

described by Felix Padilla in his book, *Latino Ethnic Consciousness* (1985). The pluralists leaders, like Padilla's "emergent" group of Latinos, tend to define Latinos by their activism in the Latino movement while the clientelists, like Padilla's "traditional" group of Latinos, use much more of a cultural definition.¹⁰ This has allowed the Latino pluralists, for example, to organize a Latino caucus in the project with the more movement-oriented U.S. born and immigrant leadership and at the same time exclude non-activist U.S. and immigrant Latinos (in this case the majority) from their definition of Latino. The clientelists, in turn, have excluded ethnic Americano Latinos (Chicanos) from their definition of Latino, particularly if they have lost the Spanish language. A further twist in the Route 2 project has been the appointment of Anglo Americanos who do speak Spanish and are identified with the immigrants' problems to what amounts to honorary Latino status.

The division between Americano regardless of ideology or ethnicity and Latino immigrants is further complicated by the factor of class. The corridor population, while overwhelmingly working-class, is composed of various strata of the working class. Certainly the Americano leadership whether populist or pluralist tends to be skilled workers including many union members. A few of the leaders have moved into administrative positions and are approaching membership in the professional-managerial class. In contrast a great deal of the corridor's immigrant and clientelist population works in the secondary labor market with garment workers, domestic workers, and contract labor in significant numbers. Because of the tendency of labor market membership to be coterminous with immigrant/ethnic status, many of the class-strata-based conflicts in the corridor are perceived by residents of cooperatives as ethnic or race conflicts.¹¹

In the Route 2 project ethnicity is a major issue if for no other reason than language, a primary element which divides the population and prevents full direct interaction. Monolingualism is common across the population including both large numbers of English-speaking-only and Spanish-speaking-only individuals. Race, on the other hand, is an issue that seems to have been superimposed on the setting. Within the diverse Americano population it has rarely been an issue. It only appears as a programatic issue as the immigrant Latino population is integrated into the racialism of U.S. society.

Because of the class and racial fragmentation of the Latino population, ethnicity or race as analytic categories do not perfectly fit the Route 2 project situation. Examples of the misfit are found in the sometimes frayed relations between Chicanos in the project and the immigrant Latinos, and racial and ethnic tensions among immigrant Latinos, whites and blacks in racial terms and European, Indian and African in ethnic terms. The categories the immigrants used, Latino and Americano, while having significant ethnic content,

more clearly divide the class-strata expression of immigrant status than ethnic or racial groups from one another.

The emphasis on immigrant status represented in the *Americano/Latino* categories in the Route 2 project echoes a distinction described by Robert Miles (1982). Although Miles is writing about England, much of what he has written seems to apply to the Route 2 project.¹² He argues that the immigrant experience is extraordinarily powerful and is central to understanding social relations in society, particularly its role in the fractionalization of the working class. Beyond this Miles argues that while ethnicity with its material characteristics such as language can be a significant social factor, race (as opposed to racism) has no objective basis in the current historical period and is, therefore, an inappropriate category to be employed in understanding social relations. He sees race instead as a social construction of the racial state that is employed through the analytically important practice of racism.¹³

The central role of immigrant status is demonstrated in the Route 2 project. The tendency for the Latinos and Americanos to have different positions in the labor force introduces a number of structural elements into the project beyond the obvious one of variation in financial resources.¹⁴ Workers in the primary labor force usually work nine-to-five, five-days-a-week jobs. Workers in the secondary economy have irregular hours (Sassen-Koob, 1985). Some of the more marginalized workers in the cooperatives are day laborers who cannot easily control their work hours or plan their free time. In this setting, establishing meeting times is difficult. The Americanos usually want to meet on week-day nights. The Latinos are often unavailable on these nights and prefer instead either Friday night (the least likely night for bosses to want workers) or weekend meetings. Friday night meetings are a particular anathema to the Americanos.

Scheduling meetings is not the only problem. Autonomy in the workplace is also a factor. Having access to a phone during work hours is important to conducting the business of the cooperative. Since the Housing Authority is primarily a nine-to-five office with phone hours between 10:00 AM and 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM and 4:00 PM, the opportunities for communication are limited. Many of the Latinos work in very regulated environments with little opportunity to communicate with the outside world or take time off for meetings. Workers in the primary labor force have more freedom during working hours. Certainly those members of the cooperatives with administrative positions have a great deal more freedom.

The class fragmentation resulting from labor market participation is further complicated by class fragmentation within the Latino immigrant population. Different countries have sent various classes to the corridor. This difference is often accentuated by a further rural-urban split. For example, the Cubans in the project tend to be from major cities with *petite-bourgeoisie* or professional-

managerial backgrounds and college educations. The Cubans have tended, given their special treatment by the U.S. government, to integrate more quickly into the primary economy. The Mexicans in the project tend to be rural, have minimal education, and be more economically marginalized. The class-educational divisions have resulted in language fights among Latinos of different countries over the style of Spanish to be used. More than once the charge of racism has been leveled by one Latino against another.¹⁵ The charge sometimes suggests that the offenders have separated themselves from the group and considers themselves better than other Latinos.

Class difference was a major factor in a conflict that emerged when a group of very low-income Mexican residents, who lived in overcrowded quarters without open space, felt deliberately snubbed when they attended an organizing party in a much higher-income, spaciouly housed Cuban neighbor's backyard on a hot summer night.¹⁶ The Mexicans had held meetings in their modest apartments and didn't understand why the party was held outside. The reasons given were the heat and the fact that the varnish was drying on the newly refinished floors inside. The reasons did not satisfy the offended. Why did the host have to refinish his floors that weekend? Weren't they good enough to be invited inside?

RACISM

The very existence of multiethnicity in the project coupled with its location within the racial state gives rise to the question of the existence of racism among the corridor population. Most of the leadership in the development phase of the project was *Americano*. This alone created the suspicion of racism in some Latinos' minds. Every time a significant question is answered the answer is subject to scrutiny for racist intent or result. Is that look of disapproval or other action racially motivated? Why was an individual elected to the board? Whose unit was repaired or improved? Who was selected for a vacant unit? The issues never end. After discussing these and similar questions in general, the remainder of the chapter will examine a case involving the selection of a new member family for one of the cooperatives.

Discrimination can be intentional behavior or the unintentional consequence of the particular structure within which an act takes place (Feagin and Feagin, 1986). There were isolated incidents of intentional racist behavior in the project, but these were not the rule. Overt racism is not acceptable behavior in the project. At one point in the development of the cooperative a group of Anglo residents approached the board and demanded their cooperative be divided into two areas with one largely Latino and one largely Anglo. The Anglos rationalized that the split would provide internal cohesion. The largely *Americano* board saw the Anglos' request as racially based. Moreover, the failure to in-

clude the two areas in the cooperative would have made the purchase of the largely Latino area financially infeasible. The leadership insisted that everyone should benefit and no one should be displaced. The co-op was not divided.

The issue of structural racism is more complex, but by the most obvious measures one would have to say that the Latinos received more of the benefits of the project than the Americanos. Certainly an analysis of subsidy dollars would lead to that conclusion. All families in need received Section 8 subsidies.¹⁷ The Latino families tended to have a greater need for these subsidies. All overcrowded families received units appropriate to their family size. The Latino families tended to be more overcrowded than the Americano families. A high percentage of rehabilitation funds were spent creating large bedroom apartments out of smaller ones. Four, five, and six bedroom apartments were created for specific Latino families. These benefits, however, also indirectly benefitted the Americanos. They made it possible for everyone to avoid displacement and become part of the cooperative.

The analysis is also complex when the burdens are considered. The original Americano leadership did most of the work that made the project possible even though they received less of the direct benefits. These burdens, however, are balanced by the fact that the Americanos tended to have nicer units than the Latinos to start with. This contributed to their greater willingness to participate. Also the Americanos suffered less of the inconvenience of the rehabilitation including the inconvenience of moving to a larger unit. Americanos are more likely to pay a monthly charge that while higher in a dollar amount (the maximum) represents a smaller percentage of their income than the members on Section 8. The Americanos are less likely, moreover, to suffer the indignities of participating in a subsidy program. Research has shown that some people value their privacy over housing quality and affordability (Hollingshead and Rogler 1963). A researcher could find this sentiment in the Route 2 corridor. Although the Latinos gained more they also had to give up more of their privacy to the Housing Authority and HUD regulations.¹⁸

Any unevenness to benefits and burdens in the project cannot be isolated from the greater variance in the larger society. The structural racism of the larger society penetrates the project creating inherent inequalities in the corridor population that no project by itself could overcome. One of the most salient elements of this is that the United States is not officially a bilingual nation. English speakers have an extraordinary advantage over non-English speakers in the society. The lack of bilingualism in the larger society has created a constant pressure to have a native English speaker as president so that person can represent the cooperative to the outside world. In dealing with the politicians or the Housing Authority on complex matters such as Section 8 regulations, English is virtually a requirement. Recently the Latino majority on the board of an

eighty-percent Latino cooperative pushed to have *Americanos* be president and vice-president of their board. Only at the insistence of the *Americanos* did a Latina unsure of her English, who is the acknowledged leader of the cooperative, assume the presidency.

WHO IS THE RACIST?

Members of one of the cooperatives encountered the issue of racism in selecting a family to occupy a two-bedroom non-Section 8 unit vacated by an *Americano* family. The cooperative had to choose between three families: a Chinese family consisting of a mother and teenage son; an immigrant Latino family consisting of a husband and wife and two young children; and a mixed family consisting of a pregnant Anglo wife and a Latino immigrant husband. The Chinese woman was an accountant with a substantial income although still within the moderate income (120% of the county median family income) requirements. The Latino family husband, the spokesperson for his family, was a sheet metal worker. The mixed family Anglo wife, the spokesperson for her family, was a bilingual school teacher with an organizing background in Latino communities. The Latino family was a friend of a Latino member of the cop's board of directors and the Chinese and Anglo applicants were friends of an *Americano* member of the board.

This cooperative had become increasing Latino over time and some of the *Americanos* were worried about the cooperative losing its multiethnic character. Many people who moved into the cooperatives whether *Americano* or Latino were friends of current residents. Some of the *Americanos* saw the increasing Latinoization of the cooperative through these friendship and kin networks as a problem. When friends of *Americanos* were chosen for membership over friends of Latinos, some Latinos saw this as problem. In both the *Americano* and Latino segments of the membership there were murmurs of racism. The non-Section 8 case brought the issue to a head.

Three Latino and three *Americano* members of the cooperative acting as the membership committee and the two Latino neighbors of the vacant unit interviewed the applicants. Of those present four people were on the board, two Latinas and two *Americanas*. Only one person at the meeting, an *Americano*, backed the Chinese family. He argued that the accountant had skills the cooperative desperately needed and that over the time the cooperative had been interviewing no one with this skill level had applied. A Latino member replied that the family didn't need the apartment since the woman had plenty of income and could live anywhere. The *Americano* said that was exactly the point. The accountant wanted to live in the cooperative and would work for it. He argued that if need was the primary criteria, particularly in non-Section 8 units, the cooperative would soon be without the skills to operate.

All the Latinos in the room including the neighbors backed the Latino family. The friend of the Latino applicants had been on the phone recruiting support and had brought another friend to the meeting whom she had previously and successfully supported for admission into the cooperative. Since this person had not attended a meeting for several years, her presence at the meeting angered some of the Americanos who felt the meeting was being stacked. The Latinos argued that the Latino family needed the apartment more than the other families and that the husband's skills would be valuable in supervising the maintenance of the cooperative. He promised to do the repairs himself. The husband and the family's friend said the wife in the family had secretarial and accounting skills, but the wife was very quiet and spoke very little in the interview.

The Americanos reacted by saying that they had heard the man's speech before and that very few of those making this speech ever kept their promise to work. The cooperative had a lot of men with manual skills who failed to be active. This made the applicant's friend angry; she declared she knew the family and promised they would work for the cooperative. She put her credibility on the line. Underlying the Americanos' reaction but unspoken, however, was the memory of two friends of this member who had previously been admitted after similar promises, but who had not kept their word.

The remaining two Americanos (one Anglo and one African-American) backed the mixed Anglo/Latino family. They believed that, like the Latino family, the mixed family needed housing. In addition they saw the organizing skills of the wife as more important to the cooperative than any other skill. Active cooperative members needed help encouraging participation in the cooperative. The women's bilingual and teaching skills could be employed to prepare a newsletter. The cooperative had wanted a newsletter for some time, but few people had the skill to prepare a bilingual newsletter and none of them had made it their priority.

An Americana populist at the meeting believed the Anglo woman applicant would also encourage multiculturalism in the cooperative and act as a multicultural mediator. The Americana did not see the husband in the Latino family in that role although he was also bilingual. In the Americana's mind the Anglo woman's marriage to a Latino and her long-time involvement in Latino communities confirmed her abilities for the role. She regarded the husband in the Latino family as part of the Latino culture and not likely to be a prime mover towards multiculturalism. Since the Chinese family was not bilingual, it also could not bridge the gap between the cultural groups.

The tense meeting became tenser when an Americana, reacting to the perceived attempt to stack the meeting, asked whether the Latinos at the meeting were voting for the Latino applicants because they were Latino. The Latinos

answered the question negatively and reiterated their reasons for supporting the family. The family was the most in need, the family's skills would be useful to the cooperative, and they were the neighbors' choice.

The Latino family received a majority of the votes at the meeting, but among the attending board members the vote was split two to two. While the board usually goes along with the committee, the ultimate authority to choose rests with the board. Consequently the three members of the seven-person co-op board who did not attend would have to make the final decision. Two of the three remaining board members were Latino. It was decided at the committee meeting that the highest ranking member of the board in attendance, the Americana vice-president, should hold a meeting with the absent board members the next night to make the final decision.¹⁹

One of the Latino members could not attend the meeting. The other two members came at different times and ended up talking individually with the vice president. She described the three applicants. Both of the board members voted for the mixed family, and the family was awarded the unit.

