not equal 1228 for some items due to missing responses for those items.

## 8. Representativeness of the Sample

As one means for checking how effectively the sampling procedure obtained a representative sample of the older persons in Ramsey County, age and sex characteristics of the sample were compared with independent estimates of these characteristics for the entire population age 60 and over in Ramsey County. The independent estimates were taken from the Minnesota State Demographer and from an update of the 1970 census produced by the St. Paul City Planning Department. Table 2-3 displays the comparisons. Overall, the actual distribution of the sample on age and sex criteria came very close to what was expected. In the totals for sex, the differences between expected and obtained percentages are minute. In the totals for age, there appear slight shortages in the 60 to 64 year old and 75+ year old groups, but the magnitudes of these shortages are quite respectable and by no means damaging to the study's purposes. The inside cells of the table reveal that differences between expected and obtained percentages for the youngest males and the oldest males were primarily responsible for these shortages.

Users of project data should not treat the issue of representativeness lightly. As the previous sections of this report made clear, a great deal of time and effort was expended to ensure that a representative group of older persons would be included in the sample. Results demonstrate that the sampling/canvassing strategy succeeded. However, in thinking about the representativeness of the sample, users of project data should keep several issues in mind.

First, survey results as a whole were intended to represent the activities, opinions, and needs of persons 60 years of age and older in Ramsey County. Statistics from the survey (for the total group surveyed) would probably be different if the minimum age for inclusion in the sample were different (e.g., 55 or 62 or 65). Users who have an interest in data on persons in a specific age cohort will want not only to use the total survey results but also to consult tables which partition these results by age.<sup>9</sup>

Second, there exists no definitive way to establish independent estimates of what is expected in Table 2-2. Comparison of characteristics of a survey

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<sup>9</sup>Many tables which partition the survey results by age and other demographics appear in this report, especially in Chapter 4. Other such tables, which could not be included in this report, are available for use in the Planning and Development Office.

Table 2-3  
 SAMPLE BY AGE AND SEX  
 N = 1,228

Age	Sex				Total		
	Male		Female		Expected	Actual	
	Expected	Actual	Expected	Actual			
60-64	N	153 <sup>1</sup>	122	189	200	342	322
	%	12.7	10.0	15.6	16.3	28.9	26.2
65-74	N	208	231	310	342	518	573
	%	17.2	18.8	25.6	27.9	41.7	46.7
75+	N	122	113	226	220	348	333
	%	10.1	9.2	18.7	17.9	29.4	27.1
Total	N	483	466	725	762	1,208	1,228
	%	38.4 <sup>2</sup>	37.9	61.6	62.1	100.0	101.7

<sup>1</sup>From 1970 census and 1975 update: expected N and % in cells; expected N in marginals.

<sup>2</sup>From 1980 projections by state demographer: expected % in marginals.

sample with data from the U.S. Census constitutes a standard, approved method of determining the success of a sampling effort. However, when discrepancies occur, between census figures and sample figures, they are not necessarily indictments of the sampling process. For example, the possibility exists that the census itself may have been faulty. Or a great deal of change may have occurred in a geographic area since the taking of the census. Canvassers for the present study sometimes found older people on blocks where the Census Bureau indicated there were none. They also found no older people where the Census Bureau indicated that some resided. (Indeed, in some areas of St. Paul, entire blocks had been levelled for re-building. Such officially numbered blocks not only contained no older people, they contained no houses.)

Third, in achieving a representative group of older people, the sampling effort for this study produced numerous isolated individuals and people in distress. Some survey participants who had what they themselves considered very serious problems revealed that participation in the survey was their first contact with the human service delivery system in Ramsey County. Some, in fact, relied upon the interviewers or other project staff to connect them with someone who could provide them with help. Nonetheless, there are some extremely withdrawn and isolated older individuals in Ramsey County who probably would avoid participation in any survey. Moreover, such persons probably would never voluntarily apply for agency service. How these people differ from the isolated, problem-ridden individuals who took part in the survey is an intriguing question. With respect to the issue of representativeness, the existence of the recluses means that many references we make from project data concerning need are probably slightly conservative.

Fourth, and finally, it should be recalled that, to maintain the representativeness of the sample, "second person" interviews were conducted when a respondent's poor physical or mental condition precluded a direct interview. In such cases, a knowledgeable informant answered survey questions dealing with easily observable, behavioral and demographic traits of the respondent. Questions dealing with feelings or emotional states were either asked of the respondent, if he or she was up to it, or were not asked at all. Thus, at least some information was captured for very disabled people who turned up in the sample. (There were 20 "second person" interviews out of a total of 1,228.)

## CHAPTER 3

### THE INTERVIEW FINDINGS

In this chapter, we review the interview as it was presented to our respondents. Each interview opened with an introduction read by the interviewer to the survey respondent. This introduction reviewed the general purpose of the study and offered the respondent the opportunity to raise any questions he or she may have had, such as questions about the study's purpose, interview format, confidentiality, etc. Specifically, the introduction was:

This interview is part of a study of persons over age 60 in Ramsey County. The study is being conducted by the Wilder Foundation. I will ask you questions about a variety of topics related to your daily life. Your answers are very important for learning more about the older residents of the county.

I'll try to make the interview as interesting as possible and I'll only ask you the same questions that we ask of others. If there is any interview question which you would prefer not to answer, just let me know, and I'll move on. All of the information you share with me will be included in our study file without your name attached to it. In this sense, no one will ever be able to locate your information and determine that you gave it to us.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Each survey item is described in this chapter in the order which it appeared on the interview form.<sup>1</sup> The categories and frequencies of responses

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<sup>1</sup>The discussion of every question includes a reference to its number. Readers can use the question numbers to locate the statistics they wish to examine in any particular table. One exception to the sequential description of interview questions and responses is that Questions 10 through 14, dealing with neighborhood social contacts, appear with Questions 58 through 61, in the section of this chapter entitled "Family/Social Ties."

to each item are displayed in an accompanying table.<sup>2</sup> Some commentary on the meaning or implications of responses is occasionally offered. However, the major part of data interpretation is reserved for succeeding chapters when the items are analyzed within topical groupings.

### The Respondent's Household

The initial interview questions focused upon household characteristics. Respondents were asked how long they had lived in their present residence (Question 1). If that was fewer than five years, they were asked the location of their previous residence and how long they had lived there. As Table 3-1 indicates, more than half of the respondents had lived in their homes or apartments for ten years or more prior to the interview. Only 15 percent had spent five or fewer years in their present residence. Of those who had recently moved into their present residence, most had previously resided in St. Paul.<sup>3</sup>

Question 2 ascertained the number of persons living in the respondent's household. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents lived alone; 55 percent lived with one other person; and 16 percent lived with two or more other people.<sup>4</sup> In Question 3, we attempted to learn the number of fellow residents in the same household who were 60 years of age or older. In very few cases (2%), more than two persons 60 and older were living in a given household.

Question 4 inquired about the relationship(s) of fellow residents to the respondent. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents lived with their spouse--this represents 82 percent of the individuals who were living with one or more other persons. Other relationships of household residents to the respondent appear in Table 3-1.

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<sup>2</sup>The number of respondents who gave a particular response appears in the column labeled "N" in a table. Percentages used in the text generally have a base of 1,228 (the number of persons interviewed). These percentages appear in the tables in columns labeled "% of Sample." For interview questions which were asked only of a portion of the respondents, another set of percentages appears in the appropriate tables labeled "% of Subgroup." So, for example, if only 120 persons out of 1,228 were asked Question X, and if 60 of those persons responded "yes" to the question, the data table would indicate: that the number of "yes" respondents is 60; that the "% of Sample" is five percent (i.e. 60/1228); and that the "% of Subgroup" is 50 percent (i.e. 60/120).

<sup>3</sup>Note that the percentages in Table 3-1, as in all tables in this chapter, are rounded. Therefore, their total may sometimes differ slightly from 100 percent.

<sup>4</sup>The proportion of persons in this sample who lived alone is comparable to national figures. See: U.S.D.H.E.W. 1978; U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1979.

Two questions, 5 and 6, elicited information on structural problems or inconveniences of the residence itself. Respondents indicated how compatible the size of their residence was with their general life style (Question 5). Fourteen percent felt that their residence was too big; two percent felt that it was too small; and 80 percent felt that it was just right. When asked whether they had any problems with needed repairs, remodeling, or redecorating, 16 percent reported such problems, while 80 percent stated that they had not experienced such problems. The types of problems which respondents indicated appear in Table 3-1. The most frequently mentioned was "structural repairs." In describing the reasons for not accomplishing repairs, remodeling, and redecorating, respondents mentioned finances and the inability to find someone to do the work as the two most common inhibitors.

Question 7 asked whether respondents had someone, or felt that they would need someone, to help with things around the house. Sixty-two percent responded that they had no such present need and did not anticipate such a need during the next few years. Seventeen percent already had such help, and 16 percent expected that they would need such help in the future. The most frequently mentioned types of help needed at present, or in the future, were help with housecleaning and help with repairs. Heavy yard work and snow shoveling were also mentioned as frequent needs for help. Thirty-five percent of the respondents who reported needing present or future help around the house indicated that a relative was the person who helped them or whom they expected to help them.

Table 3-1

THE RESPONDENT'S HOUSEHOLD: INTERVIEW ITEMS 1-7

1. First of all, how long have you lived in the building in which you are now living?

<u>Years</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
5 or fewer	179	15
6 to 10	129	11
11 to 20	251	20
21 to 30	303	25
31 or more	362	30
Missing	4	0

(If fewer than five years, questions 1a and 1b were asked.)

1a. Where did you live before this?

<u>Previous Residence</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
St. Paul	94	8	66
Ramsey Co. (outside St. Paul)	12	1	8
Outside Ramsey County	30	2	14
Missing	7	1	5

1b. How long did you live there?

<u>Years</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
5 or fewer	50	4	35
6 to 10	21	2	15
11 to 20	20	2	14
21 to 30	13	1	9
31 or more	13	1	9
Missing	26	2	18

2. How many people, including you, live in your household?

<u>Number of persons</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
1	361	29
2	670	55
3	131	11
4	36	3
5	14	1
6 or more	16	1

3. How many of these people, including you, are 60 years old or older?

<u>Number of Persons 60+</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
1	532	43
2	675	55
3 or more	21	2

4. Who lives in this household with you?

<u>Fellow Residents</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Live alone	361	29
Spouse only	581	47
Spouse and others	134	11
Children only	54	4
Children and others	24	2
Other	72	6
Missing	2	0



5. Would you say that the place where you are living is too big, too small, or just about right for you?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Too big	175	14
Too small	27	2
Just about right	983	80
Missing	43	4

6. Have you had any problems doing repairs, remodeling or redecorating that you needed to do in your home?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	200	16
No	983	80
Missing	45	4

(If yes, questions 6a and 6b were asked.)

- 6a. What did you want to do?

<u>Desired Repairs</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Painting	34	3	17
Structural Repairs	85	7	43
Electrical work	11	1	6
Plumbing work	21	2	11
Miscellaneous	38	3	19
Don't know	2	0	1
Missing	9	1	5

- 6b. What problem did you have?

<u>Problem</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Cost	58	5	29
Can't find person for job	53	4	27
Poor work by contractors	25	2	13
Physical disability	18	2	9
Miscellaneous	11	1	6
Don't know	5	0	3
Missing	30	2	15

7. Do you have someone, or will you need someone during the next few years, to come in to help with things around the house?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes, will need someone	195	16
Yes, already have someone	209	17
No	766	62
Don't know	39	3
Missing	19	2

(If yes, questions 7a and 7b were asked.)

7a. What kind of help?

<u>Kind of Help</u>	<u>(First Mention)</u>			<u>(Second Mention)</u>		
	<u>N</u>	<u>% of</u>	<u>% of</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of</u>	<u>% of</u>
		<u>Sample</u>	<u>Subgroup</u>		<u>Sample</u>	<u>Subgroup</u>
Cleaning	146	12	36	3	0	1
Repairs or painting	146	12	36	21	2	5
Yard work/snow shoveling	51	4	13	85	7	21
Personal care	16	1	4	11	1	3
Meals	4	0	1	17	1	4
Other	18	2	4	23	2	13
Don't know	3	0	1	-	-	-
Missing	20	2	5	-	-	-

7b. Whom do you expect you will get to help you? (Or: Who helps you now?)

<u>Expected (or Actual) Helper</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
A relative	136	11	34
A friend	31	3	8
Nursing service or home help service	30	2	7
Cleaning lady	34	3	8
Other	95	8	24
Don't know	39	3	10
Missing	39	2	10

### Safety Status

Question 8 moved the interview into a discussion of the safety status of the respondent, but continued briefly with specific reference to the household. Respondents indicated the presence or absence of each of five safety features in their house or apartment: dead bolt locks; window latches; a smoke detector; a fire extinguisher; and posted phone numbers for police and fire departments.

As Table 3-2 indicates, the safety item most frequently possessed by the respondents was the posted listing of police and fire department numbers (present in 89 percent of the respondents' households). Eighty-seven percent reported having latches on all their windows. The least frequent safety item present in the household was a fire extinguisher (present in only 37 percent of the respondents' households). Percentages for the other items appear in the table.

Question 9 revealed that 91 percent of the respondents considered their home as safe from fire as it should be. The few respondents (4%) who felt that their homes were not safe from fire cited various reasons, the most frequent of which was that the home lacked either a smoke detector or a fire extinguisher.

Questions 15 through 17 elicited respondents' feelings of safety. The overwhelming majority (88%) felt very safe or reasonably safe in their neighborhoods during the day, but only 51 percent felt that way at night. With regard to feeling safe within their homes at night, 52 percent of the respondents reported feeling very safe or reasonably safe.

Responses to Question 18 reveal high regard for police departments among the elderly. Eighty percent felt that the police were doing a good or very good job in their neighborhoods.<sup>5</sup>

With the relatively low fear of crime expressed in the previous questions, it might be expected that few respondents would carry special items for protection. Responses to Question 19 demonstrate that this is the case. Only 13 percent of the respondents reported ever taking something for protection, such as a whistle, a dog, or a weapon, when they left home.

Experience with crime, either through the involvement of friends and neighbors or through personal involvement, was explored in Questions 20, 21, and 22. Sixty percent of the respondents reported knowing that a friend's house had been burglarized during the past few years, and 22 percent reported that friends or neighbors had been robbed or attacked on the street. Of the reported burglaries, 83 percent occurred in the respondent's neighborhood. Of the reported street crime, 77 percent occurred in the respondent's neighborhood.

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<sup>5</sup>Positive attitudes of the elderly toward the police have also been noted by Schack and Frank (1978).

Question 22 elicited information on four types of crime which the respondents may have experienced: residential burglary; street robbery; harrassment by youths; and coercion to obtain property. Whenever a respondent had experienced one of these crimes, he or she was asked about the location of the crime, personal knowledge of the offender, and whether or not the police were called. The proportions of the respondents who had experienced each of the four types of crime are: 19 percent for burglary; four percent for attack on the street; 12 percent for harrassment; and three percent for coercion.<sup>6</sup> Virtually all of the burglaries occurred in the respondent's present neighborhood. For the other three types of crime, however, roughly two-thirds of the reported experiences occurred in the respondent's present neighborhood. Knowledge of the offender was highest for harrassment by youths (for which 50 percent of those who reported harrassment also reported that they knew the offender). For each of the other crimes, the respondents knew the offenders in 18 percent to 29 percent of the cases. The tendency to call the police varied significantly from crime to crime. Eighty-one percent of the burglaries were reported to the police, and 73 percent of the street robberies or attacks were reported to the police. However, only 56 percent of the losses through force or threat of force were reported to the police, and only 26 percent of the instances of harrassment were so reported.<sup>7</sup>

The proportion of victims who knew their assailants is relatively high. Interviewers often learned that victims of burglary and harrassment were reluctant to report crimes and to identify perpetrators because they feared reprisals. For example, one man recounted how three young males broke down the door to his efficiency apartment and, as he watched, helped themselves to his valuables and to his food. He knew they were residents of an apartment building less than a block from his apartment, and he felt that if he called the police, the thugs would retaliate by returning and beating him up.

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<sup>6</sup>Several studies have demonstrated that the elderly are generally less often the victims of crime than are younger members of the population. Interested readers should consult: Liang and Sengstock, 1981; Antunes, et al., 1977; U. S. Department of Justice, 1977.

<sup>7</sup>Note, in Table 3-2, that crimes for which the offender was most often known were crimes for which the police were least often called.

Table 3-2

SAFETY STATUS: INTERVIEW ITEMS 8, 9, 15-22

8. I would like to read a list of items. Please tell me whether you have them in your house or apartment. Do you have:

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
a. <u>Deadbolt locks on your door(s)?</u>		
yes	559	46
no	638	52
missing	31	2
b. <u>Latches on all windows?</u>		
yes	1069	87
no	125	10
missing	34	3
c. <u>Smoke detector?</u>		
yes	631	51
no	568	46
missing	29	2
d. <u>Fire extinguisher?</u>		
yes	451	37
no	746	61
missing	31	3
e. <u>Phone numbers for the police and fire departments posted near your phone?</u>		
yes	1092	89
no	106	9
missing	30	2

9. Is your home as safe from fire as it should be?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	1113	91
No	43	4
Don't know	18	2
Missing	54	5

(If no, question 9a was asked.)

9a. Why not?

<u>Reasons Unsafe</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Lacks safety item	16	1	37
No particular reason	9	1	21
Debris or trash	8	1	19
Miscellaneous	6	1	14
Don't know	2	0	5
Missing	2	0	5

15. How safe do you feel it is to be out alone in your neighborhood during the day: very safe; reasonably safe; slightly unsafe; or very unsafe?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Very safe	638	52
Reasonably safe	442	36
Slightly unsafe	67	6
Very unsafe	31	3
Don't know	6	1
Missing	44	4

16. How safe do you feel it is to be out alone in your neighborhood at night: very safe; reasonably safe; slightly unsafe; or very unsafe?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Very safe	190	16
Reasonably safe	432	35
Slightly unsafe	260	21
Very unsafe	235	19
Don't know	60	5
Missing	51	4

17. How about being at home at night? Do you feel very safe; reasonably safe; slightly unsafe; or very unsafe?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Very safe	681	56
Reasonably safe	436	36
Slightly unsafe	46	4
Very unsafe	19	2
Don't know	4	0
Missing	42	3

18. How would you rate the job the police are doing in your neighborhood: very good; good; poor; or very poor?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Very good	391	32
Good	590	48
Poor	83	7
Very poor	26	1
Don't know	96	8
Missing	52	4

19. When you go out of your home, how often do you take something to protect you from crime--like a whistle, a dog, or a weapon? Do you do this most of the time, sometimes, rarely, or never?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Most of the time	71	6
Sometimes	43	4
Rarely	33	3
Never	1026	84
Missing	55	4

20. During the past few years, have any of your friends' houses been broken into?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	733	60
No	446	36
Don't know	6	1
Missing	43	4

(If yes, question 20a was asked.)

