

MY JOURNEY TO DEVELOP AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO UNPLANNED
PREGNANCY

A Synthesis Project Presented

By

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Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, University of Massachusetts Boston,
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May 2011

Critical and Creative Thinking Program

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ABSTRACT

MY JOURNEY TO DEVELOP AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO UNPLANNED PREGNANCY

May 2011

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Directed by Professor Peter Taylor and Associate Professor Arthur Millman

This paper is my personal journey in developing the non-profit Pennies for Pause that addresses the issue of unplanned pregnancy in the 18-29 populations through the use of incentives, social media, long-acting reversible contraception and the development of critical and creative thinking skills. The paper begins with an insight into my family, how my own thinking skills developed informally throughout my life, and how my personal experiences lead to the development of the 501 (c)(3) organization Pennies for Pause. It also provides insight into my casual observations that I used to create theories, which I then researched, S.C.A.M.P.E.R.E.D, and then synthesized into the framework of the organization. The most important observations I made, and therefore the pivotal force behind the development of Pennies for Pause, are, the apparent disconnect between contraception and lifestyle, the use of technology in community building, and the marketing of long-acting reversible contraception. Instead of addressing contraception as a lifestyle commitment, the current model seems to be cemented in a 1960s institutional approach to contraceptive education. In this paper you will see how I have

developed a new model to address unplanned pregnancy by using the current methods of the more popular non-profit organizations and tailored them to appeal to the 18-29 populations.

My approach to unplanned pregnancy also addresses the issue of abortion by advocating for the more effective and invasive methods of long-acting reversible contraception. I also explain how my experience as an online student in a cohort group encouraged me to design a program that uses modern technology and community building along with distribution of incentives in the form of material rewards to hopefully modify behavior.

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I would also like to thank my grandparents for my ability to have fun while watching my pennies and using my available resources.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE SEEDS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

I have never believed that I am an exceptionally intelligent person but I have always believed that I am the recipient of either creative genes or extraordinary life instructors. I was the first child and first granddaughter born into a family with varied degrees of creativity (Davis 1994. Pp.94). To not be a good craftsman, cook, seamstress or the mastermind of some worthy community project would have raised a few eyebrows. My family is big, boisterous, and loves to have fun. My grandparents were resourceful, innovative and constantly challenging their own personal definition of achievement. Being raised in poverty in a rural area of the country, my grandparents demonstrated their creativity by placing a strong emphasis on the reuse and repurpose of everyday items by molding them into new and usable products.

My parents also possess traits of creativity. My mother has enormous drive and my father loves to brainstorm. In my hometown, my mother is the person who gets things done; she is tough, decisive and unrelenting in accomplishing her goals and because of the trust she has earned, my mother is currently the three-term mayor of my hometown. My father, on the other hand, is a dreamer. He designs, he explores, he analyzes and he collaborates, all from the comfort of his gentleman's farm. Growing up I frequently heard "*I bet a guy could*" and he then would fill in the statement with his latest idea. Due to this wonderful blend of genetics and my own life experiences I have never questioned my ability to make change in the world. For me working for change is my passion, my hobby, and my lifestyle.

Like many children growing up I had enormous concern for animals, people living in poverty, and sick kids. But as many adolescents mature and move into an adult understanding of

personal limitations they sometimes begin to believe that large scale change is impossible or so intertwined with other issues that simply removing the obstacles makes the process far too difficult and therefore, insurmountable. Since I was raised to think, design, and implement strategies for small-scale change I never adopted the pessimistic, or some may say the realistic, idea that I am not capable of making a difference and through the years I have been either the recipient of great support for my endeavors or I have experienced criticism by those who prefer traditional methods.

In my twenty-five years in the professional world I learned to protect my visionary process long enough for it to transition into the development stage where the likelihood of it being either embraced or refined by a community of like-minded contributors is typically greater. This instinct was primarily guided by two factors that were developed from my survival instinct. First, my family was more pragmatic than I was growing up. My ideas were concerned not only with function but also the aesthetics of a project. Being part of a family who believed that aesthetics were not a natural extension of function and quality, my creative vision took a lot of criticism. Second, was the recession of the 1970s. It was during this time I learned to negotiate an increasing amount of hardship as my family lost their jobs, my rural community became stagnate, and my teen years became increasingly difficult.

Having an independent spirit and an attraction to risky behavior, I became a mother at the age of sixteen. Staying true to this spirit at the age of seventeen, I put my baby in a backpack and left for California where I picked apricots with migrant workers. It was during this time that I polished my hobby of connecting dots and searching for patterns to bring complementary, yet traditionally unrelated elements together to create theories, strategies, and solutions for my own personal problems. As a teen mother I needed these skills as a means to avoid the well-known

pitfalls that most often adversely impact the lives of teen moms. Surprisingly, instead of pitfalls, as I grew older I managed to weave together a life full of unexpected rewards. I began to believe that by adopting strong thinking skills most people are also capable of designing their own destiny. As I worked in marketing and sales this “can-do” attitude permeated my professional persona and was most likely the catalyst that supported my transition from a teen mom into businesswoman.

In 2008, uncertain of where I wanted to begin the second chapter of my life, I enrolled in the graduate program in Political Strategy at The George Washington University’s School of Political Management. However, before I began, I stumbled across the Critical and Creative Thinking certificate program at the University of Massachusetts Boston. I automatically experienced a connection to the Critical and Creative Thinking program. I felt the program was a natural extension of my skills; a perfect fit for my next chapter and an obvious choice for a mid-life career change for someone interested in being a change maker. Growing up the granddaughter of a union organizer I was raised to support working class values. As a young child I marched in union parades and played under the table as my grandfather dined with United States Senators. I have always believed that the power of a passionate grassroots effort can upend an orchestrated political strategy. Instead of investing in coordinating political plot I decided to invest in critical thought. As I contemplated my choices I began to understand that political strategy wouldn’t accomplish what I wanted to achieve. I didn’t want to learn how to manipulate people – I wanted to be a part of a synergetic process. The Critical and Creative Thinking program was the opportunity to see how the cognitive process works learning both the formal process while polishing up my inherent skills and shaping them into a practice that could be used regardless of occupation, situation, or mission.

The 2008 presidential election brought the opportunity for our country to readdress how we approach social issues and I began to think that once again there was a place for innovative ideas as the country began a metamorphosis. This encouraged me to reflect on some of my earlier thoughts to understand if any of these ideas could be used as the framework for a mid-career change. Recognizing that the American people sent a man to the White House with an unprecedented amount of five-dollar donations it was evident that the traditional methods of networking were being challenged by technology and the ability to distribute information to the masses was becoming easier and more widely accepted with an increased use of social media networking. It was also at this time that the recession of 2008 was beginning to jeopardize the status quo and it became increasingly clear that Americans would need to adopt new ways of thinking and doing business as the country began to struggle. In an effort to create solutions for nagging social issues I began trying to combine my love of economics, politics, and popular culture together hoping to create a technique that blended different yet compelling components into the process of social change.

Studies show that creativity can be fostered within an environment that supports and encourages the use of thinking skills or as Csíkszentmihályi (1996, 2) explains, *it is easier to enhance creativity by changing the conditions of the environment than by trying to make people think more creatively*. As a child growing up the conditions of my environment were conducive to creative thought. Creating was a lifestyle that was supported through lively kitchen table discussions on the best way to build the next product, formulate a recipe or design a plan. Although this in itself is no guarantee that I would grow up to think creatively, it was an environment, that supported change through the use of thinking skills and innovative solutions.

CHAPTER TWO

UNPLANNED PREGNANCY AND THE NEED FOR CHANGE

In 2003, my husband and I purchased a home in a historic district located in the inner city of St. Louis. One evening we stopped to get gas at a nearby station. As I sat in the passenger's seat of the car I noticed a lady walking toward my window. She looked to be over 60 years old, ragged clothes, no teeth, and was obviously under the influence of some substance. She stumbled as she made her way closer to the car and I could see that she was very close to giving birth. She tapped on the window and asked for money to buy beer but I denied her request so she begged for a few minutes and then stumbled away.

