

Choosing Life Together:
Modelling Communities Among Persons with
Intellectual Disabilities

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Abstract

This paper theoretically compares caring for the intellectually disabled in “full communities” of diverse people versus the increasingly-standard “person-centred” care offered by social services. Living full-time together in full communities generates synergies among caring assistants and the intellectually disabled. However, full community is fragile. The intellectually disabled with high social capital may opt out of community when person-centred care is provided richly. This undermines community and the intellectually disabled with low social capital are worse-off because they do not flourish under person-centred care.

Similarly, if the social wage offered to caring assistance is too low relative to the market wage, community assistants will opt out of community. This is welfare decreasing because of unaccounted-for community synergies. Uncertainty as to preferences and synergies reveals a welfare enhancing role for organizing structures like L’Arche. Organized community can provide greater continuity of care and preserves synergies by making full community more resilient.

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1 Preamble

Over fifty years ago in a little village outside of Paris, three men chose to live together. They didn't know each other too well. Raphael Simi and Philippe Sieux had been living in an institution for the “mentally retarded” because they had an intellectual disability and that was what was done in the mid-1960s. Jean Vanier was a young Canadian who had recently completed his PhD in Aristotilean ethics and had taught for a semester at the University of Toronto. For many reasons, their little community was rather improbable, and yet it came about. Not only that, what would become known as l'Arche spread quickly and communities began cropping up all over France, and then even in India, and Canada. Today there are l'Arche communities all around the world, comprising a federation of people with and without intellectual disabilities who have chosen to live life together.

This paper was inspired in part by my own experiences of having lived in or been affiliated with l'Arche for nearly ten years all together. Being in l'Arche can train a person to look at the world a little differently. In l'Arche, we build community by focussing on the welfare of the most marginalized. Fragility and vulnerability are attributes that society often fears; in l'Arche they are celebrated. Even more radically, however, in l'Arche, the human person is understood to be *in relationship*¹. This is distinct from a vision of the rational individual (and in l'Arche we discover that people are anything but rational!) that is the foundation of economics. I do not believe that

these are mutually exclusive understandings of what it is to be human. But I think in both economics and l'Arche, we fail to recognize the truth of the other school of thought and this can lead to a severe lack of communication.

This is a problem. A couple of years ago, I had an excellent conversation with my uncle who was at that time ADM of Community and Social Services in Ontario. This is the department concerned with programs for persons with an intellectual disability. He was describing initiatives under what Ontario has called a “transformation of... services” (MCSS, 2006, iii). Some of these include individualized funding schemes, personal-planning support, and integrative employment initiatives (MCSS, 2006). As he explained to me, over the past decades of service provision, much of the power has been in the hands of service providers rather than the individuals who benefit from them. In Canada and elsewhere, there has been a strong push for person-centred programming that changes the balance of power (Mausell and Beadle-Brown, 2004).

This is when I became acutely aware of the fundamental contrast in approach between l'Arche and current governments. Both are motivated by welcoming men and women with intellectual disabilities to fulfill their role in society. But the motivating principles are contrasting. As a brief illustration, consider this excerpt from Ontario's description of the transformation of services. It states that the principle guiding the transformation: “focusses on independence, dignity and self-reliance for people with a developmental disability” (MCSS, 2006, 14).

Now consider the principles implied in l'Arche's Mission Statement:

1. Make known the gifts of people with intellectual disabilities revealed through mutually transforming relationships.
2. Foster an environment in community that responds to the changing needs of our members whilst being faithful to the core values of our founding story.
3. Engage in our diverse cultures, working together toward a more human society ²

On the one hand, policy is driven by a vision of independence and self-reliance such that individuals be integrated into society. On the other hand, l'Arche is guided by a vision of mutually transforming relationships, community, and working together, for it is *together* that we build a more human society.

These visions are by no means incompatible, but one can see that there are sources of tension in their implementation.

This paper seeks to bring a l'Arche-motivated perspective to a discipline that is inherently more in line with the stated principles of government policy. Although the exercise is to shed some light on the effects of person-centred integrative policy, my intention is to demonstrate that this exchange between divergent schools of thought can be fruitful.

2 Introduction

This is a paper about some of the theoretical effects of moving towards person-centred planning and services for people with intellectual disabilities and on the most vulnerable, those less able to take advantage of integrative programs. To do this, I ask three broad questions. First, what are the criteria for *full community*? And a related question, how resilient is *full community* to improved integrative policy? By *full community*, I mean people who are quite diverse (men and women with and without disabilities, each with varying needs, as well as diverse socio-economic backgrounds) choosing to share a home, choosing to live *life together*.

My second question is, what is the outcome for the most vulnerable person? Person-centred, integrative policies are better suited to some persons with an intellectual disability than others (Robertson et al., 2007). I do not go into specific reasons in my paper, but rather than distinguish categories of people according to the ease with which they are able to “integrate” into society. The gain to integrating into society is captured by what I call an *integrating premium*. Those with a lower *integration premium* are defined as the most vulnerable because they are the most sensitive to changes in the criteria for *full community*. When *full community* becomes more tenuous, they suffer because they do not have another option.

Finally, my third question: is there a role for structures that organize community? A primary example of such a structure is l’Arche, an inter-

national federation of communities like the one modelled here. Does the presence of l'Arche improve the resilience of *full community*? How does it affect the outcomes for the different people concerned?

To answer these questions, I develop a very simple model with three people choosing to live *life together* or some more independent *alternative* over two consecutive periods. There are two persons with intellectual disabilities, one with a better *alternative* outcome due to greater levels of social capital³. *Full community* is the outcome when, in either period, all three persons choose *life together*. As this model is able to illustrate, when the *integration premium* to the person with a higher level of social capital increases, as I would expect with current government policy approaches, the *full community* outcome becomes more tenuous and the person with a lower level of social capital suffers a negative externality. In a second version of the model I include l'Arche as a community-organizing structure. The result is that *full community* in the first period is slightly more resilient. Interestingly, l'Arche improves the continuity of the *full community* outcome over the second period. Not surprisingly, the outcome for the most vulnerable improves significantly.

This analysis provides a clear picture of the possible paradox of person-centred policies for people with intellectual disabilities. Although they have an agenda of improving the lives of people who are often in the margins of society, if insufficient attention is given to *community* outcomes, they can lead to an even more severe marginalization of the most vulnerable person.