- 20a. In this neighborhood or somewhere else?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
This neighborhood	610	50	83
Somewhere else	104	9	14
Both	17	1	2
Missing	2	0	0

21. During the past few years, have any of your friends or neighbors been robbed or attacked on the street?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	269	22
No	909	74
Don't know	8	1
Missing	42	3

(If yes, question 21a was asked.)

- 21a. In this neighborhood or somewhere else?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
This neighborhood	206	17	77
Somewhere else	55	5	20
Both	6	1	2
Missing	2	0	1

22. During the past few years, could you tell me if any of the following things happened?

a. Has your house been broken into? (If yes, three questions were asked.)

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	237	19
No	977	80
Missing	14	1

If yes, did this happen in your present neighborhood or somewhere else?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Present neighborhood	223	18	94
Somewhere else	9	1	4
Missing	5	0	2

Did you know the offender?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	50	4	21
No	166	14	70
Missing	21	2	9

Did you call the police?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	191	16	81
No	24	2	10
Missing	22	2	9

22b. Have you been robbed or attacked on the street? (If yes, three questions were asked.)

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	44	4
No	1167	95
Missing	17	1

If yes, did this happen in your present neighborhood or somewhere else?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Present neighborhood	26	2	59
Somewhere else	10	1	23
Missing	8	1	18



Did you know the offender?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	8	1	18
No	33	3	75
Missing	3	0	7

Did you call the police?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	32	3	73
No	8	1	18
Missing	4	0	9

22c. Have you been threatened or harrassed by kids? (If yes, three questions were asked.)

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	148	12
No	1064	87
Missing	16	1

If yes, did this happen in your present neighborhood?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Present neighborhood	94	8	64
Somewhere else	18	2	12
Missing	36	3	24

Did you know the offender?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	74	6	50
No	55	5	37
Missing	19	2	13

Did you call the police?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	38	3	26
No	88	7	59
Missing	22	2	15

22d. Has something been taken from you by force or threat of force? (If yes, three questions were asked.)

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	34	3
No	1174	96
Missing	20	2

If yes, did this happen in your present neighborhood or somewhere else?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Present neighborhood	22	2	65
Somewhere else	8	1	24
Missing	4	0	12

Did you know the offender?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	10	1	29
No	21	2	62
Missing	3	0	9

Did you call the police?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	19	2	56
No	12	1	35
Missing	3	0	9

### Housing Status

Interviewers recorded the type of building in which each respondent lived at the time of the survey. As Table 3-3 indicates, most of the respondents (79%) lived in single family houses; ten percent lived in apartments.<sup>8</sup> The proportions who lived in other types of housing appear in the table.

Questions 23 through 26 ascertained the housing preferences of the aging individuals interviewed. In response to Question 23, 81 percent of the respondents indicated that, given a choice, they would prefer to live in their present residence rather than somewhere else. Among those who would prefer to

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<sup>8</sup>These proportions are comparable to national figures. See: U.S.D.H.E.W., 1979.

live somewhere else, 26 percent mentioned a specific, negative feature of their neighborhood as the reason for their preference (e.g., too much noise, poor street lighting, fear of crime, etc.); 17 percent mentioned problems with their house or apartment (e.g., place too big, dislike stairs, etc.); and 12 percent mentioned that they dislike the climate of this region. Other, less frequent responses appear in Table 3-3.

Question 24 asked that each of the persons whom we surveyed indicate preferences which would exist for type of building, location of residence, and neighborhood characteristics, if moving from a present residence became necessary. Apartment living was most frequently mentioned as a building preference (38 percent of the respondents). Despite the fact that most respondents lived in single family houses, and that most reported that they want to live where they now live, only 33 percent of the sample mentioned a single family house as their preference if they had to move. If respondents mentioned special characteristics of the buildings which they would prefer, these characteristics were recorded and tallied. As Table 3-3 shows, six percent of the respondents emphasized that a new residence should be small, four percent would want living quarters on or close to the ground floor, and three percent would look especially for safety.

One's own neighborhood clearly emerged as the favorite place of residence among the people whom we interviewed (Question 24). If they had to move, 29 percent of the respondents would want to remain in their own neighborhood; 24 percent would want to move into a St. Paul neighborhood other than their own; 11 percent would want to move to a suburban location near St. Paul; six percent would like to live in a small town or rural area; and eight percent don't know their particular preference for location. Characteristics which respondents would seek in a new neighborhood were quite varied, and up to three were recorded for each interview. Those mentioned by sizeable proportions of the individuals surveyed were: convenient shopping facilities (37%);<sup>9</sup> public transportation nearby (24%); church nearby (15%); safety, good police protection (18%); proximity to friends, children and relatives (17%); privacy (7%); open space (5%); and well-kept surroundings (5%).

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<sup>9</sup>Note that the three responses recorded for Question 24c can be added to obtain the total percentage of people who offered a particular response.

Only 11 percent of the respondents indicated that they had plans to move during the next few years (Question 25). When asked whether they would ever like to live in a senior high rise, the majority of respondents (63%) reported that they would not like to do so; 28 percent reported that they would like to do so; and 5% felt uncertain about the idea (Question 26). Most of those who would not like to live in a high rise felt that way for "no particular reason." Two reasons often mentioned were that respondents disliked multiple dwellings (9%) or that respondents considered high rise units too confining or small (9%).

Table 3-3

HOUSING STATUS: INTERVIEW ITEMS 23-26, IR3

23. If you had your choice, would you prefer to live where you do now or somewhere else?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Where he/she lives now	992	81
Somewhere else	195	16
Don't know	8	1
Missing	33	3

(If somewhere else, question 23a was asked.)

23a. Why would you rather live somewhere else?

<u>Reason</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Negative aspect of the neighborhood (noise, crime, etc.)	50	4	26
Problematic features of residence	33	3	17
Dislike climate	24	2	12
Want smaller town	17	1	9
Better access to friends and family	15	1	8
Need cheaper housing	10	1	5
Miscellaneous	26	2	13
Don't know	3	0	2
Missing	17	1	9

24. If you had to move:

a. What type of building would you prefer?

<u>Building Preference</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Apartment	460	38
Condominium	64	5
Single family house	404	33
Town house	44	4
Nursing home	22	2
High-rise	77	6
Trailer	16	1
Don't know	59	5
Missing	82	7

<u>Preferred Features</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Small	70	6
On ground floor	50	4
Secure, safe	35	3
Yard, garden, or porch	24	2
Low upkeep, maintenance free	11	1
Miscellaneous	104	8
No characteristics mentioned	852	69
Missing	82	7

b. Where would you prefer to live?

<u>Preferred Location</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Same neighborhood	357	29
St. Paul (other than own neighborhood)	298	24
Suburbs (other than own neighborhood)	136	11
Small town/rural	70	6
Miscellaneous	165	13
Don't know	92	8
Missing	110	9

24. c. What are the most important things you would want in your new neighborhood?

Things wanted in new neighborhood	(First Mention)		(Second Mention)		(Third Mention)	
	N	% of Sample	N	% of Sample	N	% of Sample
Convenient shopping	110	9	235	19	106	9
Public transportation nearby	211	17	81	7	3	0
Church nearby	186	15	3	0	2	0
Safety, good police protection	109	9	104	8	12	1
Proximity to friends, children, relatives	87	7	79	6	53	4
Privacy	64	5	17	1	11	1
Open space	42	3	19	2	5	0
Medical service nearby	23	2	9	1	0	0
Other public services (library, post office, etc.)	17	1	16	1	1	0
Well-kept, pleasant surroundings	33	3	17	1	17	1
Miscellaneous	84	7	61	5	31	3
Don't know	110	9		-	-	-
Missing	152	12		-	-	-

25. Do you have any plans to move during the next few years?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	140	11
No	1041	85
Don't know	19	2
Missing	28	2

26. Would you ever like to live in a senior high-rise?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	348	28
No	771	63
Don't know	61	5
Missing	48	4

(If no, question 26a was asked.)

26a. Is there any special reason why not?

<u>Reasons</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
No particular reason	173	14	22
Prefer own home	51	4	7
Dislike multiple dwellings	110	9	14
Too confining or small	105	9	14
Bad image as senior ghetto/depressing image	44	3	6
Dislikes high buildings	50	4	6
Miscellaneous	89	7	12
Don't know	12	0	2
Missing	34	3	4

IR3. Type of building in which respondent lived at time of interview.

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Single family house	966	79
Apartment building	118	10
Multi-family house	96	8
Senior high-rise	12	1
Townhouse	12	1
Rooming house	8	1
Trailer/mobile home	6	1
Other	10	1

### Transportation

The frequency with which respondents get out of their homes was ascertained in Question 27. Slightly more than half (52%) of the people surveyed reported getting out of the house every day (Table 3-4). Thirty-five percent reported getting out several times a week; seven percent about once a week; and five percent less often than once a week. Those who leave the house once a week or less often were asked whether they would like to get out more often. Forty-nine percent of these individuals expressed the desire for greater mobility.

In Question 28, the respondents told the interviewers whether or not they used each of eight modes of transportation to get to places where they wish to go. From Table 3-4, it is clear that walking, driving a car, riding with a friend or relative, and taking a bus are widely, even if not frequently, used by the elderly. Paying someone (other than a bus or taxi) and using a special transportation service for seniors are little used options. Respondents

were asked which of these modes they used "most often" and "second most often." Driving a car was reported by the largest proportion of respondents (49%) as the most frequent mode of travel. The second largest proportion of respondents (18%) reported that taking the bus was the mode of travel used "most often." Taking the bus was most frequently mentioned (i.e., by 23 percent of the respondents) as the "second most often" mode of travel.

Fifty-nine percent of the respondents reported living within one block of a bus stop; 29 percent reported living two to three blocks from a bus stop; five percent reported living four to five blocks from a bus stop; and four percent reported living six blocks or more from a bus stop (Question 31).

In Question 32, respondents indicated whether problems with transportation ever keep them from doing things they want to do. Sixteen percent mentioned such problems, the most frequent of which was that the respondent did not drive and had no one to provide transportation when needed. Three of the problems cited were related to use of buses (inconvenient routes, infrequent service, and bus generally difficult to use). Other responses appear in Table 3-4. In suggesting possible remedies for their transportation problems, most of the persons who experienced those problems suggested improvements of one sort or another in the bus service available to them.

About half of the respondents stated that they avoid going outside during the winter (Question 33), and 14 percent stated that they had problems crossing streets (Question 34). The street crossing problems were most often attributable to physical impairments or disabilities (i.e., problems walking, poor eyesight or other physical problems). Icy, winter conditions also produced problems for some of the respondents.

Almost half of the persons surveyed felt that they would use a special door-to-door transportation service if such a service were available (Question 35). The vast majority of those who would use such a service (82%) would be willing to pay to use it.



Table 3-4

TRANSPORTATION: INTERVIEW ITEMS 28-35

27. Could you tell me about how often you go out of the house each week? Do you go out everyday, several times a week, about once a week or less often?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Everyday	638	52
Several times a week	434	35
About once a week	87	7
Less often	63	5
Missing	6	1

(If about once a week or less often, question 27a was asked.)

27a. Would you like to get out more often than you do now?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	73	6	49
No	59	5	39
Missing	18	2	12

28. How do you get to places where you wish to go? Do you ever:

	<u>Yes</u>		<u>No</u>		<u>Missing</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
a. Walk?	717	58	506	41	5	0
b. Drive a car?	723	59	502	41	3	0
c. Ride with someone who lives with you?	509	41	715	58	4	0
d. Ride with a friend or relative who does not live with you?	759	62	464	38	5	0
e. Take a bus?	694	57	529	43	5	0
f. Take a taxi?	245	20	978	80	5	0
g. Pay someone to take you?	109	9	1114	91	5	0
h. Use a special transportation service for seniors?	74	6	1149	94	5	0

29. Which one of these ways do you use most often?

<u>Means used most often</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Walk	87	7
Drive	603	49
Ride with someone who lives with you	163	13
Ride with a friend or relative who does not live with you	121	10
Take a bus	220	18
Take a taxi	14	1
Pay someone to take you	4	0
Use a special transportation for seniors	5	0
Missing	11	1

30. Which one of these ways do you use second most often?

<u>Means used second most often</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Walk	258	21
Drive	95	8
Ride with someone who lives with you	146	12
Ride with a friend or relative who does not live with you	237	19
Take a bus	283	23
Take a taxi	42	3
Pay someone to take you	11	1
Use a special transportation for seniors	11	1
No second mode	95	8
Missing	50	4

31. How close is the nearest bus stop?

<u>Distance from home</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
1 block or less	728	59
2 to 3 blocks	354	29
4 to 5 blocks	65	5
6 or more blocks	43	4
Don't know	19	2
Missing	19	2

32. Do problems with transportation ever keep you from doing things that you want to do?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	193	16
No	1010	82
Don't know	2	0
Missing	23	2

(If yes, questions 32a and 32b were asked.)

32a. What problems are these?

<u>Problem</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Bus service too infrequent	20	2	10
Bus routes inconvenient	21	2	11
Other bus problems	13	1	6
Cannot drive, have no one to drive	38	3	20
Unable to reach specific location, e.g. doctor (no reason specified)	20	2	10
Restricted by winter conditions	22	2	11
Need an escort	9	1	4
Can't afford gas or bus	9	1	4
Miscellaneous	38	3	20
Missing	3	0	2

32b. What could help you?

<u>What Could Help</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Some special form of transit (shuttle, etc.)	32	2	17
Better bus service (general)	15	1	8
Bus routes closer to home	13	1	7
More frequent bus service	15	1	8
Miscellaneous	38	3	20
Don't know	41	3	21
Missing	39	3	20

33. During the winter, when ice and snow are on the ground, do you try to avoid going outside?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	602	49
No	584	48
Missing	42	3

34. Do you have any problems crossing streets?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	168	14
No	1011	82
Missing	49	4

(If yes, question 34a was asked.)

34a. What are they?

<u>Problem</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Poor eyesight/blindness	22	2	13
Problems walking	33	3	20
Can't move quickly enough	24	2	14
Ice, snow, winter conditions	41	3	24
Streets too busy	15	1	9
Miscellaneous	26	2	15
Missing	7	1	4

35. If a special service were available to provide door-to-door transportation around the area would you use this service?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	563	46
No	591	48
Don't know	22	2
Missing	52	4

(If yes, question 35a was asked.)

35a. Would you only use it if it were free, or would you be willing to pay a dollar or two?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
If free	76	6	13
Willing to pay	464	38	82
Don't know	15	1	3
Missing	8	1	1

### Knowledge and Use of Services

Questions 36 and 37 elicited each individual's knowledge about six services available to older people. Interviewers mentioned each type of service, and the respondents simply stated whether or not they had ever heard of such a service. As Table 3-5 indicates, recognition of these six services varied greatly from service to service. Only seven percent of the respondents reported that they had ever heard of the "Know Phone," Information and Referral.<sup>10</sup> Eighty-eight percent reported that they had heard of home delivered "meals-on-wheels." This was the most recognized service, perhaps because of the catchy label. Recognition of other services fell in between the extreme of seven percent and 88 percent; discounts on prescriptions (75%); congregate dining (59%); home help services (57%); and senior citizens clinics (55%). Within this section, a "bogus" knowledge item, laundry services for seniors, was inserted. Five percent of the respondents reported knowing about such services.

Claimed knowledge of service does not, of course, demonstrate the actual ability to access such service if the need arose to do so. Therefore, Question 38 asked the respondents how they thought they would find an appropriate agency in the community if they had a problem. Thirty-two percent of the respondents stated that they had no idea how to go about finding an agency which could provide helpful service. Twenty-three percent suggested that they might go to a phone book, although they were frequently uncertain as to whether the phone book could serve their purpose. A variety of other conduits to the right agency were suggested, such as calling a local community center, contacting a friend or relative, calling a government agency, etc.

Question 39 ascertained where people who actually look for information on programs or services available to the elderly find such information. Twenty-four percent of the respondents stated that they look for information about programs and services for the aging. Of that 24 percent, most tended to look in the newspaper, while many others relied upon senior newsletters or personal contacts.

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<sup>10</sup>The "Know Phone" was an information service available by phone to all Ramsey County residents. Individuals could call the "Know Phone" to learn the names of agencies which provide health and human services which they would like to receive.

Question 40 listed eight types of service available to older people. The interviewers read this list, and respondents stated whether or not they had ever used each service. If a respondent had used a particular service, he or she was then asked about satisfaction with the service and about problems that may have been experienced in using the service. The percentages of respondents who used the various services appear in the table. Congregate dining had the largest usage (14%); and senior clinics had the second largest (12%). The total number of services used was tallied for each respondent. Sixty-seven percent used none of the eight services; 23 percent used one service; seven percent used two services; and three percent used three or more services.

Satisfaction with the various services was quite high, as Table 3-5 indicates. The only service for which users tended to be more dissatisfied than satisfied was employment services (for which 36 percent of the users said they were not satisfied). For congregate dining, the most frequently used service, 80 percent of the users reported satisfaction, and nine percent reported dissatisfaction. Service users reported very few specific problems with the services which they had used.

In Question 41, respondents were asked whether they had ever tried to use a service, but were unable to do so. Three percent responded affirmatively. (It is appropriate to reiterate at this point that, although three percent is a small proportion, it nonetheless indicates problems among a large number of people. That is, to the extent that it represents three percent of the approximately 65,000 Ramsey County residents aged 60 and over in the free community, the numbers involved (approximately 2,000 persons) are not inconsequential.) Among those who reported problems obtaining service, a surprising 25 percent were unable to obtain transportation.<sup>11</sup> Other problems obtaining service were distributed more or less evenly among the service categories of Question 40. Those who couldn't obtain a service which they sought frequently mentioned either the inability to find that particular service or the inability to obtain the service immediately when needed as the principal reason for their problem.

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<sup>11</sup>The importance of this finding, despite the small number of respondents involved, is enhanced by the analysis in Chapter 5 which reveals an association between having transportation problems and having problems within other domains.