Moving to the city of St. Louis from a rural community was an eye opener. The city of St. Louis had the highest crime rate in the country and the unrelenting feeling of raw despair was emotionally overwhelming as I watched babies in diapers roam the streets, children with obvious signs of neglect rang my doorbell for food, and violent crimes within blocks of my home were a common occurrence. In an effort to maintain my sanity I began volunteering for children's charities. I tutored public school kids, I became a CASA guardian ad litem (court appointed special advocate for children), I helped plant community gardens, and I began to notice a common thread among community volunteers; although everyone was emotionally exhausted, they loved being a small component of a greater mission to create change. I also began noticing a pattern in the operation of nonprofit organizations. In my opinion many were so busy addressing the repercussions or the symptoms of the larger problem that there was little energy or resources left to eliminate the root of the problem. I began to ask myself a series of questions to determine the root of the social problems facing the inner city of St. Louis. My immediate

reaction was typical. I wanted to address the parenting skills of the inner city families and the needs of the neglected children. Although both are extremely important, this approach focuses directly on the repercussions and not the root of the issue.

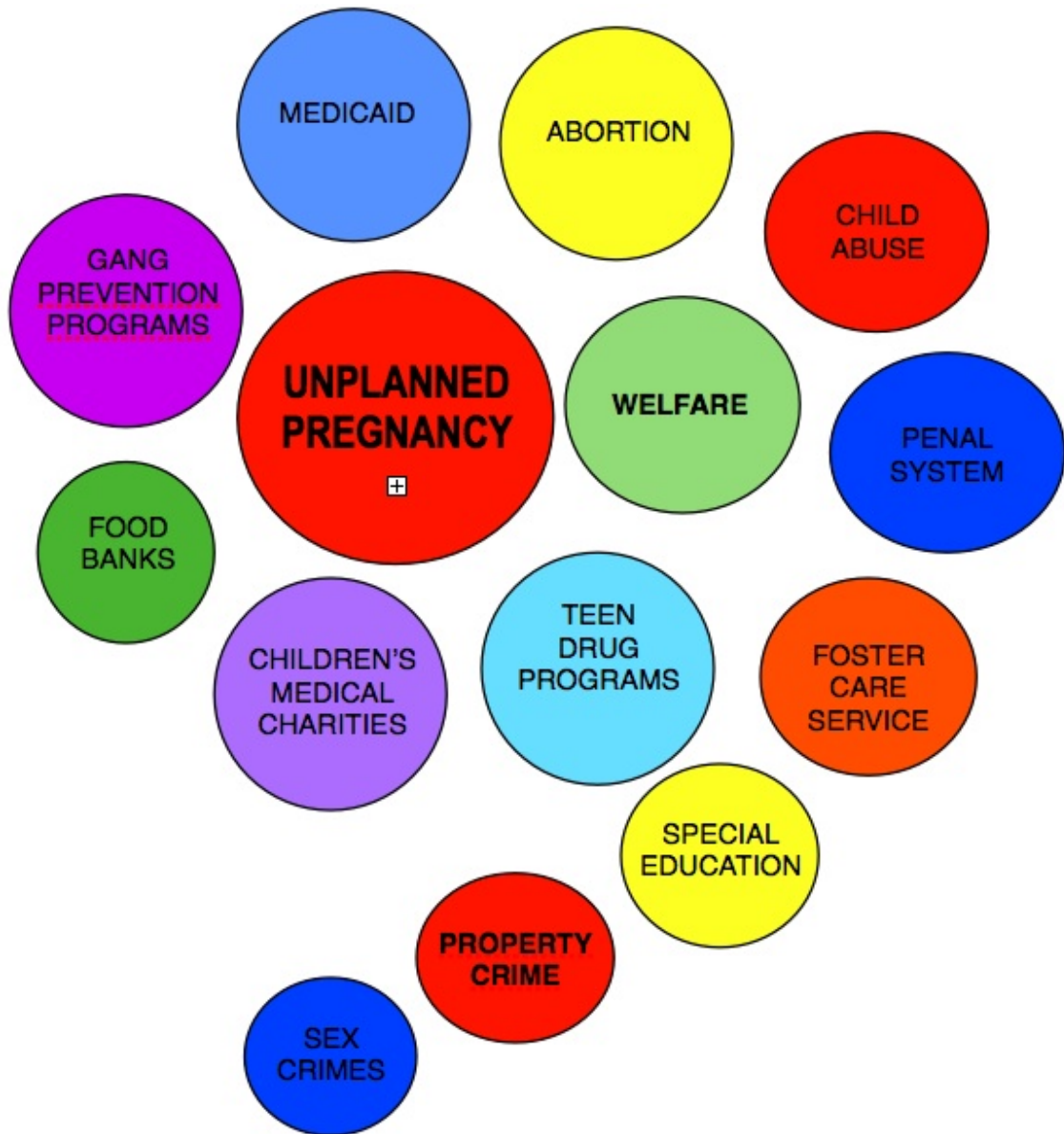
According to a Princeton University study *fragile families* are families who are not married at the time of child bearing. They are typically teens or early young adults who are undereducated and have little dependable income (Princeton, 2009). In my opinion these fragile families are the root of our social issues such as poverty, child abuse/neglect, drug/alcohol dependence, and incarceration. I began researching the amount of money taxpayers contribute to support issues relating to repercussions of unplanned pregnancy and found that the amount of money spent yearly is significant. After my initial research it became apparent from an economic standpoint that the United States should shift how these social issues are addressed in order to redirect these funds to other necessities such as education, funding for the current children's protective services programs, and other related programs supporting child development.

Throughout the years I created a mental library of inspirations and collected fragments of information that I believed would someday be of value. I began to pull these snippets together as I started to make a connection between this data and unplanned pregnancy. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs states that in human development it is difficult for one to achieve the more advanced or upper levels of development which include love, belongingness, affection, self-esteem and finally the ultimate, self-actualization, unless the lower basic needs of water, food, shelter, and safety have been met (Maslow 1987). It is my belief that one of the reasons unplanned pregnancies occurs is the safety needs have not been met. Especially among more vulnerable populations, there is an inability to reach beyond the lower levels of human development. I believe it is exhausting for these young women to live a life of stress and routinely taking birth

control pills, as prescribed, is simply one more hardship that can be easily forgotten (Nauert 2010).

Statistics show the effectiveness of the birth control pill is 92-99% when taken as prescribed but the effectiveness of the birth control when adjusted for average use, which means forgotten pills, drug interactions etc. is approximately 82-85%. In my opinion these odds of pregnancy are far too high for women living in stressful living conditions. An alternative to the birth control pill, and my own personal contraception of choice, is the long-acting reversible contraceptive (LARC) methods. These forms of contraception come in a variety of forms and some such as the intrauterine device (IUD) are perfectly designed for women who easily forget to take their contraception. The effectiveness of the LARCs is approximately 98-99.9% and they can last between 3 months and 10 years (Planned Parenthood 2011). Due to the invasive design of an LARC these methods must be inserted and removed by a healthcare provider. This forced me to ask a basic question: Wouldn't the rate of effectiveness and the unforgettable factor make these methods much better suited for women who are forgetful or living in stressful living conditions?

FIGURE 1. THE REPERCUSSIONS OF UNPLANNED PREGNANCY The diagram below is an example of how the repercussions of unplanned pregnancy can be a burden on the non-profit sector.



Throughout the years Oprah Winfrey inspired me for a number of reasons but a remark she has made on several occasions made a lasting impression. Quoting Maya Angelou, Oprah has said on several occasions, *It's not about what you do for people, it's about how you make people feel about themselves.* One woman explained on an Oprah episode that when she was going through a divorce, had limited funds, and was feeling hopeless, she purchased a pair of Oprah's high- heels at a charity auction because she wanted to stand in Oprah's shoes to *feel* the

success. Second, Oprah's promotional giveaways have more than proven that not only does everyone love a free gift but also the media loves to report the giveaways. In 2003, I began sorting through household items my husband and I no longer needed. I decided that instead of taking the items to Goodwill I would follow Oprah's model and put them on the curb in front of our house beside the bus stop with the sign "FREE" for my inner city neighbors. For approximately a week I watched as people gathered and pillaged through the boxes and at the end of the evening the boxes were always empty. I began asking myself how I might recreate Oprah's intimacy with her audience in a nonprofit setting.

Around 2005 I read a *People Magazine* article on the nonprofit organization C.R.A.C.K (Kids Require a Caring Community), since renamed Project Prevention. The mission of the organization is to prevent women suffering from drug and alcohol abuse from becoming pregnant and giving birth to drug addicted babies. C.R.A.C.K is a controversial program. First, it pays drug addicts \$200 - \$300 to be permanently sterilized. Second, it has been compared to eugenics for allegedly targeting poor women of African American and Latina descent through the use of billboards advertising in African American and Hispanic neighborhoods. After years of continued protest regarding C.R.A.C.K.'s use of permanent sterilization methods they later modified their program to include the inter-uterine device (I.U.D.) a long-time reversible contraceptive method (Project Prevention 2011). After researching C.R.A.C.K further I began to ask myself how this idea could be modified so it was less controversial and more widely accepted.