3 Literature Review

This paper indirectly draws upon and contributes to discussions in a variety of other disciplines.

One area is a broad conversation about services for people with intellectual disabilities. As l'Arche was being founded in the mid-1960's an emerging principle with regards to services for people with intellectual disabilities was "normalization". One of the early proponents of this was Dr. Wolf Wolfensberger with his book, "The Principle of Normalization in Human Services" (1972). A more recent development in this same vein is in the area of "Person-Centred Planning" which is becoming the norm in social services, particularly in the UK (Mansell & Beadle Brown, 2004). There is some empirical research looking into its effectiveness (Robertson, 2006), but its compatibility with "modernity...marked by an excessive anthropocentrism" (Francis, 2015, 116) has made it an obvious policy principle. My own paper offers a more critical perspective on its unequivocal adoption.

This paper also fits easily into a small but interesting body of literature stemming from the l'Arche experience. For example, Dr. Pamela Cushing has done some work in anthropology from a l'Arche perspective (2002). As well, Dr. Elena Lasida, an economist at l'Institut Catholique in Paris, has been developing a conceptual and empirical frame-work for measuring the "social utility" of l'Arche in France (personal communication, 2015).

Finally, this paper is about articulating and developing an analysis that

takes into account relationship and community synergies. The most obvious area that this fits into is that of social capital. D. Robert Putnam's book, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* provides a very comprehensive and well-documented account of social capital, its various dimensions and its diminishing state in the U.S.A.

A more traditional approach in economics to these less tangible mechanisms is the literature on altruism. Adreoni (1990) develops a model of giving whereby the agent not only gains utility from the public good itself, but also from the act of contributing to it. Work by Dr. Patrick Francois ties this literature into theory about caring wages and so-called "pro-social motivation" (Francois, 2008).

More in line with the motivations of my paper, however, is work by Dr. Nancy Folbre, one of the most thoughtful voices in this area of broadening the scope of economic analysis to include what I would call the more *human* aspects of reality. Her paper "For Love or Money—Or Both?" describes the destructiveness of maintaining a market/non-market binary.

Economists who talk about contemporary economic activity as if it were fully represented by an idealized hypothetical market and as if dualisms of self-interest vs. altruism or money vs. love were simply insurmountable may find that their models work in certain narrow economic sectors but are spectacularly ill-equipped to provide the kinds of understanding necessary to analyze markets involving care.

(Folbre & Nelson, 2000, p. 138)

My paper takes this as a call to action. If we in economics are properly to consider issues concerning persons with intellectual disabilities, we must begin by expanding our analytical tool-kit, and even by changing the intellectual paradigm of our approach.

4 Introduction to the Model

To engage these discussions, I develop a very simple model with three persons choosing between *life together* (t) or some more independent *alternative* (a). *Life together* is the choice to live in a community, to share a home. This likely means a common residence, but it is plausible that people live more independently and yet live in a community. It is to sit at the same table for meals, to share responsibilities according to the gifts of each, to laugh and cry together, to be closer than neighbours. The *alternative* varies greatly person to person. For some, it is to live in a family home placement. For still others, it is to pursue further education or job-training.

The three persons concerned in this model are an assistant (A), and two core-members (H and L respectively). Following l'Arche terminology, a core-member is a person with an intellectual disability: the one who is at the core of the community.

Core-members : The two core-members are distinguished by the utility value of their *alternative*, the ease with which they could integrate into a more individualistic society. This may have something to do with their level of *ability*. If H is verbal and ambulatory, she is much more likely to be able to be employed or live in her own apartment than someone who is unable to speak or walk alone. But I would suggest that even more important than ability is H and L's relative level of social capital. Suppose that H is non-verbal and non-ambulatory. If hse has a supportive family or other type of social network, she will likely be much more able to establish a more independent life for herself than L who, although apparently "able" does not have those supports and may fall through the cracks. Even programs designed to help the most needy require some navigation⁴ and those with higher levels of social capital will better be able to take advantage of them. With this in mind, the core-members are denoted H and L for "high" and "low" social capital respectively. This means that the value of the *alternative* to H will always be higher than that to L (ie: $X_H > X_L$).

The core-members make a choice such that their utility is maximized. In *life together*, they receive a basic level of physical health, h , and they benefit from their relationships with the others who have made that choice with them. This latter benefit is summarized in a *community* function, c , which I will get to shortly. Choosing their *alternative*, the core-members receive h as well. In place of c , they receive what I call an "integration premium". The "integration premium" comprises assisted living options, employment

programs and so on; the surplus in excess of *health* offered in choosing the *alternative*. If X_i for $i = H, L$ is the utility payoff of the *alternative*, then the “integration premium” can be defined so: $x_i = X_i - h$. Person-centred programs affect x_i and do so unequally for H and L.

The decision faced by the core-members can be described so:

H’s decision:

$$U_H = \max[(h + c_H), (X_H)]$$

L’s decision:

$$U_L = \max[(h + c_L), (X_L)]$$

As stated above, $X_H > X_L$. More specifically, however, $x_H > x_L$ since they are both guaranteed h in their *alternative* and these then cancel out. The intuition is that if the “integration premium” is in part generated by those programs promoting independence and integration, it is increasing with a person’s level of social capital because that is what facilitates their access of those opportunities. In this model, I assume an extreme case where L’s *alternative* payoff is simply the basic level of health, h . The intuition is that their next best choice is comparable to an institution or even a hospital setting⁵:

$$X_L = h$$

Note that since $x_L = X_L - h$, the assumption that $X_L = h$ implies that $x_L = 0$. In other words, the core-member with low social capital does not

receive any “integration premium” in her *alternative*. This means that L will always choose *life together*. This the action is really in the decisions of H and A, with L bearing an externality from the outcome. As for the parameters of X_H , I assume that the *alternative* payoff to H is higher than the payoff to *life together* when only one other person also chooses it but lower than when everyone chooses it⁶

$$h + 1 < X_H < h + 3$$

Recognizing that $X_H = x_H + h$, however, these parameters are more intuitively expressed in terms of x_H :

$$1 < x_H < 3$$

Assistant The assistant faces a similar choice. *Life together* yields a social wage w ⁷ as well as the benefit of *community*. The *alternative* has a payoff X_A . As with the core-members, the difference between X_A and w can be thought of as a “market premium”, the utility premium from being in the market as opposed to being in *life together*. This “market premium” can be defined as $x_A = X_A - w$. The assistant’s choice can be summarized so:

$$U_A = \max[(w + c_A), (X_A)]$$

Community life is very challenging. Many people that go to l’Arche, for

example, are drawn by the prospect of doing good for people with intellectual disabilities. They can be surprised and even choose to leave after realizing that community is much more reciprocal. It is about accepting one's own vulnerabilities and needs, as well as accepting those in others. It is about growing through conflict rather than avoiding it. It is not so much about overcoming differences as celebrating them.. Some people find this either uninteresting or extremely challenging. In my model, assistants may be one of two types. "Engaged" assistants (A_E) are those who thrive in *life together*. They contribute fully to community and benefit fully from it in return. By contrast, "not-engaged" assistants (A_N) find that *life together* is much like a badly paying job. They do not contribute to the rich relationships in a community and this do not benefit from them either.