Orientation towards, or away from, formal social services was tallied by means of Question 42. Sixty-three percent of the older people surveyed reported that, if a community agency could help them with a problem, they would use the available service. Thirty percent reported that they would look for some way other than a formal agency to solve the problem. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents reported that their family or friends would not object to the use of such service (Question 43); while four percent reported that family or friends would object.

Question 44 ascertained whether a respondent had, since turning age 60 used counseling services. (The use of counseling services was separated from Question 40 because of the broad, general nature of the term "counseling." It was felt that the reasons for using such services might be elaborated so that respondents could reply meaningfully to the question.) Two percent of the respondents stated that they had used counseling services. Most of those individuals were satisfied with what they had received and did not feel they had any major problems with the service itself.

In response to Question 45, 52 percent of the respondents reported that they make decisions about big purchases or spending a lot of money with a spouse; 23 percent make such decisions alone; and 20 percent first talk those decisions over with friends and family.

Table 3-5

KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF SERVICES: INTERVIEW ITEMS 36-45

36. Have you ever heard of the "Know Phone," Information and Referral?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	80	7
No	1096	89
Missing	52	4

37. I would like to mention some services which are provided to people over age 60 in some places. Please tell me if you have ever heard about these services. Have you ever heard about:

	Yes		No		Missing	
	N	% of Sample	N	% of Sample	N	% of Sample
a. Congregate dining?	723	59	462	38	43	4
b. Laundry services for seniors?	63	5	1122	91	43	4
c. Home delivered "meals-on-wheels"?	1075	88	111	9	42	3
d. Home-help services?	694	57	489	40	45	4
e. Senior citizen clinics?	681	56	500	41	47	4
f. Discounts on prescriptions for seniors?	917	75	266	22	45	4

38. If you had a problem and you wanted to get in touch with an agency which could help you to solve that problem, how do you thing you would find the right agency?

<u>Means for Finding Agency</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Phone books	282	23
Call government agency	89	7
Call community center	45	4
Call Wilder Foundation	68	6
Call clergy or other professional	51	4
Contact family member or friend	107	9
Miscellaneous	138	11
Don't know	394	32
Missing	54	4

39. Do you ever look for information about programs or services available to people of your age?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	300	24
No	889	72
Missing	39	3

(If yes, question 39a was asked.)



39a. Where do you usually get that information?

	(First Mention)			(Second Mention)		
	N	% of	% of	N	% of	% of
		Sample	Subgroup		Sample	Subgroup
Phone book	16	1	5	12	1	4
Newspapers	99	8	33	16	1	5
Through family members or friends	39	3	13	26	2	9
Senior newsletter	71	6	24	7	1	2
Television/radio	15	1	5	25	2	8
Miscellaneous	54	4	18	57	5	19
Missing	6	1	2	-	-	-

40. Now I would like to ask you about services which you might have used. If you have used any of the services which I mention next, I will ask you their names and I will ask what you thought about them. Since you've turned age 60, have you used:

a. Senior Advocates

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	17	1
No	1205	98
Missing	6	1

If yes, were you satisfied?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Satisfied	14	1	82
Not satisfied	2	0	11
Missing	1	0	5

What problems did you have getting the service you wanted?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	13	1	76
Didn't help	1	0	6
Missing	3	0	18

40. b. Home-delivered "Meals-on-wheels"

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	70	6
No	1152	94
Missing	6	1

If yes, were you satisfied?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Satisfied	45	4	64
Not satisfied	13	1	19
Missing	12	1	17

What problems did you have getting the service you wanted?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	42	3	60
Disliked food	6	1	9
Other	5	0	7
Missing	17	1	24

c. Congregate Dining

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	176	14
No	1046	85
Missing	6	1

If yes, were you satisfied?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Satisfied	141	12	80
Not satisfied	16	1	9
Missing	19	2	11

What problems did you have getting the service you wanted?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	136	11	77
Miscellaneous	11	1	6
Missing	29	2	16

40. d. Employment services especially for older people.

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	14	1
No	1206	98
Missing	8	1

If yes, were you satisfied?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Satisfied	3	0	21
Not satisfied	5	0	36
Missing	6	1	43

What problems did you have getting the service you wanted?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	4	0	25
Miscellaneous	2	0	13
Missing	8	1	50

e. Community clinics or health programs especially for older people

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	153	12
No	1069	87
Missing	6	1

If yes, were you satisfied?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Satisfied	128	10	84
Not satisfied	8	1	5
Missing	17	1	11

What problems did you have getting the service you wanted?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	121	10	79
Miscellaneous	5	0	3
Missing	27	2	18

40. f. Nursing service for people confined to bed

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	32	3
No	1189	97
Missing	7	1

If yes, were you satisfied?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Satisfied	25	2	78
Not satisfied	1	0	3
Missing	6	1	19

What problems did you have getting the service you wanted?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	24	2	75
Miscellaneous	1	0	3
Missing	7	1	22

g. Home-help or chore service

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	32	3
No	1189	97
Missing	7	1

If yes, were you satisfied?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Satisfied	21	2	66
Not satisfied	5	0	16
Missing	6	1	19

What problems did you have getting the service you wanted?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	17	2	53
Miscellaneous	6	1	19
Missing	9	1	28

40. h. Transportation service for older people

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	59	5
No	1169	95
Missing	8	1

If yes, were you satisfied?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Satisfied	47	4	80
Not satisfied	5	0	8
Missing	7	1	12

What problems did you have getting the service you wanted?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	45	4	76
Miscellaneous	4	0	7
Missing	10	1	17

41. Did you ever try to use a service like one of those I just mentioned, but you were unable to do so?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	40	3
No	1156	94
Missing	32	3

(If yes, questions 41a and 41b were asked.)

41a. What service did you try to use?

<u>Service</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Legal assistance	3	0	8
Meals-on-wheels	6	1	15
Congregate dining	3	0	8
Community clinics	4	0	10
Nursing service	3	0	8
Home-help, chore service	6	1	15
Transportation service	10	1	25
Food stamps	2	0	5
Tutoring	1	0	3
Don't know	2	0	5
Missing	0	0	0

41b. Why were you unable to use it?

<u>Problem</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Couldn't find/unable to locate	6	1	15
Unable to obtain service soon enough	6	1	15
Service contacted couldn't help with problem	5	0	13
Miscellaneous	20	2	50
Don't know	1	0	3
Missing	2	0	5

42. In general, if you had a problem and could get help from a place such as those I just mentioned, would you use the service, or would you look for some other way to solve the problem?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Use service	769	63
Other way	363	30
Don't know	37	3
Missing	59	5

43. If you wanted to use a service like the ones just mentioned, would your family or friends object to it?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	53	4
No	1085	88
Don't know	24	2
Missing	66	5

44. Since you were 60 years old, have you ever used counseling services for such things as family problems, loneliness, help during illness, or death of a relative or friend?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	30	2
No	1156	94
Missing	42	3

(If yes, questions 44b and 44c were asked.)

44b. Were you satisfied or not satisfied with the service you received?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Satisfied	23	2	77
Not satisfied	4	0	13
Missing	3	0	10

44c. What problems did you have receiving the service you wanted?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	14	1	47
Miscellaneous	7	1	23
Don't know	1	0	3
Missing	8	1	27

45. When you make decisions about big purchases or spending a lot of money, do you make these decisions alone or with your spouse, or do you talk them over with friends or family?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Alone	287	23
With husband/wife	639	52
With friends or family	245	20
Missing	57	5

### Legal Status

Question 46 through 50, which appear in Table 3-6, constitute a mix of open ended and precategorized questions designed to assess respondents' perceptions of the fulfillment of their legal needs, use of the legal system, and satisfaction with legal services. Nineteen percent of the respondents reported that they had a "legal need" during the year previous to the interview. That need most often involved the making or probating of a will. Other problems frequently mentioned were real estate purchases, distribution of property after death of a family member, and tax or insurance problems.

Forty-one percent of the individuals surveyed had used a lawyer since they turned age 60 (Question 47). Virtually all of those who used a lawyer (90%) used a private attorney. The types of activity for which lawyers were used paralleled the legal needs expressed in the previous question (making a will, real estate purchase, etc.). Those who used a lawyer reported a high level of satisfaction. The few who were dissatisfied most often felt that their attorney had done poor work or that the attorney didn't finish the work.

Fifty-three percent of the respondents had used a lawyer before turning age 60, while 43 percent had not used a lawyer in those early years (Question 48).

Question 49 asked whether four types of events which may have produced a need for legal service had occurred during the five years previous to the interview. The proportion of individuals who experienced each of these events was: six percent who had trouble obtaining Social Security or Medicare benefits; one percent who had a dispute with a landlord (which constituted six percent of the people who rented their house or apartment); 29 percent who needed to write or revise a will; and three percent who felt that someone was trying to take away part of their property or belongings.

Respondents who reported one or more of these experiences were asked whether they had used a lawyer to help them do what they had wanted to do, and if not, why they hadn't used a lawyer. Of the individuals who reported problems and who responded to Question 49e, 72 percent had used a lawyer, and 28 percent had not done so.<sup>12</sup> Not using a lawyer was most often attributed to the alleged ability of the respondent to resolve the problem directly or with the help of a non-barrister. Also, many respondents indicated that they simply hadn't taken any steps to alleviate their difficulty.

At the time of the interview, 60 percent of the older people surveyed reported that they had a lawyer to whom they would go for any legal needs which might arise; and 37 percent reported that they did not have a lawyer (Question 50).

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<sup>12</sup>The number of respondents who answered "yes" to one or more of Questions 49a through 49d equals 455. However, due to an error in the interview form, only 306 of them were asked Question 49e. Thus, percentages of 72 percent (users) and 28 percent (non-users) were calculated with a denominator of 306.



Table 3-6

LEGAL STATUS: INTERVIEW ITEMS 46-50

46. Do you feel that you had a "legal need" during the past year?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	230	19
No	953	78
Don't know	1	0
Missing	44	4

(If yes, question 46a was asked.)

46a. What was that need?

<u>Legal Need</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Making or probating a will	89	7	39
Real estate purchase	48	4	21
Distribution of property	18	2	8
Tax or insurance problem	14	1	6
Accident settlement	9	1	4
Housing problem	7	1	3
Miscellaneous	38	3	17
Don't know	1	0	0
Missing	6	1	3

47. Since you turned age 60, have you used a lawyer for any reason?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	507	41
No	693	56
Don't know	1	0
Missing	27	2

(If yes, questions 47a, 47b, and 47c were asked.)

47a. Did you use a private attorney, Legal Aid, Senior Advocates or someone else?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Private attorney	456	37	90
Legal Aid	8	1	2
Senior Advocates	13	1	3
Someone else	10	1	2
Missing	20	2	4

47b. For what type of activity did you use a lawyer?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Automobile	21	2	4
Workmen's compensation	2	0	0
Divorce or other family problems	11	1	2
Making or probating a will	258	21	51
Distribution of property	62	5	12
Tenant/landlord, housing or rent problem	5	0	0
Home purchase or other real estate problem	106	9	21
Debt	1	0	0
Difficulty with medical care or medical bills	3	0	0
Tax or insurance problem	10	1	2
Criminal charges	3	0	0
Discrimination	1	0	0
Other	20	2	4
Missing	4	0	0

47c. How satisfied were you with the legal help you received?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Very satisfied	319	26	63
Satisfied	129	11	25
Dissatisfied	22	2	4
Very dissatisfied	16	1	3
Missing	21	2	4

(If dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, question 47d was asked.)

47d. If there was something about the legal service that you didn't like, could you tell me what it was?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Poor work by attorney	13	1	34
Attorney didn't finish work	11	1	29
Too expensive	7	1	18
Miscellaneous	4	0	11
Missing	3	0	8

48. Before you turned age 60, did you ever use a lawyer for any reason?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	653	53
No	523	43
Don't know	2	0
Missing	50	4

49. Could you tell me whether any of the following things have occurred during the past five years?

a. You had trouble obtaining Social Security or Medicare benefits.

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	68	6
No	1139	93
Missing	21	2

b. You had a dispute with a landlord

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	11	1
No	181	15
Not applicable	1032	84
Missing	4	0

c. You needed to write or revise a will.

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	356	29
No	844	69
Missing	28	2

d. You felt that someone was trying to take away part of your property or belongings.

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	41	3
No	1156	94
Missing	31	3

(If yes to any of the above four, question 49e was asked.)

49e. Did you use a lawyer to help you do what you wanted to do?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	219	18
No	87	7
Missing	149	12

(If no, question 49f was asked.)

49f. Why didn't you use a lawyer?

<u>Reason</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Resolved problem without lawyer	23	2	26
Haven't taken care of problem yet	18	2	20
Miscellaneous	28	2	32
Missing	18	2	21

50. Do you presently have a lawyer to whom you would go for any legal needs which might arise?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	736	60
No	453	37
Don't know	4	0
Missing	35	3

Senior Centers

Question 51 shifted the orientation of the interview to a focus upon participation in community/senior centers. Fifty-one percent of the respondents stated that their neighborhood had a senior center or place operated especially for seniors; 33 percent stated that their neighborhood did not have such a center; and 14 percent felt that they didn't know whether their neighborhood had such a center (Table 3-7). Great variety existed among the types of settings which individuals considered to be senior centers. Approximately 100 different centers were named--ranging from the Wilder Senior Center and other extensively developed programs to rooms which churches made available to older persons for just a few hours each week.<sup>13</sup> Most of those who felt that their neighborhood had a center reported that the center was two miles or less from their home. However, a few individuals reported themselves as living four or more miles from their "neighborhood" center.

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<sup>13</sup>The names of the centers were requested in the interview, but are not reported here because of: the large number of centers named; the small number of persons who mentioned each center; and the fact that many persons referred to their centers in terms incomplete for positive identification.

Most persons (68%) who stated that they were residents of neighborhoods with senior centers did not visit their centers (Question 51c). Eighty-one percent of the sample as a whole (i.e., including residents of neighborhoods with and without centers) never visit a senior center in their own neighborhood. About five percent of the respondents visited their local centers on a weekly basis or more often.<sup>14</sup> Nonetheless, thirty-four percent of the sample (68 percent of the persons whose neighborhoods had senior centers) reported that they used their centers as much as they would like (Question 51d). Fourteen percent of the sample (27 percent of those whose neighborhoods had senior centers) stated that some obstacle deterred them from using their center as often as they would like. The most frequent obstacle cited was a lack of free time; other obstacles included transportation impediments; physical or health problems which restrict mobility, the need to care for a disabled spouse, and the time demands of employment.

Question 52 was intended specifically to assess knowledge and use of the Wilder Foundation's Senior Center in downtown St. Paul. Fifty-three percent of the older people who were interviewed stated that they knew where the Wilder Senior Center is located. Those who stated such knowledge were asked whether they had ever visited the Center. Forty-four percent had done so (23 percent of the total sample). Visitors were then asked about formal membership, frequency of visiting the Center, and obstacles to going to the Center. Ten percent of the sample had a Wilder Senior Center membership card.<sup>15</sup> Eight percent reported visiting the Center one to 18 times per year; while two percent reported visits on the average of once per week or more often. Nine percent of the respondents cited obstacles which kept them from using the Center as often as they would like. A "lack of time" was most frequently mentioned. Other frequently mentioned obstacles were transportation problems and physical or health problems which restrict mobility.

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<sup>14</sup>That is, the total of people in the categories 45-78, 79-234, and 235-265 in Question 51c, Table 3-7.

<sup>15</sup>This figure was expected since Center records showed a membership of roughly eight to nine percent of the persons 60 and over in Ramsey County.

Survey participants had the opportunity to manifest their creativity in response to Question 53 which solicited suggestions of the "most important activities" which should be offered for older persons in their own neighborhood. Up to three suggestions were recorded. A large proportion of respondents (19%) did not mention a specific activity, but stated rather that "companionship" or "a place to be with friends" was most important for senior centers to offer. Nineteen percent mentioned simply that "recreation" was important. Other suggestions included: card playing (15%); crafts, such as sewing, ceramics, weaving, etc. (14%); classes or discussion groups with suggested topics such as current events, music, making a will, and financial planning (11%); congregate meals (8%); travel (7%); and table games (5%). About 35 percent of the respondents said that they really didn't know what local senior centers ought to offer.

Table 3-7

SENIOR CENTERS: INTERVIEW ITEMS 51-53

51. Does your neighborhood have its own senior center or place especially for seniors?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	620	51
No	407	33
Don't know	166	14
Missing	35	3

(If yes, questions 51b, 51c, and 51d were asked.)

51b. How far is the Center from your home?

<u>Distance</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
0.5 miles or less	271	22	44
0.6 to 1.0 miles	169	14	27
1.1 to 1.5 miles	27	2	4
1.6 to 2.0 miles	42	3	7
2.1 to 3.0 miles	32	3	5
3.1 to 4 miles	11	1	2
4.1 miles or more	8	1	1
Don't know	31	3	5
Missing	29	2	5

51c. About how often would you say that you go to the Center?

<u>Visits per year</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	421	34	68
1 to 18	97	8	16
19 to 44	24	2	4
45 to 78	32	3	5
79 to 234	14	1	2
235 to 365	1	1	0
Missing	31	3	5

51d. Does anything keep you from using the Center as much as you would like?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	167	14	27
No	419	34	68
Missing	34	3	5

(If yes, specify.)

<u>Impediment to Using Center</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Lack of time	36	3	22
Transportation problems	19	2	11
Physical, health problems	23	2	14
Caring for disabled	16	1	10
Employment demands	16	1	10
Nothing offered of interest	21	2	13
Miscellaneous	32	3	19
Don't know	1	0	0
Missing	3	0	1

52. Do you know where the Wilder Senior Citizens Center is located?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	655	53
No	537	44
Missing	36	3

(If yes, question 52a was asked.)

52a. Have you ever visited the Center?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	286	23	44
No	367	30	56
Missing	2	0	0

(If yes, questions 52b, 52c, and 52d were asked.)

52b. Do you have a membership card?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	122	10	43
No	164	13	57
Missing	0	0	0

52c. About how often would you say that you go to the Wilder Senior Citizens Center?

<u>Visits per year</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	112	9	39
1 to 18	102	8	36
19 to 44	11	1	4
45 to 78	15	1	5
79 to 234	10	1	3
235 to 365	5	0	2
Don't know	19	2	7
Missing	12	1	4

52d. Is there anything which keeps you from going to the Wilder Center as often as you would like?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	108	9	38
No	167	14	58
Don't know	2	0	1
Missing	9	1	3

(If yes, specify.)