Although *The End of Poverty* illustrates the hardship in under-developed countries, one of the messages that I recognized as relevant to the development of my mission was that geographic location plays a key role in the proliferation of poverty (Sachs 2005, 57-63). When I

expand this thought to include women living in both the inner city and rural areas of the United States I noticed there was a common thread in accessibility. Obviously the rural areas have more of a geographic disadvantage but the inner city also suffers from issues with accessibility. This encouraged me to rethink how accessible regular contraception is for inner city women. Studies show that people in lower income brackets typically utilize healthcare services less frequently than those in higher socioeconomic groups. How does regular accessibility fit into the issue of unplanned pregnancy in the United States? It is my belief that the fewer contraceptive visits the better.

Richard Florida is a professor at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, a senior editor at *The Atlantic*, and the author of “The Rise of the Creative Class” (Florida 2002). Florida believes that in order to create an open, dynamic, personal and professional synergy every community needs a “creative class.” This class of creative people is composed of technology workers, artists, musicians, lesbians and gays, and craftspeople or what Florida refers to as “high bohemians.” Florida believes that combined these people provide a balance of artistic and creative components that create an aesthetically pleasing community which attracts higher wage earners, and therefore a healthy economy. Although Florida’s data have been questioned, I understood the creative composition he referenced in his book because I, too, feel this same energy when visiting Seattle or Chicago. *As my focus groups and interviews reveal, members of this class strongly favor organizations and environments in which they feel that anyone can fit in and can get ahead* (Florida 2002, 78-80). For me, Florida’s theory is interpreted as; creativity, aesthetics, function, and human connection are important when developing a community, or even an organization. In order to create a communal relationship members need to feel not only accepted – but also valued.

Divergent thinking requires us to think outside of our normal confines but it wasn't until I read the Malcolm Gladwell books and *Freakonomics* (Dubner & Leavitt 2005) that made it an accepted practice to think differently that I began to quietly experiment with my own personal theories. I embraced the way the authors blended together social research, economics, and popular culture in a story telling narrative that appealed to a populist audience. Growing up I hesitated to share my ideas or thoughts for fear of being ridiculed. My ideas were considered eccentric and my family didn't quite understand the unusual connections I typically made. It wasn't until I read *The Tipping Point* (Gladwell 2002) and *Freakonomics* that I began to feel vindicated. These books validated my way of thinking while providing the courage to play with my own thoughts and analyze my own cognitive process. I began to understand that I could play with popular culture and research to create my own theories. It helped me to see that blending untraditional, yet complementary elements together could provide an entertaining platform for creating change.

Granovetter's Theory of Weak Ties was assigned reading during an undergraduate Community Building course. Based upon a study on how people obtained their jobs Granovetter's theory states that the number of connecting human impressions is greater among people with weak ties because stronger ties typically create more overlap impressions, therefore, the flow of information is disrupted (Granovetter 1973). At the time of the assigned reading Facebook and other social networking sites were relatively new and had yet to create the following that they have in 2011. As someone who frequently relocates for professional reasons online communication had become my primary source of interaction. Over the years I had grown comfortable with online groups, virtual learning environments, and maintaining relationships via

electronic exchange. I realized that it was easier to find likeminded people in a new community if I began my search online. I began to question how this networking theory could be used to initiate and engage social change.

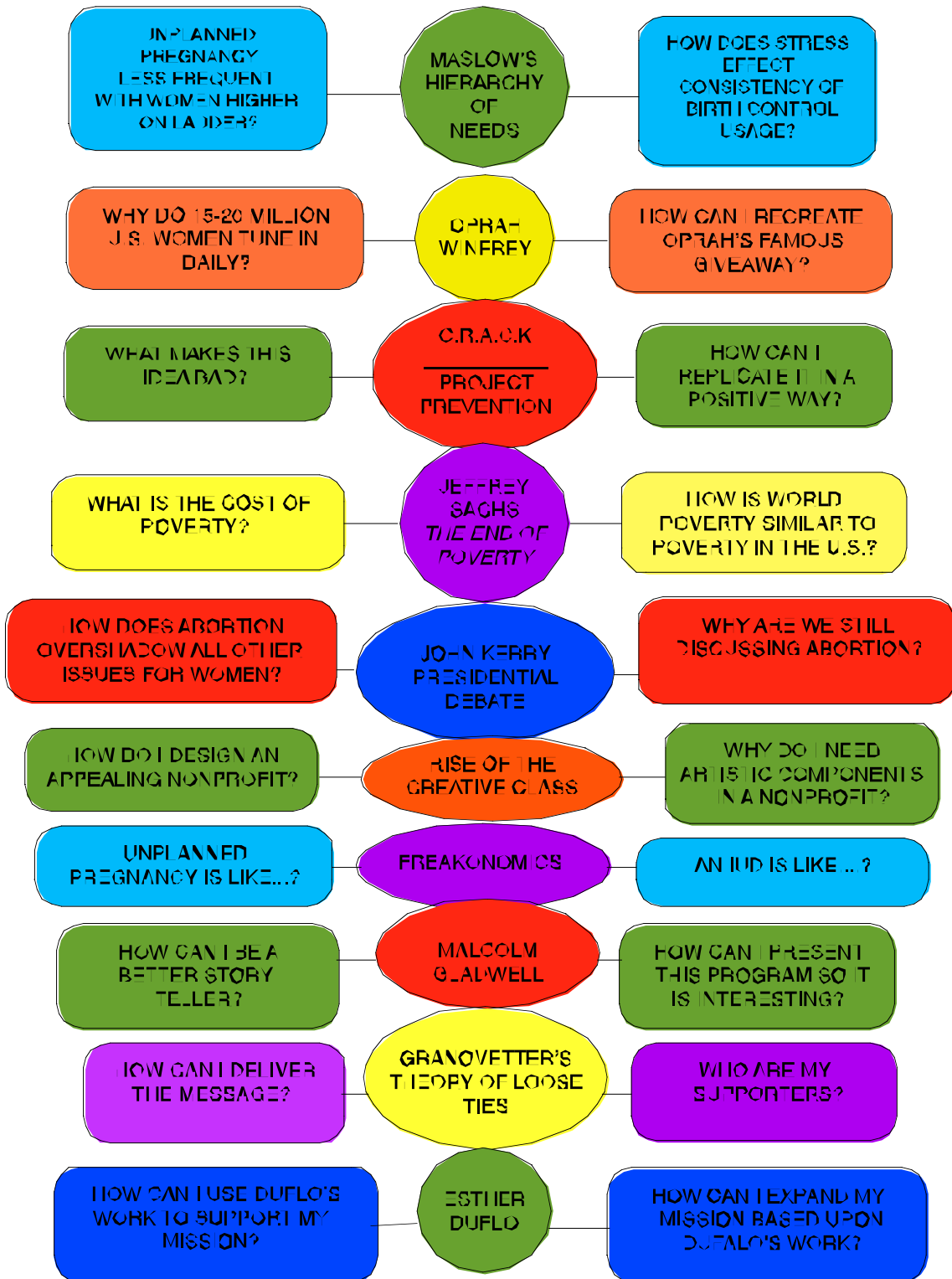
During the 2004 presidential election, John Kerry and President George W. Bush met on the campus of Washington University in St. Louis. I watched the local news coverage of the event as CNN interviewed Senator Kerry on campus. For the duration of the interview as Senator Kerry spoke a man hovered a sign over the senator's head that read "Baby Killer." I kept thinking throughout the extended interview that someone would remove the sign but it never happened. What angered me most was that at this pivotal time with so much going on in the world, as a female, I was reduced to defending my uterus. I remember thinking that as long as abortion is an issue in American politics I will be forced, in the public arena, to defend a pro-choice stance instead of discussing economic, environmental, or other social issues. It was at this moment that I became even more serious about creating a program that addressed unplanned pregnancy.

Professor Esther Duflo of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology was highlighted in the December 2008 *Economist* article, "International Bright Young Things" for her research in India studying the effect of incentives in behavior modification (Dettemer 2008). Dufalo and a colleague were working to determine if offering a small bag of beans to mothers living in poverty would increase their willingness to vaccinate their children. The results showed that incentives worked within the Duflo vaccination study and she has gone on to conducted a number of other studies that focus on the use of incentives in addressing poverty in developing countries (Duflo 2004-2007). Since 2002 Duflo has become known as the visionary behind field experiments in the discovery of causal relationships in economics. What I admire about Duflo's

work is her extensive use of field experiments, which, for me, represent a far more authentic approach to understanding how to create sustainable change.