Nature determines the Assistant type. An Assistant is "engaged", A_E with probability p and "not engaged", A_N , with probability $(1-p)$. By definition, A_N will prefer to leave *life together* rather than stick around with poor pay and no enjoyment of community. However, A does not know if she is "engaged" or "not-engaged" until she has spent some time in community. In other words, at the first stage of decision-making, before the first period, the payoffs from *life together* must be expected payoffs due to the uncertainty⁸. In the second round of decision-making, before period two, A's type is known by everyone (in community nothing remains secret for long!). Thus second period decisions are made with full information.

I assume that the value of the *alternative* to A is higher than if only one

other person chooses *life together*, but lower than if everyone chooses it (and A_E):

$$w + 1 < X_A < w + 3$$

I would also like to make clear that A is not a health-care professional, but someone who genuinely wants to share a life with people with an intellectual disability and simply look after them.

Community The community function is the sum of synergies from the different relationships that a particular person is involved in. The first two terms are “one-to-one” relationships, and the final term is a “household” relationship. This means that there is an extra boost to community when there is at least one A, one H, and one L. Formally, the community functions are the following:

$$c_H = A_E^5 H^5 + H^5 L^5 + A_E^2 H^2 L^2$$

$$c_A = A_E^5 H^5 + A_E^5 L^5 + A_E^2 H^2 L^2$$

$$c_L = A_E^5 L^5 + H^5 L^5 + A_E^2 H^2 L^2$$

I have made three important assumptions in their construction:

1. *Community* is good. I do not question that community is in fact utility generating. This is simply a stance that I am taking in line with

l'Arche's perspective.

2. Small communities are more effective. This is built into the model very simply. Each of the “one-on-one” relationships has constant returns to scale, but the “household” relationship actually has diminishing returns to scale. This doesn't really come into play in this paper as I am simply looking at a situation of three persons making a choice. But extensions that look into larger populations require this model feature.
3. Diversity is fruitful. The optimal ratio built in is 1A: 1H: 1L. It may seem a strong assumption that the relationships captured in the terms of the *community* function are only those between persons who are different from one another. There is no term that captures the relationship between two L's for example, I don't wish to suggest that there will be *no* synergy between two people who are the same (similar), but that the relationship synergies between people who are different from one another are the richest. These are the ones that the *community* function illustrates.

When describing the choices made, I will refer first to H's choice, then A's choice, then L's choice. For example, suppose that H and A choose *life together*, but L chooses her *alternative*, this would be summarized as *t,t,a*. Also, I will refer to the “value” of community, which is simply the *community* functions evaluated for the number of people who have chosen *life together*. For example:

- *full community* (t,t,t): when everyone chooses *life together*, the *community* values are $c_H = 3$; $c_A = 3$; $c_L = 3$.
- *one in, one out* (t,a,t): Here, A chooses her *alternative* while L and H choose *life together*. In this case, $c_H = 1$; $c_L = 1$.⁹

Importantly, the *community* functions involve the engaged assistant A_E . If the assistant is not engaged, A_N , then $A_E = 0$ and the community functions are evaluated accordingly. This means that we can have a *full community* outcome in the first period, but that the community values for H and L are simply one, and that for A is zero.

Model Summary To summarize, here are the features of the model:

- three persons: an assistant A of type “engaged” (A_E) or “not engaged” (A_N); core-member with high social capital, H; core-member with low social capitalm L (ie: $X_H > X_L$).
- A is A_E with probability p and A_N with probability $(1-p)$
- each chooses between *life together* and some *alternative* such that they maximize their (expected) utility. They choose according to:

$$U_H = \max[(h + c_H), (h + x_H)]$$

$$U_A = \max[(w + c_L), (h + x_L)]$$

$$U_L = \max[(h + c_L), (h + x_L)]$$

- Their choices are summarized as t and a with H's choice followed by A's and then L's. For example, when A chooses her *alternative* but both H and L choose *life together*, this outcome is summarized as t, a, t .
- The game spans two periods. Outcomes over both periods can also be summarized in the following way (continuing the previous example): tt, aa, tt .
- some notation:
- h : basic level of physical health
- w : social wage received in community
- $x_H; x_A; x_L$: “integration premiums” (for H and L) and “market premiums” (for A) from choosing her *alternative*
- $X_H; X_A; X_L$: *alternative* utility payoff where:

$$X_H = x_H + h;$$

$$X_A = x_A + w$$

$$X_L = x_L + h$$

- $c_i, i = H, A, L$ is the value of *community* to each person. It is a function of H, L, and A_E . When A is $A_N, A_E=0$

- *full community* refers to the outcome when everyone chooses *life together* (ie:t,t,t)

I add one final rule: the choice of *life together* is only available in the first period. Should A or H (remember that L always chooses *life together*) choose her *alternative* in the first period, she may not choose *life together* in the second.

5 Variation One: Unorganized Community

In this first section, I look at results from the model above. I call these “unorganized community” results because they describe a world where *full community* is something of an organic outcome. By contrast, in the following section, I develop a variation on this model to investigate a world where a structure like the l’Arche federation may provide some stability to the *full community* outcome.

In this section I will be able, in particular, to address my first two research questions:

1. What are the criteria for *full community*? How resilient is community to changing conditions for men and women with intellectual disabilities?
2. What is the outcome for the most vulnerable person?

The model allows for some very specific ways to address these questions. With regards to the first, my primary interest is in whether it is possible, even

with the uncertainty of A's type, for everyone to coordinate and choose *life together* in the first period. The model can help to establish what criteria in terms of relative values of p and x_H or x_A are necessary for this to occur.