The Latino member of the board who had supported her friends was clearly upset at the decision. She felt she made a mistake allowing the Americana to convene the meeting and that pressure had been put on the Latino member to vote for the mixed couple. She withdrew from activity in the cooperative, but after several talks with the Americanos involved (talks that would likely not have taken place at an early point in the development of the cooperatives) resumed full involvement. The board resolved to create a new waiting list for the non-Section 8 units to reduce the chances of such a problem recurring.

Almost everyone involved in this event believed initially that racism played a part in the interview meeting. There was no agreement about the nature of the racism. The Latinos saw the Americanos as anti-Latino and voting for their own, and the Americanos saw the Latinos as biased in favor of Latinos and voting for their own. The Latino members viewed the Latino member who broke ranks and voted for the mixed family as a "dupe" of the Americanos, a term which had been applied before in the history of the project to Latinos who consorted with the Americanos. They were regarded as tokens or only Latinos on the outside. In the most dramatic incident, a Latino distributing fliers in his cooperative had been accused of being paid by the Americanos. He had to go home and get his pay stub to convince his accusers that he had another job and was just volunteering to help the co-op.

THE CHARGE OF RACISM

What the charge of racism means in a multiethnic organization like a Route 2 cooperative is not entirely clear.

If the intentional bias charges were both true —

In the larger society Anglos are the majority and as a group the purveyors of the racial state and racism. Minority groups who suffer from racism and the racial state are seen by some as having a legitimate right to assert their group interests in the larger society and to demand affirmative treatment to redress past and continuing wrongs (Omni and Winant, 1986).²⁰ In the cooperatives, the division between the majority immigrant Latinos and minority ethnically mixed Americanos confuses the usual societal debate.

National minority groups that are subject to discrimination in the larger society, including Chicanos, form a minority Americano population in the cooperatives. Can the immigrant Latinos claim an affirmative action preference for Latinos within the project without being seen as racists? To a U.S. African-American member of the cooperative, for example, the preference for Latinos can look like a new version of the same racist game. The Americanos claimed not to be anti-Latino but pro-multicultural. Can Americanos support a claim for affirmative action for Americanos on the grounds that they are seeking multiculturalism in the cooperative? If they are saying in effect that the Latino quota was filled by past practices which increased the percentage of Latinos in the cooperative, that this unit was an Americano unit, and vote against a Latino for that reason, are they being racist? Can a bias for multiculturalism be seen as racism?

If nepotism controlled judgment —

It may be that intentional bias had nothing to do with the decision and that one or both sides were simply favoring their friends and received the support of their friends in their effort. The reality of the situation in the project and in the larger racial state is that each ethnic/racial group is likely to have people of their group as friends. Trying to help a friend and friends helping friends who are helping friends is likely to have a biasing effect. The activity may have no racial motive, be unintentional, but have the effect of creating biased results. It has been argued that nepotism in this form, the "good-old-boy network," is the basis of racism (Feagin and Feagin, 1986). Here the story is only complicated by the presence of numerous groups that suffer from exclusion from these networks.

If different criteria controlled judgment —

The Latinos stressed the applicants' level of need in their discussion. As one of the Latinos put it, "helping people in need is what the cooperative is all about." The Americanos emphasized the skills of the applicants and the needs of the cooperative. Their position is that once eligibility is established, skills should be considered as the primary factor or there will be no cooperative to help people

in need. Here the issue becomes one of structural racism. Structurally, Latinos have less economic and educational opportunity than Americanos, particularly Anglo Americanos (Barrera 1979). If the Americano criterion of skill level is used, then selection is likely to favor Americanos. Conversely if the criterion is need, the opposite is true. Selection results are less clear when national minority groups are brought into the picture.

Given the limited number of vacancies in the cooperative, there is no external reason for structural racism to express itself in the cooperative. Here, however, the issue was not just skill, but a particular type of skill. The Latinos saw manual labor skills as important while the Americanos stressed mental labor skills. When the type of skill becomes a criterion and a choice is made from an applicant pool largely representative of the present residents of the cooperative, the likelihood of this structural tendency to express itself is greatly enhanced. The claimed importance of mental skills is certainly subject to skepticism by the listener whose group will be negatively affected by its application.²¹

The issue of skill level as a criterion also raises the question of training of members of the cooperatives. Whose responsibility is the training? Who designs the training and who does the training? Do the residents with greater skill levels have a special responsibility to train the less skilled members or is it an overall cooperative responsibility? Training has taken place from time to time. Members who participate are becoming more sophisticated over time. The issue is partly one of short-term versus long-term participation. In the long-term people can be trained. In the short-term the skills are needed.

If stacking the meeting and the reaction controlled judgment—

In the cooperative majority rules. The populists, however, believe the rule of the majority should be part of an open process where decisions are based on meritocracy. Can the societal history of racism justify stacking the meeting? I have been in groups where it has been argued when there have been complaints against such tactics that "it's about time Anglos understood what it feels like." Can the Americanos' definition of meritocracy be seen as biased in itself and justify the Latinos stacking a meeting? What is usually argued is that merit is only a proper criteria up to that necessary to do the task. Beyond that affirmative action can come into play (Maquire 1980). If the meeting were stacked, can the mixed ethnic Americanos justify violating their own rule of meritocracy and vote against the stacker's friends? This would seem to corrupt the process even further.

CONCLUSION

The extraordinary number of differences both material and ideological among the Route 2 cooperative members demonstrates how difficult it can be to form

the community necessary for a cooperative to function close to the ideal. Members must successfully work through a great many issues to make the cooperative work. The lesson learned in the Los Angeles cooperatives is that this takes time and commitment to the success of the cooperative. The seeds of conflict are ever present. Time is no guarantee because conflict can be crippling, but it is necessary. Time will not be enough if the will to make the cooperative work is fully dissipated.

Another lesson is that the presence of conflict in a cooperative should not be equated with failure. Conflict can be the basis for the achievement of a new level of understanding. Those in regulator positions with governmental oversight power for cooperatives must know that the residents of cooperatives must go through a process of change and adjustment to one another. Our current society is not one of direct democracy or close community. The residents of the cooperative must learn the skills of direct democracy and community. The residents of the cooperative must learn when to react angrily or laugh with friendly tolerance at a cultural *faux pas*. They must negotiate and renegotiate the limits of each others' ideological space, see what works and what does not, and learn who to trust and who is not trustworthy.

Even with this knowledge, the suspicion and distance created and recreated by the racial state cannot easily be overcome. Racism overshadows all the other questions of ethnicity, class, and immigration status. Racism is omnipresent in the larger society and tears down the community constructed within the cooperatives. The implication of bias is possible in nearly every significant act. The whistle cannot be blown, and everyone cannot simply agree to avoid behavior that could be interpreted as racist. Yet the whistle must be blown.

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NOTES

- ¹ Racial differences among the Latinos have generated charges of racism within the Latino populations. One dark skinned Latina often makes charges of racism against fairer Latinos.
- ² This statement should be qualified. The multicultural image was largely in the Anglo world. Among Chicanos activists in the city, the project was often characterized in the early days as a Cubano project because of the original Cuban leadership.
- ³ For a discussion of the authoritarian populist rather than progressive populist approach, see Omi and Winant (1986), p. 120.
- ⁴ For a discussion of the racial state see Omi & Winant (1986). Omi and Winant set out the long history of racism in the United States and discuss the role of the state in the establishment, maintenance, and redefinition of racial categories, what Miles (1982) calls racialization. Their position is similar to those theorists who see the state as the locus and product of class struggle and, therefore, relatively autonomous from the bourgeois (Carnoy, 1984). Omi and Winant see the racial state as a focus of "racial" conflict in which distinct state institutions intervene in a contradictory fashion as pressures are placed on them. Overall, however, as with the relative autonomy theorists position on class, their position is that racism underlies the state's actions.
- ⁵ The racial state and the attack on ethnic groups requires self-defense. The stress on one's own needs is an inevitable result. The creation of the category "race" and the fractionalization of the working class is the result (Miles 1982).
- ⁶ There are Americanos who also share a clientelist approach, but they are in the minority in this group.
- ⁷ The patron is a "gatekeeper" who stands between the community and the state and connects the peasant to the larger market (Powell 1970). John Powell indicates that the patron's "basic function is to relate to community-oriented individuals who want to stabilize or improve their life chances, but who lack economic security and political connections, with nation-oriented individuals..." (p. 413). The test of reciprocity is the ability of the patron to improve the life chances of the individual or more likely the family. Empowerment in this context is a term often used to evaluate the ability to survive and not, as the pluralists use it, to compete (Friedmann 1988, p. 116).
- ⁸ Low income have similar clientelism on Immigration status in the U.S.
- ⁹ This is true even with immigrants who believe they will return to their country of origin. To some extent they have to adjust to conditions in the United States.
- ¹⁰ Padilla sees the traditionalists as pluralists and the emergent group in an-

other category. On this point we disagree. I see the difference between the groups being a matter of tactics. They both seek benefits from the state. What is different is that the traditionalists play more within the rules and the agenda set by the state than the emergent group.

¹¹. There is voluminous material on the subject of ethnicity, race, and class. See for example the excellent collection of articles in Rex and Mason (1986).

¹². The global phenomenon of restructuring contributes to making this juxtaposition possible. See Soja (1989) p. 188.

¹³. For a further discussion of this point and its implications see Fields (1982). It is important to note that Miles sees racism as important if not central to societal analysis. If, however, I am correct that racism is not a primary internal factor in the Route 2 project, then racism itself does not come into play.

¹⁴. This is somewhat offset internally by the subsidization of the monthly carrying charges of the lower-income residents. The housing in Route 2 is sometimes treated as transitional housing on the way to unregulated ownership and is employed as part of the immigration process. Over the years that Caltrans owned the housing many immigrants moved on as they successfully integrated into the economy. This process contributed to a collection and over-representation of those who did not have this success. The Americanos have also gone through a similar process of passing through this housing on their way to unregulated ownership, however, they tend to have a head start in the process.

¹⁵. Interestingly I rarely heard the charge publicly made against an Americano although the feeling existed in the Latino population.

¹⁶. Nationalism is also a factor in Route 2. Long held national animosity clearly played a role in what is called motivation. How one approaches a problem is a result of history. Nationalism in this context shares a great deal with racism.

¹⁷. This is a subsidy provided by the federal government to very low income (50% of the county median family income or less) residents. The residents pays 30% of their adjusted gross income in monthly charges. The government pays the differences between that sum and the total monthly charges.

¹⁸. One of the biggest issues in the research and in the Route 2 project involves how many people live in a home. The Section 8 program has regulations on overcrowding and being underhoused. Those in the Section 8 program can be forced to move from their existing homes to an "appropriate" sized unit.

¹⁹. The other board members at the interview said they were too busy to come to yet another meeting that week.

²⁰. For a discussion of the affirmative action debate see Maguire (1980).

²¹. There is some basis for the argument that need alone will detrimentally effect co-op participation. The boards of the cooperative tend to be made up of people who are either non-section 8 residents or people towards the top of the Section 8 income criteria. In the cooperative in question, for example, the ma-

majority of the residents on the board are non-section 8 members. Among those who are Section 8 eligible all but one are in the higher income group. That one person just suffered a personal tragedy which greatly reduced the family's income. Whether mental versus manual skill is preferable is more debatable although clearly both mental and manual skills are required to make the cooperative work. It should be made clear that the Americanos are talking about skill and not capacity. However, either interpretation could be made by a listener to the argument.

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COLLECTIVE JUSTICE AND COOPERATIVE STRUCTURES: DISCIPLINING DEVIANCE IN HOUSING COOPERATIVES

Stuart Henry

Among those who have examined or who advocate collective organizations there is considerable debate about whether such structures are sustainable when set in the broader context of a capitalist society. Many of the issues raised by commentators relate to attempts by collectives to distance themselves from contamination by the non-collectivist ideology and structure of capitalist society. Central to the debate are: how to avoid hierarchy; whether specialization is inevitably undermining; how to prevent cliques and factionalism; how to maintain commitment and full participation; whether differential reward systems are always undesirable; what relations to have with non-collectivist organizational structures; and what to do about uncooperative members such as the "free rider."

Much can be learned about this whole range of issues by focussing on the last. The way an organization deals with its deviants can tell us much about its internal social structure and operational practices. In this chapter I will explore the way some British housing cooperatives struggled with their internal control problems and how, as a result of failures at collective control, they were often undermined and indeed transformed into hierarchist organizational forms.

THE GENERAL IDEA OF COLLECTIVE JUSTICE

As part of their overall implementation of alternative ideological formations to those of hierarchy, specialization, competition and profit incentives, cooperatives maintain internal normative order through informal collective social control. Instead of constructing their internal disciplinary procedures on the third-party interventionist model of the quasi-court or tribunal, as do most capitalist companies (Henry, 1983; 1987a), cooperatives rely on controls that have more in common with the dispute settlement procedures common in acephalous, non-industrial societies (Roberts, 1979; Rothschild-Whitt, 1979; Henry, 1985; 1988).

The cooperatives that I surveyed¹ generally developed normative orders similar to those that Abel (1982) describes as consistent with the needs of decentralized socialism, and to those found by Schwartz (1954; 1957) in his study of the

Israeli kibbutz. Efforts at social control, like those in the kibbutz Schwartz (1954: 476) studied, "must be considered informal rather than legal." Written rules were thought to be incompatible with the kinds of spontaneous, collective decision-making that provide the context in which individuals can be fully and personally responsible, so rules were not fixed or written down, except in the very general sense of an overall policy objective.

Instead of celebrating formal rules and procedures, cooperative members see control in terms of everyday ongoing relations which are their own discipline. The idea is that people should conform to the cooperative tasks because they want to do so rather than because there are imperatives directing them. There is an emphasis on preventing the rise of disciplinary issues by incorporating ongoing interpersonal evaluations as part of normal working relationships. Rather than establishing a separate control specialism, cooperative members generally have no system of supervision, finding, as one member I interviewed said, "that the best form of control is...through open discussion, with criticisms of each other in as constructive a way as possible."