FIGURE 2: MY INSPIRATIONAL PROCESS Mind mapping and my reflective process.

How do I use these components to create change?



CHAPTER THREE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PENNIES FOR PAUSE

In the spring of 2009 Creative Thinking was my first course in the CCT program at the University of Massachusetts Boston. I recognized that many of the exercises within the course work were skill sets I had used most my life but didn't realize they were part of a formal process. Within the course I learned the terms, the techniques, the science, and the history of creative thinking. Most importantly I learned that divergent thinking is necessary for the production of ideas, solutions, and invention. Until this point I believed that unconventional thinking was considered eccentric and to be taken seriously I needed to train myself to think more traditionally. This new information gave me the courage to take my concepts that had been filed away for years and begin to play with them. In an effort to see if any of them could be part of my mid-career change I began using the tools learned within the course to process these ideas in new and different ways.

It was in December 2008, immediately prior to my Creative Thinking course, that I read the article "International Bright Young Things" in the *Economist*, which highlighted Esther Duflo's work on the use of incentives to address poverty in India. During the semester I learned the different methods of creative processing and idea generating, how imagery and analogical thinking allow us to see things in a new light, and divergent and convergent thinking free the mind to think big, while whittling the grandiose into something more critically composed. I learned that humor plays a large role in thinking creatively as we allow ourselves the freedom to produce innovative approaches. I was also introduced to the *PBS* series "The New Heroes" which presented the work of change-makers worldwide. Through the "New Heroes" videos I

was able to understand that it is possible for everyday people to make a difference in the world through small steps that produce big footprints (PBS 2005).

In the last two weeks of the Creative Thinking course I struggled to embrace my chosen topic *Roadside Art on Route 66* when all of a sudden I was struck with this lightening bolt of inspiration that came in the form of the *Guns N' Roses* song "Sweet Child O' Mine" (Clink 1988). Immediately an avalanche of stored information began tumbling in my brain. Instantaneously I determined that my final project would be the development of a nonprofit organization with the mission of addressing unplanned pregnancy through the use of an incentive based program encouraging the use of long-acting reversible contraception (LARC). The organization was nameless until I sat in a movie theater a week later watching preview clips when one actor screamed to another, "Pause. Pause man, and think about what you've done!" The price of the failure to think, the failure to plan – this was exactly the message I wanted to send. Pause. Think. Plan. Live. And *Pennies for Pause* was born.

In my opinion in order to ensure that every woman has the opportunity to create a life plan we need to ensure that every child is a planned child. I believe the mission of *Pennies for Pause* is to encourage the use of contraception that is reliable, unforgettable, and long acting. As I look back on the journey of this mission I recognize the creative process that began in 2003.

According to The Wallas Model of creative processing there are four steps:

1. Preparation, exploring and clarifying the issue at hand to discover the "real" problem;
2. Incubation, understanding the importance of reflecting on the situation to provide a clear perspective;
3. Illumination, the Aha! moment of clarity providing a new combinations and a fresh outlook;
4. Verification, which provides assurance that the idea is plausible, and, therefore,

has the potential to be executed (Stockmyer & Williams 1987). As I began sorting through my avalanche of stored information I started to formally process my inspirations. Using the Analogical Method of Creative Processing I began my line of questioning to understand how I could expand this idea into a legitimate program that addressed unplanned pregnancy (Changing Minds 2011). I then began to S.C.A.M.P.E.R to generate ideas (Fig. 3) *Incentivizing women to use LARCs is like? Oprah's Big Giveaway. What does Oprah create? – A feel good moment. How might I recreate Oprah's intimacy with her audience in a nonprofit setting?*

To process the verification portion of the Wallas Model I decided to approach Ms. Claudia Stravato, the executive director of the Texas Panhandle Family Planning and Health Centers (formerly Planned Parenthood) who, to my surprise, had been chosen as a Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leader. I wanted to determine if she believed the idea of developing an organization using donated merchandise as incentives to encourage the use of LARCs had merit. I was elated to find that not only did Ms. Stravato believe my idea was fresh and innovative, but after further discussion with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, she was given their approval to provide a one hundred thousand dollar grant to fund Pennies for Pause as soon as the pending 501(C)(3) status was complete.

Pennies for Pause was originally designed to address teen pregnancy for two reasons. Familiarity, I had been a teen mother and the idea was carried over from my experience in the inner city of St. Louis. However, soon after the Pennies for Pause presentation in Creative Thinking was complete I began to doubt the effectiveness of this model. Living in Texas I became more aware of the controversy and the restrictive legislation for programs addressing sex education and contraception for teens. So prior to my meeting with Ms. Stravato I had determined that the best way to address unplanned pregnancy was to target the 18-29 population

since they have the highest rates of unplanned pregnancy and they can choose an LARC method of contraception without parental consent (The National Campaign 2011). It is my belief that this group also has the greatest influence regarding fashion, music and popular culture. In my mind, it was a *trickle down theory*. If I target the older, legal population, my message will trickle down to teens. Although, to me this seemed logical, in a generational divide, members of the Amarillo, Texas family planning community did not embrace this new approach for reasons related, but not limited to, the absence of government funding and skepticism of the LARCs. The prevention of teen pregnancy has historically been a mission of the United States federal government, and therefore, has funded community programs addressing this issue. If community healthcare centers do not target the teen population, they will lose significant funding. According to a few older women's rights activist, another issue with the Pennies for Pause concept is the I.U.D. These ladies remember the era of 1980's recall of the Dalkon Shield, one of the first I.U.Ds on the market, whereas the younger generation does not. Some also feel that incentivizing women to choose invasive contraception methods is reminiscent of compulsory sterilizations that began in the United States in 1907 and spread across the world before the practice ended in Oregon in 1981. However, I believed the incentives and the LARCs would make Pennies for Pause unique and, hopefully, effective. Due to this strong belief I relinquished my input in the Robert Wood Johnson research project *It's Just Your Future* based on concept of Pennies for Pause and courteously agreed not to launch Pennies for Pause until after summer 2011.

In retrospect, the original Pennies for Pause model lacked substance. In an effort to make it more easily implemented I used the *K.I.S.S* Method (Keep It Simple Stupid) in the first design process. Although I believe it was a good start, the idea of incentivizing women to take birth control has been viewed by some as entrapment. Therefore, I wanted to give the program more

substance than a party bus passing out gift bags to women who have committed to an LARC. I needed to illustrate that incentives are not a method of coercion but have been used in a variety of studies in the United States to modify behavior such as The Minnesota Department of Health's tuberculosis treatment program where patients are provided small incentives to take their medicine as prescribed (Minnesota Department of Health, 2011). As I continued to question the direction I wanted to take the organization, I recalled my experience as an online undergraduate student and the bond that is created by cohort groups. Regardless of geographical locale, cohorts can create a synergy when the group is working toward a shared goal. It is this synergy that I wanted to recreate for Pennies for Pause. At this point I began a line of questioning: *How is Pennies for Pause similar to Jeffrey Sachs theory of poverty in underdeveloped communities? What role does geographic isolation or sociocultural theory play in the consistent use of contraception? Could we narrow this divide with the use of peer support via online social networking?* For example, if I could recreate an integrated online community comprised of young adults with risky behavior who are geographically isolated or lack social skills with well-adjusted young adults would this population mix encourage the development of complex thinking skills as James Coleman's historic "Equality of Educational Opportunity" study (John Hopkins 1966) or the more recent "Housing Policy is School Policy" study showing interaction produces positive results? (Schwartz 2010)

How is Richard Florida's theory of "High Bohemians" in community building like an organization addressing unplanned pregnancy? Just like a planned community the organization also needs to be appealing to the public. People should feel a sense of belonging and feel the atmosphere of possibility. How might I do this? Design the organization like Richard would plan a community. Make it welcoming, aesthetically pleasing and highly functional. Is it enough to

simply address the issue of unplanned pregnancy? Once we have encouraged the use of an LARC then what happens to the lives of the participants? It seems even more tragic for someone to make the responsible commitment of an LARC and not have a support system for further personal development. I then decided to create a Maslow-style pyramid of achievement to reward those who wish to continue up the ladder of personal development. By modifying the Komen model of cause marketing, I created a way for companies to sponsor the organization by donating merchandise. As the participants work up the ladder of achievement they are rewarded with points that can be used to purchase the donated items.