The second question focusses on the outcome for L due to H's and A's choices. And a related question is concerned with the welfare of society as a whole. I investigate whether it is possible for H to compensate L when H chooses her *alternative* in the first period.

My analysis primarily revolves around a first period payoff matrix. In order to construct this, I first look at the second period and establish outcomes under various possible scenarios.

5.1 Second Period Analysis

The second period decisions will depend upon what happened in the first period. There are four possible scenarios:

1. "Both in": t, t, t
2. "A in": a, t, t
3. "H in": t, a, t
4. "Both out": t, t, t

I will go through each of these in turn.

“**Both in**”: **t, t, t**: In this case, as with both scenarios where A chose *life together* in the first period, there are two possible scenarios depending upon A’s type. I will consider first the scenario with A_E , illustrated in the table below.

		A_E	
		<i>life together</i>	<i>alternative</i>
H	<i>life together</i>	$H : 3$ $A : 3$ $(L : 3)$	$H : 1$ $A : x_A$ $(L : 1)$
	<i>alternative</i>	$H : x_H$ $A : 1$ $(L : 1)$	$H : x_H$ $A : x_A$ $(L : 0)$

Table 1: Second Period when A_E , expressed in terms of c_i and x_i , $i = H, A, L$.

For simplicity, I have expressed the payoffs in terms of *community* and the “integration premium”, x_H , and “market premium”, x_A . Recall the parameters for x_i , $i = H, A, L$ established earlier:

- $1 < x_H < 3$
- $1 < x_A < 3$

- $x_L = 0$

Given these, there are two equilibria: (t, t) and (a, a). Given an assumption of perfect information, the latter is a very unlikely outcome as everyone is clearly better off when they coordinate to choose *life together*. To rule out the bad equilibrium, I will assume “coordinating trust”. Having already spent one period with one another, it seems unlikely that A and H would not be able to coordinate and achieve outcome (t, t).

The cumulative outcome in this case is then (tt, tt, tt) with everyone choosing *life together* for two periods.

I will now investigate the case with A_N .

		A_N	
		<i>life together</i>	<i>alternative</i>
H	<i>life together</i>	$H : 1$ $A : 0$ $(L : 1)$	$H : 1$ $A : x_A$ $(L : 1)$
	<i>alternative</i>	$H : x_H$ $A : 0$ $(L : 0)$	$H : x_H$ $A : x_A$ $(L : 0)$

Table 2: Second Period when A_N , expressed in terms of c_i and x_i , $i = H, A, L$.

In this case, both H and A_N will always choose their respective *alternatives* since $x_A > 1$ and $x_A > 0$. There is only one equilibrium in this case, (a, a). The cumulative outcome is then (ta, ta, tt).

“A in”: a, t, t As with the previous case, there are two possible scenarios depending upon whether A is “engaged” or “not engaged”. I will investigate each of these in turn. In A_E , the assistant, chooses between *life together* which yields (w+1) and the *alternative* with a payoff of X_A (see the second row in Table 1 above where the payoffs are expressed as $(x_A = X_A - w)$). Given that $X_A > w + 1$, she will choose her *alternative*. The cumulative outcome in this case is (aa, ta, tt).

“H in”: t, a, t In this case, H has a choice between $h + 1$ in *life together* and X_H in her *alternative* (see the second column of either Table 1 or Table 2 above). Given that $X_H > h + 1$, she will choose her *alternative*. The cumulative outcome here is (ta, aa, tt).

“Both out”: a, a, t As per the rules of the game, the choice of *life together* is only available in the first period, which means that the cumulative outcome in this case must be (aa, aa, tt).

Second Period Results Summary This second period analysis generates five possible outcomes:

- tt, tt, tt (if A_E)

- ta, ta, tt (if A_N)
- aa, ta, tt
- ta, aa, tt
- aa, aa, tt

Using these results, I construct a First Period Payoff Matrix.

5.2 First Period Analysis

As in the second period analysis rather than comparing expected utilities, I will compare *community in life together* ($c_i, i = H, A, L$) and the market and independence premiums ($x_i, i = H, A, L$). In the first period, each person looks across two periods and has complete foresight about the decision-making for the various cases, as we discussed above. Recall that A is “engaged” with probability p and “not engaged” with probability $(1 - p)$. These probabilities are used to appropriately weight the different scenarios. Note that the payoffs reported here are expected utility payoffs due to the uncertainty around the Assistant type.

<i>Assistant</i>			
		<i>life together</i>	<i>alternative</i>
H	<i>life together</i>	$H : p(6) + (1 - p)(1 + X_H)$ $A : p(6) + (1 - p)(x_A)$ $(L : (p(6) + (1 - p)(1)))$	$H : 2$ $A : 2x_A$ $(L : 0)$
	<i>alternative</i>	$H : 2x_H$ $A : p(1_{x_A}) + (1 - p)(x_A)$ $(L : p(1) + (1 - p)(0))$	$H : 2x_H$ $A : 2x_A$ $(L : 0)$

Table 3: First Period Expected Payoffs

I will proceed by assuming that A moved first. After all, it was Jean Vanier who went to the institution in France and invited Raphael and Philippe to join him. This implies that $p(6) + (1 - p)(x_A) > 2x_A$ ¹⁰ If this condition is satisfied, A will choose *life together*.

H will do the same so long as $p(6) + (1 - p)(1 + x_H) > 2x_H$. This means that H will choose *life together* (given that A has moved first and done the same) for the region under the curve below (the vertical axis begins at $x_H = 1$ respecting the condition that $h + 1 < X_H$):

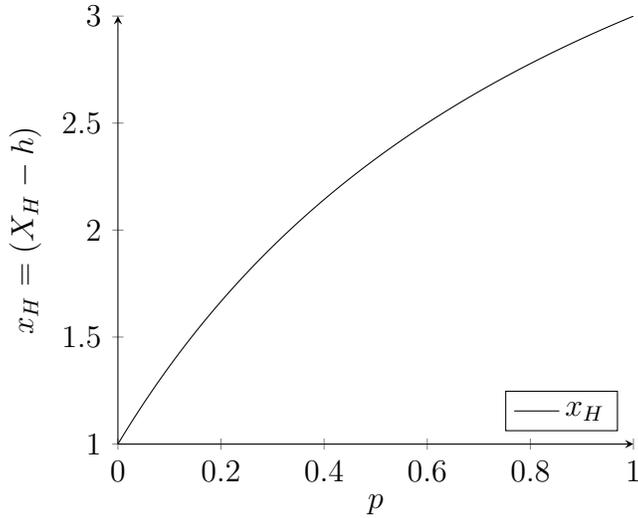


Figure 1: H chooses *life together* when $1 < x_H < \frac{5p+1}{1+p}$

H will choose her *alternative* if

$$x_H > \frac{5p+1}{1+p}$$

With perfect information, A knows that this will be H's choice and A will not initiate *life together* either.