What is important for the present analysis is not only that cooperatives organize themselves in a way that is consistent with their overall ideological direction, but that this organization is both rooted and reflected in the members' discourse about social control. In other words the members' "control talk" (Cohen, 1985) must be supportive of the cooperative ideology. Unlike the accounts of managers and employees of those industrial and commercial organizations that model their discipline on capitalist legality (Henry, 1987a; 1987b), the discourse of members of cooperatives does not talk of law, policing, courts, or punishment. Instead they account for control in terms of responsibility to other co-op members and of deviants who "failed to take this responsibility."

If control issues persist, however, a more formalized arena is constituted. For example, in most of the co-ops that I studied, a decision about someone who had broken the co-op rules was made by a general meeting of the cooperative. Consistent with the findings of Schwartz (1957) and Rosner (1973), an organized forum was found to better focus the control effort, but the sanction remained one of collective opinion. As long as these non-capitalistic control forms maintain the internal order of the cooperative, then there is no challenge to them. However, sufficient evidence exists on collective social forms to show that when persistent problems arise in collective social forms set in capitalist contexts, there is a tendency for the collective control form to be displaced by a form of capitalist legality. Weisbrod (1980: 11), for example, showed how nineteenth century American utopian communistic religious societies eventually used an orthodox legal framework to "create and defend their quite unorthodox institutions." Similarly, Schwartz (1954: 473) has argued that when disturbing behavior is not adequately controlled through informal processes, law develops at the expense of

collective justice, in the form of control by "specialized functionaries who are socially delegated the task of intra-group control." For others (Shapiro, 1976), this tendency towards "legalistic" control co-exists with informal controls.

The fundamental question that concerns me here is whether the construction of capitalist legality by cooperatives as a form of social control is the result of some inevitable tendency in all collective organizations when their control problems become intractable, or whether this development is the result of contamination from the wider capitalist context in which the collective is set. In addition, I am concerned with the question of whether the development of capitalistic rational-legal control forms undermines the cooperative as a cooperative. To address these issues adequately is beyond the scope of the evidence I have.² However, in order to tentatively illustrate the issue I will focus on the development of discipline in housing cooperatives and on a case study of one particular housing cooperative which had experienced a problem of member delinquency in the form of rent arrears and a related problem of the failure of members to participate in co-op activities. Examination of this case study will suggest the way subsequent analysis might proceed with a broader research base. To begin the analysis, however, it is important to review the assumptions about human relations and social control made by those who advocate cooperative collective organizational structure, in order to gain a broader understanding of how supporters of collective organizational structures generally envision the control of member deviance and delinquency.

THE PRINCIPLES OF COLLECTIVE JUSTICE

In this review, I will first discuss the assumptions about human nature by advocates of collective justice. The key issue here will be whether people are seen to be basically socially responsible or whether they are viewed as naturally differentiated. Second, I will examine the view taken of social order; whether the division of labor and occupational specialization necessarily imply hierarchy. Third will be a discussion of the nature of rules in collective structures and in particular, whether these are always informal, spontaneously created, and diffusely applied, or whether there are also occasions where formalization and legalism take precedence. Fourth, I will discuss the perspectives that collectives take toward rule-breaking and deviance. Here it will be important to resolve the question of whether deviance is seen as individualized or as part of the wider relations of disputing within the collective. Also important will be the views taken by cooperatives about the cause or causes of their members' deviance. Fifth will be an examination of the procedures advocated for and used by collectives for administering discipline and justice. As with the discussion of rules, it will be important to look at whether procedures are informal and col-

lectively administered or whether they can also be formal, administered by elite groups, or even by individuals. Finally, I shall examine the philosophy of sanctioning advocated to enforce the rules in collective structures. I shall try to determine whether this is designed to celebrate the individual rule-breaker as an indicator of the need for organizational growth, to encourage individual reform, or whether the moral condemnation such as shaming, ridicule and ostracism are used to deter unacceptable behavior. I will begin with the assumptions about human nature and social order, before I go on to discuss the dimensions relating to deviance, discipline and justice.

Of vital importance to any discussion of deviance and discipline is a consideration of the way individual human agents are perceived and the organizational structure in which they are seen as acting. Although some commentators on collective behavior have taken a pessimistic view of human nature (Olson, 1965) and others have pointed to its utilitarian roots, classical advocates are more optimistic about social cooperation being an essential human trait (Kropotkin, 1902). For Marx, humans are intrinsically social agents, potentially open to development and change under the right structural conditions (Geras, 1983). They are fundamentally social beings who create the world in which they live, but not under conditions they have freely chosen for themselves: "Rather on terms immediately existing, given and handed down to them" (Marx, 1852: 115). An even more radically individualist position was taken by Proudhon (1876) who viewed the cooperative human spirit as secreted within a person, imminent, constituting not only human essence but the essence of society itself.

The view of social order taken by advocates of cooperative organization is coalescent with, and indeed cannot be separated from, their view of human nature. For Kropotkin, "man...was not naturally solitary...He was naturally social and his natural form of social organization is that based on voluntary cooperation" (Woodcock, 1977: 18). Indeed, the freedom of individuals, argues Wieck (1978: 230), is "defined not by rights and liberties but by the functioning of society as a network of voluntary cooperation," such that order is "constituted freely through manifold agreements, contracts, negotiation." This view flows from the nature of human agents choosing voluntarily to cooperate and results in a society composed of a plurality of organic groups.

A central idea of this view of social order is that government should be decentralized, emphasis being placed on face-to-face contacts and shared decision-making among all of its members. "Each group is to be small enough that all members know each other" and size should be such that people can "relate to one another in a variety of ways" (Gaus and Chapman, 1978: xxxiv). It is argued that this leads to the strengthening of connecting bonds between people and the elimination of the alienation which accrues from impersonal structures that emphasize separation and fragmentation. Woodcock (1977: 22) says that

in a collective structure of the kind we have been considering, decision-making authority begins among individuals and small groups: "The most important unit of society...is that in which people cooperate directly to fulfill their immediate needs. Nobody can assess these better than those that experience them."

A crucial issue here is whether the authority for decision-making resides in the individual or the group/collective. Some, such as Rothschild-Whitt (1979: 509), argue that authority resides not in the individual but in the collective:

Decisions become authoritative in collective organizations to the extent that they derive from a process in which all members have the right to full and equal participation...there is a "consensus process" in which all the members participate in the *collective* formulation of problems and negotiation of decisions...All major policy decisions are decided by the collective as a whole. Only decisions which appear to carry the consensus of the group behind them, carry the weight of moral authority...are taken as binding and legitimate...Ultimate authority is based in the collective as a whole, not in the individual.

Indeed, although decision theory has been invoked to show how collective decisions differ from the sum of individual inputs and may have unintended outcomes, the notion that collectives make decisions is open to the charge of reification. Collectives are abstract constructs which merely appear to make decisions; beneath the appearance is the reality that only individuals can make decisions because only individuals have human agency. Moreover, that these decisions intermesh and also have unintended consequences is no grounds for attributing the choice to an abstraction. This agency-based view recognizes that individuals are free within the collective structure to deliberate in the exercise of their own responsibility on an equal basis with fellow members, but it does not simultaneously deny their agency by expropriating it to an abstraction. Thus in contrast to Rothschild-Whitt, Ritter (1978: 132) argues that,

the one most crucial...justification of authority is their commitment to the overriding value of rational deliberation, understood as choosing and acting on the basis of evidence and arguments that one has evaluated for oneself.

He argues that only when individuals have freely exercised their own authority, can the process of sharing individual decisions begin. From such sharing derives the consensus: "All members of society must exercise authority before its directives can deserve support" (Ritter, 1978: 135; Ritter, 1980). Similarly, as Tifft and Sullivan (1980: 47) say, "A truly valid and meaningful social order is one which is voluntarily constructed by each person freely entering relationships with others, constantly renewing or dissolving agreements based on each person's own desire."

One feature of social order that can undermine this free individual process of participation in collective decision-making occurs when individuals accrue specialist knowledge or when they adopt increasingly specialist organizational roles. Some believe that the tendency for a minority to rule, stems from allowing individual differences to be used as a resource. This is subsequently enhanced by specialization, which itself develops into hierarchy. According to Rothschild-Whitt (1979: 517), in order to avoid such a development some cooperatives, "aim to eliminate the division of labor that separates intellectual workers from manual workers, administrative tasks from performance tasks," by creating a series of generalized jobs, holistic roles and non-specialized functions. As in many communal structures (See Rayner, 1988) this is achieved through job rotation, internal education and task sharing.

However, not all agree that a division of labor is necessarily detrimental, nor that it inevitably means hierarchy (See, for example, Unger, 1975). Indeed, as Gaus and Chapman (1978: xxxv) argue,

The purpose of occupational specialization is to foster development of some aspects of men's many-sided selves to the fullest possible extent. Specialization promotes romantic expression... Thus respect for human differences is preserved without... domination.

At a broader level of analysis, whether the basic unit of a collective society is described as the parish, commune, workshop, cooperative or collective, the links between this unit and others is typically envisaged as administrative rather than governmental. The workplace or neighborhood is the vital nucleus of social life and associations formed around these arenas of interaction federate loosely, where they have interests in common, to discuss ways in which to cooperate and to arbitrate differences. "The whole world becomes a federation of federations, bringing together every small community in a kind of symbiotic unity like a great structure of coral" (Woodcock, 1977: 26). As Tifft and Sullivan (1980: 152) summarize it,

The social organization of these networks has been envisioned as communes, councils, syndicates, people living and working, mutually, unselfishly aiding one another. The organization of work/life has been envisioned as decentralized among face-to-face interacting individuals who arrange their order autonomously and equally. Human society is to be arranged into a series of autonomous communities which can voluntarily form federations or links with one another... The criterion of being is the spirituality that connects one's life with all life.

This is not to say, of course, that there are not splits and divisions but these may be seen as constructive growth enabling the collective to survive in a changing environment.

According to scholars who have theorized about the nature of rules in decentralized collective structures, these are designed to reflect both the interests of the sum of individual members, and to serve consensually agreed goals. The rules or guiding principles cannot be constructed by anyone other than those whose interests they directly affect since only the person subject to possible harm knows how much of that risk they wish to absorb and how much they wish to control. Abel (1982: 702), for example, argues that risk control is best achieved through a cooperative structure in which each person is "able to control the risk to which he or she is exposed" and where people share equally, "those risks we collectively choose to encounter" (Abel, 1982: 710).

Nor can the rules be fixed in advance or written down, since, in the ideal structure, there should be no limits on spontaneous decision-making because this is the only guarantee that members are always fully responsible decision-makers. Indeed, for Unger (1976: 202-3) all who have "communitarian aspirations...will look for an alternative to legality in the notion of a community bound by shared experience and capable of developing its own self-revising customs or principles of interaction." Similarly, for Rothschild-Whitt (1979: 513), "No written manual of rules and procedures exists in most collectives, though norms of participation clearly obtain."

However, the relative absence of formal rules does not, it must be emphasized, deny the existence of informal rules governing activities taken to be deviant, as we shall see later. Indeed, that some behaviors are taken as deviant is itself a reflection of these informal rules and norms and insofar as these behaviors are acted on by other members, therein the informal rules are constituted.

What counts as deviance is that which offends the collective interests, irrespective of whether a specific rule has been broken or not. At a general level, "The abuse of persons and anything that tends toward creating patterns of 'enslavement' or that hinders the realization and continuity of free cooperation is wrong in such a society" (Wieck, 1978: 232). Behavior which goes against the cooperative spirit of taking full responsibility for one's actions in a socially aware way, is considered deviant. It includes any number of specific actions and can be called by any member of the cooperative; indeed, not to call attention to deviance would itself be seen as avoidance of responsibility and may invoke its own questions. Examples of rule-breaking behavior are: failure to participate in activities of the cooperative such as meetings; unwillingness to help other members if asked; attempting to create personal advantage at the expense of other members; and failure to contribute an equivalent amount of effort. Indeed, as Taylor (1982: 120-23) states in his review of communes and other intentional communities, "a central problem was inequality of work effort." For Olsen such "free riding" in any structure where ben-

efits are available on the basis of need or on an equal basis, independent of contribution, is tantamount to theft (Olson, 1965).

The cause of such behavior is attributed to individuals themselves since they are responsible for their own action. However, the assumptions discussed above regarding human's essential social being imply a recognition that any particular incident may be the outcome of the shared responsibility of many rather than being only the responsibility of one individual. It is such a stance that leads to the celebration of deviance, since other members of the collective can take some responsibility for their own contribution to another member's uncooperative behavior.

Gurvitch (1947), like Ehrlich (1913) long before him, pointed out that in any social structure or substructure it is possible to discern a number of levels of formality whereby control is administered. This is no different for collective structures such as cooperatives. As I mentioned earlier, some commentators have generalized about decision-making in collectives (Schwartz, 1954). Rothschild-Whitt (1979: 513) has observed, "Decisions...tend to be conducted in an ad hoc manner...are generally settled as the case arises, and are suited to the peculiarities of the particular case." Importantly, informal control involves, as Godwin observed in the 18th century, the "inspection of every man over the conduct of his neighbors" (Woodcock, 1962: 83-84).

But procedures are not limited to purely informal, face-to-face interpersonal messages. When disturbing behavior is not adequately controlled through the informal process, an organized forum focusses members' attention more sharply (Schwartz, 1957; Rosner, 1973).

Sanctioning in collective structures is designed to bring the individuals to accept responsibility for their own behavior by reminding them of their connectedness to other members of the collective. The major sanctions used are collective persuasion through approval or disapproval, expressed through public opinion, personal appeals, withdrawal of cooperation, ostracism, shaming and expulsion. The general philosophy behind each of these controls is to restore the wholeness of social existence to the collective after it has been breached by a person's failure to accept responsibility and connectedness. Informal procedure operates as a continuous control on each member's behavior and one which constitutes "a censorship of the most irresistible nature," provided that it is based upon "the spontaneous decisions of the understanding" (Godwin, cited by Woodcock, 1962: 83-84).