<u>Impediment to Using Center</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Lack of time	30	2	28
Transportation problems	25	2	23
Physical, health problems	18	2	17
Caring for disabled spouse	2	0	2
Employment demands	7	1	6
No activities of interest	5	0	5
No companion	4	0	4
Miscellaneous	16	1	15
Missing	1	0	1



53. Many community centers offer activities specially designed for older persons. What do you think are the most important activities which should be offered for older persons in their own neighborhood?

<u>Recommended Activities</u>	<u>Choice 1</u>		<u>Choice 2</u>		<u>Choice 3</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Companionship; place to be with friends	164	13	48	4	24	2
Card playing	106	9	63	5	13	1
Crafts	89	8	50	4	25	2
Classes, discussion groups	43	4	62	5	24	2
Congregate meals	52	4	33	3	10	1
Table games	20	2	20	2	10	1
Recreation	116	9	81	7	40	3
Travel	31	3	29	2	19	2
Health screening	16	1	14	1	8	1
Transportation	22	2	17	1	5	0
Miscellaneous	76	6	43	4	39	3
Don't know	426	35	-	-	-	-
Missing	67	5	-	-	-	-

### Spiritual Status

Various aspects of religious participation, as well as impediments to such participation, were explored in Questions 54 through 57. Membership in a formal religious organization is relatively high--83 percent of the sample (See Table 3-8). Forty-seven percent of the church members identified themselves as Catholic, and 26 percent identified themselves as Lutheran. Much smaller proportions of respondents fell into other religious categories, as Table 3-8 indicates. Fifty-seven percent of the church members (47 percent of the total sample) reported that they are never visited by someone from their church; 14 percent reported that such visits occurred once per year; and 14 percent reported that such visits occurred six or more times per year.<sup>16</sup> Eight percent of the sample reported having discussed problems with a clergy member during the year previous to the interview. Twenty-one percent of the respondents stated that they take part in activities for people 60 and older at their church.

<sup>16</sup>The ambiguity of this question must be noted. The intention was to ascertain the frequency of visits by clergy or other, official church representatives. Interviewers were instructed to convey this intention, if respondents had a query. However, some respondents may have counted a visit from any member of their congregation. Thus, the frequencies for this question may reflect an artificially high number of visits by clergy.

Average attendance at religious services for the persons interviewed is 45 times per year (Question 55). About half of the sample reported roughly weekly attendance. Eight percent attend more often than once per week; 24 percent attend between one and 40 times per year; and 16 percent never attend.<sup>17</sup>

The vast majority of respondents (86%) felt that enough religious activities exist in their area (Question 56); three percent felt that not enough activities exist; and six percent didn't know whether enough activities exist. Suggestions by respondents of additional religious activities which might be needed appear in the table. Fourteen percent of the sample stated that they personally have trouble taking part in religious services as often as they would like (Question 57). The most often cited cause of this trouble was a physical or health problem which limited mobility (39 percent of those with trouble). Other problems often mentioned were inadequate transportation to church and the inability to leave a disabled spouse or family member to whom the respondent provides care.

Table 3-8

SPIRITUAL STATUS: INTERVIEW ITEMS 54-57

54. Are you now a member of any church or synagogue?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	1016	83
No	203	17
Missing	9	1

(If yes, questions 54a, 54b, 54c, and 54d were asked.)

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<sup>17</sup> Question 55 was asked of all respondents, regardless of whether they had identified themselves as members of a church or synagogue.

54a. What religion is that?

<u>Religion</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Catholic	475	39	47
Lutheran	267	22	26
Methodist	52	4	4
Presbyterian	63	5	5
Other Protestant	100	8	10
Protestant (unspecified)	35	3	3
Jewish	14	1	1
Other	7	1	1
Missing	3	0	0

54b. About how often does someone from the church come to visit you?

<u>Times per year</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
0	575	47	57
1	144	12	14
2	78	6	8
3 to 5	32	3	3
6 or more	139	11	14
Don't know	24	2	2
Missing	24	2	2

54c. During the past year, have you discussed any problems with a clergyman from there?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	100	8	10
No	891	73	88
Don't know	1	0	0
Missing	24	2	2

54d. Do you take part in any special activities for people over age 60 at your church?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	257	21	25
No	737	60	73
Missing	22	2	2

55. About how often do you go to church?

<u>Annual Church Attendance</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	196	16
1 to 5	99	8
6 to 19	98	8
20 to 40	94	8
41 to 60	616	50
61 to 325	63	5
326 to 364	26	2
Don't know	14	1
Missing	22	2

56. Do you feel that there are enough religious activities in this area for people who want them?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	1057	86
No	35	3
Don't know	77	6
Missing	59	5

(If no, question 56a was asked.)

56a. What else do you think is needed?

<u>Needed Religious Activity</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Greater variety of churches	6	0	17
Activities attracting all ages	6	0	17
Miscellaneous	10	1	29
Don't know	8	1	23
Missing	5	0	14

57. Do you have any trouble taking part in religious services as often as you would like.

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	171	14
No	1003	82
Don't know	2	0
Missing	52	4

(If yes, question 57a was asked.)

57a. What kind of trouble do you have?

<u>Problem</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Physical disability, health problem	67	5	39
Transportation problem	64	5	37
Caring for disabled spouse	12	1	7
Lack of time	10	1	5
Miscellaneous	16	2	9
Missing	2	0	1

Family/Social Ties

The next set of questions elicited information on the family and friend networks of the survey participants. The intention was to learn not only the number of kin and other close associates with whom the survey participants had contact but also the functions performed by this set of individuals.

Table 3-9 indicates the number of living children which each of the respondents had: 20 percent had no living children; 15 percent had one; 25 percent had two; 19 percent had three; ten percent had four; and 11 percent had five or more. When looking at the number of children who reside in the Twin Cities, the figures shift slightly: 29 percent had no children in the area (i.e., the 20 percent of the sample who had no living children plus nine percent of the sample all of whose children reside outside of the Twin Cities); 26 percent had one child in the area; 22 percent had two; and 21 percent had three or more.

Contact with children--in person or by phone--was ascertained by Question 58b. Seventy-one percent of the sample reported at least weekly contact with one or more children. Looking only at the respondents who had living children, 91 percent had contact with one or more of those children at least once per week.

Question 58c included a list of activities in which older people may have engaged with their children. The percentages of respondents who reported taking part in each of these activities during the year previous to the interview were: having dinner at the children's house (69%); hosting dinner for the children (68%); shopping with the children (56%); helping children do things around their house (42%); receiving help from children to do things around the house (61%); giving money to children (38%); receiving money from children (13%); going to a show or ballgame or on a trip with children (41%).

The majority of the respondents (61 percent of the total sample, 77 percent of the persons with children) felt that the amount of time spent with children was "about right." However, 14 percent of the respondents (17 percent of the persons with children) felt that they spent too little time with their children. Only four percent of the respondents felt that their children should help them to a greater extent. Those who wanted help mentioned most often the desire for help with chores around the house.

Seventy-nine percent of the survey participants have relatives or in-laws, besides children, in the Twin Cities area (Question 59). Nineteen percent do not have such kin close by.<sup>18</sup>

In response to Question 60, the individuals whom we surveyed indicated the number of people whom they considered their "close friends." The definition of a "close friend" was left in their hands; and the number of people whom respondents included in their friendship circles varied widely. Six percent reported having no close friends at all; 16 percent reported one to three; 24 percent reported four to six; five percent reported seven to nine; 19 percent reported ten to twelve; 12 percent reported thirteen to twenty-nine; and six percent reported thirty or more. In addition, two percent of the respondents said they "didn't know" how many close friends they had; two percent said they had a "few, not many," and five percent said they had "too many to count."

Question 60a contained a short list of activities in which individuals may have engaged with their close friends: 56 percent had shopped with friends during the year previous to the interview; 46 percent went to a show or ballgame or on a trip with friends; 30 percent received help with household chores from friends; and three percent received money from friends. More than half of the respondents (55%) stated that their close friends know one another. Twenty-nine percent said that when they see friends they usually do so individually; 19 percent said they usually get together with friends as a group; and 22 percent said that they get together with friends individually and in groups equally often.

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<sup>18</sup>The responses to these questions indicate relatively active participation in family networks by aging persons. Other, recent research on the kin and family relationships of older people, summarized by Streib and Beck (1980), has produced similar findings. In fact, Shanas (1973) found that, among the elderly whom she interviewed in five countries, 80 percent visited frequently with their children.

Eighty percent of the people whom we interviewed stated that they have someone in whom they can confide about important things or with whom they can discuss problems (Question 61). Fourteen percent feel they do not have such a confidant. When asked the relationship of the confidant to them, 24 percent reported that he or she was a friend or neighbor; 17 percent a spouse; 17 percent a daughter or son; nine percent a sister or brother; nine percent another family member or relative; and one percent a member of the clergy.

Four questions regarding the respondent's feelings about his or her neighborhood, the respondent's interaction with neighborhood residents, and the prevailing patterns of interaction of neighborhood residents with one another were asked earlier in the interview (Questions 10 through 14). Most of the older people whom we surveyed strongly liked their neighborhood: sixty-seven percent liked it "very much"; and twenty-four percent liked it "pretty well" (Question 10).

Thirty-five percent of the respondents reported that their neighbors often visit with one another, while 60 percent reported that their neighbors keep mostly to themselves (Question 11). Twenty-three percent of the respondents reported talking with their neighbors every day; 36 percent reported talking with neighbors several times a week; 19 percent reported such contact only several times a month; and 18 percent reported such contact less often (Question 12).

Most people seemed to be satisfied with their visiting patterns in the neighborhood. Seventy percent visited with neighbors as much as they (i.e., the respondents) would like (Question 13). Only 25 percent expressed dissatisfaction with their level of neighborly visiting. Those who were dissatisfied most often cited their own lack of time as the reason for visiting neighbors less often than desired. Other, frequent reasons were that the neighbors were too busy or that the respondents were not acquainted with the neighbors. The distribution of reasons for not visiting appears in Table 3-9.

In Question 14, respondents indicated whether they had a neighbor to call on if a problem arose. Eighty-six percent felt that they had such a neighbor; ten percent felt that they did not have such a neighbor.

Table 3-9

FAMILY/SOCIAL TIES: INTERVIEW ITEMS 58-61, 10-14

58. How many living children do you have?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
None	245	20
1	182	15
2	307	25
3	228	19
4	120	10
5	65	5
6	37	3
7 or more	40	3
Missing	4	0

(If one or more, questions 58a, 58b, 58c, 58d, and 58e were asked.)

58a. How many of your children live in the Twin Cities area?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	112	9	11
1	324	26	33
2	266	22	27
3	137	11	14
4	65	5	7
5	39	3	4
6	14	1	1
7 or more	16	1	2
Missing	6	1	1

58b. How many of your children do you see or talk with at least once a week?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	86	7	9
1	291	24	30
2	299	24	31
3	147	12	15
4	69	6	7
5	38	3	4
6	14	1	1
7 or more	19	2	2
Missing	16	2	2



58c. During the past year, have you and your children done any of the following things?

a. You had dinner with them at their house.

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	846	69	86
No	104	8	11
Missing	29	2	3

b. They had dinner with you at your house.

Yes	836	68	85
No	114	9	12
Missing	29	2	3

c. You went shopping with them.

Yes	685	56	70
No	264	21	27
Missing	30	2	3

d. You helped them do things around their house.

Yes	517	42	53
No	425	35	43
Missing	37	3	4

e. They helped you do things around your house.

Yes	747	61	76
No	197	16	20
Missing	35	3	4

f. You gave them money to help pay for something they needed.

Yes	463	38	47
No	477	39	49
Missing	39	3	4

g. They gave you money to help pay for something you needed.

Yes	163	13	17
No	779	63	80
Missing	37	3	4

h. You went to a show or ballgame or on a trip with them.

Yes	507	41	52
No	438	36	45
Missing	34	3	3

58d. Do you think that the amount of time you spend with your children is too much, too little, or about right?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
About right	751	61	77
Too little	168	14	17
Too much	9	1	1
Don't know	3	0	0
Missing	48	4	5

58e. Do you feel that your children should help you more than they do now?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	43	4	4
No	884	72	90
Don't know	2	0	0
Missing	50	4	5

(If yes, question 58f was asked.)

58f. In what ways?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Household chores	23	2	53
Miscellaneous	8	1	19
Don't know	8	1	19
Missing	4	0	9

59. Do you have any relatives or in-laws, besides children, in the Twin Cities area?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	964	79
No	239	19
Missing	25	2

60. About how many people do you consider your "close friends"?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
None	72	6
1 to 3	198	16
3 to 6	290	24
7 to 9	61	5
10 to 12	231	19
13 to 29	142	12
30 or more	72	6
"A few, not many"	20	2
"Too many to count"	65	5
Don't know	25	2
Missing	52	4

(If one or more, question 60a was asked.)

60a. During the past year, have any of the following things happened with you and your friend(s)?

a. You went shopping with them.

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	684	56	52
No	395	32	36
Missing	25	2	2

b. You went to a show or ballgame or on a trip with them.

Yes	565	46	51
No	511	42	46
Missing	28	2	3

c. They helped you do things around your house.

Yes	374	30	34
No	701	57	63
Missing	29	2	3

d. They gave you money to help pay for something you needed.

Yes	37	3	3
No	1038	85	94
Missing	29	2	3

(If more than one close friend, questions 60b and 60c were asked.)

60b. Do your "close friends" all know each other, or do they just know you?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Know each other	670	55	64
Just know you	137	11	13
Both	49	4	5
Don't know	3	0	0
Missing	196	16	19

60c. When you see your friends, do you usually see them individually or do you get together as a group?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
See individually	359	29	34
Together as group	231	19	22
Both	264	22	25
Missing	201	16	19

61. Do you have someone whom you confide in about things that are important to you or talk with about problems you have?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	982	80
No	173	14
Missing	73	6

(If yes, question 61a was asked.)

61a. Who is this person?

<u>Confidant</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Friend, neighbor	297	24	30
Spouse	214	17	22
Daughter, son, child	214	17	22
Sister, brother	108	9	11
Other family	113	9	12
Clergy	14	1	1
Other	11	1	1
Missing	11	1	1

10. Generally speaking, how do you like living in this neighborhood? Would you say you like it not at all, a little, pretty well, or very much?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Not at all	18	2
A little	57	5
Pretty well	289	24
Very much	820	67
Don't know	3	0
Missing	41	3

11. Do the people in this neighborhood often visit with one another or do they keep mostly to themselves?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Often visit	429	35
Keep to themselves	738	60
Don't know	11	1
Missing	50	4

12. About how often do you talk to your neighbors--I mean longer than just saying "Hello"? Would this be every day, several times a week, several times a month, or less often than that?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Every day	278	23
Several times a week	448	36
Several times a month	237	19
Less often	224	18
Missing	41	3

13. Do you visit with your neighbors as much as you would like?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	862	70
No	309	25
Don't know	6	1
Missing	52	4

(If no, question 13a was asked.)

- 13a. Why not?

<u>Reason</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Respondent too busy	79	6	26
Neighbor too busy	68	6	22
Physical problem	37	3	12
Different interests from neighbors	53	4	17
Not acquainted with neighbors	50	4	16
Don't know	13	1	4
Missing	9	1	3

14. Do you have a neighbor you can call on if you have a problem?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	1059	86
No	128	10
Don't know	3	0
Missing	38	3

### Demographics

Questions 62 through 64 obtained demographic information regarding marital status, age and place of birth. As Table 3-10 indicates, 59 percent of the respondents were married; 30 percent were widowed; seven percent were never married; and four percent were either divorced or separated. Widows and widowers were asked how long they had been widowed. Eight percent of the persons in the widowed category had been widowed for less than a year and a half; 39 percent had been widowed for one and a half to nine years; and 46 percent had been widowed for ten or more years.

The age distribution of the sample was discussed in Chapter 2, and it appears again in Table 3-10 (Question 63). Question 64, on nativity, revealed that 94 percent of the respondents were born in the United States, while five percent were born elsewhere.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Other "demographic" data were elicited at different points in the interview: living arrangements from the first few interview questions; education, from Question 65; income, from Question 115; and sex and race, from the Interviewer's Report.

Table 3-10.

DEMOGRAPHICS: INTERVIEW ITEMS 62-64

62. What is your current marital status?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Married	724	59
Widowed	367	30
Divorced	42	3
Separated	5	0
Never Married	85	7
Missing	5	0

(If widowed, question 62a was asked.)

62a. How long have you been widowed?

<u>Years</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
1.4 or less	28	2	8
1.5 to 4.4	55	5	15
4.5 to 9.4	87	7	24
9.5 to 14.4	65	5	18
14.5 or more	103	8	28
Missing	29	2	8

63. How old are you?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
60 - 64	322	26
65 - 69	334	27
70 - 74	239	19
75 - 79	165	13
80 - 84	112	9
85 - 89	45	4
90 - 94	7	1
95 - 99	4	0

64. Were you born in the United States?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	1155	94
No	58	5
Missing	15	1

### Educational Status

The formal educational background of the survey participants was ascertained by Question 65. Data on both years of formal education and the highest degree completed appear in Table 3-11; and there exists a wide range of variation among the respondents on each of these dimensions. Seven percent of the respondents had less than eight years of schooling; 20 percent had exactly eight years. Seventeen percent attended high school or technical school for one to three years; 25 percent had twelve years of education; and 30 percent had more than twelve years of education.

Forty-one percent of the respondents possessed a high school diploma or G.E.D. as their highest educational credential; six percent possessed a bachelor's degree; and four percent held advanced, graduate degrees. Other degrees held by the respondents appear in Table 3-11. Forty-four percent of the respondents had no educational credential at the high school level or above.

Recent and present educational activities and interests were explored in Questions 66 through 68. Fourteen percent of the respondents stated that they had taken one or more classes during the year previous to the interview. Most often taken (each by one percent of the respondents) were classes which taught: retirement or estate planning; ceramics; sewing; and special skills related to a job or profession. Thirty-two percent of the persons interviewed expressed a desire to take one or more courses in the near future (Question 67). When asked what courses they would like, the most frequently mentioned subject areas were crafts, painting, sewing, and foreign languages.

A relatively high proportion of the respondents (27%) stated that something had kept them from enrolling in a course which they wanted or needed to take. A lack of time, especially among employed respondents, was the most commonly cited obstacle (nine percent of the respondents). Physical or health problems also presented a significant inhibitor to many (6%). Other barriers mentioned were: travel and transportation problems (3%); inability to pay for class (2%); feeling "too old" to take a class (1%); fear of travel in the evening (1%); the need to care for a disabled spouse or family member (1%); and the lack of course offerings in a desired subject area (1%).<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>A Planning and Development Office demonstration study has examined some of the influences upon both the decision to register for a class and the ability to attend class among the elderly. See: Berger and Hawkins, 1981.