5.3 Research Questions

This is enough information to offer some insight into my first research question: “What are the criteria for *full community*? How resilient is community to changing conditions for men and women with intellectual disabilities?”

As policies are put in place, such as those under Ontario's “transformation

of Services”, policies that promote independence and integration, the value of x_H increases¹¹.

As can be seen from the figure above, this requires an increasing p so as to maintain the *full community* outcome, (t, t, t). Otherwise put, H will require an increasing degree of certainty that A will be an “engaged” assistant. The *full community* outcome is destabilized by a rising *alternative* value for H ¹²

With respect to my second research question: “What is the outcome for the most vulnerable person?”, I am interested in the outcome for L? With the *full community* outcome achieved, the expected *community* value for L is¹³:

$$5p + 1$$

More importantly for the moment, however, is to recognize that if x_H rises above the threshold level for *full community*, or if p falls for a given x_H , H will not choose *life together*. With perfect information, A knows this and will also choose her *alternative* since $w + 1 < X_A$. In this case, L will be entirely left behind. As x_H rises, there is a significant negative externality placed upon L due to the individually rational decisions made by H and A.

A natural question is whether, when x_H rises above the *full community* threshold, H is so much better off that she could in theory compensate L¹⁴. I will investigate this by observing what x_H is required for the net gains to outweigh the net losses for H and L when H chooses her *alternative*.

The net gains to H are two periods of her *alternative* payoff, $2x_H$, minus

the foregone expected benefit of *life together*, $(6p) + (1 - p)(1 + x_H) = (5p + 1 - px_H) + x_H$. The net losses to L are two periods or foregone expected payoff in *life together*, $(6p) + (1 - p)(1) = (5p + 1)$, minus the expected payoff to L when H and A choose their respective *alternatives*, which is simply zero.

For H to be able to compensate L, we require that the net gains outweigh the net losses. This is expressed as the following:

$$2x_H - (5p + 1 - px_H + x_H) > 5p + 1$$

This yields:

$$x_H > \frac{10p + 2}{1 + p}$$

This figure indicates that there is a region of x_H 's for a given p where H will prefer her *alternative* but will not be sufficiently better off of compensate L.

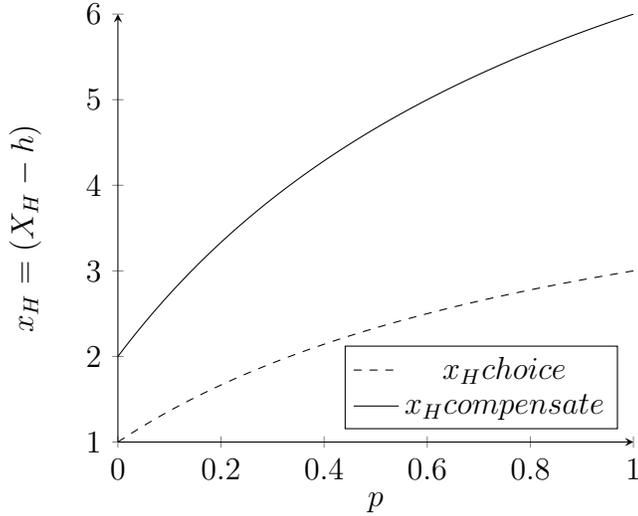


Figure 2: Can H compensate L when H chooses her *alternative*?

To come back to my second research question, the outcome for the most vulnerable person of policies that raise x_H does not seem very positive. Even supposing that she *could* be compensated (ie: that there exists a means for transferring utility from H to L), as x_H rises incrementally for a given level of p , there is a region where L cannot be compensated fully¹⁵

5.4 Unorganized Community Summary

To summarize, in a world where there is one assistant A, one core-member H, and one core-member L, each choosing whether or not to enter *life together*, a threshold of $x_H(p) = \frac{5p+1}{1+p}$ can be established to describe the maximum *alternative* “independence premium” for a given p for which H will still prefer *life together*, making the *full community* outcome, (t, t, t) feasible.

As x_H for a given p rises above this threshold due to a changing, person-centred policy environment, the *full community* outcome falls apart and L, the most vulnerable person, suffers. Furthermore, there are values of x_H for a given p which are high enough for H to prefer her *alternative*, but not high enough to fully compensate L for the expected foregone benefit.

Now I will turn to the third research question: Is there a role for an organization such as l'Arche?

6 Variation Two: Organized Community

In this section, I vary the previous model to illustrate a world where there exists some structuring body such as l'Arche. Very quickly after Jean, Raphael, and Philippe began living together in little Trosly-Breuil, people took an interest and little communities began popping up all over France, and then India, and then, in 1969, in Richmond Hill, Ontario. When Steve and Ann, founders of this first community in Canada, approached the founding core-members Bill Van Buren and Peter Rotterman¹⁶, they were not doing so entirely independently but rather on behalf of the organization that l'Arche International had become and was quickly growing into. The primary difference was that now Bill and Peter could be certain of having some assistant choose *life together* each period. For example, if Steve and Anne turned out to be “not engaged” assistants, l'Arche would ensure that there would be a new assistant in their place in the second period¹⁷

6.1 Second Period Analysis

The presence of l'Arche affects the Second Period payoffs in the case that A is “not engaged”. Rather than A simply leaving, l'Arche provides a new assistant whose type is unknown.

In the second period, H faces a choice then not between 0 and x_H , but rather between $3p + (1 - p)(1)$ and x_H . This is illustrated in the figure below. When H’s “independence premium” is above the threshold $2p + 1$, she will leave *life together* in the second period and is unaffected by the presence of l'Arche. If, however, her x_H is below the “threshold with l'Arche” line, she will benefit from an organizing community structure and will choose *life together* in the second period.