If this series of informal sanctions fails, collective justice can get very rough. Even relatively mild ongoing criticism can be an effective inducement to radical self-discipline. Collective persuasion can either work to correct the individual's behavior, such that the connections are reestablished positively, or else they can lead to the member deciding that they do not want to take that

responsibility, in which case they may voluntarily leave the cooperative. As Godwin again astutely observes, "Under the unequivocal disapprobation and observant eye of public judgement" they are "inevitably obliged...either to reform or emigrate." (Godwin, 1946: 211; 340).

It is not always only an individual who takes responsibility for breaking the cooperative spirit of responsibility and connectedness to others. The other members also share this responsibility. Wieck (1978: 234) recognizes this when he says "reparation would not always be exclusively a demand made on a guilty person, but a task for the community concurrently." Elsewhere I have described this approach as *celebrative* (Henry, 1983: 94-5; 179-219) to reflect the view that deviance and delinquency, rather than necessarily being seen negatively may sometimes, and ideally often, positively contribute toward the cooperative's need to revise its relationships in order to adapt to changing circumstances. In one version of this deviant behavior may be no more than an indicator of new direction and the deviant, a kind of Durkheimian functional rebel (Durkheim, 1953). Indeed, Melville (1972: 130) has pointed out that where there is no general agreement about a problematic behavior, it is "a sign that part of the group should leave and form another community." This is a process Taylor (1982: 92) describes as *fissioning* which he says may occur "when there is persistent internal conflict." At a more general level, "grievances, conflicts, disputes and unhappiness are desirably inevitable as social life is enriched by our differences" (Tiftt and Sullivan, 1980: 155).

In short, then, under the collective model of discipline, the philosophy of sanctioning is often one of turning negative connectedness into positive, by reminding individuals of their responsibilities. As such, it is a celebration of human agency over negative structures which necessarily involves "acts of imagination...to rectify injustice, to resolve conflict, just as acts of imagination are called for in the normal creation of ongoing life" (Wieck, 1978: 235).

CONTAMINATION OF AN IDEAL: THE CASE OF HABIT HOUSING COOPERATIVE

Habit Housing Cooperative is based in London, England and in 1980 received short-life housing from the local governmental authority, in the form of housing scheduled for demolition or renovation. When the cooperative was founded and in its early days there was little problem in getting the members to participate and there were no rent defaulters. As one member explained,

When we first got together it was naturally a co-op...because we were all in the same boat. We all wanted to get out of the situation we were in and do something about it. Everybody wanted to have a say and everybody had something to say at the time. We were a small group. And because we were into self-help and mutual ad-

vancements, naturally there was no question about it. We actually needed people's skills. We wanted to maintain it on a self-help basis and we couldn't do that unless we knew which people had skills and we knew who we could call on.

For another member this was a period where thoughts of discipline were unnecessary:

The cooperative spirit is actually doing the right thing without the formality. In a sense there is a lot of coercion...it's less formal than that. It's just cooperation between small groups of people. We agree to get something done in the best way possible and that sometimes means that you have to put yourself out.

At the time of the study and during the course of my research, which took place between 1979 and 1980, the cooperative had begun to experience a deterioration in member participation and there began to be discussion about how to correct this development. One member explained how she thought the problem arose:

Last year we got very big, very quickly and a lot of people are either very ignorant of what is going on, who would otherwise get involved, or are intimidated by the organization. They come along to meetings, and don't say "I don't understand," because of the whole social taboo of not being "in with the scene"...I suppose it is intimidating if you don't know anything about the organization—you are a new member—or somebody who hasn't been involved because they came in last year and haven't been called on to be involved. Then they come along to a meeting and a lot of discussion takes place...and they don't know the background and then everyone else gets fed up going over old ground and unless you can grab someone in the pub and ask them what's going on, you know it's difficult to get involved.

The lack of interest in meetings and in participation generally was also said to be a problem of growth by members:

How many people do we get to meetings? Ten? Well occasionally, if there's a house going we get loads of people. People only come when they've got a vested interest. If the members were really cooperative you wouldn't have to do anything like that (discipline and evictions). People would pay their rent. They would want to come to meetings because they would be involved...A cooperative should be a joint effort by every member. You shouldn't need a single member keeping it together because the idea of a co-op is that everyone knows what's going on and is involved. But I think because we're so big, and the members aren't involved and don't want to be involved, then you can't run it like a proper co-op.

However, another member saw the fault lying with the management committee of the cooperative which had become distant from the membership:

On the old management committee people were building up expertise which only they had. Some of the members outside the management committee thought that what was going on was wrong, that because the management committee had become a bunch of experts, perhaps they were corrupt as well...And there's always been a lot of allegations about people bringing in their friends, fiddling here and there...So the allegation was that the management committee had become very centralized, very tight and alienating to the members.

For their part members of the management committee felt that the fault was with the members. As one member explained:

It's all very well them complaining but they should make more effort. If the members think something's wrong, if they feel they are being subjected to something they don't like, the opportunity has always been there for them to devise a different system. But if they have not participated, what right have they got to complain? There are so many people in this cooperative who acknowledge it's a cooperative when they've got something to complain about. So if they haven't helped devise a different system and if they then accumulate rent arrears, I've really got no sympathy with them.

It was in this context that the co-op began to experiment with a series of measures designed to control its delinquent members. Initially the rent arrears problem was approached using informal collective control that involved inviting defaulters to the meeting of the co-op to explain why they were in arrears. The following members explain the principles at work under such a system:

People who would normally act in a very responsible cooperative way sometimes forget what the co-op system is and don't use it properly. They fail in their duty to pay rent, which is most fundamental, I suppose. If you can remind people of their duties, talk to them on a friendly basis, then they think "Oh, of course."

If they are not put in a situation where they have to discuss it they might just think, "Oh, I've got rent arrears. I'll get round to solving it sometime" and they don't think what the implications are for the other co-op members and what it means for them personally. Whereas if they are in a meeting they can see the implications for the organization and they can see the implications for themselves.

I think it has a lot to do with friends...At a meeting if there are friends there and they find out you are not paying rent then there's much more pressure on you to pay. It's group pressure...people might be cut off from their friends if they do not pay.

The participation issue was tied up with rent arrears, as well as being a problem in its own right. If members are less involved they are less likely to feel compelled to pay their rent. If they do not pay rent they are less likely to want to attend meetings and then they become increasingly less involved. A preventative to rent arrears would be increased involvement and participation but how is this to be achieved? Consistent with the literature on collectives discussed earlier, Habit Housing Co-op tried a formal, collective approach. They attempted to enact legislation to compel attendance:

If they won't come to meetings and won't get involved then I think we should get rid of them because those of us who believe that we should stay a cooperative and strive to be a real cooperative can't carry that kind of membership...Apart from anything else, if we want to be a cooperative we have to have a mandate from the membership to do the things that we do, and you won't have a mandate if people aren't there to say yes or no.

So we put together this motion. "Every member of the co-op shall assign themselves to one pre-determined area of work in 'List A' within which their skills may lie, and can be called on to utilize their skills and assist in running the co-op. Anyone who persistently fails to help when asked will have their membership questioned by the participation sub-committee (which was intended to be set up if the motion got through). In addition no member shall be exempt from assisting in any area of activity in 'List B'."

But as another supporter of this motion pointed out:

What happened was, it was amended. Someone got up and said, "I will support anything as long as there is no compulsion in it." He was a very good speaker. The part about the compulsion and being checked up on by a participation committee got fought against and we lost it. It was dropped.

One of those who opposed the motion explained the reason for the opposition to this formal collective disciplinary measure:

I can see no sense in people attending meetings that they are not interested in. It makes it difficult to run the meeting because if people are not interested in a particular issue, which is the business of the meeting, they will talk about other things and thereby divert the course of the meeting. I think if you were going to try and get people to go who don't want to, you insist that they go, they would take offence and it would alienate them. I saw this, actually, at the general meeting where, on precisely this motion people just happened to be wandering out. You know they were going home to

their tea or something and the finger was pointed—"these people are leaving the meeting. Isn't it a disgrace?" Well there was no evidence to suggest that they were acting in the wrong way, so they took offence. They said "Fuck You!"

On the issue of rent arrears a double problem emerged. I found confirmation of Olsen's (1965) observation that the weak were able to exploit the strong. Those who came to the meeting to explain their arrears did not simply offer an explanation and make an arrangement to pay, which was the intention of the control measure. Rather, some used the power of the meeting against the cooperative to invoke sympathy for themselves and further extend their arrears. For example, it was said of one delinquent member who leaned heavily on the cooperative's tolerance of personal and emotional difficulties and their alleged source in the capitalist social structure, that he manipulated the principles of the collective system for his own interests:

Peter is a special case. People think "Oh he's got a lot of problems." But it's only because we know about his problems, because he's made damn sure everybody knows about them, whereas other people in the co-op don't do that. There may be people who've got into rent arrears difficulties, who've got really serious problems, but they haven't made it their business to try and say to us, "Well, I have got these problems."

The way this manipulation occurred was illustrated by another delinquent member, who explained in one such meeting that I attended:

Look I'm shit scared. It's sheer hell to stand up and explain your financial expenses to a meeting of twenty or thirty people. This co-op policy is a peculiar way to collect rent. It just frightens people who are already in a state about their inability to pay, who are unemployed and on social security.

The effectiveness of the "invitation to explain," then, was questionable. It could be exploited or used against the co-op and it could further alienate the members who were already uninvolved. The problem was captured by one member who said:

If they came along to the meeting, they would get a warning and we'd be very nice to them and make an arrangement for them to pay. None of us wants to get our fingers burned or be seen to be heavy, so what happens? We start feeling sorry for them. "Ah poor dears. They've got all these problems. Let's make it easier for them." Perhaps we ought to reorganize and restructure the co-op to make it more accessible...But on the receiving end, when people in arrears come to meetings, it puts them on edge to be strong about it. It's incredibly humiliating and I think it's a cheek

to make people come along and be humiliated because I don't think it's going to make them want to be more cooperative. It's just going to put their backs up.

Importantly, therefore, not all deviants in cooperative organizations submit meekly to the collective sentiment. Some use the collective structure as a resource to exploit the co-op's softer side whilst avoiding its harsher controls. This ability for the relatively powerless individual to turn the collective policy against the collective can pose severe control problems for the co-op. In the context of collective justice it is, as Olson (1965) has observed, almost as if the more severe the sanctioning mechanism, the more powerful are the resources available to the individual being sanctioned.

The second difficulty in controlling the rent arrears problem came from those members who did not attend meetings to offer any explanation. In this instance Habit Housing Cooperative decided to "take the meeting to the member" by adopting a system of "visits." Although seemingly against the principles of collective justice, specialized functionaries are sometimes deemed necessary, as when members of a housing co-op neither pay their rent nor attend meetings to explain why. Clearly the whole collective cannot visit *en masse*, so a sub-group might be invited to volunteer. These were undertaken by sub-groups of the collective meeting. Although a very intimidating technique, sensitivity to this fact ironically renders the cooperative vulnerable to further exploitation by the individual, to incursions or manipulation by individuals who were the subject of control. A member of the co-op described how the system should have worked.

The idea behind the visits was not to bludgeon the rent out of people. You don't go along as a sort of threatening mob. It's more of a visit to try and find out whether there are any mitigating circumstances and to sort out a means of payment, but not in a lump sum.

At a regular Habit meeting that I attended, volunteers were invited to go on a visit and there was a lot of humor and joking expressing a consciousness about how their visit might be viewed. One member asked "What is it going to be then? A knee job?" Another replied, "They're not going to break his legs, just bruise him a little—where it can't be seen." "Come out with your hands up or your rent book," said another. Indeed, a further reason why this approach is vulnerable is because co-op members do not enjoy taking responsibility for discipline. One member of the visiting sub-committee described his experiences:

I was on one of those early visits. That's why I didn't go the second time—because it freaked me out. We went in a group of six and stood around shuffling our feet, feeling very uncomfortable. We went along to a house on Galena Drive, a large house with very large debts...I went to visit one girl in particular and she was obvi-

ously taken aback and abusive...If there isn't hostility then the person who is being visited is bound to get overwhelmed. It is rather intimidating when six people suddenly descend on you with no prior notice at all. It's not a good forum to discuss personal things like "Are you going to pay your rent?" and "Why are you not paying it?"

It should be pointed out that, in the co-ops I studied, this ability for the individual to turn the collective pressure back on the cooperative was not restricted to occasions of hostile reception. Even where the visitors were invited into the member's home, a surprising amount of power can be reflected back onto the visiting committee. There were usually not enough seats for six or so people arriving unannounced and even if there were, the visiting party was so sensitive to its intimidating appearance that it was easily disarmed by questions about fellow co-op comrades, friendly offers of hospitality and apologies, that the quicker the subject of rent arrears could be dropped and leaving rituals begun, the better everyone felt.

By driving a wedge between those exercising control and the rest of the cooperative this institution of sub-committee discipline can actually escalate the problem. For example, where the deviance is the not uncommon practice of a member failing to participate, then the act of collectively disciplining that person can result in the deviant feeling even less involved and being less willing to participate. This, in turn, can result in an even greater control problem for the collective.

Subcommittee discipline is also vulnerable to the charge of personal vindictiveness. As a member of a housing cooperative said: "The individuals concerned are surprised and resentful when they see a comrade knocking on the door. Quite a lot react aggressively...feel they have to hit back. People think they are victimized." Indeed, by the nature of co-ops, nearly all members know each other quite intimately, so where one group acts to discipline a fellow member, resentment is often inevitable.

Perhaps the ultimate irony is that in order to resolve these kinds of difficulties some cooperatives have sought to eliminate personal feelings from their control policy by resorting to the outside legal system to support their collective disciplinary action. After considerable attempts with these innovations in collective discipline Habit Housing Cooperative reluctantly decided that a more extreme solution was necessary. Against all its principles, and those of collective justice discussed earlier, the collective decided to adopt a rational legal approach to its rent arrears problem, and to not only model itself on capitalist legality, but to use the police and state law against its delinquent members. A member of a housing cooperative explained that after the visits system had caused a number of inter-personal disputes within the cooperative and some members were still avoiding paying their rent, a different approach was adopted.