Table 3-11

EDUCATIONAL STATUS: INTERVIEW ITEMS 65-68

65. What is the last year of education which you completed?

<u>Years</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
7 or less	87	7
8	243	20
9 - 11	207	17
12	312	25
13 - 15	218	18
16	107	9
17 or more	42	3
Missing	12	1

<u>Degree</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
None	540	44
High school/G.E.D.	499	41
Trade school	15	1
R.N.	15	1
Bachelor's degree	76	6
Master's degree	21	2
Law, Ph.D., D.D.	28	2
Other (not graduate)	14	1
Missing	20	2

66. During the past year, have you taken a class of any kind, for example, home maintenance, physical fitness, retirement planning, literature, and so on?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
None	1031	84
1	125	10
2	31	3
3 or more	20	2
Missing	21	2

(If one or more, question 66a was asked.)

66a. What did you take?

	(First Mention)			(Second Mention)		
	N	% of	% of	N	% of	% of
		Sample	Subgroup		Sample	Subgroup
Retirement, estate planning	13	1	7	3	0	2
Ceramics	10	1	5	6	1	3
Sewing	12	1	6	3	0	2
Job-related training	15	1	9	1	0	1
Physical conditioning	9	1	5	4	0	2
Music lessons	9	1	5	1	0	1
Miscellaneous	108	9	61	32	3	18

67. Are there classes of any kind which you would like to take during the next few years?

	N	% of Sample
None	792	64
1	222	18
2	135	11
3 or more	37	3
Don't know	9	1
Missing	33	3

(If one or more, question 67a was asked.)

67a. What are they?

	(First Mention)			(Second Mention)		
	N	% of	% of	N	% of	% of
		Sample	Subgroup		Sample	Subgroup
Crafts	84	7	21	29	2	7
Painting	33	3	8	8	1	2
Sewing	29	2	7	12	1	3
Foreign Languages	29	2	7	9	1	2
Exercise	15	1	4	4	0	1
Home repair, auto repair	18	1	5	4	0	1
Musical instrument	11	1	3	7	0	2
Reading	14	1	4	8	1	2
Retirement or financial planning	12	1	3	10	1	3
Social sciences	13	1	3	9	1	2
Business, sales, law	14	1	4	6	0	2
Courses for high school or college degree	12	1	3	4	0	1
Miscellaneous	95	8	24	60	5	15
Don't know	14	1	4	-	-	-
Missing	1	0	0	-	-	-

68. Is there anything which has kept you from taking a course which you want or need to take?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	337	27
No	853	69
Missing	38	3

(If yes, question 68a was asked.)

68a. What is that?

<u>Impediment to Taking Class</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Lack of time	113	9	34
Physical, health problem	74	6	22
Transportation problem	35	3	10
Can't afford it	18	2	5
Feel "too old"	16	1	4
Fear of travel in evening	15	1	4
Care for disabled family member	14	1	4
Course not offered	14	1	4
Miscellaneous	36	3	11
Missing	2	0	1

### Employment

In response to Question 69, individuals described the work they had done for most of their lives.<sup>21</sup> The largest occupational group represented in the sample was that of clerical workers (26%). The second largest was that of housewives (16%). Other major occupations represented were: service occupations (12%); production working occupations (8%); material handlers and equipment cleaners (6%); marketing and sales (5%); and executives, administrators, and managers (5%). Most of the individuals surveyed (70%) were involved in their principal occupations when they reached age 60. Those involved in different occupations at age 60 were asked to describe their new line of work so that, if necessary, data analysis could reveal the extent and nature of occupational transitions among aging individuals. The major new employment categories reported at age 60 were: housewife (8%); unemployed (3%); service occupations (2%); clerical occupations (1%); production-related occupations (1%); and retired (2%).

<sup>21</sup>Note that the question asks each respondent for specifications of the work done "for most of your life." A respondent's answer does not necessarily reflect current or recent involvements. These are examined by later interview questions.

Seventy-five percent of the sample considered themselves "retired" at the time of the interview (Question 69<sup>1</sup>).<sup>22</sup>

Most individuals (27 percent of the sample) retired due to a mandatory retirement policy or a permanent "lay off." (This represents 36 percent of the retirees.) About 15 percent stated that retirement occurred because they were tired of working or because they wanted more leisure time; and 13 percent retired as a result of a health problem or physical disability. Other, less frequent, reasons for retirement from the labor force appear in Table 3-12.

About one-third of the retirees reported that there was something particular they missed since they retired. The things they missed included: companionship with co-workers; public contact; the daily routine of work; money; and the actual activities of work itself (Question 69b).<sup>23</sup> When asked whether they worry about money matters more than before retirement, 22 percent of the retirees said that they did worry more, while 69 percent said that they did not.

Although 81 percent of the respondents were not working for pay at the time of the interview, ten percent did hold part-time jobs, and eight percent held full-time jobs (Question 70). Jobs which these active members of the labor force held varied widely, with the largest proportion of individuals having service occupations (4%); clerical occupations (3%); and sales occupations (2%). Fifteen percent of the respondents (84 percent of those employed either full or part-time) reported satisfaction with their present job. Only one percent stated that they would rather be doing something else. Twelve percent of the respondents expressed an interest in finding a full-time or part-time job (Question 71). The types of jobs which they would prefer appear in Table 3-12. Most of those interested in a job had not actually been looking for a job. Consequently, very few reported problems trying to find a job.

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<sup>22</sup>On the original survey form, two questions were numbered 69. For clarity of recording and discussing responses from these questions, the first is now labelled 69 and the second, 69<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>23</sup>Peppers (1976), in a study of male retirees, discovered that the retirees ranked "visiting friends" as their most popular post-retirement activity. He suggested that such activity may compensate for the loss of companionship which occurs at retirement.

Table 3-12

EMPLOYMENT: INTERVIEW ITEMS 69-71

69a. What kind of work have you done for most of your life?

<u>Type of Work</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Executives, administrators, managers	61	5
Teachers, librarians	44	4
Marketing, sales	63	5
Clerical	322	26
Service occupations	148	12
Production working occupations	104	8
Material handlers, equipment cleaners	68	6
Housewife	201	16
Other	123	10
Missing	94	8

69b. Were you doing this when you turned age sixty?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	857	70
No	266	22
Missing	105	9

(If no, question 69c was asked.)

69c. What were you doing then?

<u>Type of Work at 60</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Housewife	103	8	39
Unemployed	39	3	15
Service occupations	27	2	10
Clerical occupations	16	1	6
Production related occupations	13	1	4
Retired	19	2	7
Other	33	3	12
Missing	16	1	6

69<sup>1</sup>. Are you now retired?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	919	75
No	290	24
Missing	19	2

(If yes, questions 69<sup>1a</sup>, 69<sup>1b</sup>, 69<sup>1c</sup> were asked.)

69<sup>1a</sup>. Why did you retire?

<u>Reason for Retirement</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Compulsory, mandatory	331	27	36
Tired of working, wanted leisure time	189	15	21
Health problem, disability	157	13	17
Job too stressful	26	2	2
Poor health of spouse	32	3	3
Spouse wanted retirement	29	2	3
Miscellaneous	87	7	9
Don't know	7	1	1
Missing	61	5	7

69<sup>1b</sup>. Is there anything particular that you miss since you retired?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	315	26	34
No	528	43	57
Missing	76	6	8

(If yes, specify)

<u>Miss since retirement</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Companionship, co-workers	131	11	42
Public contact	42	3	13
Daily routine	38	3	12
Money	41	3	13
The work itself	42	3	13
Other	18	1	6
Don't know	1	0	0
Missing	2	0	1

69<sup>1</sup>c. Do you feel that you worry about money matters now more than you did before you retired?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	203	17	22
No	635	52	69
Don't know	2	0	0
Missing	79	7	9

70. Are you now working either full-time or part-time for pay?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
No	999	81
Part-time	117	10
Full-time	101	8
Missing	11	1

(If full-time or part-time, questions 70a and 70b were asked.)

70a. What type of work are you doing?

<u>Type of Work</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Service occupations	43	4	20
Clerical occupations	38	3	17
Sales occupations	22	2	10
Executives, administrators, managers	16	1	7
Teachers, librarians	11	1	5
Production-related occupations	12	1	6
Material handlers, equipment cleaners	12	1	6
Other	56	5	26
Missing	8	1	4

70b. Are you satisfied with your job, or would you rather be doing something else?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	184	15	84
No	25	1	7
Missing	19	2	9

71. Would you like to find a new job, either full or part-time?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
No	1054	86
Yes, part-time	139	11
Yes, full-time	14	1
Don't know	5	0
Missing	16	1

(If full-time or part-time, questions 71a, 71b, and 71c were asked.)

71a. Is there a specific kind of job you would like?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	119	10	78
No	29	2	19
Don't know	1	0	0
Missing	4	0	3

(If yes, specify)

<u>Type of Work Desired</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
General office work	28	2	24
Work with children, with sick people	17	1	14
Maintenance, repair work	18	2	15
Miscellaneous	45	4	38
Missing	11	1	9

71b. Have you been looking for a job?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	11	1	7
No	137	11	90
Missing	5	0	3

71c. What problems have you had trying to find a job?

<u>Problems</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	49	4	32
Physical disability	7	1	5
Too old	5	0	3
Lack needed skills	4	0	3
Miscellaneous	11	1	7
Don't know	1	0	0
Missing	76	6	50



### Volunteer Work

On the topic of volunteer work, 23 percent of the survey participants stated that they were volunteers at the time of the interview (Question 72). Most frequently, the volunteer work involved driving or delivering items to needy individuals (e.g., meals on wheels, books, etc.). Other activities included general office work, light housework or chore service for the disabled, and friendly visiting. When the volunteers specified the auspices under which they rendered service without pay, these auspices were recorded. As Table 3-13 shows, churches were mentioned most frequently (6%), followed by hospitals (2%), and nursing homes (2%).<sup>24</sup> Two percent of the sample (eight percent of the volunteers) were involved in voluntary programs affiliated with the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program. Few volunteers reported problems getting to their volunteer jobs.

Nineteen percent of the respondents stated that they would like to do some new or additional volunteer work (Question 73).<sup>25</sup> Most of these prospective volunteers did not specify the type of work they would like to do. Among those who did specify a type of preferred work, however, the most popular activities were: visiting, phoning, or reading to the disabled; making deliveries; and working with children. Most also did not specify a desired site for the volunteer work, but those who did favored hospitals and churches.

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<sup>24</sup>Note that part a of Question 72 asked only for the type of work, not for the auspices under which it occurred. The data on auspices are presented only because they can offer survey users some perspective on the range of volunteer sites which respondents considered important to identify as part of their descriptions of their work.

<sup>25</sup>This figure includes some of the respondents who reported themselves as volunteers in Question 72, but who would like to do some different (and/or additional) volunteer work.

Table 3-13

VOLUNTEER WORK: INTERVIEW ITEMS 72-73

72. Are you now doing any volunteer work?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	278	23
No	937	76
Missing	13	1

(If yes, questions 72a, 72b, and 72c were asked.)

72a. What are you doing?

<u>Type of Work</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Driving people, delivering meals or books	41	3	15
Office work	11	1	4
Light housework, chores	7	1	3
Friendly visiting	20	2	7
"General volunteer work"	28	2	10
Miscellaneous	48	4	17
Missing	123	10	44
<u>Auspices</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Church	77	6	28
Hospital	24	2	9
Nursing home	17	2	6
Senior center	13	1	5
Miscellaneous	73	6	26
No location listed	74	6	27

72b. Is this sponsored by R.S.V.P.?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	21	2	8
No	233	19	84
Don't know	4	0	1
Missing	20	3	7

72c. Do you have any problems getting to your volunteer job?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	3	0	1
No	267	22	96
Missing	8	2	2

73. Is there any kind of volunteer work that you would like to do?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	236	19
No	929	76
Don't know	19	2
Missing	44	4

(If yes, specify)

<u>Type of Activity</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Not specified	85	7	36
Visiting, phoning, reading to disabled	27	2	11
Delivering meals or books	9	1	4
Working with children	16	1	7
Miscellaneous	44	4	19
Missing	55	5	23

<u>Site Desired</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Not specified	76	6	32
Hospital	56	5	24
Church	14	1	6
Nursing Home	9	1	4
Miscellaneous	27	2	11
Missing	54	4	23

### Recreational Activities

Question 74 shifted the focus of the interview toward recreational activities, hobbies, artistic abilities, and other leisure pursuits (see Table 3-14). A relatively high proportion of the aging individuals who were interviewed (63%) reported that they had a hobby or pastime. Sewing was the most frequently mentioned activity (30%).<sup>26</sup> In addition, many respondents were involved in playing a musical instrument (19%), in working with light crafts (12%), in active sports (9%), in painting (5%), or in gardening (4%). Most of the respondents who engaged in these activities preferred to do them alone. Only 12 percent of the sample expressed a desire to join a group in

<sup>26</sup>Note that this figure of 30 percent is the total of those respondents who mentioned sewing either first, second, or third in their list of up to three hobbies or pastimes. That is, 368 respondents, 30 percent of the sample, mentioned sewing.

the pursuit of such activity; and only nine percent already belonged to a group of persons with recreational or artistic interests similar to theirs. Fourteen percent of the respondents stated that they would be interested in teaching their skills to someone else.

Those individuals who did not have a favorite hobby or pastime were asked whether they would like to learn something like painting, sculpting, or some other activity. Seventeen percent of the respondents (54 percent of those without a hobby or pastime) indicated that they would not like to learn something new. Four percent of the respondents expressed a desire to learn something new, most often crafts.

Question 75 contained a list of 12 recreational activities. For each activity, the respondents were asked to indicate whether they took part "never, sometimes, or very often." From Table 3-14, it is clear that watching television is an activity in which the largest proportion of the respondents involved themselves. (Only two percent stated that they never watched T.V.) Other activities in which large numbers of respondents stated they were "very often" involved included reading a book (43%), gardening (37%), walking in their neighborhood (32%), and sewing or other crafts (28%). Activities which respondents were most likely to avoid were jogging or running (95 percent "never"), playing sports (78%), and dancing (75%).

Question 76 asked about activities which the respondent misses. Slightly more than half of the individuals surveyed (51%), reported that there were activities which they once greatly enjoyed but which they were no longer able to do. Thirty-one percent of the sample mentioned a sporting activity (most often bowling, eight percent, or baseball, five percent); nine percent mentioned dancing; nine percent mentioned other forms of active recreation; and five percent mentioned housework and gardening.

Health was most commonly cited as the reason for a respondent's inability to take part in activities which he or she once enjoyed: 30 percent of the sample mentioned a specific health problem or physical impairment. In addition, four percent of the respondents said that they lacked their former strength or were "out of shape." Other reasons offered were: no partner or no one to accompany (3%); just "old age" (2%); "just don't any more" (2%); and transportation problems (2%). If a respondent mentioned "old age" as partially or entirely the reason for being unable to take part in an activity,

the interviewer followed up with the question; "Anything specific about old age?" If the respondent then mentioned a specific inhibitor, it was recorded and tallied as if it had been the initial response to Question 76b. If the respondent could not mention any specific facet of age as the inhibitor, his or her response became part of the category, "just old age" in Question 76b. Seven percent of the sample mentioned "old age" as the reason why they could not take part in activities they once greatly enjoyed. However, only two percent could not mention anything specific about old age.

Question 77 asked specifically about problems people may have attending shows, concerts, or other events. Thirteen percent of the respondents stated that they had such problems; 83 percent stated that they did not. Frequently mentioned were: transportation problems (5%); fear of going out in the evening (2%); physical or health impairments (2%); and lack of a companion (1%).

Slightly less than a third of the survey participants had used the library during the year previous to the interview (Question 78). Library users tended to be very positive about their experience--virtually none of them had problems with library hours, the card catalogue, library layout, or finding materials. Non-users of the library were asked whether any special reason existed for their non-usage (Question 78e). Most replied either that there was no special reason (10%) or that they had all the books they needed at home (9%). Others stated that: they don't read very much (8%); they have "no need" (7%); vision problems prevent reading (5%); they read magazines (5%); or they haven't enough time (4%). Eight percent of the sample stated that they would like to have books delivered to their homes (Question 79).

Question 80 asked the respondents whether they would use a camp where people aged 60 and over could go for the day or could spend a few nights. Thirty-two percent expressed an interest in such a hypothetical camp, and 62 percent stated that they would have no interest. Persons with an interest in camp suggested a variety of activities they would like to see there: fishing (15%); hiking (5%); card-playing (4%); boating (3%); and getting together with friends or companions (3%). Persons with no interest in a camp most often said this was so because they simply preferred other activities or had a general dislike of camping (16%). Others said that: they or their families had their own cabin (12%); there was no particular reason for their lack of interest (6%); they go on trips on their own or with an organized group (5%); or that they were too ill or disabled (4%).

About one out of every two respondents belonged to an organization or club. The distribution of persons by number of memberships appears in Table 3-14. Members of organizations or clubs identified the groups by name (Question 81a). Up to three of them were recorded by type. Organizational memberships were most commonly held in church-affiliated groups (26%). Other types of groups to which large proportions of respondents belonged are: veterans organizations (10%); fraternal groups (8%); senior citizens or retirement clubs (8%); sports clubs (8%); and hobby or garden clubs (7%). When asked to select one organization to discuss (e.g., either their favorite or most frequently attended organization), most respondents gave the name of a church-affiliated group (14%).

Twenty-three percent of the sample reported that they attend meetings or take part in the organizational activities of the one group selected for discussion between one and 18 times annually (that is, no more than about once per month); seven percent attend 19 to 44 times per year (about twice to three times per month); and 12 percent attend about once a week or more often. With reference to the one, selected group, forty percent of the respondents had close friends and/or relatives who were fellow members.

When asked what they like about belonging to this specific organization, most (26 percent of the sample) cited the fellowship, friends, and socializing that they found in the group. Others mentioned the opportunity to help others or the community as a whole (2%), the opportunity to work with people who have similar skills or interests (2%), and ability to find things with which to keep busy (2%). Few people (6%) reported trouble taking part in the group's activities. Those with problems mentioned: physical or health impairments; transportation problems; and others.

Table 3-14

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES: INTERVIEW ITEMS 74-81

74. Do you play a musical instrument, paint pictures, do crafts, or have any other favorite hobby or pastime?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	776	63
No	400	33
Missing	52	4

(If yes, questions 74a, 74b, and 74c were asked; if no, question 74d was asked.)