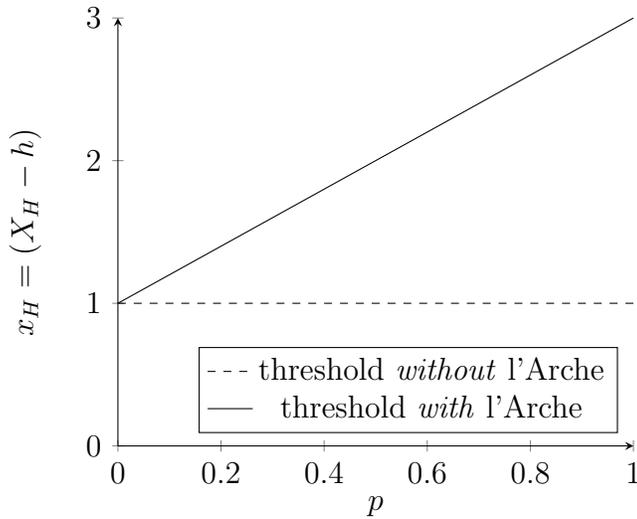


Figure 3: Second Period x_H thresholds (when A_N) for H to choose *life together*

6.2 First Period Analysis: Outcome for H

As in previous sections, it is enlightening to plot the function of the line where H is indifferent between her *alternative* and *life together*. However, as became clear from the second period analysis, outcomes will vary depending on whether the *alternative* value for H is above or below $2p + 1$. The implications of this may be best navigated by means of some simple story-telling. One story is about Harry for whom $x_H < 2p + 1$, and the other is about Helen for whom $x_H > 2p + 1$. Harry will then choose *life together* in the second period when A from the first period is “not engaged” and l’Arche has sent a new Assistant.

A		
		<i>life together</i>
Helen	<i>life together</i>	$H : p(6) + (1 - p)(1 + X_H)$ $(L : (p(6) + (1 - p)(1 + p(3) + (1 - p)(0))))$
	<i>alternative</i>	$H : 2x_H$ $(L : p(1) + (1 - p)(0 + p(1) + (1 - p)(0)))$

Table 4: First Period expected utilities with l’Arche for Helen, $2p + 1 < x_H$

A		
		<i>life together</i>
Harry	<i>life together</i>	$H : p(6) + (1 - p)(1 + p(3) + (1 - p)(1))$ $(L : (p(6) + (1 - p)(1 + p(3) + (1 - p)(1))))$
	<i>alternative</i>	$H : 2x_H$ $(L : p(1) + (1 - p)(0 + p(1) + (1 - p)(0)))$

Table 5: First Period expected utilities with l'Arche for Harry, $2p + 1 > x_H$

The criteria for Helen and Harry to choose *life together* are illustrated in the figure below.

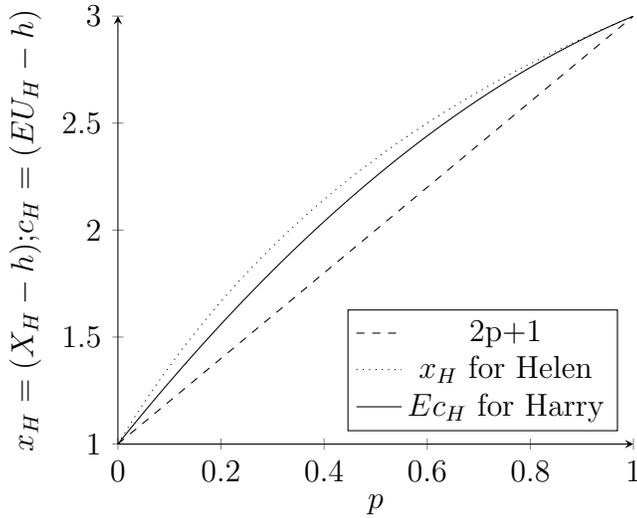


Figure 4: Conditions for choosing *Life Together* (X_H)

The first thing to consider is the dashed line which describes the second period criteria for Helen and Harry to choose *life together*. Helen's *alternative* lies above the dashed line which means that when A_N , Helen will leave in the second period, despite l'Arche sending a new A. In other words, l'Arche doesn't change the outcome for Helen. But so long as x_H is still below the dotted line, Helen will choose to try out *life together* in the first period.

As for Harry, his *alternative* value lies below the dashed line. As such, the solid line is not his threshold value as the dotted line is for Helen. Rather, the solid line is Harry's average expected *community* value to Harry from choosing *life together*.

So what is the effect of an organizing structure such as l'Arche on Helen and Harry's outcome? It doesn't change anything for Helen as her *alternative*

is still high enough that she will leave in the second period if A is “not engaged”, even if l’Arche does provide a new assistant.

l’Arche does change the outcome for Harry. Let’s investigate this algebraically. In a world without l’Arche, the two-period expected outcome for Helen and Harry can be described, without differentiating between them, as:

$$EU_H = p(2h + 6) + (1 - p)(h + 1 + X_H)$$

They appear the same in a world without l’Arche because the criteria for leaving in the second period, given A_N is simply $X_H > h + 1$. However, recall that the *alternative* value to Harry (which I will denote as X_{HA}) is below $2p + 1$ while the *alternative* value to Helen (which I will denote as X_{HE}) is above it. This means that $EU_{HA} < EU_{HE}$.

l’Arche doesn’t change the situation for Helen, but it does change it for Harry. Again, without l’Arche:

$$EU_{HA} = p(2h + 6) + (1 - p)(h + 1 + X_{HA})$$

and with l’Arche, the outcome for Harry simplifies to:

$$EU_{HA} = p(2h + 6) + (1 - p)(h + 1 + 2p + h + 1)$$

These equations are identical except that X_{HA} is replaced by $2p + h + 1$. By definition, $2p + h + 1 > X_{HA}$ which means that the expected utility to

Harry for a given p *with* l'Arche must be higher than the expected utility for a given p *without* l'Arche.

l'Arche then improves the outcome for an H such as Harry whose “independence premium” is lower than other H's.

6.3 Outcome for L from l'Arche

Now I will look at the effect of l'Arche on L's outcome. In the case that L lives with Helen (who leaves in the second period when A_N), L's outcome is improved simply because l'Arche guarantees an assistant. This is illustrated below.