The explanation of how this came about is instructive:

We reached a stage then when we sent out eviction notices and nobody believed that we'd carry them out, because basically, up to then nobody had carried them out... People just saw it as an empty threat. They said, "Oh yes, here we go again. Send in a couple of quid." And meetings just delayed things further. We invited them to come along and explain. But I mean you can talk until you're blue in the arse and still nothing gets done about it. Then, the visits were a bloody disaster. There was a rumpus which was totally over personal things. It had sod all to do with rent. I mean the reason for people getting at each other's throats about those visiting and calling them the "heavy mob" was because of their own personal feelings towards those people that came. And also you try and get six people together that will go on a visit... See the people who advocate policies and the people who come to meetings are human beings and most human beings are unstable in the sense that they don't want to be disliked. But if you are going to lay on someone, you're not going to be liked. So people won't go. As far as I'm concerned if it can't be done there's no point in attempting it... You see, the problem when you're trying to use discipline or just logic is that people get in the way, because people aren't disciplined and they aren't logical, right? To run an efficient rent system you've got to get the human element out as much as possible because that is what messes the whole thing up—people's emotions and whatever. I know it sounds daft trying to get the human element out, but a system where you don't have to go and explain why you haven't paid and involve yourself in totally irrelevant personal problems, has to be preferable, as long as you pay it. I mean if there is a good rent system I don't see why anybody should be intimidated, humiliated. There's no reason. As far as I'm concerned it's cut and dried. So that's why we introduced the new system... Now, if they are four weeks behind with their rent they get a warning letter; if they are eight weeks behind they get a notice to quit and when that expires we take court proceedings. Of course, the main objection we have from people if you send them a notice to quit is, "Oh that's a bit heavy isn't it?" or if it's a possession order, "getting the law involved." But, number one, if the law wasn't involved, people wouldn't be secure in their short-life housing. They would be in squats, because that's all short-life housing is, official squats. So the law is already involved. Number two, they tell us that it's a bloody cheek that we send them eviction notices, but of course it's not a bloody cheek that they don't pay their

rent...I'd much rather not see the law involved but if there isn't another way then you've got to do it. I think it's a drag giving credibility to the law in this sense because the law does not particularly like co-ops or people who are in them. There are a lot of funny people in co-ops and they'd love to get hold of all that. We are allowing the police to harass our members, more or less, which is very heavy but there's no option...I'm afraid you just have to kick them out. I feel that a co-op is a very important and good way of living—good for the people. And because of that you've got to treat it like a bloody baby. You've got to wrap it in cotton wool. If anybody comes near to strike it down, then you go for them, go for their throats. Oh that sounds very heavy but you've got to protect it.

In this Habit Housing Co-op moved from an informal system of control to one which explicitly relied on the capitalist rational legal control form. It was noted by members that this changed the nature of the cooperative such that "It's running now like a housing association."

Although Ritter (1978: 138) has claimed that the kind of authority which underlies the cooperative enterprise, "being intimate, particular and internal, cannot issue directives of a legal sort," clearly my evidence supports the argument of Shapiro (1976) who suggests that this tendency to legalism co-exists with informal procedures. Both serve to bring those who offend and those who are offended together to resolve their differences. As Shapiro (1976: 429) says:

The possibility that the kibbutz will not prevent the initiation of police action...has a subtle influence in strengthening internal controls in the kibbutz. This parallels the way tribal societies use the colonial power to strengthen traditional leaders.

However, as with the other cases of the collective flexing of muscle which I have discussed above, the adoption of a legalistic stance is also available to individual co-op members. In the nineteenth century this counter legalism was used successfully by individual ex-members of utopian-communist religious societies to sue for the right to reclaim their investment from the collective (Weisbrod, 1980).

For our purposes there are three crucial issues in this development that have a bearing on the broader issue of the viability of collective forms in a capitalist society. First, does the tendency toward rational legal forms of control in cooperatives undermine the collective form? Second, is this tendency inevitable and a product of intrinsic micro-forces or is it an outcome of the contamination by the wider social structure in which cooperatives are set? Third, are there ways that collective organizational forms in a capitalist society can avoid both being undermined from within and resist penetration by the wider hostile forms? Discussion of these issues will form the basis of the final section of this paper.

INTRINSIC DIFFERENTIATION OR EXTERNAL CONTAMINATION

Let us consider, for a moment, the possibility that the tendency toward adopting rational legal control forms, like the tendencies toward specialization, hierarchy, domination and factionalism in collective organizations, is the outgrowth of micro-human interaction. If this is so, it would seem that initial cooperation in any collective enterprise, regardless of the wider context, will eventually deteriorate into competition, if only because of the differential development and uniqueness of human individuals. If differentiation, specialization and hierarchy are products of micro-processes of human individuality, then collective justice and cooperative structures are simply an ideal that cannot be met; a framework whose reality is present only at the point of its creation and which time, growth and action will ultimately undermine. However, whether such diversity of human process must necessarily undermine cooperative structures may depend upon whether there is an alternative back cloth of principles and practices which support the divergences of membership while simultaneously placing limits on the tendency of some to monopolization of power, knowledge and interests. If so, then a healthy tension can exist between cooperation and individual competition. However, where that structure is relatively undeveloped, or, as in our capitalist society, where it is surrounded by a wider structure that caricatures and refines the merits of individualism and competition, then the issue of contamination and undermining becomes critical.

A number of commentators have recognized that social forms within the wider matrix of capitalist society, although exercising a degree of autonomy, are simultaneously penetrable by that society, and that this is also true of control forms (Moore, 1978; Fitzpatrick, 1984). I have documented elsewhere (Henry, 1983; 1985; 1988) the ways in which cooperatives in a capitalist society assimilate organizational features such as specialization, hierarchy, sexism and materialism, which are directly contradictory to their collectivist aims. It has been shown in the case study above, that this is particularly true of their form of social control. Let us take one further illustration from a member of another housing cooperative of how the outside structure penetrates the collective:

I think it's almost conditioning. I mean they have always had to be aggressive with their landlords. So they might come stomping in here and say that they've got a burst pipe or something. I think that is where their background is, always being on the receiving end. They only really do see how things have changed when they are actually required to play the role of landlord. And some of them are reluctant to do that. It's a question of people having been tradi-

tionally in a very, very weak position of power but not aware of it. Like going to a general meeting and asking for a decision to serve a notice to quit—a lot of people really cannot believe that by putting their hands up that it is actually going to result in somebody being kicked out of their home. People find it difficult. They cannot comprehend how Joe and Mabel from up the road are going to be able to kick them out of their home.

A member of Habit Housing summarized the penetration problem facing cooperatives in general:

How do you persuade someone to change their beliefs? From believing in elitist institutions to believing in collectivist beliefs and self discipline. I mean you have to persuade them or control them into it first, especially if they've got no experience.

One result of forming cooperatives from people whose ideas are receptive but whose experience is largely with a different system is that conflicts and frustrations of process are ultimately met, not by creating and seeing through new innovations, but by relying on partial fragmented parts of the old capitalist order. Nowhere is this more so than when dealing with delinquents or free riders. As we have seen, not only has the capitalist system the appearance of a rational legal form of social control that offers a tested system, but it has constructed the institutions and developed an ideology that presents these institutions as disconnected and self contained; mere tools for control. Nothing could be further from the truth, for as I shall argue below, the mere presence of that system of control must ultimately undermine the collective system of control, and in turn the interrelated cooperative structure as a whole.

There are three ways that the collective control form preferred by the cooperative is undermined. First there is the generation of problems extraneous to the cooperative which become problems for the cooperative. Members having difficulties stemming from their ambivalent relations with the wider society and from the contradictions that lie therein, find they are unable to adequately fulfill their cooperative responsibilities. It might be thought that a collective could avoid problems that are extraneous. However, insofar as its members are also members of the wider structure, they will also be unwitting purveyors of its contradictions. Therefore, dealing with its own members, a cooperative is also dealing with the wider capitalist structure. If a collective acknowledges the existence of the outside structure in its own internal relations, regardless of whether in support or opposition, this can be drawn on as a resource in a manipulative process by the delinquent members and used to undermine the collective. We saw examples above of how some delinquent members would exploit the co-op's understanding of the difficulties of living in a capitalist structure to allow themselves personal concessions.

A second way that the cooperative's form of social control is undermined occurs simply by the wider system of capitalist legality being held at a distance. The very existence of a rational legal model with an accompanying ideology that claims neutrality in its impersonal interventions, stands in stark contrast to a system which sees particular instances of delinquency tied up with wider issues. When co-op members draw on their familiar capitalist ideological thinking about issues of control they undermine the attempt to develop alternatives. For example, the cooperative's visits system for collecting rent arrears allowed a sub-committee of the collective to privately police co-op members to the point where this was declared as harassment, intimidation and victimization. The paradox here is that by doing nothing but maintaining a distance from the cooperative, capitalism's rational legal control forms are strengthened. Rational legal control forms are thrown into relief as being preferable because they are apparently impersonal and predictable. The more the cooperative attempts to develop its own control forms that are resisted by some individuals, the more those of the wider system are given credibility. So the mere existence of a wider control form based on rational rather than substantive principles of which members have knowledge regardless of direct experience, combines with the co-op's difficulties in developing a new collective control form, and considerably weakens its resistance to penetration.

The third way the collective control form of cooperatives is undermined is in the actual adoption of capitalist control forms in place of its own emerging forms. After trying many variants of its collective control form, if problems persist there will be a great temptation to try the very form that lies in direct contradiction to their own ideology. Once that form is used, as when the housing cooperative uses court orders on its members, it not only gives credibility to the wider system, it also changes its own internal structure. While there is a sense in which the use of capitalist legality to support collectivist objectives demonstrates that form is adaptable to content, the overwhelming extent of the capitalist content of law is unaffected by its marginal use in the collective. In contrast the internal structure of the collective is massively affected by resort to this structural form. While the use of capitalist legal control forms may have the effect of temporarily resolving the co-op's delinquency crisis, it simultaneously remakes the old structure and undermines the necessary elaboration of that which is emergent. Indeed, insofar as the medium of available discourse is that common to the wider capitalist society, then collectives cannot fail to simultaneously reproduce the capitalist control forms as they struggle to create their own alternative vision. Nor is this difficulty surprising since, as Rothschild-Whitt (1979: 522) says, placing people in dual structures is stressful: "It is asking in effect that people in collectivist organizations constantly shift gears, that they learn to act one way inside their organizations and another outside."

CONCLUSION: GLIMPING A NEW WAY FORWARD

Leaving aside the issue of any intrinsic tendency toward differentiation, and fragmentation, the question remains of how a collective such as a housing cooperative can resist such undermining and penetration from the wider structure in which it is set. Whether or not the recreation of capitalist control forms within the collective structure will ultimately undermine the whole collective venture is to some considerable extent dependent upon how far these collective social forms can simultaneously generate and sustain new alternative discourse which is constitutive of their own order, regardless of regenerating the old order of capitalism. Marx (1852: 115) recognized this duality facing practitioners of radical change in his observation that:

The tradition of countless dead generations is an incubus to the mind of the living. At the very times when they seem to be engaged in revolutionizing themselves and their circumstances, in creating something previously non-existent, at just such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously summon up the spirits of the past to their aid, borrowing from them names, rallying cries, costumes, in order to stage the new world historical drama in this time-honored disguise and borrowed speech.

For Marx the crucial issue for revolutionary change was whether the concepts of the past could be used selectively to enable the liberation of the future. Until the spirit of revolutionary change could be captured and used without reference to the past, automatically and spontaneously, it was but a bourgeois revolution, short-lived, soon reaching its climax.

So it is with cooperatives under capitalism. While the basic idea of cooperatives will emerge in response to the contradictions of capitalism, beyond that, invasion by the wider system is likely whenever new problems arise. This is because the readily available resources for addressing these problems are those generated, tried and tested as answers to problems of capitalist development. Because of its emergent nature the collective structure has a limited set of solutions available. The result is that situations requiring new formulations are often answered with old recipes, as in the case of the use of law to back-up the housing co-op's problem of rent arrears. While this may have the effect of temporarily resolving the co-op's immediate crisis, it simultaneously remakes the old structure and undermines the necessary elaboration of that which is emergent. Until co-ops can resist the temptation to embrace the apparent security of the past, until they can disinvest in unwittingly constructing that which is, they will be unable to gain a permanent release from their self-generated subordination.³

This is not to say that collective social forms need to develop oppositional or critical discourse, for oppositional discourse is no more liberating than

supportive discourse insofar as it buys into the prevailing constructions. That which denies also affirms since both opposition and support invest in constructions which reconstitute the existing relations of power of capitalist society. Release from this self-generated subordination can only come from disinvestment; ceasing to construct what is. But as we have seen, total disinvestment is virtually impossible given the ideological content of a shared language. What is necessary is the development of a replacement discourse; investment in an alternative set of constructions while simultaneously ceasing to invest in existing forms. This involves learning a new language while creating that which is being learned and of talking only in terms of that which is imminent or becoming. Cooperation is a struggle and one which, especially in a capitalist society, needs continuous attention.

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NOTES

¹ This analysis draws on data on cooperatives that I collected in the course of a wider study on non-state forms of social control (Henry, 1983). The research entailed tape-recorded, unstructured interviews with twenty-seven members of twelve different housing, worker and consumer co-ops; correspondence with eighty-one housing co-ops and twenty worker co-ops; and attending nineteen meetings of one housing cooperative, "Habit" Housing Cooperative, over a four-month period. The data were gathered in England in 1979 and 1980. The research was funded by the British Economic and Social Research Council grant no. HR5907/2 while I was a Research Fellow at Middlesex Polytechnic. The results have been published in a number of places. For a more extensive discussion of some of the issues presented here see Henry, 1984; 1985; 1987b; 1987c; 1988; 1989.