74a. What is it?

<u>Activity (first mention)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Sewing	230	19	30
Playing music	173	14	22
Light crafts	85	7	11
Active sports	56	5	7
Painting	35	3	5
Gardening	23	2	3
Heavy crafts	24	2	3
Reading	22	2	3
Miscellaneous	126	10	16
Missing	2	0	0

<u>Activity (second mention)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Sewing	103	8	13
Playing music	45	4	6
Light crafts	49	4	6
Active sports	34	3	4
Painting	20	2	3
Gardening	15	1	2
Heavy crafts	14	1	2
Reading	4	0	1
Miscellaneous	76	6	10
Missing	-	-	-

74a. <u>Activity</u> (third mention)	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Sewing	35	3	5
Playing music	12	1	2
Light crafts	11	1	1
Active sports	11	1	1
Painting	4	0	1
Gardening	8	1	1
Heavy crafts	1	0	0
Reading	9	1	1
Miscellaneous	39	3	5
Missing	-	-	-

74b. Would you like to join a group to do this with others?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	152	12	20
No	481	39	62
Already in group	113	9	15
Don't know	4	0	1
Missing	26	2	3

74c. Would you be interested in teaching someone else to do this?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	166	14	21
No	566	46	73
Don't know	7	1	1
Missing	37	3	5

74d. Would you like to learn something like painting, making sculptures, or some other activity?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	44	4	11
No	214	17	54
Missing	142	12	36

(If yes, specify)

<u>Activity</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Art, painting	5	0	11
Playing music	7	1	16
Sewing	4	0	9
Ceramics	5	0	11
Other light crafts	5	0	11
Miscellaneous	8	1	18
Don't know	7	1	16
Missing	3	0	7



75. Now I would like to read a list of some recreational activities. For each could you tell me whether you never do it, sometimes do it, or do it very often?

a. Take walks around your neighborhood

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	306	25
Sometimes	517	42
Very often	389	32
Missing	16	1

b. Go jogging or running

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	1161	95
Sometimes	40	3
Very often	9	1
Missing	18	1

c. Go to movies

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	751	61
Sometimes	443	36
Very often	14	1
Missing	20	2

d. Go to music concerts, plays, ballets

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	664	54
Sometimes	461	38
Very often	80	7
Missing	23	2

e. Go to ball games or to other sports events

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	736	60
Sometimes	426	35
Very often	44	4
Missing	22	2

75. f. Play sports, like bowling or tennis

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	959	78
Sometimes	125	10
Very often	125	10
Missing	29	1

g. Sew or do handcrafts

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	550	45
Sometimes	312	25
Very often	342	28
Missing	24	2

h. Go out dancing

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	924	75
Sometimes	233	19
Very often	51	4
Missing	20	2

i. Watch T.V.

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	21	2
Sometimes	462	38
Very often	719	59
Missing	26	2

j. Play cards or go to card parties

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	477	39
Sometimes	473	39
Very often	255	21
Missing	23	2

75. k. Read a book

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	222	18
Sometimes	452	37
Very often	532	43
Missing	22	2

l. Do gardening

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	386	31
Sometimes	372	30
Very often	451	37
Missing	19	2

76. Are there any activities which you once greatly enjoyed but which you are now no longer able to do?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	629	51
No	544	44
Don't know	10	1
Missing	45	4

(If yes, questions 76a and 76b were asked.)

76a. What are these activities?

<u>Activity</u>	<u>(First Mention)</u>			<u>(Second Mention)</u>		
		<u>% of</u>	<u>% of</u>		<u>% of</u>	<u>% of</u>
	<u>N</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Subgroup</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Subgroup</u>
Sports	265	22	42	105	9	17
Dancing	99	8	16	17	1	3
Other active recreation	68	6	11	32	3	5
Getting out and around	74	6	12	44	4	7
Housework/gardening	49	4	8	10	1	2
Miscellaneous	59	5	9	21	2	3
Missing	15	1	2	-	-	-

76b. Why are you no longer able to do them?

<u>Reason</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Health problem	368	30	59
Lack strength	49	4	8
No partner to do activity	36	3	6
Too old	28	2	4
"Just don't any more"	22	2	3
Transportation	19	2	3
Too busy	12	0	2
Miscellaneous	69	6	11
Don't know	2	0	0
Missing	24	2	4

77. Do you ever have trouble getting to shows or concerts or other events that you would like to attend?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	157	13
No	1021	83
Missing	50	4

(If yes, question 77a was asked.)

77a. What sort of trouble do you have?

<u>Trouble Attending Shows</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Transportation problems	65	5	41
Fear in evening	24	2	15
Health problem	20	2	13
Lack of companion	15	1	10
Miscellaneous	26	2	17
Missing	7	1	4

78. Have you used the public library during the past year?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	385	31
No	811	66
Missing	32	3

(If yes, question 78a, b, c and d were asked; if no, question 78e was asked.)

a. Is it open enough hours?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	366	30	95
No	11	1	3
Don't know	0	0	0
Missing	8	1	2

b. Is the card catalog easy enough to use?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	327	27	85
No	16	1	4
Don't know	17	1	4
Missing	25	2	6

c. Do you have any trouble at the library because of lighting, stairs layout, etc.?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	37	3	10
No	337	27	88
Missing	11	1	3

d. Are the materials you want at the library usually available?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	357	29	93
No	20	2	5
Missing	8	1	2

e. Any special reason why not?

<u>Reason for Not Using Library</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
No special reason	117	10	14
Have books at house	115	9	14
Don't read much	100	8	12
"Have no need"	90	7	11
Read magazines	57	5	7
Vision problems	61	5	8
Don't have time	44	4	5
Miscellaneous	141	11	17
Don't know	19	2	2
Missing	67	6	8

79. Would you like books delivered to your home?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	97	8
No	1022	83
Missing	109	9

80. If there were a camp where people over age 60 could go for the day or could stay in a cabin for a few nights, would you be interested in using it?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	391	32
No	767	62
Don't know	15	1
Missing	55	5

(If yes, question 80a was asked; if no, question 80b was asked.)

80a. What kinds of activities would you like to see included at such a camp?

<u>Activity</u>	<u>(First Mention)</u>			<u>(Second Mention)</u>		
		<u>% of</u>	<u>% of</u>		<u>% of</u>	<u>% of</u>
	<u>N</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Subgroup</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Subgroup</u>
Fishing	163	13	42	22	2	6
Hiking	32	3	8	28	2	7
Card-playing	16	1	4	33	3	8
Boating	13	1	3	28	2	7
Get-together with friends	24	2	6	13	1	3
Light sports	17	1	4	17	1	4
Swimming	16	1	4	19	2	5
Just relaxing outdoors	18	2	5	14	1	3
Other	54	4	14	67	6	17
Don't know	29	2	7	-	-	-
Missing	9	1	2	-	-	-

80b. Any special reason why not?

<u>Reason For No Interest</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Own cabin or camper	152	12	20
General disliking of camping	194	16	25
No particular reason	76	6	10
Travel on own or with organized group	57	5	7
Physical disability	43	4	6
"Too old"	27	2	4
Dislike group activities	22	2	3
Miscellaneous	107	9	14
Don't know	27	2	4
Missing	62	5	8

81. Do you belong to any organizations or clubs, for example, a neighborhood association, a sports team, a hobby club, a group sponsored by your church, the American Legion, etc.?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
None	602	49
1	243	20
2	188	15
3	94	8
4+	78	6
Missing	23	2

(If yes, questions 81a-f were asked.)

81a. What are they?

<u>Organization (First Mention)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Church-affiliated	200	16	33
Veterans'	77	6	13
Fraternal	66	5	11
Senior citizens retirement	48	4	8
Sports club	46	4	8
Hobby/garden	35	3	6
Neighborhood association	23	2	4
Professional	18	2	3
Card club	30	2	5
Nationality	15	1	2
Other	43	4	7
Missing	2	0	0

<u>Organization (Second Mention)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Church-affiliated	87	7	14
Veterans'	35	3	6
Fraternal	29	2	5
Senior citizens retirement	24	2	4
Sports club	34	3	6
Hobby/garden	25	2	4
Neighborhood association	19	2	3
Professional	18	2	3
Card club	27	2	4
Nationality	11	1	2
Other	49	4	8
Missing	-	-	-

<u>Organization (Third Mention)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Church-affiliated	42	3	7
Veterans'	6	1	1
Fraternal	10	1	2
Senior citizens retirement	18	2	3
Sports club	7	1	1
Hobby/garden	20	2	3
Neighborhood association	15	1	2
Professional	5	0	1
Card club	11	1	2
Nationality	7	1	1
Other	28	2	5
Missing	-	-	-

81b. Now I would like to talk with you about one of these. Could you pick one--perhaps the one that is your favorite or the one in which you do the most activities?

<u>Favorite Group</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Church-affiliated	175	14	29
Sports club	61	5	10
Fraternal	55	5	9
Veterans	52	4	9
Hobby/garden	42	3	7
Card club	40	3	7
Other	155	13	26
Missing	23	2	4

81c. On the average how often would you say that you attend meetings or take part in activities of this group?

<u>Times Per Year</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
None	42	3	7
1 - 18	287	23	48
19 - 44	88	7	15
45 - 78	98	8	16
79+	47	4	8
Don't know	26	2	4
Missing	15	1	2

81d. Do any of your close friends or relatives belong to this group?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	494	40	82
No	93	8	15
Missing	16	1	2



81e. What do you like best about belonging to this group?

<u>What Likes Best</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Fellowship, socializing	325	26	54
Helping others	30	2	5
Similarly skilled people	21	2	3
Keep busy	21	2	3
Exercise	20	2	3
Good recreational activities	16	1	3
Other	125	10	21
Don't know	8	1	1
Missing	37	3	6

81f. Do you have any trouble taking part in any of the activities of this group?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	69	6	11
No	519	42	86
Missing	15	3	2

(If yes, specify)

<u>Type of Problem</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Physical, health problem	31	3	45
Transportation problem	11	1	16
Miscellaneous	12	1	16
Missing	15	1	22

### Health

Question 82 begins the largest single focused set of questions in the interview: questions which deal with health (physical abilities, health behaviors, presence of health problems, etc.). Respondents indicated in Question 82 whether they could accomplish each of nine activities of daily living with or without help. The activity which the largest proportion of individuals was unable to do without help was grocery shopping (17%). A sizeable proportion was unable to clean the house (13%). Other activities and the percentages of persons who could not accomplish them without help, were: going for walks (8%); using the bathtub (6%); climbing stairs (6%); preparing meals (5%); taking medications (3%); using the phone (3%); and dressing themselves (2%).

Those people who require help to accomplish the activities of daily living were asked to specify the person who usually helps them. The helpers are identified in Table 3-15. (It should be noted that the helper was not always specified, in which case the table only indicates a respondent's inability to perform particular tasks.) Spouses and children were most often identified as the helpers; although friends and neighbors, as well as other relatives, appeared prominently in connection with grocery shopping assistance. Individuals who reported that they could not accomplish a particular activity and who stated that they have nobody to help them with that activity appear in the column of Table 3-15 labelled "Has No Helper." (So, for example, one percent of the sample reported both that they could not climb stairs and that they had no one to help them to climb stairs.)

The use of various physical aids was recorded in Question 83. Persons in the sample were most likely to use eyeglasses or contact lenses (97%), and second most likely to use dentures (57%). Other aids used were: a cane (10%); a hearing aid (6%); a walker (3%); and a wheel chair (1%).

Question 84 asked the respondents whether their health prevented them from doing anything which they felt they should be able to do. (This question is very similar to Question 76, but it focuses directly upon impediments produced by health problems.) Twenty-nine percent of the sample stated that their health does prevent them from doing things they should be able to do. Five percent mentioned a wide range of sports such as bowling, baseball, etc. Four percent mentioned walking outside. Other activities which respondents would like to do but can't were shopping, recreation, visiting friends' houses, etc. (3%); housework (3%); home maintenance (2%); and gardening (2%). In addition, four percent of the respondents answered Question 84 by stating that their health impeded them from doing virtually everything they wanted to do. The health problems which impeded people from engaging in desired activity were: "general, poor health" (6%); arthritis (3%); and heart trouble (3%).

A majority of the people whom we interviewed had contact with health care providers during the year previous to the interview (Question 85). Eighty-one percent had seen a medical doctor, nurse, or nurse practitioner; 57 percent

had seen an eye doctor; and 55 percent had seen a dentist. Forty-four percent of the respondents reported that they had received Medicare or Medicaid benefits during the year previous to the interview.<sup>27</sup>

Thirty-one percent of the sample reported that they had problems seeing as well as they would like; 25 percent reported problems hearing as well as they would like; and 38 percent reported problems remembering things (Question 86). Fewer than half, however, stated that they had had to stay home because of an illness or injury during the year previous to the interview (Question 87). Seventeen percent reported staying home for one to twelve days during the year; eight percent reported staying home between 13 and 36 days and 9 percent reported staying home for 37 days or more.

Twenty percent of the respondents spent time in the hospital for illness or injury during the year previous to the interview (Question 88). Forty-four percent of the people who spent time in the hospital (i.e., 106 of 240 people) spent a total of 7 or fewer days there. Those who spent time in the hospital were asked whether, after their discharge, anyone helped them until they got back on their feet. Twelve percent of the sample (60 percent of those who had spent time in the hospital) had someone help them upon their return home. Most often the helper was a spouse or a child. Seven percent of the sample (35 percent of those who spent time in the hospital) did not have anyone to help them, and about one in six of these people (15%) stated they could have used someone to help after the return from the hospital (Question 88c).<sup>28</sup> In response to Question 89, one percent of the respondents reported that they had stayed in a nursing home for some period of time during the year previous to the interview.

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<sup>27</sup>This figure may seem relatively low. However, it should be recalled that such benefits may not be appropriate for many of the younger and employed respondents in the sample.

<sup>28</sup>Remember that, to the extent that these data provide a picture of what is going on among all aging persons in the county, the finding that one percent of the sample returned home from the hospital during the year and needed help which was not provided suggests that perhaps 650 such older people in Ramsey County could have used help which they did not receive after a hospital discharge.

Most of the people in the sample (83%) felt that they have someone to take care of them in case of sickness or disability (Question 90). Forty percent of the respondents suggested that their spouse would do so; 16 percent felt that a child would do so; and six percent felt that their spouse and children together would take care of them. Various other relatives, such as brothers and sisters, in-laws, etc., were mentioned by eight percent of the respondents. About three percent of the respondents felt that a friend or neighbor would take care of them.

Question 91 elicited each respondent's chronic illnesses or health or dental problems. The question was asked in an open-ended style, from the respondent's point of view, although the interviewer had a check list of 25 categories into which he or she placed the respondent's answers. Thirty-four percent of the sample stated that they had no chronic illnesses. The most common illness reported was high blood pressure (22%). The second most common was arthritis (16%). Others frequently mentioned were heart trouble (13%), back, joint or muscle problems (9%), visual problems, such as cataracts or glaucoma (6%); and diabetes (6%).

Question 92 asked about prescription and non-prescription medicines. Fifty-six percent of the respondents reported that they were currently taking prescription medicines; five percent were taking non-prescription medicines; and two percent were taking both. Most persons who were taking medications (46 percent of the sample) paid for their own. Only 14 percent of the sample stated that Medicare or a health plan paid for their medicine. Most people (53 percent of the sample; 85 percent of those taking medicine) said that they did not have trouble affording the medicines which they took. Eight percent of the sample reported that they did have trouble affording the medicine.

Questions 93 and 94 ascertained each respondent's self rating of his or her own health. When asked to characterize their health as "good," "average," or "poor," 59 percent of the individuals surveyed felt that it was good; 31 percent considered it average; and six percent considered it poor. Most people (58%) considered their health better than the health of their age peers; 30 percent considered it about the same; and five percent considered it worse.

Question 95 and 96 dealt with dental problems and dental care. Sixteen percent of the respondents reported having problems with their teeth or dentures; 81 percent said that they did not have such problems. Those with problems were asked whether the problems prevented them from eating the way they would like to eat. Forty percent of them (seven percent of the sample) stated that their dental problems interfered with eating. Twelve percent of the sample would like to get to the dentist more often than they do now (Question 96). When asked what keeps them from getting there, most (4%) said that dental work is too expensive. Others cited their dissatisfaction with dental work (1%) or a transportation problem (1%).

Table 3-15

HEALTH: INTERVIEW ITEMS 82-96

82. Now I will read a list of activities. For each, please tell me whether you can do it without help or only if someone helps you.

a. Climbing stairs

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Without help	1151	94
With help	68	6
Missing	9	1

b. Cleaning the house

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Without help	1053	86
With help	163	13
Missing	12	1

c. Going for walks outside

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Without help	1115	91
With help	99	8
Missing	14	1

82. d. Getting in and out of the bathtub

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Without help	1137	93
With help	79	6
Missing	12	1

e. Preparing your meals and snacks

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Without help	1151	94
With help	67	5
Missing	10	1

f. Dressing yourself

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Without help	1197	97
With help	24	2
Missing	7	1

g. Taking medications

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Without help	1188	97
With help	32	3
Missing	8	1

h. Shopping for groceries

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Without help	1010	82
With help	204	17
Missing	14	1

i. Dialing the telephone and using the directory

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Without help	1183	96
With help	35	3
Missing	10	1

Person Who Usually Helps (If "with help")

	<u>Spouse</u>		<u>Child</u>		<u>Other Relative</u>		<u>Friend/ Neighbor</u>		<u>Paid Help</u>		<u>Not Specified</u>		<u>Has No Helper</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
a. Climbing stairs	13	1	16	1	6	1	5	-	1	-	18	2	9	1
b. Cleaning the house	32	3	27	2	14	1	9	1	22	2	44	4	15	1
c. Going for walks outside	24	2	19	2	8	1	6	1	2	-	22	2	18	2
d. Getting in and out of bathtub	15	1	12	1	7	1	3	-	5	-	27	2	10	1
e. Preparing your meals and snacks	21	2	15	1	5	-	5	-	6	1	11	1	4	-
f. Dressing yourself	7	1	6	1	3	-	-	-	2	-	6	1	-	-
g. Taking medications	8	1	11	1	2	-	-	-	4	-	6	1	1	-
h. Shopping for groceries	37	3	58	5	21	2	21	2	10	1	45	4	12	1
i. Dialing the telephone and using the directory	5	-	12	1	3	-	2	-	2	-	8	1	3	-

83. Do you use any of the following?

	Yes		No		Missing	
	<u>% of</u>		<u>% of</u>		<u>% of</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Sample</u>
a. Eyeglasses or contacts	1191	97	23	2	14	1
b. A hearing aid	70	6	1142	93	16	1
c. A cane	121	10	1090	89	17	1
d. A walker	31	3	1181	96	16	2
e. A wheelchair	11	1	1199	98	18	2
f. Dentures	706	57	507	41	15	1

84. Is there anything that you feel you should be able to do, but your health prevents you from doing it?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	352	29
No	827	67
Don't know	5	0
Missing	44	4

(If yes, questions 84a and 84b were asked.)