After analyzing the current method of marketing contraception to young women, I decided we could serve a larger audience by creating an online collaborative network, accessible through a smartphone or website. The program can then reach young people in the far corners of the world through a more immediate technology delivery. We no longer have to wait for participants to want to be educated on contraceptive use. Through the use of push technology, which is the ability to send out messages without participants requesting the information, we can engage even the most reluctant procrastinators to participate. We now can reach those who are geographically isolated, those who lack familial support, and those who have great potential and drive but lack the connections or the where-with-all to bring it together. *Can Pennies for Pause be a supportive concierge of personal development services while simultaneously encouraging the use of strong thinking skills?* As Mihaly suggests, *it is easier to change environments than to teach thinking skills* (Csíkszentmihályi 1996, 2).

FIGURE 3: S.C.A.M.P.E.R (Mindjet Blog 2011) a creative thinking tool used in idea generating.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE PRESENTATION

The following slides were incorporated into Synthesis presentation that was presented on May 3, 2011 at the University of Massachusetts Boston as my final presentation. A disc of the presentation, which includes the musical accompaniment, is attached to this paper. When I began working on the presentation I found it very comfortable to use images and music to convey the story behind the development of Pennies for Pause. I realized as I continued working on the presentation that this story-telling narrative is exactly what I wanted to use within my organization. Throughout the years, many non-profit organizations have used this method of emotional attachment to attract monetary donations. It is my goal to use this method to attract participants, along with donors when possible, by tapping into their personal aspirations. The Susan Komen Race for the Cure, very appropriately, uses this emotional bonding to further their mission of finding a cure. I intend to use the same strategy to further the mission of reducing unplanned pregnancy through the achievement of personal goals and aspirations in edutainment (education plus entertainment) approach.

FIGURE 4: THE PRESENTATION (pp. 22-36)

My Journey to Develop an Innovative Approach to Unplanned Pregnancy

Gina Dillon Podolsky
Critical & Creative Thinking
The University of Massachusetts Boston
Spring 2011



Statistically, 50% of you were UNPLANNED Babies

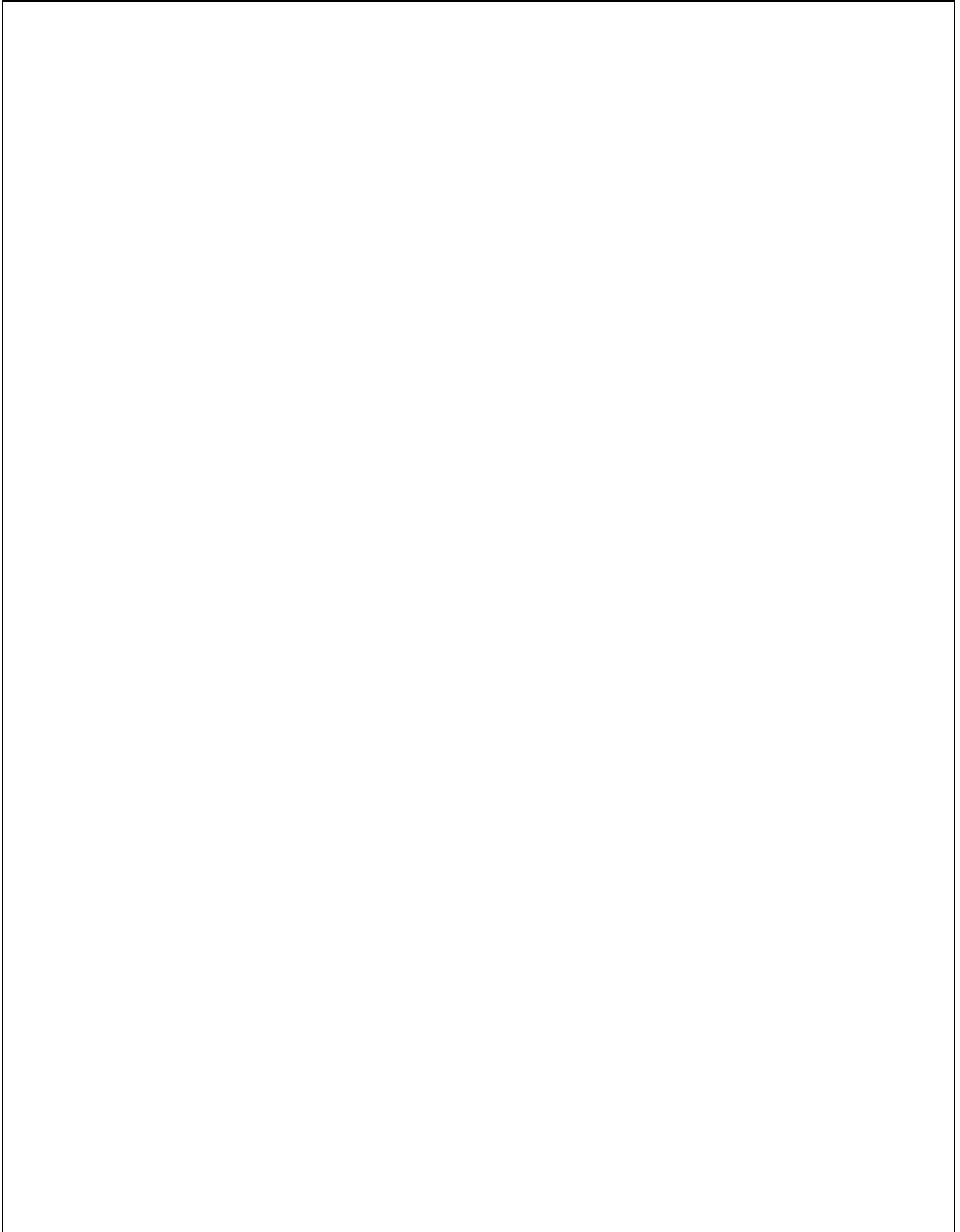


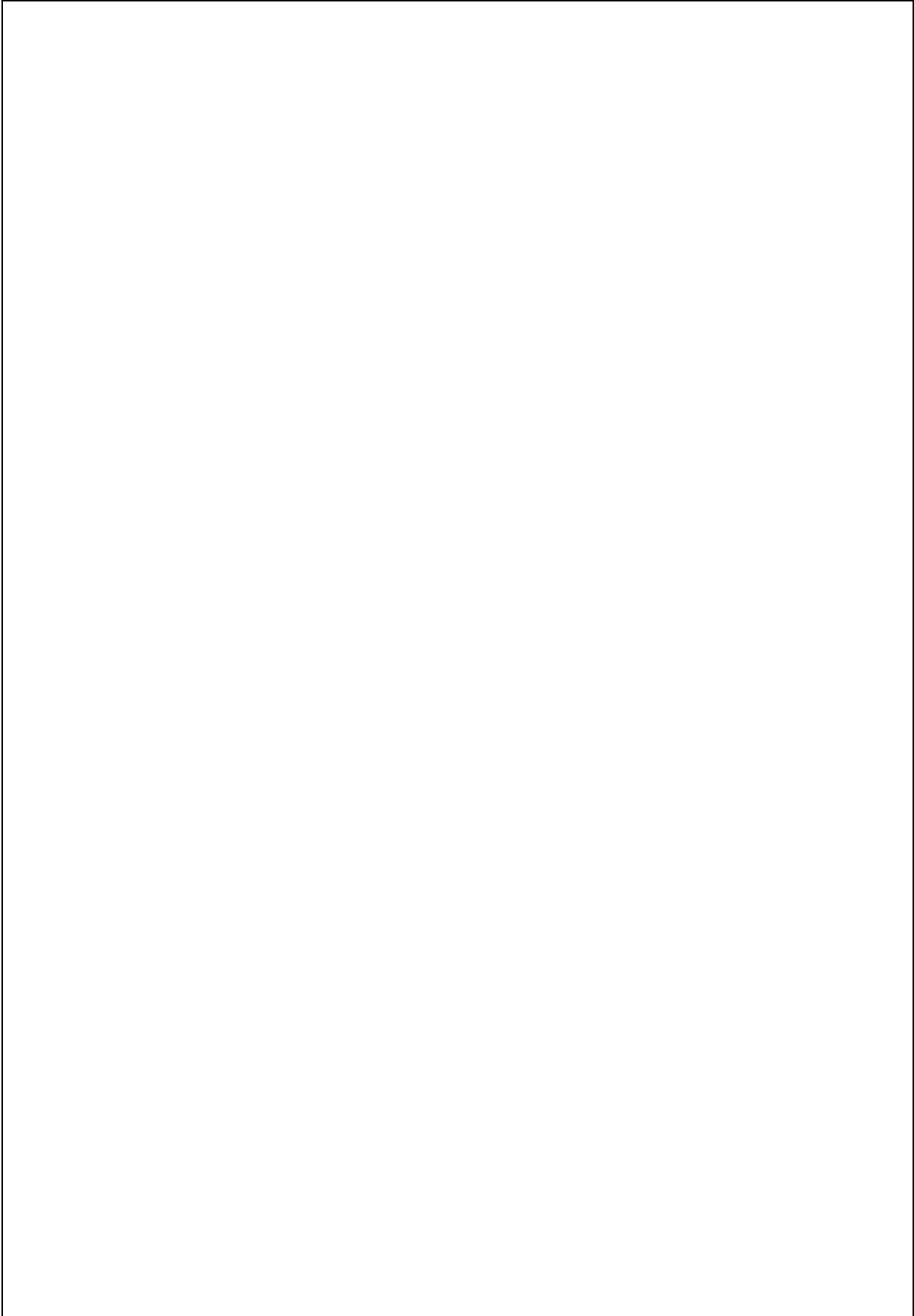
AND in the 50-80s big families were
playful and rambunctious
and FANTASTIC