² Indeed, not only would evidence of collective structures in capitalist societies be required but we would also need evidence of capitalist adventures in socialist societies before any firm conclusions could be drawn.

³ For an elaboration of these ideas see Henry 1987b. Here I formulate the concept of "replacement discourse" to capture the essence of a reflexive communication, whereby members of a cooperative might transcend their tie to the existing dominant structure by investing in alternative forms while simultaneously ceasing to invest in existing ones. See also Henry, 1989.

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HOUSING COOPERATIVES AND COMMUNITY

David Clapham and Keith Kintrea

The idea of community is at the heart of the theory and practice of housing cooperatives and provides the justification for their existence as a collectivist form of housing. However, there is no agreement about what community is. Furthermore, there is a stream of academic writing arguing that in Western urban society community is in decline and is being replaced by the concept and practice of individualism, which has led to increasingly privatised lifestyles. The aims of this chapter are threefold. The first aim is to examine briefly the roots of housing cooperatives in communitarian philosophy, with its emphasis on community and collectivism. The second is to review ideas on the concept of community and to review the argument that it is in decline. The third and main aim of the chapter is to explore the meaning and importance of community in cooperatives in two British cities, Glasgow and Liverpool. The experience of cooperatives in two cities shows clearly that, in these cases at least, the desire for community by residents is strong and housing cooperatives are a mechanism for expressing and reinforcing this desire.

COMMUNITARIAN PHILOSOPHY AND HOUSING COOPERATIVES

Housing cooperatives embody a set of social relations quite distinct from the main tenures of renting or home ownership. Cooperatives have their roots in communitarian philosophy which developed from the nineteenth century onwards as an alternative to liberal and socialist traditions.

Communitarians in general dislike both the individualistic, self-interested, money-mediated exchanges of the market and the authoritarianism and lack of liberty which they associate with collectivism achieved through state socialism. They seek to tread a middle path between the individualistic concept of liberty adopted by liberals and the collectivist concept of equality pursued by state socialists. They argue that although individuals are motivated to some extent by individual self-interest, they also have a strong desire for fraternity or community with others through mutualism and collective self-help.

As in any tradition of thought, there has been substantial variation between communitarian writing at different times and stimulated by different circum-

stances. This applies to the perceived importance and meaning of community. For example, Proudhon, writing in France as a contemporary of Marx, adopted primarily a liberal, individualist position, arguing that a man must accept full responsibility for himself and his family. He argued strongly against any form of authority which would impinge on this freedom, whether the authority is vested in the state or in any kind of formal association. Nevertheless, Proudhon considered a degree of association to be necessary to meet needs of production, consumption and security.

Mutualism intends men to associate only insofar as this is required by the demands of production, the cheapness of goods, the needs of consumption and the security of the producers themselves (Edwards, 1969: p.62).

Hyams (1979) argues that

He [Proudhon] sought a measure of association between men so minimal that it would allow every man to retain the optimum of individual freedom and responsibility, but sufficient to ensure an adequate process of production and exchange (p.142).

Cole, taking part in debates around the turn of the twentieth century about the appropriate direction of the emergent Labour Party in Britain also argued for the minimum of association. He argued that it is "better to do a thing without organisation if we can, or with the minimum of organisation that is necessary" (Cole, 1920: pp.185-6).

In contrast to Cole and Proudhon, Kropotkin argued for a much stronger degree of mutualism or collective action. Kropotkin was born in Russia where he spent half his life before being exiled because of his political views, which were rejected by both supporters of the Czar and the Bolsheviks. In his later travels, Kropotkin spread his ideas which became influential in Britain around the turn of the twentieth century. Amongst other things, Kropotkin was concerned with refuting the influential Darwinian ideas of the inherent selfishness of animals by putting forward mutual aid as a principle of evolution. He recognised the importance of self-asserting instincts in humans and animals, but he placed emphasis on mutual aid both for the survival of species and social groups, but also as an instinct upon which societies are based. Mutual aid, he argued, is not based on emotions such as love or sympathy as it can be applied to individuals in general and formulated into moral values and codes.

Love, sympathy and self-sacrifice certainly play an immense part in the progressive development of moral feelings. But it is not love and not even sympathy upon which society is based in mankind. It is the conscience—be it only at the stage of an instinct—of human solidarity. It is the unconscious recognition of the force that is borrowed by each man from the practice of mutual aid; of

the dependency of everyone's happiness upon the happiness of all; and of a sense of justice, or equity, which brings the individual to consider the rights of every other individual as equal to his own (Kropotkin, 1972: p.22).

Some writers such as Owen and Kropotkin saw the ideal of community being best put into practice in small, self-governing communities. Owen thought harmony and human happiness could best be achieved in small, largely self-sufficient communities involved in agriculture and industrial production which could barter between themselves to exchange goods which they could not produce themselves. However, others such as Cole and Proudhon, argued for co-operatives which were based on one particular aspect of people's lives. They conceived that production and consumption would be organised around a large range of overlapping co-operatives and other mutual organisations such as worker co-operatives, consumer co-operatives and housing co-operatives.

THE MEANING OF COMMUNITY

The idea of 'community' emphasised by the communitarians has for a long time been subject to investigation by sociologists. In addition, the development of community has often been a leading objective of urban renewal projects. However, it has proved to be an elusive concept which is difficult to define and even more difficult to measure.

In his review of the British community studies literature Frankenberg (1966) takes as his working definition of community that put forward by Maclver and Page who write that a community is 'an area of social living marked by some degree of social coherence. The bases of community are locality and community sentiment' (1961, p.9). However, two schools of thought have emerged concerning the meaning and measurement of community. The first has been less concerned with community sentiment and more with the patterns of interaction between individuals. For example, Janowitz and Kasarda (1974) attempted to measure social interactions in areas in England through indicators such as the number of relatives and friends in the locality and participation in social activities and formal organisations. They argued that:

One can identify the social fabric of communities in systemic terms by focusing on the daily networks of the populations and analytically abstracting those that are directly linked to the occupational system. The remaining social relations, to the extent that they have a geographical base, are manifestations of the social fabric of human communities, be they neighbourhoods, local communities, or metropolitan areas (Janowitz and Kasarda, 1974: p.210).

By these means the patterns of mutualism and interdependence can be ascertained, but little insight is gained into what Maclver and Page call 'community

sentiment.' It may be that high rates of interaction between people reflect a high degree of 'community sentiment' but this may not necessarily be so. Also, this approach measures only the quantity of social relationships and not their quality. Further, there are very difficult problems of definition involved in this approach. Which patterns of interaction constitute 'community' and which do not? Where is the dividing line between the existence or absence of 'community'?

MacIver and Page's emphasis on community sentiment follows closely Kropotkin's emphasis on the 'conscience of human solidarity.' Community does not consist of a specific pattern of social interaction, but is a feeling of solidarity or inter-dependence. Therefore, community cannot be measured by outsiders as it only exists in the sense that it has meaning to those who are part of it. Thus, as Cohen argues, the role of an outside investigator is not to attempt an objective definition and description. Rather it is to try to understand 'community' by capturing people's experience of it. 'Instead of asking, "what does it look like to us? What are its theoretical implications?" we ask, "What does it appear to mean to its members?"' (Cohen, 1985: p.20).

The implication of this approach is that community may be defined differently by different individuals or groups and that each of these definitions is equally valid. This is borne out by some case-studies of housing areas. For example, in a study of the formation of housing cooperatives in Echo Park/Silverlake, an ethnically diverse area of Los Angeles, Heskin (1991) identified three conceptions of community held by three different groups. One group which he labeled the 'populists' was keen to create an inclusive political community based on participatory democracy—an oasis in a world of oppression. 'They wanted the cooperatives to be places of political contemplation and psychological safety where justice would be the common concern' (Heskin, 1991: pp.39-40). This group specifically rejected the idea of community-based small town life with what they saw as its 'oppressive' social control based on a close knowledge of the lives of others.

Another group, the 'pluralists,' saw community as a negotiated compromise of interests and a base from which to launch wider political struggles. 'Clientalists' on the other hand, 'sought a more traditional totalised community of family where blood ties, culture, or ideology is the prime element that holds people together and serves as a cause to exclude the outsider' (Heskin, 1991: p.41).

Each of these concepts of community is likely to lead to a different pattern of social interaction. If they have meaning for those involved and they influence attitudes, objectives and actions, then it would seem to be erroneous to exclude any of them from the definition of 'community' on the grounds that they do not conform to the conceptions of academics outside.

THE DECLINE OF COMMUNITY?

Whatever the definition of 'community' there seems to be a consensus that it is in decline. For example, Wirth (1938) characterised urban life as consisting of social relations which are impersonal, superficial and transitory.

The distinctive features of the urban mode of life are the substitution of secondary for primary contacts, the weakening of bonds of kinship, and the declining social significance of the family, the disappearance of the neighbourhood, and the undermining of the traditional basis of solidarity (Wirth, 1938).

The 'decline of community' has been a constant theme in urban writing in the twentieth century and is based on two main arguments. The first is that the trend towards smaller households and greater geographical mobility has reduced the intensity and quality of contact between kin.

Contact with kin, particularly between parents and grown-up children themselves married, is maintained by the motor car and telephone. In times of need, one can travel to the other, but day-to-day local contact has more typically been replaced by week-to-week contact from a distance (Bulmer, 1987: p.55).

The second argument is concerned with the idea of a growing 'privatism' of life styles. This first surfaced in Lockwood's (1966) study of affluent manual workers who, he argued, exhibited an instrumental work orientation and adapted a pattern of life centred on, and largely restricted to, the home and the conjugal family, restricting the scope of common sociability outside the family. Members leave the home only to service their lives within it (Saunders and Williams, 1988).

The argument for increased privatism is a controversial one which has been criticised by, among others, Gurney (1990) and Franklin (1986). They argue that the extent of privatised behaviour found in studies such as that by Lockwood has been exaggerated and can be explained to some extent by life-cycle factors. Franklin argues that, inasmuch as increased privatism exists, it is not a universal or inevitable trend. Further he argues that what is often viewed as privatised behaviour is the re-assertion of traditional working class cultural values in new economic, social and technological circumstances.

An interesting version of the privatism thesis is one put forward by Giddens (1984). He argues that, in advanced capitalism, people's lives are shaped by economic forces which operate on a global scale. Consequently people cannot understand or control their everyday existence and, therefore, suffer from a lack of identity and meaning in their lives, in other words a lack of 'ontological security.' However, Giddens argues that people attempt to overcome this lack through the routinisation of everyday life in certain 'locales' or physical settings where social interaction takes place such as the home or a street corner.

Saunders (1986, 1990) has expanded this argument by stressing the importance of home ownership in providing control, autonomy and a sense of identity which can create 'ontological security.' However, these same features may be present in housing cooperatives because they can enable residents to have more control over their housing circumstances than they would enjoy in traditional renting (Clapham and Kintrea, 1992).

In summary, the emphasis on the decline of community and the increase of privatised lifestyles would seem at first glance to offer a bleak outlook for the growth or even survival of housing cooperatives, which above all other tenure forms embody mutualism and community. However, these are not universal trends as the experience of housing cooperatives outlined in the next section shows. Further, the arguments of Giddens and Saunders have pointed to the possibility that housing cooperatives, as well as being an expression of a sense of community, may also act as a focus in which 'ontological security' and community can be regained.

HOUSING COOPERATIVES AND COMMUNITY IN LIVERPOOL

Housing cooperatives in Britain have not received much political support and have existed at the margins of housing policy (Clapham and Kintrea, 1992). Nevertheless, they have flourished in particular cities such as Liverpool and Glasgow where economic, social and political conditions have been conducive to their growth, even in a national climate which has been generally hostile or apathetic towards them.

Liverpool is a city with a population which has declined to around 450,000 from 850,000 in 30 years. The period since the 1950s has seen a series of industrial setbacks: the manufacturing industry has shut down or reduced in scale substantially and dock-related trades have dwindled almost to nothing (Meegan, 1989). Unlike many former industrial centres, including Glasgow, Liverpool's role as a regional centre is quite limited and there has been little recent expansion of the service sector (Parkinson, 1985).

The first council housing anywhere in Britain was built in Liverpool (Gauldie, 1974) and there was a vigorous programme of council housebuilding from 1919 right through to 1973. Although the programme led to many successful schemes, it also led to some poor-quality walk-up tenement blocks in the inner city built in the inter-war years. From 1955 to 1973 there was widespread demolition and clearance of unsatisfactory privately-owned inner-city housing. However, communities were broken up and many thousands of people were rehoused in public housing in overspill estates on the periphery of the city.

The main period of support for cooperatives in Liverpool came between 1973 and 1983 when the Council was controlled by the Liberal Party. (In Britain, the

Liberal Party was a centre party which placed considerable emphasis on community politics. It is now subsumed within the Liberal Democrats). The aim of the Council and the voluntary agencies involved was to manage slum clearance and rehabilitation projects in a way which gave local people control over the process and kept communities together. By 1989, there had developed 29 housing cooperatives in Liverpool, providing nearly 2,000 houses (Walker, 1991). This was despite a period between 1983 and 1987 when the city council was controlled by the Labour Party. This Labour administration was dominated by Militant, a leftist grouping within the party which strongly favoured public ownership and direct state provision of public services. It attempted to drive housing cooperatives out of existence and re-established municipal housebuilding. Housing cooperatives were viewed by the Council as 'elitist, exclusive and discriminatory—in fundamental opposition to the basic objectives of their housing programme' (Grosskurth, 1985: p.21). However, in 1987 the councillors who led the assault on cooperatives were dismissed from office and surcharged by central government for failing to set a legal rate (property tax) in Liverpool. Although the Labour Party remained in power, with different personnel it has become more supportive of cooperatives.