84a. What is it that you would like to do?

<u>Activity</u>	<u>(First Mention)</u>			<u>(Second Mention)</u>		
	<u>% of</u>		<u>% of</u>	<u>% of</u>		<u>% of</u>
	<u>N</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Subgroup</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Subgroup</u>
Everything/many things	44	4	13	2	0	1
Walking outside	40	3	11	7	1	2
Sports	40	3	11	22	2	6
Shopping, visiting, etc.	29	3	8	10	1	3
Housework	31	3	9	3	0	1
Home maintenance	23	2	7	3	0	1
Gardening	24	2	7	4	0	1
Jogging/exercise	25	2	7	2	0	1
Miscellaneous	82	7	23	11	1	3
Missing	14	1	4	-	-	-



84b. Why can't you do it?

<u>Reason</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
General, poor health	77	6	22
Arthritis	42	3	12
Heart trouble	38	3	11
Bad back	18	2	5
Bad legs	26	2	7
Poor vision	17	1	5
Lung problems	13	1	4
Other	95	8	27
Missing	26	2	7

85. During the past year, have you:

a. Gone to see an eye doctor?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	697	57
No	510	42
Missing	21	2

b. Gone to see a medical doctor, nurse, or nurse practitioner?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	999	81
No	212	17
Missing	17	1

c. Gone to see a dentist?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	678	55
No	529	43
Missing	21	2

d. Received Medicare or Medicaid benefits?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	545	44
No	660	54
Missing	23	2

86. Do you have:

a. Problems seeing as well as you would like?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	377	31
No	818	67
Missing	33	3

b. Problems hearing as well as you like?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	309	25
No	884	72
Missing	35	3

c. Problems remembering things?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	466	38
No	715	58
Missing	47	4

87. For approximately how many days during the past year have you had to stay home because of an illness or injury?

<u>Days Home</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
None	697	57
1 - 12	211	17
13 - 36	104	8
37 - 299	84	7
300+	32	3
Don't know	76	6
Missing	24	2

88. How many days during the past year did you spend in a hospital for illness or injury?

<u>Days in Hospital</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
None	972	79
1 - 7	106	9
8 - 21	79	6
22 - 35	29	2
36 - 70	18	2
71 - 95	7	1
Don't know	1	0
Missing	16	1

(If one or more, question 88a was asked.)

88a. When you returned from the hospital, did anyone help you out until you were able to get back on your feet?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	144	12	60
No	84	7	35
Missing	11	1	5

(If yes, question 88b was asked; if no, question 88c was asked.)

88b. Who helped you?

<u>Helper</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Spouse	65	5	45
Child	38	3	26
Relative	22	2	15
Friend	6	1	4
Nursing service	6	1	4
Other	7	1	5

88c. Could you have used someone to help you?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	13	1	15
No	67	5	80
Missing	4	0	5

89. Did you stay in a nursing home at all during the past year?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	12	1
No	1169	95
Missing	47	4

90. Do you have someone who would take care of you if you were sick or disabled--for example, your husband/wife, a member of your family or a friend?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	1021	83
No	155	13
Don't know	24	2
Missing	28	2

(If yes, specify.)

<u>Potential Caretaker</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Husband/wife	493	40	48
Spouse and children	77	6	8
Child/children	202	16	20
"My family"	60	5	6
Other relative	97	8	10
Friend/neighbor	34	3	3
Other	18	2	2
Don't know	8	1	1
Missing	32	3	3

91. Do you have any chronic illnesses or health or dental problems?

<u>Number of Illnesses</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
None	412	34
1	348	28
2	253	21
3	94	8
4	50	4
5+	25	2
Don't know	7	1
Missing	39	3

(If yes, question 91a was asked.)

91a. What are they?

<u>Illness (First Mention)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
High blood pressure	145	12	19
Arthritis	186	15	24
Heart trouble	72	6	9
Back, joint, muscle problems	72	6	9
Visual problems	15	1	2
Diabetes	49	4	6
Respiratory problems	28	2	4
Ulcers, gall bladder, stomach problems	16	1	2
Other	186	15	24
Missing	1	0	0

<u>Illness (Second Mention)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
High blood pressure	91	7	12
Arthritis	10	1	1
Heart trouble	60	5	8
Back, joint, muscle problems	31	3	4
Visual problems	34	3	4
Diabetes	23	2	3
Respiratory problems	24	2	3
Ulcers, gall bladder, stomach problems	23	2	3
Other	115	9	15
Missing	-	-	-

<u>Illness (Third Mention)</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
High blood pressure	41	3	5
Arthritis	2	0	0
Heart trouble	22	2	3
Back, joint, muscle problems	1	0	0
Visual problems	29	2	4
Diabetes	0	0	0
Respiratory problems	11	1	1
Ulcers, gall bladder, stomach problems	10	1	1
Other	52	4	7
Missing	-	-	-

92. Are you currently taking any prescription or non-prescription medicines?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
No	406	33
Yes, prescription	684	56
Yes, non-prescription	56	5
Both	27	2
Missing	55	4

(If yes, questions 92a and 92b were asked.)

92a. Are these paid for by Medicare or some health plan, or do you have to pay them?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Medicare or health plan	173	14	23
Pay for own	562	46	73
Both	25	2	3
Missing	7	0	1

92b. Do you ever have trouble affording these medicines?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	102	8	13
No	649	53	85
Missing	16	1	2

93. In general would you say that your health is good, average, or poor?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Poor	76	6
Average	377	31
Good	729	59
Don't know	3	0
Missing	43	4

94. Would you say that your health is better, the same, or worse than the health of most people your age?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Worse	61	5
Same	370	30
Better	714	58
Don't know	33	3
Missing	50	4

95. Do you now have any problems with your teeth or dentures?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	201	16
No	991	81
Missing	36	3

(If yes, question 95a was asked.)

95a. Do these problems keep you from eating the way you would like?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	81	7	40
No	113	9	56
Missing	7	1	3

96. Would you like to get to the dentist more often than you do now?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	149	12
No	1024	83
Don't know	1	0
Missing	54	4

(If yes, question 96a was asked.)

96a. What keeps you from getting there?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Too expensive	47	4	32
Dissatisfaction with dentist	15	1	10
Transportation problem	14	1	9
Other	59	5	40
Don't know	8	1	5
Missing	6	1	4

### Nutrition

Question 97 introduced a series of questions which elicited information on eating arrangements and satisfaction with those arrangements. Virtually everyone (93%) reported doing most of his or her eating at home. The small proportion of persons who reported doing most eating away from home specified the locations, and these appear in Table 3-16. Sixty-four percent of the sample reported that they get their meals ready for themselves; 28 percent reported that their spouse prepares their meals (Question 98).

Eighty-one percent of the respondents stated that, during the year previous to the interview, they had had no trouble eating the way they wanted to eat; 16 percent reported that they did have trouble of this type (Question 99). Problems mentioned by the people who had trouble included: problems with teeth or dentures (4%); dislike of the foods allowed on a prescribed diet (3%); stomach or other health problems (3%).

Sixty-nine percent of the people interviewed generally eat their meals with someone else (Question 100); 29 percent eat most of their meals alone. Virtually all of them reported satisfaction with their present cooking arrangements (Question 101).

Twenty-four percent of the respondents said that a doctor had prescribed a special diet for them (Question 102). Most often mentioned was a low salt diet (seven percent of the sample; 28 percent of those on diets). Others mentioned were: low sugar, diabetic (6%); low calorie (5%); and low cholesterol (4%). About one-third of those on a diet reported trouble following it. These troubles included lack of self control (3%); difficulty preparing foods free of the wrong ingredients (2%) and overeating (1%).

Table 3-16

NUTRITION: INTERVIEW ITEMS 97-102

97. Do you do most of your eating at home or somewhere else?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
At home	1143	93
Somewhere else	66	5
Missing	19	2

(If somewhere else, question 97a was asked.)

97a. Where?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Restaurant	49	4	74
Congregate Dining	6	1	9
Relatives	6	1	9
Friends	3	0	5
Other	1	0	2
Missing	1	0	2

98. Who usually gets your food ready for you?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Self	782	64
Spouse	339	28
Friend	5	0
Child	31	3
Other relative	21	2
Volunteer	7	1
Congregate dining	2	0
Meals-on-wheels	9	1
Restaurant	14	1
Missing	18	1



99. During the past year or so, have you had any trouble eating the way you would like to eat?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	192	16
No	998	81
Missing	38	3

(If yes, question 99a was asked.)

99a. What problems have you had?

<u>Eating Problems</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Problems with teeth or dentures	49	4	26
Dislike prescribed foods	42	3	22
Stomach/health problems	39	3	20
Other	59	5	31
Missing	3	0	2

100. Do you eat most of your meals alone or with someone else?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Alone	353	29
With someone	845	69
Missing	30	2

101. Are you satisfied with your present cooking arrangements?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	1148	93
No	27	2
Missing	53	4

102. Has a doctor prescribed a special diet for you?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	296	24
No	892	73
Missing	40	3

(If yes, question 102a and 102b were asked.)

102a. What kind of diet?

<u>Type of Diet</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Low salt	82	7	28
Low sugar	67	6	23
Low calorie	55	5	19
Low cholesterol	46	4	16
Bland diet	19	2	6
Other	23	2	8
Missing	4	0	1

102b. Do you have any trouble following it?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	106	9	36
No	172	14	58
Missing	18	1	6

If yes, specify)

<u>Problem Following Diet</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Lack self-control	33	3	31
Difficulty preparing correct foods	29	2	27
Overeating	13	1	12
Other	20	2	19
Missing	11	1	10

Economic Status

Income and expenses were discussed within Questions 103 to 116 and appear in Table 3-17. (The dollar figures given by the respondents have been grouped into categories for examination in this chapter. However, they are retained in their original form in later analyses of averages, correlations, etc.)

Almost one-half of the sample (46%) spent between \$16 and \$45 per week for groceries (Question 103). Twenty-four percent of the respondents said they didn't know their weekly grocery bill. Thirty-six percent of the sample reported spending no money eating out during an ordinary week (Question 104). Of those who did eat out, most spent less than \$15 during an ordinary week. Almost two-thirds of the respondents reported a usual telephone bill of between \$1-\$15 per week (Question 105). A question concerning NSP bills was

asked with reference to the month previous to the interview. Table 3-17 indicates the responses to this question. However, those responses cannot be adequately interpreted without examination of the months during which the interview occurred. Thirty-one percent of the sample paid their NSP bill on the budget plan, and 57 percent did not do so (Question 107). When asked whether the NSP bill was a big or a small problem to pay, 54 percent of the people surveyed said that paying NSP was no problem, while 33 percent said that it was either a small or a big problem (Question 108).

Most of the respondents (79%) owned their homes; 16 percent rented; and two percent reported that their housing was provided rent-free (Question 109).<sup>29</sup> Of those who owned their homes, 86 percent did not have an outstanding mortgage.

In Question 110, respondents indicated whether they or their spouses receive money in each of ten ways. The most common source of income was Social Security benefits, which 82 percent of the respondents (or their spouses) received. Many respondents (or their spouses) received income from interest from assets (64%); pension benefits other than Social Security (56%); and salary or wages (25%). Eighty-eight percent of the respondents felt that they have enough money to meet their everyday basic needs, and 67 percent felt that they can usually afford extras and recreation (Question 111). However, one-fourth of the sample stated that they have to go without some things in order to pay for others (Question 112). When asked what they go without, common responses were: personal items (8%); recreation (4%); food (3%); and luxury items (2%).

Eight percent of the respondents had taken out a loan during the year previous to the interview (Question 113). Automobile loans, loans for household repairs, and real estate loans were the most common types. When asked whether they would be able to take care of their future money needs, most of the people whom we surveyed (74%) responded affirmatively (Question 114). Only four percent predicted that they definitely would be unable to take care of their future money needs.

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<sup>29</sup>The interview form contained two follow-up questions to Question 109 which attempted to ascertain monthly mortgage and rent payments. However, respondents did not use uniform standards for computing mortgage payments plus taxes plus insurance. Therefore, the data are not presented in this report.

Question 115 ascertained the income of the respondent (or the combined income of the respondent and spouse). Sixty-eight percent of the sample reported their income. Fourteen percent did not disclose their income, and 14 percent stated that they didn't know their income. Reported incomes, on a monthly basis, were: \$1-\$300 (10%); \$301-\$600 (25%); \$601-\$900 (13%); \$901-\$1200 (7%); \$1201 or more (13%). It should be noted that these figures are likely higher than income figures for a sample consisting solely of retired individuals.

About half of the sample considered themselves financially "better off" than other people of a similar age (Question 116). Thirty-one percent considered themselves "the same" financially as their age peers; seven percent considered themselves "worse off"; and five percent felt that they didn't know their relative financial standing among persons of a similar age.

Table 3-17

ECONOMIC STATUS: INTERVIEW ITEMS 103-116

103. About how much money do you spend each week for groceries?

<u>Dollars Per Week</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
None	3	0
1 - 15	119	10
16 - 30	339	28
31 - 45	225	18
46 - 60	140	11
61+	54	4
Don't know	298	24
Missing	50	4

104. In an ordinary week, about how much do you spend eating out?

<u>Dollars Per Week</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
None	443	36
1 - 15	514	42
16 - 30	123	10
31 - 45	23	2
46+	20	2
Don't know	44	4
Missing	61	5

105. About how much is your usual telephone bill?

<u>Dollars Per Week</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
None	13	1
1 - 15	775	63
1 - 30	232	19
31 - 45	25	2
46+	21	2
Doesn't pay bill	33	3
Don't know	79	6
Missing	50	4

106. What was your N.S.P. bill last month?

<u>Dollars Previous Month</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
1 - 50	474	39
51 - 100	416	34
101 - 150	99	8
151 - 200	18	2
201+	11	1
Doesn't pay bill	88	7
Don't know	74	6
Missing	48	4

107. Do you pay N.S.P. on the "budget plan"?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	379	31
No	701	57
Doesn't pay	88	7
Don't know	17	1
Missing	43	4

108. Is paying your N.S.P. bill a big problem, a small problem, or no problem at all?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
No problem	666	54
Small problem	210	17
Big problem	197	16
Doesn't pay	88	7
Don't know	9	1
Missing	58	5

109. Do you own or rent the place where you live, or is it provided rent-free?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Own (paying mortgage)	138	11
Own (no mortgage)	829	68
Rent	196	16
Rent-free	27	2
Missing	38	3

110. Now I would like to read a list of ways that people receive money. You don't have to tell me the amount, but could you tell me if you or your husband/wife get any money from:

Salary or wages from a job?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	311	25
No	887	72
Don't know	0	0
Missing	30	2

Social Security retirement benefits?

Yes	1003	82
No	199	16
Don't know	1	0
Missing	25	2

Other pension benefits?

Yes	686	56
No	507	41
Don't know	1	0
Missing	34	3

Interest from assets, like interest and dividends, life insurance, etc.?

Yes	785	64
No	401	33
Don't know	2	0
Missing	40	3

Regular withdrawals from savings?

Yes	243	20
No	944	77
Don't know	2	0
Missing	39	3

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Disability?		
Yes	78	6
No	1114	91
Don't know	3	0
Missing	33	3
Welfare?		
Yes	31	3
No	1161	95
Don't know	2	0
Missing	34	3
Unemployment?		
Yes	5	0
No	1187	97
Don't know	2	0
Missing	34	3
Family and relatives?		
Yes	31	3
No	1158	94
Don't know	3	0
Missing	36	3
Other sources?		
Yes	89	7
No	1076	88
Don't know	3	0
Missing	60	5

111. Do you feel you have enough money to meet your everyday basic needs such as food, utilities, housing, clothes and transportation?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	1076	88
No	104	9
Don't know	1	0
Missing	47	4

(If yes, question 111a was asked.)

111a. How about extras and recreation? Can you usually afford these?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	817	67	76
No	193	16	18
Don't know	8	1	1
Missing	58	5	5

112. Do you ever have to go without some things in order to pay for others?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	307	25
No	864	70
Don't know	1	0
Missing	56	5

(If yes, question 112a was asked.)

112a. What do you usually go without?

<u>Item</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Personal items	102	8	33
Recreation	46	4	15
Food	34	3	11
"Luxury" items	28	2	9
Travel	17	1	6
Other	53	4	17
Missing	27	2	9

113. Have you taken out any loans during the past year?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	92	8
No	1093	89
Missing	43	4

(If yes, question 113a was asked.)

113a. For what purpose?

<u>Purpose of Loan</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Automobile	19	2	21
Household repairs	17	1	18
Real estate	13	1	14
Business	10	1	11
Miscellaneous	30	2	33
Missing	3	0	3



114. Do you feel that you will be able to take care of your future money needs?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	903	74
No	50	4
Don't know	224	18
Missing	51	4

115. Could you tell me what the income of you and your husband/wife is before taxes?

<u>Monthly Income</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Those Who Reported Their Income</u>
1-300	117	10	14
301-600	302	25	36
601-900	165	13	20
901-1200	89	7	11
1201+	164	13	20
Don't know	173	14	-
Refused to answer	175	14	-
Missing	43	4	-

116. Do you think that financially you are better off, worse off, or about the same as other people your age?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Same	617	50
Worse	86	7
Better	384	31
Don't know	66	5
Missing	75	6

### Life Satisfaction, Happiness

Questions 118 to 124 focus upon personal satisfactions, worries, and concerns of the respondents. Question 118 asked for a global rating of the respondent's satisfaction with life. Eighty-eight percent stated that they were either very satisfied or moderately satisfied with life in general. Only eight percent expressed moderate or high dissatisfaction. When asked to compare their life at the time of the interview with other times of life, 54 percent considered it no better or worse than any previous time (Question 119). Thirty-one percent considered it their best time, and eight percent considered it their worst time.

General descriptions of the respondent's level of happiness resembled the descriptions of life satisfaction. Fifty-two percent of the sample reported that they were very happy; 36 percent reported that they were somewhat happy; and only seven percent reported that they were either somewhat unhappy or very unhappy (Question 120).