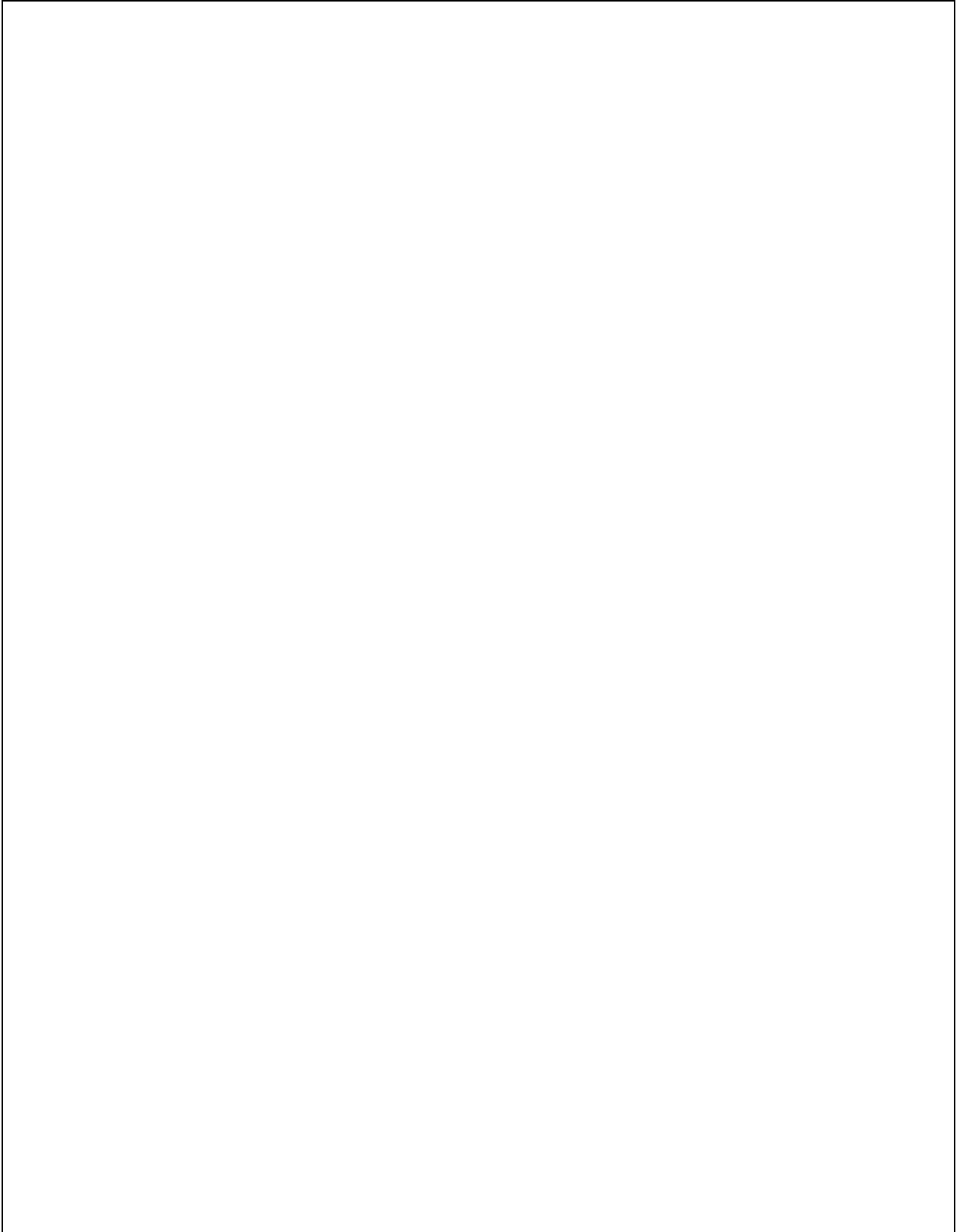
Today, the **PROBLEM**
with **Unplanned Pregnancy** is...
fragile families do not have the extra
resources to dedicate to parenting

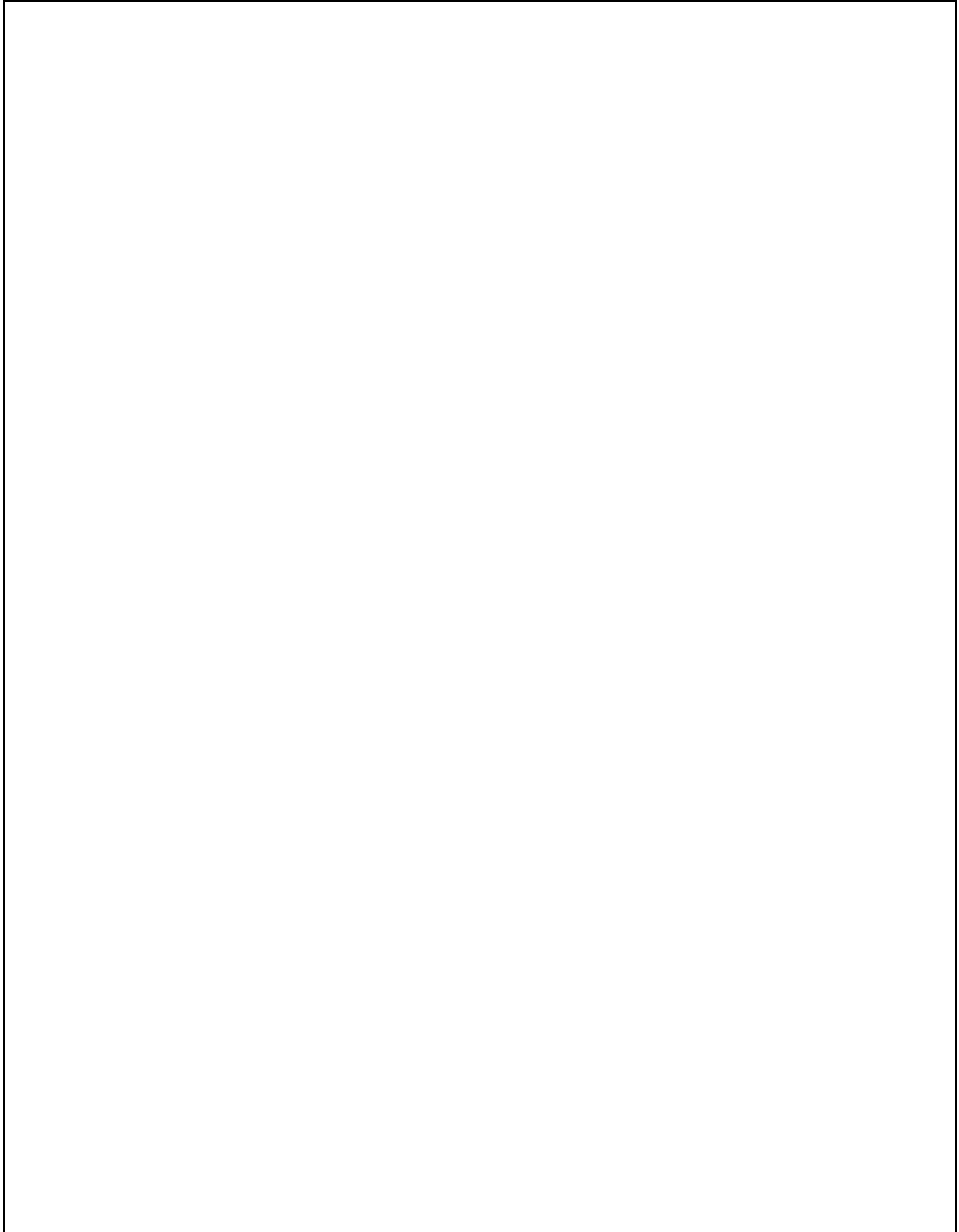
Unplanned pregnancy costs U.S. taxpayers