During the major growth of cooperatives in the 1970s the Liberal administration provided support partly as a means of building on grassroots reaction to the paternalism of previous Labour Party housing policies. Many of the cooperatives such as Weller Streets (Macdonald, 1986) and the Eldonians (Walker, 1991) grew out of community action for better housing and other facilities and a resistance to the prospect that long-established communities would be dispersed to the unpopular estates on the outskirts of the city.

Meegan (1989) suggests that the strength of community feeling evident in parts of central Liverpool is a reaction to economic decline. Marginalisation in the labour market led to alienation and a distrust of officialdom. However, the absence of work forced the reforging of family and community links. Meegan suggests this sense of community was, at least partly, a cultural legacy whose origins lay in people's sense of 'fair play', antipathy towards authority, and solidarity developed as a reaction to the working practices of local employers.

Thomas and Hedges (1988) in a study of Portland Gardens Cooperative point also to the role of the Catholic church and population stability as important factors in the derivation of a sense of community and suggest both were a consequence of economic decline.

In Portland Gardens, Thomas and Hedges argue that local people's sense of 'community' was vital in bringing about the cooperative.

The key to understanding Portland Gardens is to understand how local people feel about their areas. The salient feature is an extremely powerful sense of community, which is not simply an ab-

stract or romantic notion. There are real practical benefits in terms of the help and support given, both individually and collectively (1988, p.124).

In interviews, over half the residents spoke of their 'decent, helpful and friendly' neighbours.

You could go outside to hang washing out and you could be out there hours because everyone wanted to stop and chat. If you needed help with anything you could always go to someone who would help you (Portland Gardens Resident, quoted in Thomas, 1990: p.15).

Surveys showed that 60 percent of respondents had a close relative living elsewhere in the scheme (Thomas, 1990). Nearly half of the respondents had most of their friends living in Portland Gardens and the vast majority of people interviewed felt they were living in a 'tightly-knit community' (Thomas and Hedges, 1988: p.23). Walker (1991) provides similar evidence from his survey of residents in nine Liverpool cooperatives where residents also previously lived in fairly stable areas with intensive social ties.

Support for the cooperative was seen by residents as a way of keeping the community together.

I think the primary impetus was the very fact that the community itself expressed this desire to remain intact. It's always been our philosophy that, while it may take many generations to establish a community, they can be destroyed within a matter of months. We didn't want to have happen again what had happened in the past, from our own experience. Past experiences have produced bad results, and we've seen in other parts of the city what had happened—and you've only got to look on the outskirts and the problems they're having out there now, where people have like no identity with one another, indeed fear one another. And our attitude was, "Well we've got something here which is good, and we're not going to let it be broken up, we're not going to lose it"—and the ideal way to preserve it is the cooperative thing (Portland Gardens Resident, quoted in Thomas, 1990: p.43).

At Portland Gardens the hopes of a cooperative were dashed following the rise to power of the Militant-dominated Labour Party in Liverpool in 1983. But the rehousing plans were well-advanced and the strongest attempts at municipal intervention came too late to prevent most of the plans from being implemented. In particular, the design and planning of the scheme remained the product of the cooperative's efforts, not the council's, despite the eventual municipalisation of the ownership of the houses.

Despite the transfer to the council and the enforced disbanding of the cooperative, the residents achieved much of what they wanted including keeping

their community together. The achievements of the co-operative were appreciated by residents.

It took a great interest in the people, the co-op. It really did. And if they didn't want this and they didn't want that, they never got it. They got whatever they want. It's a fine thing, the co-op (Portland Gardens Resident, quoted in Thomas, 1990: p.94).

There was considerable support for the re-instatement of the cooperative. Seventy-one percent of residents said that they wanted the cooperative revived if the opportunity arose.

We want our co-op back again, that's what we want, we want to be responsible for these houses. If we do we're going to have either our own co-op or a management committee, where we can manage them ourselves, make sure the repairs are done, and make sure that they're maintained properly, which is what we want—this is our own little village now (Portland Gardens Resident, quoted in Thomas, 1990: p.94).

HOUSING COOPERATIVES AND COMMUNITY IN GLASGOW

In Glasgow, unlike Liverpool, industrial decline has been offset to some extent by the growth of a service sector which has been given support by a pragmatic Labour council and by a central government quango, the Scottish Development Agency, which was originally set up by a Labour administration to promote employment. But despite its changing economic base, Glasgow, like Liverpool, has a history of employment in heavy engineering and shipbuilding and a long tradition of trades union organisation and militancy.

In Glasgow, as in Liverpool, for most of the post-war period until the early 1970s, housing policy was dominated by the clearance of slum housing and its replacement by large council schemes on the periphery of the city and many high-rise developments in the inner city. The slum clearance programme was planned to be extensive, nearly 200,000 houses were to be cleared in more than 20 comprehensive redevelopment areas. Glasgow's housing conditions were the worst of any major British city after the Second World War, with extensive overcrowding in one- and two-room tenement flats. There was an overwhelming belief by Labour politicians that council provision was the solution to these problems and, in consequence, clearance and housebuilding was relentlessly pursued, almost without regard to other social considerations. The city's housing management department became enormous, highly centralised and paternalistic.

Keating reports that by the 1970s the backlash against these policies was growing.

Comprehensive redevelopment was not only proving very expensive, but disruptive and unpopular, breaking up old community patterns, moving people permanently or temporarily out to the hated periphery, and producing, when completed, a bleak concrete environment (1988: p.117).

A change of approach took place in the period 1977-1980 when there was no overall political majority in the city council. A review of the council's housing policies led to the 'alternative strategy' which, although mainly a response to spending restrictions imposed by central government, also emphasised rehabilitation rather than redevelopment, the need for private resources, and a commitment to decentralisation and greater tenant involvement in housing management.

The rise of the 'alternative strategy' in the late 1970s and early 1980s provided an opening for the development of resident-controlled housing organisations in a city where large-scale and highly centralised housing management by the council had been the norm. At first this led to support for community-based housing associations, as an agent of rehabilitation in the older, inner city areas. They draw their membership and carry out their operations within specific, usually fairly tightly-drawn, areas. They are run by management committees comprised mainly of local residents, often tenants of the association, but also owner-occupants. Their major role in Glasgow has been in coordinating and carrying out improvements to inner-city tenements with the support of the council and financial backing from government-funded agencies. Community based housing associations grew quickly in Glasgow and surrounding towns and by the mid-1980s there were 25 associations with 10,000 improved houses in management (Armstrong, 1984). By 1991 the number of improved houses had grown to 15,000. Community based housing associations have proved successful and popular. A government-sponsored research project concluded:

Locally-based associations have certainly provided a unique opportunity for local people to become actively involved in decisions affecting their own housing and the future of their area (MacLennan and Brailey, 1984: p.35).

The other important development in the 1970s and 1980s was the growth of tenant management cooperatives in public housing. Tenant management cooperatives are resident's organisations which take over responsibility for certain housing management functions from the council. The council retains ownership of the buildings and the responsibility for any necessary major re-investment in the fabric. The first was set up in a newly-built council scheme of nearly 250 houses at Summerston in 1977. Crofts and Seale (1979) report that the

cooperative proved very effective at everyday housing management and that it successfully operated as a focus for the community. Other tenant management cooperatives have followed, but unlike Summerston, were usually created in housing that was already developed and occupied. Some such as Speirs Cooperative in Yoker (see Birchall, 1987) were established in conjunction with an improvement programme.

The perceived success of community-based initiatives such as these meant that by the early 1980s all political opposition to establishing small, resident-controlled housing organisations had evaporated. Attention then turned to the large housing schemes which had been created in the 1950s and 1960s on the periphery of the city, and which were showing increasing signs of disrepair and social malaise. In the mid 1980s central government restrictions on council capital expenditure meant that increasingly dilapidated and damp houses could not be improved. Within the council the idea emerged of establishing housing cooperatives to take over ownership of areas of council housing (Nicholson, Sim and Webster, 1985). The intention was to use public resources earmarked by the government for the private sector, supplemented by loans from private financial institutions, to fund improvements in housing built by the public sector. At the same time, building on the experience of community-based housing associations and tenant management cooperatives, the council wanted to decrease the scale of housing management, increase resident involvement and carry out modernisation without displacing existing residents. It also wanted to create, where possible, a sense of community which seemed to be lacking in the peripheral schemes (Clapham et al. 1989).

'Community Ownership,' as these ideas came to be called, drew support from across the political spectrum (Kintrea and Whitefield, 1991). The Conservative government promoted it as a means of breaking up council housing and because it embodies principles of self-help. At the same time Labour politicians have seen them as a form of socialism embodying communitarian principles.

Tenants were initially sceptical and, in some cases, openly hostile to the idea of cooperatives. However, the incentive of having their houses modernised was strong and this proved to be the principal reason why cooperatives were supported. But, in addition, commitment to the idea of cooperatives grew as tenants visited established tenant management cooperatives in Glasgow and cooperatives in Liverpool and saw what they had achieved. In particular, a strong desire emerged to recreate a sense of community in areas which were suffering from crime and vandalism and where little sense of community existed. A cooperative was seen as a means of bringing people together in order for them to gain control over their living conditions. Initial scepticism turned into a strong campaign by residents in six areas to form Community Ownership cooperatives, which helped to overcome resistance to the idea among some politi-

cians and initial delay and prevarication from the government. In 1986 the first three Community Ownership schemes (Broomhouse, Calvay and Castlemilk East) were created followed by another three (Possil, Southdeen and Rosehill) in 1987. By the early 1990s there were about 30 schemes throughout Scotland and many more were being developed.

As part of an evaluation of the first six Community Ownership schemes (see Clapham, Kintrea and Whitefield, 1991) interviews were carried out with residents who were members of the cooperative committees. In addition, group discussions were held with a selection of about 10 or 12 tenants in each of the six schemes. One of the aims of the interviews was to explore the importance of 'community' to tenants and what it meant to them.

From the interviews it was evident that many tenants had a view of what a sense of community meant and were intent on creating this in their areas. Most of the older tenants interviewed had been brought up in older, inner-city tenement areas, many of which were demolished in slum clearance campaigns in the 1960s and early 1970s. They had fond memories of their early lives and of the places in which they lived at that time.

I'm a great believer in the co-op and I'll tell you why...I was born and bred in Glasgow—George Street—but the city of Glasgow's changed...it had a terrific community spirit. I'll never forget that. I think people were...for example, you knew the name of every policeman, you knew your neighbours. I can always remember my mother taking an illness and the neighbours would step in. They took over. One would take the boys and put them in with their boys, put them into their bed, put them to school in the morning. Other ones would take the daughters (Tenant, Broomhouse).

Other tenants shared a similar view of what a community should be:

but the area where I stay I've got good neighbours and everything else and that's one of the reasons why I would not leave this area, because of the neighbours I've got round me. Even when the big kinda storm with the weather was bad and we were more or less kept in the house, the mothers of people round about...the children round about, sent their children over to see if we needed bread or milk or anything and when you got these people round about you you're quite happy (Tenant, Rosehill).

People being neighbourly and being able to walk down the street unafraid. People looking out for each other (Tenant, Rosehill).

A number of tenants specifically related community to village life reflecting a recurring theme in urban writing.

a lot of people in Broomhouse are related, this is what people want to cling to and this is what they agreed earlier on, getting back to the old village style thing, communities (Tenant, Broomhouse).

I'd love to see like a wee village night, everybody knew each other and they were very supportive to each other, but I think maybe it's a generation gap...that everyone's changing. Might not get that, you might achieve some of it but I don't think you'll get it the way it used to be years and years ago—there was always somebody on hand to help you if something went wrong (Tenant, Castlemilk East).

We saw co-ops in the beginning was to get the community spirit going, to get people doing things for themselves, not just about housing, about everything...you know, organising summer outings for the kids, parent-toddler group, after-school care, like a normal little village would do, the thing that you used to do when I was young (Tenant, Possil).

It was recognised that not everyone wanted this kind of community and that many people were living privatised lifestyles.

Broomhouse isn't different from any other area, people are just isolating themselves, staying in the house. Television is like a religion (Tenant, Broomhouse).

There's not a lot of people in the area want to communicate (Tenant, Castlemilk East).

Overall the creation of Community Ownership was felt to have improved community spirit within the areas.

Very seldom a new tenant comes into the co-op even if they've had absolutely no idea where the place was or anything, it's very seldom that they're here for more than a couple of days and you don't see them straightaway talking to people and seem to be reasonably friendly. I mean there is a pretty good sense if something happens that people do rally round...people helping out if the folk are moving...I just think there certainly seems to be a bit more pulling together in terms of things like vandalism and stuff like that. If people weren't protecting not just their own property but communal property, the Oval for example, that's not one individual stopping folk damaging that, that's everyone around here. I mean that's communal and everyone knows it. That's the community as a whole that's trying to protect it (Co-op Employee, Castlemilk East).

I'm speaking to people on the street now that I havenae spoke to for the last 17 years, didnae know them from Adam, even if they're only stopping to say "when're we getting them done?"—it's an opening gambit. Now if I go out there to wash my car it takes me about two hours 'cos everybody that passes stops and talks to me. Now if I can create what I said earlier, what the tenements had gone from, it was a community spirit (Tenant, Rosehill).

However, in Castlemilk East it was recognised that creating a sense of community would take time. Unlike the other five areas, Castlemilk East had been largely derelict and empty before the creation of Community Ownership with only about a dozen families living in the area. Therefore, many of the cooperative members were new to the area.

Hasn't been enough time. That idea's great, but you don't create communities right away from the outside in the space of 30 months.

Communities come from shared experiences over a long period of time (Tenant, Castlemilk East).

There was also a recognition that in deprived areas such as some of the Community Ownership schemes, the gains could easily disintegrate under the pressure of people's problems.

Let's be honest about it. When people moved into the housing co-op most people brought their problems with them...they didn't leave them behind...and those problems are manifest throughout Castlemilk—poverty, low income...when you get poverty you get apathy, you get in-fighting because people start blaming each other for their own situation and the real blame lies upstairs (with the Conservative Government)" (Tenant, Castlemilk East).