When asked to identify the biggest problems in their day-to-day lives, 37 percent of the respondents stated that they had no big problems. Frequently mentioned were: a current health problem (12%); a serious physical disability (5%); finances, inflation, paying bills (9%); and inability to do household repairs or to care for a home (5%).<sup>30</sup> Respondents were also asked what they expected to be the best things which could happen to them during the next few years (Question 122). Thirty-one percent of the sample stated that to remain healthy would be the best thing to happen, and six percent hoped for an improvement in their health. Eleven percent of the respondents looked forward to a vacation or travel; five percent relished the thought of retirement; seven percent stated a preference for things to continue "just the way they are now" and three percent looked forward to achievements or life transitions of their children or grandchildren.

In response to Question 123, respondents indicated whether anything particular about their lives worried them. Thirty percent reported particular worries or concerns; while 65 percent reported that they had none. The most common worries centered around a current health problem (seven percent of the sample; 23 percent of those who said they had a particular worry). Other worries mentioned by the respondents were: concern about a future decline in health (3%); finances (3%); fear of losing their independence (2%); and health of a spouse (2%). Seven percent of the sample (almost one-fourth of those with worries) felt that some other person or group might be able to help them with their problems. Suggestions of who that group might be or of what might be done appear in Table 3-18.

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<sup>30</sup>This question was asked in an open-ended fashion. Respondents could mention as many problems as they desired. However, only the first two mentioned were coded for data processing.

Loneliness was the topic of Question 124. When asked how often they felt lonely, more than half of the respondents (52%) said that they never do. (Since, strictly speaking, there is probably no one who never feels lonely, it is likely that older individuals do not acknowledge this feeling very readily.) Thirty-six percent of the sample stated that they sometimes feel lonely, and seven percent stated that they feel lonely very often.

Question 125 asked about big changes which had occurred in a respondent's life in the decade previous to the interview.<sup>31</sup> About one in ten of the people interviewed stated that no big changes had occurred in their lives during the last ten years. The most often cited change was retirement (31%). Other, frequently mentioned changes were: death of a spouse (17%); significant change in the respondent's health (17%); death of a family member other than spouse (13%); and change of residence (11%).

Table 3-18

LIFE SATISFACTION, HAPPINESS: INTERVIEW ITEMS 118-125

118. Taking all things into consideration, how would you describe your satisfaction with life in general at the present time? Would you say that you are very satisfied, moderately satisfied, moderately dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with your life at the present time?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Very dissatisfied	28	2
Moderately dissatisfied	65	5
Moderately satisfied	527	43
Very satisfied	550	45
Don't know	4	0
Missing	54	4

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<sup>31</sup> Respondents could mention as many changes as they wished. The first three, and the years during which they occurred, were recorded for data processing.

119. Would you consider this time of your life as your best time, worst time, or no better or worse than usual?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
No better or worse	659	54
Worst time	102	8
Best time	383	31
Don't know	14	1
Missing	70	6

120. How happy would you say you are: very happy; somewhat happy; somewhat unhappy; or very unhappy?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Very unhappy	19	2
Somewhat unhappy	65	5
Somewhat happy	437	36
Very happy	640	52
Don't know	5	0
Missing	62	5

121. Presently, what are the biggest problems that you have in your day-to-day life?

<u>Problem</u>	<u>(First Mention)</u>		<u>(Second Mention)</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Current health problem	141	11	11	1
Serious physical disability	45	4	8	1
Finances, inflation, bills	81	7	27	2
Inability to care for home	46	4	11	1
Problems in relationships with children, relatives	29	2	4	0
Loneliness, isolation	40	3	7	1
Can't get out and around	57	5	14	1
Health problem of spouse	25	2	3	0
Trying to find satisfying activity to keep busy	63	5	4	0
Feel inadequate, without energy	21	2	5	0
Miscellaneous	92	8	29	2
None/have no problems	453	37	-	-
Don't know	76	6	-	-
Missing	59	5	-	-

122. What do you expect will be the best things to happen to you during the next few years?

<u>Best Thing to Happen</u>	<u>(First Mention)</u>		<u>(Second Mention)</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Remain healthy	362	29	29	2
Vacation, travel	95	8	34	3
Improvement of health	63	5	6	1
Retirement	54	4	4	0
Keep on living as at present	75	6	6	1
Improvement in finances	16	1	11	1
Inherit money	22	2	4	0
Watching children and grand-children grow and develop	30	2	14	1
Moving elsewhere	28	2	2	1
Family remaining together and happy	15	1	12	1
Death	17	1	1	0
Miscellaneous	126	10	112	9
Nothing good will happen	16	1	0	0
Don't know	240	20	-	-
Missing	69	6	-	-

123. Is there anything particular about your life which worries you?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	366	30
No	800	65
Don't know	3	0
Missing	59	5

(If yes, questions 123a and 123b were asked.)

123a. Would you care to tell me what it is?

<u>Type of Worry</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Current health problem	86	7	23
Serious physical disability	11	1	3
Fear loss of independence, future disability	29	2	8
Fear decline in health	38	3	10
Health of spouse	29	2	8
Health of other family members	18	2	5
Finances, inflation, bills	32	3	9
Relationship with other family members	24	2	7
Loneliness	17	1	5
Miscellaneous	78	6	21
Missing	4	0	1

123b. Do you think that some other person or group could do something about this problem?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	85	7	23
No	233	19	64
Don't know	9	1	11
Missing	39	3	11

(If yes, question 123c was asked.)

123c. Who would that be, and what could they do?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Social service agency/ local government agency	20	2	24
Nursing or medical care	16	1	19
Legislation or political action	15	1	19
Family, relatives	11	1	13
Miscellaneous	14	1	16
Don't know	7	1	8
Missing	2	0	2

124. How often do you feel lonely: very often, sometimes, or never?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Never	643	52
Sometimes	442	36
Very often	88	7
Don't know	2	0
Missing	53	4

125. Big changes occur from time to time in everyone's life. During the last ten years, what have been the biggest changes in your life, and when did they happen?

<u>Type of Change</u>	<u>(First Mention)</u>		<u>(Second Mention)</u>		<u>(Third Mention)</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Retirement	290	24	71	6	15	1
Death of spouse	190	15	16	1	2	0
Change in health	124	10	64	5	19	2
Death of relative	78	6	61	5	19	2
Change in spouse's health	47	4	50	4	12	1
Change in residence	72	6	21	1	4	0
Children moved away	43	4	24	2	6	1
Child's marriage/divorce	45	4	37	3	13	1
Miscellaneous	119	10	83	7	45	4
None/no change	118	10	-	-	-	-
Don't know	32	3	-	-	-	-
Missing	70	6	-	-	-	-

Observations on the Community

The focus then shifted to enable each person interviewed to proffer his or her observations concerning older people in general. Each respondent could mention as many as four problems which were the "biggest problems" facing people over age 60 in Ramsey County (Question 126). Problems relating to money were mentioned by many: general finances (30%); inflation and the cost of living (19%); difficulty living on a fixed income (7%); and difficulty paying bills (4%). Health problems were noted by 20 percent of the respondents; loneliness by 17 percent; transportation by 14 percent; and safety or fear of crime by nine percent. When asked what they would do, as Mayor, to make their community a better place for people over age 60 to live, 23 percent said they would reduce crime or increase safety (Question 127). Others mentioned: cutting taxes (9%); better street maintenance (4%); help with housing problems (5%); and better mass transportation (4%).

In Question 117, respondents were asked to select a name for people of their own age group. (Three examples were provided: "senior citizens," "the elderly," and "oldsters.") Sixty-three percent considered "senior citizens" most appropriate. No other single label had much popularity, with the exception of "the elderly," which four percent of the respondents selected. Ten percent of the respondents felt that no name is necessary for people of their age group.

Table 3-19

OBSERVATIONS ON THE COMMUNITY: INTERVIEW ITEMS 126-127, 117

126. What do you think are the biggest problems facing people over age 60 in Ramsey County?

Type of Problem	<u>(First Mention)</u>		<u>(Second Mention)</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
General finances	263	21	88	7
Inflation, cost of living	137	11	66	5
Difficulty living on fixed income	48	4	27	2
Health problems	112	9	102	8
Difficulty paying bills	13	1	30	2
Inability to obtain quality medical care	31	3	27	2
Loneliness	105	9	61	5
Transportation	60	5	56	5
Safety/fear of crime	48	4	36	3
Finding satisfying activities	28	2	28	2
Miscellaneous	147	12	118	10
Don't know	148	12	-	-
Missing	88	7	-	-
			<u>(Fourth Mention)</u>	
			<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
General finances	18	2	4	0
Inflation, cost of living	26	2	7	1
Difficulty living on fixed income	11	1	0	0
Health problems	31	3	4	0
Difficulty paying bills	10	1	4	0
Inability to obtain quality medical care	28	2	7	1
Loneliness	28	2	11	1
Transportation	33	3	9	1
Safety/fear of crime	18	1	8	1
Finding satisfying activities	11	1	4	0
Miscellaneous	58	5	21	2
Don't know	-	-	-	-
Missing	-	-	-	-



127. If you were the mayor, what is the first step you would take to make your community a better place for people over age 60 to live?

<u>Action</u>	<u>(First Mention)</u>		<u>(Second Mention)</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Reduce crime/promote safety	216	18	56	5
Cut taxes	96	8	10	1
Provide financial assistance	44	4	42	3
Housing assistance	44	4	9	1
Better street maintenance	37	3	12	1
Improve transportation	32	3	13	1
Change the government	31	3	6	1
Would be no changes	35	3	0	0
More recreational activities	21	2	13	1
Improve general quality of life	23	2	7	1
Miscellaneous	168	14	41	3
No additional mention	0	0	901	73
Don't know	363	30	-	-
Missing	118	10	-	-

117. If you had the job of selecting a name for people of your own age group, what would you choose? For example, would you choose the name senior citizens, the elderly, oldsters, or what?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Senior citizens	773	63
Elderly	50	4
Other	82	7
No name necessary	124	10
Don't know	131	11
Missing	68	6

### Reactions to the Interview

Question 128 provided a means of obtaining names of adult children of aging parents for this study's survey of adult children (reported in Volume III). Forty-four percent of the respondents gave a child's name. Thirty-one percent did not wish to give a name, and 20 percent had no children.

It is pleasing to note that almost two-thirds of the people whom we interviewed (65%) liked taking part in the interview very much (Question 129). Twenty-six percent stated that they liked it a little, and two percent liked it not at all. The vast majority (82%) felt optimistically that surveys can make a difference (Question 130). Only nine percent felt that surveys such as the one in which they had just participated would not make any difference.

Table 3-20

REACTIONS TO THE INTERVIEW: INTERVIEW ITEMS 128-130

128. We would like to interview some younger people, such as the children of people who took part in this study. Would you be willing to give us the name of your children? The child does not have to live in Ramsey County. We can send questions by mail.

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Name given	542	44
Has no children	246	20
No name given	382	31
Missing	58	5

129. How much did you like taking part in this interview? Did you like it very much, a little, or not at all?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Not at all	20	2
A little	323	26
Very much	803	65
OK, it was fine	10	1
Don't know	3	0
Missing	69	6

130. Do you think that surveys like this can help people over age 60, or won't they make any difference?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Can help	1007	82
Won't make difference	104	9
OK, can't harm	4	0
Don't know	42	3
Missing	71	6

### Interviewer's Report

After completing the interview and leaving the respondent's home, each interviewer filled out an "Interviewer Report." The first two items in this report were the respondent's sex and race. Frequencies for these characteristics were discussed in Chapter 2: males (38%); females (62%); whites (95%); blacks (3%); other races (1%).<sup>32</sup> Items 4, 5, and 6 related to the interview proper. Only a small number of respondents (6%) were reported to have had significant difficulty in understanding or responding to the questions (Item 4). Various physical impairments were noted in Item 5, and the frequency of these appears in Table 3-21.

In 22 percent of the reports, interviewers noted that "someone else" was present during the interview, most often (13%) the respondent's husband or wife (Item 6). Caution must be exercised in interpreting this item, however, because some interviewers included people in other rooms as "present" during the interview. Item 6b indicates that for only nine percent of the sample did another person talk with or assist the respondent during the interview.

If the use of alcohol was in any way mentioned or observed during the interview, the interviewer so specified in Item 7. For three percent of the respondents, alcohol was mentioned or observed, and the ways in which this occurred appear in the table.<sup>33</sup> In Item 8, the interviewer recorded whether the respondent cared for anyone who was sick or disabled. Seven percent of the sample were identified as caretakers. Most often (4%) they were caring for a husband or wife.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>In Item 3, the interviewer noted the type of building in which the respondent lived. This information was reported in Table 3-3.

<sup>33</sup>Items 7 and 8 in the Interviewer's Report were not added until after approximately 250 respondents were interviewed.

<sup>34</sup>Other, major studies have also noted the extent to which disabled older persons receive care in their homes from family members (e.g., Shanas, 1979). Maddox and Dellinger (1978) estimated that 70 percent of the services provided to disabled older people are provided by family and friends--an informal, unfunded network of individuals.

Table 3-21

INTERVIEWER'S REPORT: INTERVIEW ITEMS IR1, IR2, IR4-IR8

IR1. Respondent's sex

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Male	466	38
Female	762	62

IR2. Respondent's race

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
White	1164	95
Black	41	3
American Indian	3	0
Spanish-speaking	10	1
Other	2	0
Missing	8	1

IR4. Did the respondent have significant difficulty in understanding or responding to the questions?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	70	6
No	1107	90
Missing	51	4

IR5. Check any of the following which the respondent had:

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
None	1037	84
Blindness	24	2
Deafness	69	6
Missing limbs	5	0
Tremors, shakes	7	1
Speech impediment	15	1
Other	31	3
Missing	40	3

IR6. Was any other person present during the interview?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	265	22
No	902	73
Missing	61	5

(If yes, items 6a and 6b were completed.)

IR6a. Who was that person?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Spouse	157	13	59
Child	39	3	15
Brother/sister	8	1	3
Grandchild	13	1	5
Other relative	8	1	3
Friend	15	1	6
Other	12	1	5
Missing	13	1	5

IRb. Did this person talk with or assist the respondent during the interview?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Yes	110	9	42
No	113	9	43
Missing	42	3	16

IR7. Was the use of alcohol (or an alcohol problem for the respondent, or for a relative of the respondent) mentioned or observed during the interview?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	32	3
No	849	69
Missing	347	28

(If yes, specify)

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Respondent mentioned present or past drinking problem	13	1	41
Family member has drinking problem	7	1	22
Respondent drank at time of interview	7	1	22
Miscellaneous	5	0	16

IR8. Does the respondent take care of any other person who is sick or disabled?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>
Yes	85	7
No	814	66
Missing	329	27

(If yes, question 8a was completed.)

IR8a. Who is that person?

	<u>N</u>	<u>% of Sample</u>	<u>% of Subgroup</u>
Spouse	51	4	60
Mother/father	7	1	8
Sibling	6	1	7
Child	8	1	9
Grandchild	3	0	4
Friend/neighbor	5	0	6
Other	5	0	6

## CHAPTER 4

### AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOURTEEN ADJUSTMENT DOMAINS

#### 1. Introduction

The previous chapter included an item-by-item presentation of the survey of 1,228 Ramsey County residents aged 60 and older. In the present chapter, those results are organized thematically into "domains of adjustment," and then are analyzed in detail in order to: 1) provide an understanding of how older people are adapting within each domain; and 2) learn whether demographic differences in older people tend to be associated with different levels of adaptation. The adjustment domains, as described earlier, constitute facets of the day-to-day experiences of older people. They include: housing, family/social ties, safety, legal, knowledge and use of services, spiritual, economics, transportation, education, employment/volunteer work, recreational activities, health, nutrition, and life satisfaction/happiness.

It should be recalled that most of the survey questions were developed for the specific purpose of gathering information on one or another of the 14 domains. However, items not designed intentionally as part of one domain often produce information relevant to understanding that domain. For example, Questions 27 to 35 were intuitively developed to examine the domain of transportation. Yet Question 96a, "What keeps you from getting to the dentist as often as you would like?" often reveals transportation problems. In this chapter, all information judged to be relevant to a particular domain is culled from throughout the interview for the discussion of that domain.

#### The Data Presentation in this Chapter

The data tables in this chapter have been organized to feature three basic information elements: a) composite index scores; b) a standard set of demographic attributes by which index scores are partitioned and examined and c) the use of tests of statistical significance. In addition, the data tables have a fourth characteristic: d) the exclusion of missing data from the calculation of statistics.

a) Composite index scores. For many of the domains, the responses to several survey questions are summed in order to create one or more index scores for respondents. For example, a number of survey questions offered respondents the opportunity to indicate whether transportation problems impede their access

to places, activities, or services. Some of these questions are combined to form a Transportation Problems Index, so that the greater the number of one's problems due to transportation, the higher the score on the Transportation Problems Index. In similar fashion, sets of questions have been combined to form, for example, a Health Problems Index, and Experience with Crime Index, and other indices which appear in this chapter. All of the index scores of the aging persons interviewed have been transformed mathematically to range from 0 to 10. In the case of the Transportation Problems Index, therefore, a score of "0" indicates the absence of reported transportation problems. A score of "8" to "10" indicates a high degree of such problems.<sup>1</sup> Each time that an index is introduced in this chapter, its component items are listed in a table, and the distribution of transformed scores on that index for the total sample is displayed.

Not every survey item designed to elicit information within a domain is included in the index (or indices) constructed for that domain. A review of the steps used to construct the indices makes clear why only certain items are included. First, items to be included in an index had to bear some apparently logical relationship (face validity) to the index. In the case of the Transportation Problems Index, for example, survey items were considered which were expected to reveal transportation problems. A question asking respondents their most frequent mode of transportation would not be included (even though it is part of the transportation domain) because it does not point directly to transportation problems. Second, items considered for an index were retained in the index only if their being asked within the survey was not dependent upon a response to an item which forms part of another index.<sup>2</sup> Finally, items under consideration for inclusion in an index were analyzed for their statistical relationship to the index being constructed. Those items with inadequate statistical properties were not included in the index.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Note that a score of "8" does not imply that a respondent mentioned eight transportation-related problems. It implies, rather, a greater amount of transportation-related difficulty than a score of "7" or less.

<sup>2</sup>For example, a question asked as a follow-up to a question which is part of the Health Problems Index could not become part of any index other than the Health Problems Index.

<sup>3</sup>Readers interested in the item-analysis procedures used in this step should consult with project staff.