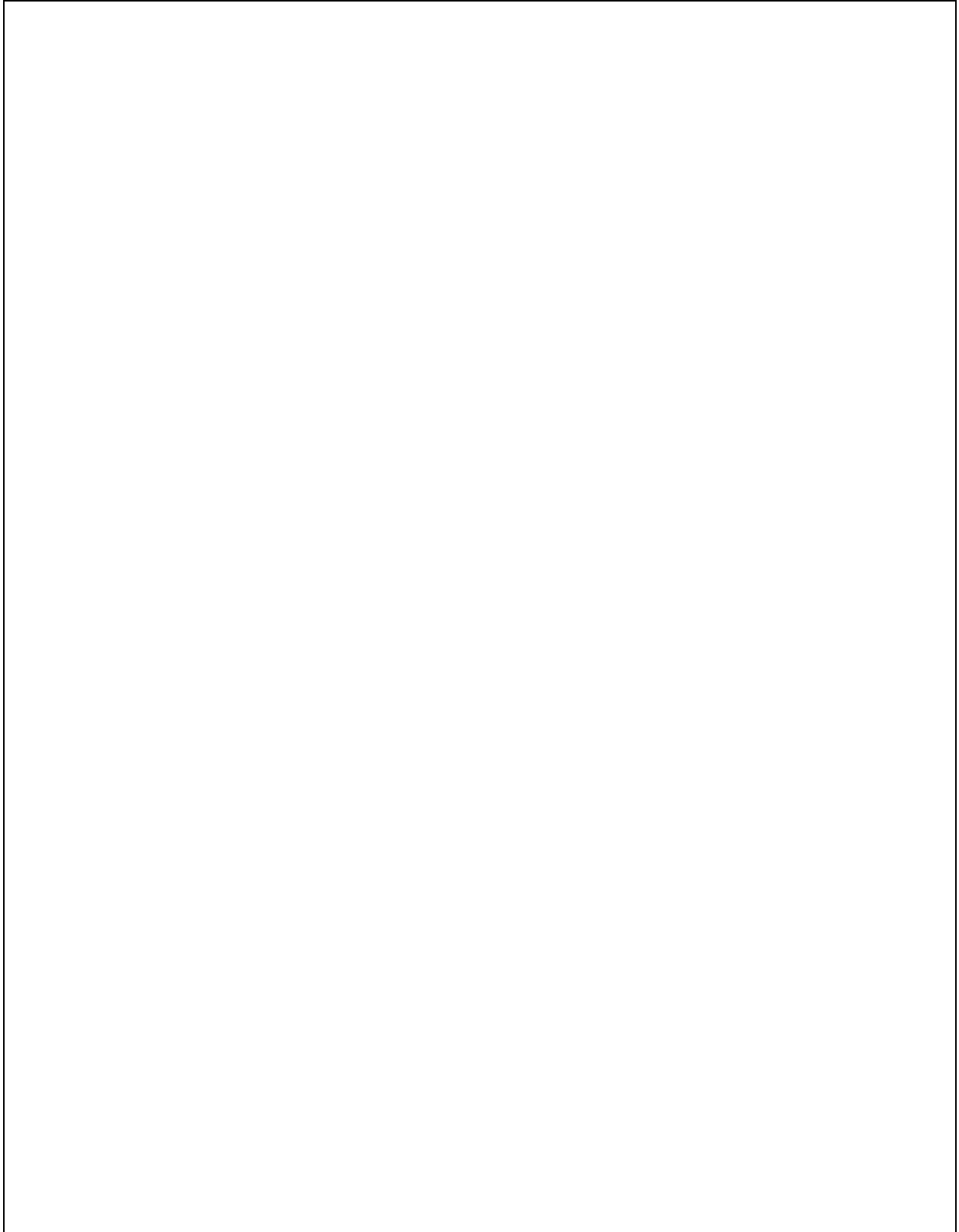
\$9.1 BILLION ANNUALLY

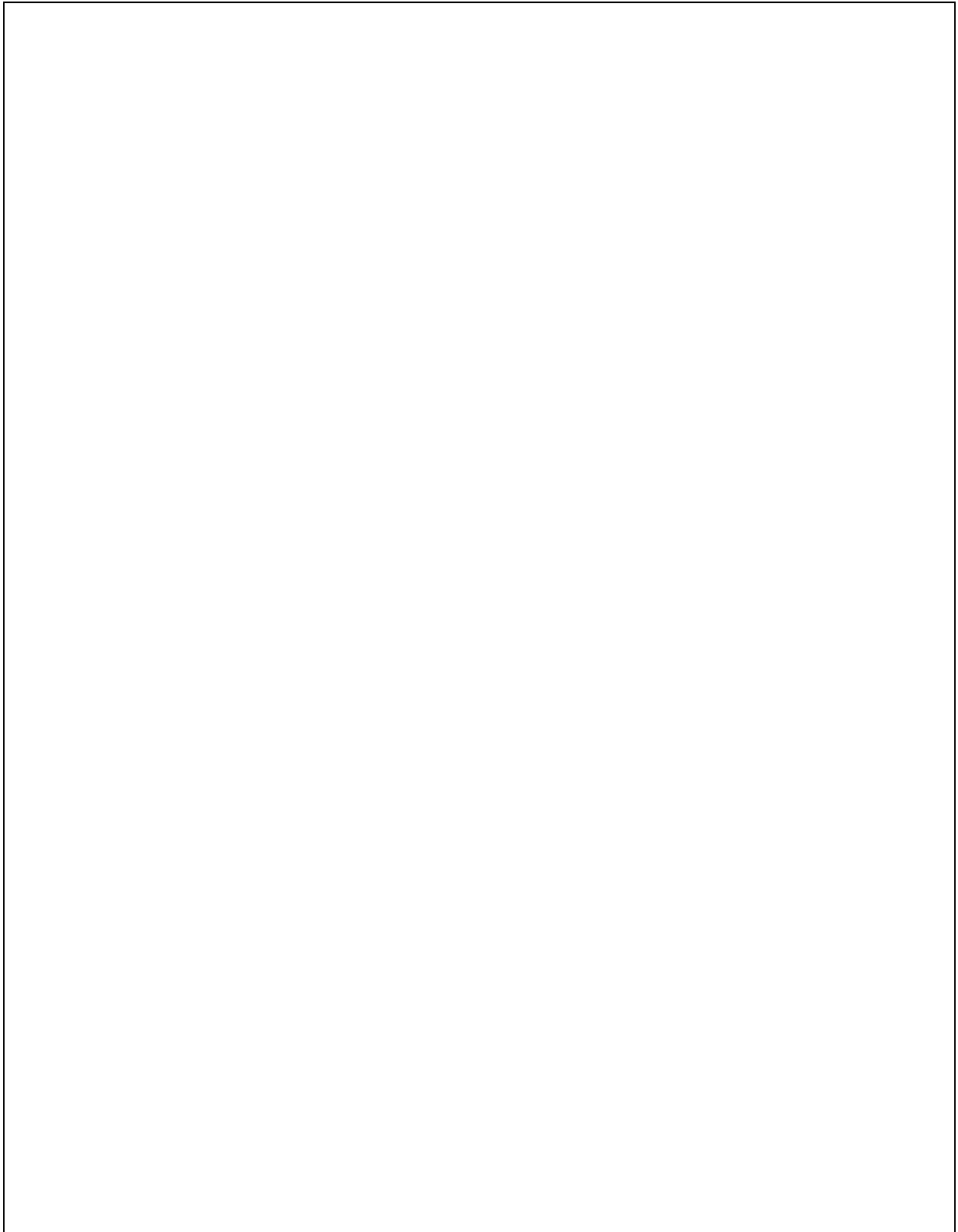












A quick Analogy,
the PILL is to CONTRACEPTION...

what the 8 track



is to music



HOW WILL WE ENCOURAGE
WOMEN TO SWITCH?

With INCENTIVES in the form of donated merchandise, professional DEVELOPMENT opportunities, CYBER SUPPORT and other activities that encourage

LIFE PLANNING

I brought these ideas TOGETHER

C.R.A.C.K pays crack addicts \$1,000 to undergo permanent sterilization

Oprah gives away merchandise and makes people feel good.