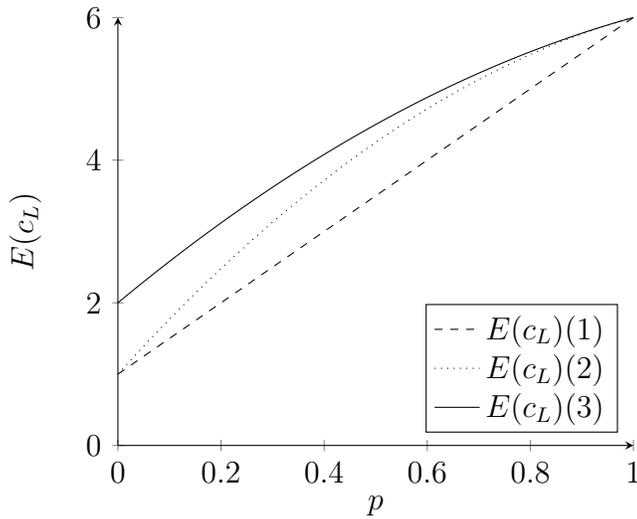


Figure 5: $E(c_L) = E(U_L) - h$ *withfull community*

The base-case without l'Arche is $E(c_L)(1)$. The case with l'Arche and Helen is described by the dotted line, $E(c_L)(2)$, and the case with l'Arche

and Harry is described by the solid line $E(c_L)(3)$. Simply put, an organizing structure such as l'Arche always improves the outcome for L, but particularly when H, like Harry, will be swayed to stay in the second period despite the assistant being “not-engaged” (as in the case of Harry).

Finally, is there anything to be said about H compensating L for losses if H chooses her *alternative* in the first period? As in the previous version, I compare expected net gains for H to expected net losses to L. I compare a situation where x_H rises above $\frac{5p+1}{1+p}$ because this is the threshold for H to already choose her *alternative* in the first period. The expected net gains to H comprise $2x_H - (5p+1 - px_H + x_H)$ just as in the first version. The expected net losses to L are more complicated. The foregone expected benefit to L when H leaves in the first period is $6p + (1-p)(1+p) = 6p + 1 - p^2$. What L is left with simplifies to $3p - p^2$. As such, for H to be able to compensate L, the following must hold:

$$2x_H - (5p + 1 - px_H + x_H) > 3p - p^2$$

This yields:

$$x_H > \frac{8p - p^2 + 1}{1 + p}$$

The figure below illustrates the threshold of $x_H(p)$, above which H will choose her *alternative* in the first period, and the threshold above which H could in theory compensate L and still be better off. There are two scenarios displayed here: the threshold without l'Arche (1) and the threshold with

l'Arche (2).

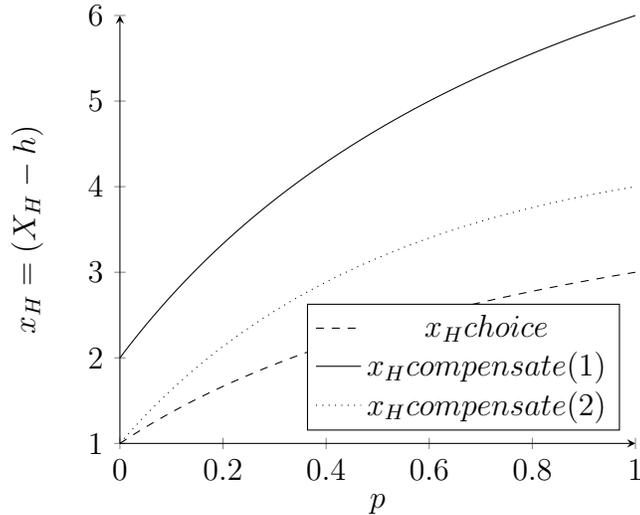


Figure 6: Can H compensate L when H chooses her *alternative*?

Importantly, with l'Arche, the region where H chooses her alternative but is unable to compensate L (ie: the area between the “compensate” curve and the “choice” curve) shrinks. Thus the gains from l'Arche, an organizing structure, can also be illustrated in this way.

6.4 Organized Community Summary

This section looked at a model where there is a structure such as the l'Arche Federation that can draw on a pool of assistants and guarantee an A every period. With l'Arche, the criteria for full community do not actually change that much. This is because if $x_H > 2p+1$, l'Arche does not change the threshold over which H will prefer her *alternative*. However, l'Arche does induce H

to stay for a second period with A having been revealed as “not engaged”, so long as $x_H < 2p+1$. Recall that, without l’Arche, the condition for H staying in the second period when A was that $x_H < 1$ which was already ruled out by definition. An organizing structure such as l’Arche allows for that parameter to be loosened, giving the possibility of a *full community* outcome in the second period even when A_N . In this subtle way, l’Arche does make community more resilient to changing conditions for men and women with intellectual disabilities, although only for the most vulnerable (H with with lower a “independence premium” and L).

The case of H with a lower “independence premium” is particularly interesting. Without l’Arche this H (whom I had referred to as Harry) would have left *life together* in the second period. But with l’Arche, H’s expected value of remaining in *life together* with the gamble of a new assistant in the second period is still higher than the value of her *alternative*. This is a subtle gain from “organized community” that I believe is very truthful.

These insights are directly related to my third research question about the role for l’Arche or an organization such as l’Arche. As clarified in this discussion, such an organization promotes continuity in community, leading to improved outcomes for most concerned

7 Conclusion

In conclusion, with the use of a very simple theoretical model, I have investigated the impact of person-centred integrative services for people with intellectual disabilities on community and on the most vulnerable persons concerned. The results would suggest that there is a trade-off between person-centred policies and community-synergy. Furthermore, these policies risk inducing further marginalization of those who already have lesser opportunities in a more independence-oriented context

The model and discussion engaged here are limited which suggests that there are still many points of discussion between “a l’Arche perspective and a “policy (dare I even say “economic”) perspective”. Engaging these conversations is very important work if we, as a society, are to realize the contributing role of people with intellectual disabilities. Or even more radically, it is important work if we are ever to come to realization that these people we so often reject are the ones who can teach us to be truly human.

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8.1 Organized Community Summary

Notes

¹I should add that I have had the pleasure of working Jean Vanier and his thinking influences my own quite profoundly. His book, *Community and Growth* (Vanier, 1972) stands as one of the most essential books about community life ever written.