Part Two

Incentives



According to the
Research of
Esther Duflo

The women of India will walk miles into town to vaccinate their children for a small bag of beans



Share This: [Facebook] [Twitter] [Email]

Today's Deal: \$25 for \$50 Worth of Apparel at Gap

\$25 **Buy!**

Value	Discount	You Save
\$50	50%	\$25

Buy it for a friend!

Time Left To Buy
7 hours
46 minutes
51 seconds

10,648 bought
The deal is on!
Tipped at 12:55AM with 600 bought

The Fine Print
Expires Nov 19, 2015.
Limit 1 per person. Valid in-store at US and Canada Gap stores only. Not valid @ Gap Outlet, Factory, Generation, online. Not valid for GiftCards, tax, or other offers. \$50 minimum purchase. View complete terms.
See the rules that apply to all deals.

Highlights

- For use on any item in-store, including sale items
- New line of women's pants
- Many locations

WOULDN'T IT BE NICE IF SPONSORS VIA
GROUPON DONATED MERCHANDISE TO
CHARITY FOR EVERY 100TH PRODUCT
 SOLD?

PART THREE

Tapping Into Personal Aspirations

It is simply not enough to **ENCOURAGE** the use of
CONTRACEPTION. We need to encourage the practice of
 life planning through **SUPPORTIVE VIRTUAL
 NETWORKS**

How do we EMPOWER people?

MASLOW'S HEIRARCHY OF NEEDS

Lower needs must be met to reach
 self-actualization



JEFFERY SACHS

Geographic isolation doesn't have
 to be third-world country it can be
 an inner city neighborhood



*It's not what you DO for people, it's how you
 make them FEEL.* Maya Angelou

MALCOLM GLADWELL
 &
 Dubner and Levitt
 "FREAKONOMICS"

Use **STORY-TELLING** to make
 complex issues easily **UNDERSTOOD**
 by the general population

RICHARD FLORIDA

"THE RISE OF THE CREATIVE CLASS"

Believes that the synergy of a
 community is as important to its
 development as the structural
 components

Creating Supportive Communities



The founders of
THE SUSAN B KOMEN FOUNDATION
 invented the SALAD BAR
 and his wife (Susan's sister) was a
NEIMAN MARCUS
 marketing executive

this helps to explain their success...

Community Building
 Via
 Facebook and Twitter

Part Four

Community Building & Technology



COMMUNITY BUILDING & MARKETING
 ARE THE BACK BONE OF
 THE SUSAN KOMEN FOUNDATION



Millions of your closest friends whom you've never met



Donating MONEY is easy when it is directly billed to a CELLULAR account



Part Five

Designing the Organization

I SCAMPERED a program design

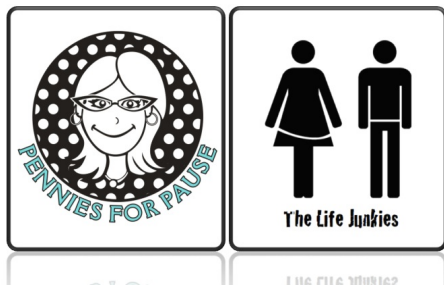
It takes two to TANGO...
 so I decided Pennies for Pause will include GUYS

I was inspired by Lance Armstrong



I created a COLLABORATIVE online community

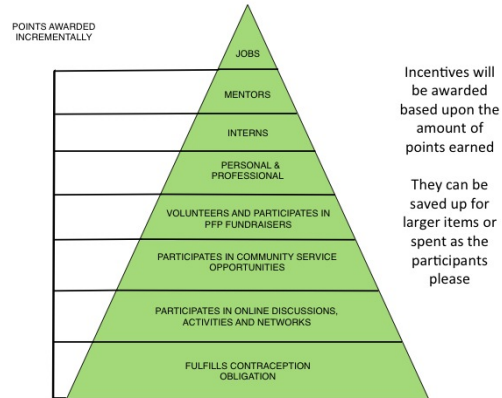
So...PfP and TLJ merged



I outlined the OPERATION of the organization



And organized a **REWARD** system



The goal is to create a **SELF-SUSTAINING** non-profit organization so I created *LIFE. In a Note* a professional announcement writing services that turns wedding, obituaries, anniversary announcements into **WORKS OF ART**



A portion of the **PROCEEDS** will go to Pfp and **LIFE** will provide intern and writing positions for Pfp participants

LIFE currently has 17 writers,
12 are young adults 18-29

the **WRITERS** can work from anywhere
INNER CITY to a small **FARM COMMUNITY**

Part Six

My Motivations

I want to create a more thoughtful society



I want tax payer \$ invested in innovative programs that will benefit our country



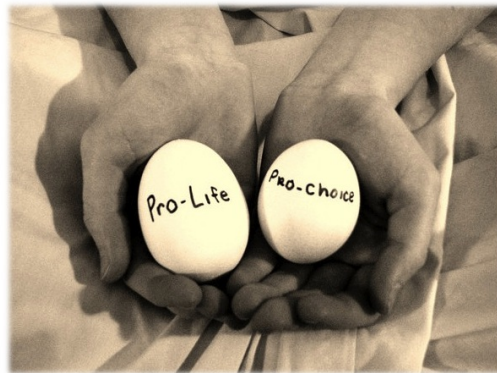
I want to reduce child abuse



I want to reduce crime



Most importantly...
I think my idea is a
SMARTER
CHOICE



CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The current political war against Planned Parenthood is a perfect example of why we need to think more creatively regarding contraceptive options and sex education. Although it is questionable whether the war on Planned Parenthood is truly related to the opposition to abortion or simply a political strategy, a strong campaign to increase the use of IUDs or other methods of LARC would theoretically reduce the number of abortions performed in the United States. It is my belief that due to the current state of financial instability and the upcoming political elections of 2012 that I should have support from both the local family planning communities and the more progressive politicians. It is my plan to reach out to these constituencies to understand how my organization can best serve the mission of reducing unplanned pregnancy, build thinking skills within the 18-29 population, while also addressing the issue of abortion in the United States.

One of my observations that I feel is particularly important is the role education plays within the war against unplanned pregnancy. Educated people believe that education is the solution to all problems; and this is no different for the family planning centers across the United States. But in my opinion, the reason we are still seeing unnecessary high rates of unplanned pregnancy in the more fragile populations is not only for the reasons listed earlier within this paper but also because many within the fragile populations are either not in the mindset to embrace education or their environment does not support it. Therefore education, which is the most commonly used tool to battle unplanned pregnancy, may be ineffective when considering the population that needs assistance the most are typically high school drop-outs who shun education. Although we would like to believe that providing sex education would solve the

problem, I feel it is impossible to address the issue with education alone. I see this approach as skipping up Maslow's pyramid of needs to self-actualization while bypassing the more fundamental rungs such as psychological needs, safety needs, love and belonging and self-esteem. For this reason, I believe using incentives delivered through an educational framework can provide the fundamental rewards of necessities along with rewards of leisure to encourage personal growth as we move the participants up Maslow pyramid to self-actualization where education can be embraced. To achieve this I have designed a series of for-profit organizations that begin with the word LIFE because they are intended to be life transforming. For example, Life. In a Note is a creative announcement writing service that honors the chapters of life by creating personalized obituaries, wedding, engagement and anniversary announcements. LIFE. In a Note will hire young participants who will serve as writers, data entry specialist or administrative assistants. Pennies for Pause is the parent non-profit organization and each of the for-profit organization will work to further the mission by providing employment opportunities, internships and funding for the greater mission.

Throughout my experience in the Critical and Creative Thinking program at The University of Massachusetts Boston, I have learned how to re-analyze many approaches that I once believed were well designed. I have since learned how to examine a situation and its components to see how a situation can be reconstructed to provide a better solution. I have learned to use analogies to provide insight into the operation of a situation in order to design a better method. For example: When analyzing the role education plays in reducing unplanned pregnancy I started by visualizing a drowning person and questioned whether during the middle of the crisis was the best time to teach them to swim? I learned the importance of research and how creative ideas combined with a strong set of data can be a powerful recipe for change. I also

learned the importance of knowing what others have done before me; and understanding both what worked or why it didn't work, and most importantly, how I could use their failures and success as a model for my own endeavors. I began to understand how bringing unique components together wasn't just an odd habit of mine but a creative tool called S.C.A.M.P.E.R used to generate ideas in problem solving. I began to see how ineffective a typical board meeting could be when solutions are forced due to time constraints. The roles of questioning dialogue and listening play within the development of complex thinking skills is crucial to the success of the outcome. Without truly understanding what the problem is, what issues the problem is creating, and whom the problem is affecting we cannot begin to address a solution. By learning the formal practice of critical and creative thinking skills I have learned the formal methodology behind creating real change.

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