²http://www.larche.ca/en/larche/our_vision_mission

³To be clear, my interpretation of “social capital” in this context aligns best with what Putnam describes as “bridging” social capital. It is those links that help a person to move outside of their social or economic sphere, to interact with people who are very different, or to gain access to skills that will change their personal circumstances. This is in contrast to “bonding” social capital which strengthens and affirms identity, but can also lead to division and stagnation between social groups (Putnam, 2000).

⁴A glaring assumption in my paper is that the core-members do choose *life together* or their *alternative* themselves. This is likely not the case. There are varying legal structures in at least five provinces in Canada which formalize supported decision-making. And even where there is no formal agreement, often persons with a disability are accompanied in determining what is best for them (Boone, 2013). This doesn’t change the model or the results, except perhaps to exacerbate them since L by definition will be less well represented.

⁵<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/developmentally-disabled-people-shouldn-t->

be-living-in-hospitals-advocates-say-1.3083920

⁶The case where $h < X_H < h + 1$ corresponds with the era when l'Arche was founded. In 1964, the *alternative* payoff to both core-members was so low that they would both always choose *life together*. This paper focusses, however, on the era when one of the core-members may have an incentive not to choose *life together*. Similarly, I could look at an era where X_H rises above $h + 3$. In this case, H would have no incentive to choose *life together*. The assistant then will also choose her *alternative* and *life together* will effectively evaporate.

⁷Importantly, while this may indeed be money, here it is not expressed with monetary units, but rather in terms of utility.

⁸I assume risk-neutrality. Incorporating risk aversion would, in this model, make *life together* even less appealing since the *alternative* has no probabilities associated with it. In the real world, however, choosing one or the other, depending on the individual's starting point, could be equally uncertain. As such, the effects of risk aversion have an ambiguous outcome. In that sense, it is simpler to assume risk neutrality

⁹Notice that there is no situation where *community* will have a value of 2. This is simply a quirk of the model.

¹⁰This implies that A is indifferent between *life together* and the *alternative* along the line illustrated below:

$$x_A = \frac{6p}{1+p}$$

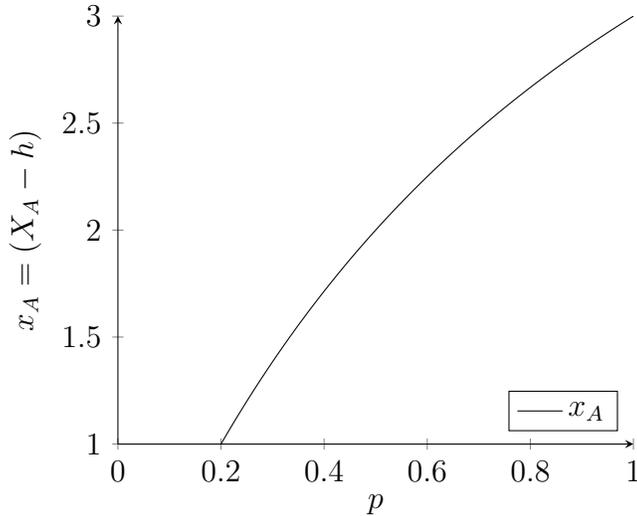


Figure 7: A chooses *life together* when $1 < x_H < \frac{6p}{1+p}$

A will choose *life together* for any (p, x_A) combination that lies *under* the curve. Note that this curve stands for the region where $w + 1 < X_A$, which is why the vertical axis begins there.

¹¹Of course x_L also increases. We might imagine that both X_H and X_L increase because h , the basic level of health ensured by the government, rises. But X_H increases more quickly because x_H is rising due to government programs.

I would point out something I have not incorporated into the model. There are very likely spill-over effects to L from H integrating more easily. One might imagine “society” becoming accustomed to having men and women with intellectual disabilities present, causing x_L to rise as well.

¹²There are two ways of seeing this as demonstrating the tenuousness of *full community*. The first and perhaps most obvious is that, as x_H rises, an exogenous p value may fall below the threshold for *full community*. The other interpretation is a more dynamic approach and is derived from a world where there is a pool of assistants (as well as many H and L core-members). If I were to plot the schedule of p -values with respect to N , the number of

assistants, it would be downward sloping, describing that the marginal p of each additional assistant is decreasing. This means that, as x_H increases and the minimum p required to achieve *full community* also rises, there will be a more limited number of assistants who meet that criteria and an organization such as l'Arche will be limited or even contract.

13

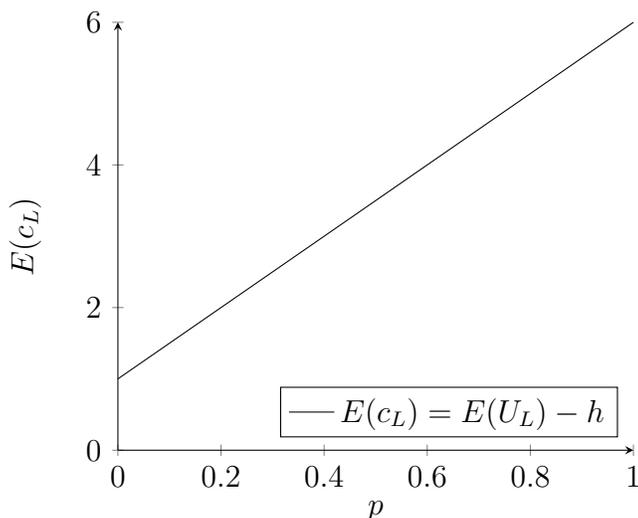


Figure 8: $E(c_L) = E(U_L) - h = 5p + 1$

This figure doesn't actually say much, except that the expected value of *community* to L is increasing with p . This is hardly surprising.

¹⁴To properly assess whether this is a "Potential Pareto Improvement", I would actually need to consider the gains/losses of A. This gets a little complicated, particularly in the following section where the l'Arche Federation guarantees an assistant in both periods. As such, I am simply comparing the gains to H and the losses to L.

¹⁵Furthermore, to continue with the story where there is a pool of assistants, recall that a rising p requirement restricts the size of an organization such as l'Arche, which bodes poorly for L.

¹⁶There were others who should also be considered founders, including David Harmon, and John Bloss

¹⁷Granted l'Arche could not always make that guarantee. There are a handful of very painful stories where l'Arche was not able to keep its promise to those core-members who helped found communities. These remain painful outliers in the history of l'Arche (my own research).

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