In the interviews, tenants were asked why community had improved after Community Ownership. Perhaps surprisingly there was little mention of the physical improvements to the houses and the environment. Rather, tenants focused on a concern that under the Council, standards of responsibility in the area had slipped because of sloppy housing management practices which Community Ownership would correct. Also, they put forward the idea that collective involvement in decisions results in a greater sense of community responsibility. Both of these explanations will now be considered in turn.

Many of the problems which existed in the areas before Community Ownership were put down by some tenants to a lack of control over the behaviour of some 'bad' tenants, either through informal pressure from other tenants or by housing managers.

At the beginning Priesthill was a great place, everybody was really keen to get going, to get their gardens done. There was a great community spirit and everybody knew everybody else. Rent collectors were really strict about tenants' behaviour and they were really strict about—they vetted them before they were housed. Now it sounds like I'm saying big brother over your shoulder, but big brother had his uses because you didn't get all this vandalism. That was nipped in the bud (Tenant, Rosehill).

If the Council had kept a beady eye on what was happening in the houses and the tenants they were putting in. I mean, at the time

they weren't even bothered to see that the tenants were doing the stairs or doing their gardens. Some of the gardens are a disgrace (Tenant, Southdeen).

It was expected by many tenants that the Community Ownership management would take a much stricter line on what was perceived as anti-social behaviour. But the job of social control was not seen to be just a job for housing managers; tenants themselves had an important role.

In the old days children would be reprimanded by adults for bad behaviour such as graffiti, but nowadays people are frightened. Everybody used to know everybody's business. The cycle's turning, or I hope it's turning and people are going back to the old values (Tenant, Southdeen).

There's a lot of people around here who do have bother and there's the youngsters that won't take a telling. But I'm lucky, I can shout and bawl at the kids if I see them doing something they're not supposed to be doing because I'm grandma. You see they all know I treat the kids the same way as I treat my grandchildren (Tenant, Southdeen).

The concept of co-ops is good. It means people talking more, they're more involved in their houses and their community which can only be a good thing. You should go to (another co-op). You can even feel the companionship people have for each other. They said it's really changed, it's put the place back to what it used to be years and years ago where neighbours and people checked their children for destroying the street (Tenant, Rosehill).

There was a view held by many tenants that the greater control given to them through Community Ownership would result in increased responsibility and a better community spirit.

Everybody's taking a pride in it (the co-op) it's given everybody a different outlook (Tenant, Broomhouse).

I think the area's improved, the tenants are going to have a lot more pride in the place and therefore they're not going to stand for what they've put up with till now (Tenant, Southdeen).

Also tenants have had a choice of what's in their houses - had a choice for the first time in their lives. People get what they want, they will look after it (Tenant, Southdeen).

I suppose first and foremost it'll be a better community because tenants will want to keep it better. I think they'll have a bigger interest in it, they know they have a say in what goes on (Tenant, Southdeen).

In the six Community Ownership areas the cooperative acted as a focus for feelings of community. Coupled with modernisation of the houses and environmental improvements it led to an increase in the proportion of tenants saying that there was 'good community spirit' in the area. Table 1 gives the results of household surveys of approximately 100 tenants in each of the initial five areas (Castlemilk East is excluded as the numbers living in the area at the formation of Community Ownership were too small). The first surveys were carried out in 1986 or 1987 when the Community Ownership schemes were in the process of being established. A follow-up survey was carried out in 1989 when the schemes had been established and most of the improvement work had been carried out. (The follow-up survey, like the first, was based on a random sample of people in the area rather than on re-interviewing tenants in the first survey.)

Table 1. Residents' Views of Community Spirit in Five Community Ownership Schemes (percentage of all residents who expressed a view)

Community Ownership Area	Good Community Spirit	
	1986/7	1989
Broomhouse	46	86
Calvay	25	53
Possil	17	67
Rosehill	39	63
Southdeen	28	74

From the table it is clear that the proportion of people saying that there was good community spirit had increased markedly between the two dates in all of the areas. It is worth noting, however, that in 1984 some areas of non-cooperative housing used for comparison in the research also had large numbers of residents who considered that their area had a good community spirit. For example, in Easthall, an area of council housing, 66 percent said there was good community spirit and in Faifley, an area of housing rented from a central government body, the figure was 70 percent. Importantly, both Easthall and Faifley are areas with strong and active tenants' associations.

Therefore, the lesson from Glasgow is not that co-operatives are a unique means of creating a sense of community. Rather, they can act as a focus for residents who wish to improve community spirit in their area and provide one mechanism by which tenants can achieve this by taking more control over their living conditions.

CONCLUSION

The experience of Liverpool and Glasgow shows that 'privatism' and a loss of 'community' is not a universal phenomenon even if it is a general trend. In traditional working class areas such as inner city Liverpool and the council estates of Glasgow, many people have experienced a sense of community in their early lives which they wish to keep (as in the case of Portland Gardens in Liverpool), or re-create (as in the case of Community Ownership in Glasgow). This has resulted in those areas in a fight for the creation of cooperatives as an instrument to keep people together, and to assert collective control over people's living conditions. Thus cooperatives are an expression of this desire for community.

Cooperative members in Glasgow and Liverpool seemed to hold similar conceptions of 'community' and there was little evidence of the conflict over the meaning of the term which characterised the ethnically diverse neighbourhood of Los Angeles studied by Heskin (1991). This is not surprising given the relatively homogeneous class and ethnic structure of the Glasgow and Liverpool cooperatives and their relatively stable populations. The conception held in Liverpool and Glasgow was different from any of those in Los Angeles and was modelled on the village idea so disliked by the Los Angeles 'populists.' The village idea had two main components. The first was the social interaction and the support from neighbours thought to be associated with village life. In Portland Gardens in Liverpool there was a desire to retain the socialising on the balconies which was a feature of their life before the cooperative was formed. In Glasgow it was associated more with stopping for a chat in the street and with the organisation of specific social activities. In Liverpool there was a concern to retain the networks of support between neighbours and in Glasgow this was a feature which cooperative members sought to revive.

The second component which featured more strongly in Glasgow was the desire to re-assert the social control perceived as operating in villages. The intention was to prevent vandalism, nuisance and crime by observing others' behaviour and applying social sanctions to those who did not conform to the established norms. The Los Angeles 'populists' specifically sought to avoid this control but in Glasgow it must be seen in the context of perceived high incidences of vandalism and other forms of 'anti-social' behaviour. Residents were attempting to regain control over the communal spaces to create a feeling of security and to improve their environment.

It is no coincidence that cooperatives have grown more rapidly in Glasgow and Liverpool than in other British cities. Both are predominantly working class cities and have had a long experience of trade union organisation. Both cities have strong religious communities and seem to engender a fierce pride and attachment in their residents. Both have suffered severe deprivation and depopulation as a result of economic change and have endured housing and

urban renewal policies which have broken up existing communities and forced people to move away from their friends and families. This is not to say that cooperatives will not flourish in other cities which do not share all these characteristics, merely that it seems more likely a desire for 'community' would exist in such cities if it existed anywhere.

Cooperatives do not create 'communities,' they act as a focus for residents wishing to express their sense of community and a mechanism for exercising collective control over living conditions. Therefore, their attraction to residents depends crucially on whether the thesis of increasing privatism holds true. If so, cooperatives may remain a marginal form of housing tenure, catering to those clinging to past memories and collective values. However, in a world characterised by what Giddens called 'ontological insecurity' it may be that cooperatives can provide a means for people to make sense of their lives and derive some control over their living conditions, and thus express their desire for 'community.'

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WOMEN, COMMUNITY, AND HOUSING

Sylvia Novac and Gerda Wekerle

The degree to which women live their lives separated from each other is probably one good indicator of their oppression under male dominance. While it is common for groups of women to develop social networks to create woman-positive space, it is rare for them to develop woman-controlled communities, yet such pockets of women's autonomy reveal a great deal. The earlier historic existence of a materialist and spatial approach to addressing women's economic and political concerns seems, for the most part, to have been forgotten by modern feminists.¹ We will present brief descriptions of two historic examples of communities of independent women living together and compare them with the experiences of residents in two Canadian women's housing cooperatives today to illustrate feminist resistance and objectives through the provision of housing and community development.

Based on interviews with residents of two women's housing cooperatives, we will describe some of the ways in which they create and sustain a sense of community. By contrasting the contemporary communities with earlier examples of women's communities, we will see that the co-op women faced both opportunities and constraints from housing policies that institutionalized a separation of private and public spheres. The resulting restrictions on use of domestic space limited the type of modern-day community women could create.

Since the 1970s, a few groups of women in Canada have developed small residential communities that address their own housing needs from a social and economic perspective using the model of housing cooperatives. While modern housing cooperatives have more limited objectives than earlier feminist communities, both incorporate or accommodate goals that are of particular importance to feminists. These goals include generic objectives such as the provision of affordable housing and democratic control by residents of their housing environment, plus creation of a supportive environment for women, skill development, and mutual exchange of services. As we will see, however, the cooperative housing model does not accommodate other feminist goals for achieving a sense of community that were met in the earlier examples.

WOMEN'S COMMUNITIES OF THE PAST

Within a climate of reform, the Beguinage Movement began spontaneously in several places all over the Low Countries during the twelfth century and spread quickly to the rest of Europe. The beguinages housed groups of independent women, creating small communities. A 'surplus' of women, particularly in urban areas, led to a movement which defined a new status for women separate from either traditional home or church.³ Elise Boulding describes the origins of this movement that lasted for many centuries:

A religiously oriented laywomen's movement led by upper- and middle-class women who were moving from rural areas to the towns and cities of Europe, it provided autonomy for single women of all classes moving in from the countryside. It created for women a third alternative to the existing ones of marriage or religious seclusion. It also provided a new kind of urban social service.³

Special houses (beguinages) were built on the edges of cities for unmarried women workers (some married women lived in them as well for periods of time). Most of the women who joined were working women or the offspring of well-to-do burghers. Those who entered with more wealth supported women of more limited means. Unlike women in convents who were drawn from the aristocracy, the communities of Beguines were of mixed class origins.⁴ The large houses constituted congenial and pragmatic living arrangements with workshops similar to those of the women's trade guilds. In fact, "the Beguine movement outlasted the guilds and gave working women an autonomous niche in urban society which the mixed guilds never provided."⁵ According to Boulding, the rapid expansion of beguinages was due to the need of increasing numbers of women in the cities to have a place to live and work. Well-to-do women who were part of the movement joined the working women in their trades in workshops.

Research on the Woman's Commonwealth of Belton, Texas portrays a nineteenth century women's separatist community based on shared religious values and celibacy.⁶ Because their husbands resisted the women's desire for celibacy, the women found it necessary to leave their homes; they designed and built their own houses, and managed a successful hotel business and dairy with a communist system of shared work, resources, and decision-making. Carved out of one town block were several buildings: the Central Hotel and the Commonwealth Area had continuous sitting, dining, and work spaces, and there were several floors of hotel rooms, some used for guests and others for the women's private bedrooms. While a desire for privacy was accommodated, work did not have to be isolated in any sense. Space was not rigidly defined, but adaptable with multiple uses.⁷

The women were bound to each other by shared values, and they pragmatically adopted a communist economic base. Gwendolyn Wright points out that these practices were common in the American West at that time, when women socialized primarily within religious groups and economic cooperation was often necessary. The application of the principles of equality and independence to their rights as women was a radical concept, initially raising strong hostility from deserted husbands and townsfolk alike. The women's rebellious and independent actions prompted vigilante group violence at first; when physical attack failed to scare the women back to their husbands and homes, there was eventual local acceptance of the group and their thriving hotel business. The Woman's Commonwealth successfully ran their hotel for about 20 years, and sustained their separate community for another 20 years.

LESSONS FROM THE PAST

Though distinctly different in time and place, there are similarities between these two historic and heroic examples of women's communities. In twelfth-century Europe and nineteenth-century Texas, there were no models of women living independent of family or church. Resistance to the development of women's spaces was a serious threat: the Commonwealth women were initially pursued by groups of angry husbands, and the Beguines were under repeated attack from a male-dominated church. The Woman's Commonwealth and the beguinages were both initiated by upper- and middle-class women who had the financial resources to buy land and build. In both examples, domestic activities were set up communally, and space for market exchange (paid) activity was made an integral part of the physical structures. Wealth and resources were pooled within a cooperative and communal system to include women of limited means. Success in both cases was largely attributable to a high degree of sharing and group autonomy due to the supportive, communal integration of work opportunities and living space. In other words they retained an integration of domestic and industrial or commercial economies.

As we look at the contemporary experience, we note that women's fundamental issues of autonomy within patriarchal societies have changed little, and that their responses are similar to some extent. A significant difference is the greater degree of government programs which have created both opportunities and constraints for the full realization of the co-op as women's preferred life spaces.

ANOMALY WITHIN ANOMALY: WOMEN'S HOUSING COOPERATIVES

First established in 1973, the federal nonprofit cooperative housing program in Canada has been revised several times, but as of this writing, continues despite a trend in federal withdrawal from nonprofit housing support.⁸ Cooperative housing remains a minor housing tenure form, little known or understood by most Canadians, but the model allows for community initiative and control in housing development and management. The use of this program as an opportunity to create woman-controlled housing is an innovation even more unique.

Women rarely develop housing in our society, but an increasing number of women's groups have sponsored and developed nonprofit housing for themselves.⁹ In the early 1980s, two women's housing co-ops were built in Toronto under Section 56.1 of the National Housing Act (the second version of the cooperative housing program that was in effect from 1979 to 1985). Constructed in 1982, the Constance Hamilton Co-op is a 30-unit stacked townhouse project with an attached 6-bedroom transitional house for single women. The *Beguinaige*, a 28-unit combination of stacked townhouses and apartments, was occupied in 1985.¹⁰ Specific aspects of the federal co-op housing program made it an attractive vehicle for women's groups. They were eligible for development assistance grants, which allowed people with no prior housing experience to develop a proposal. The government insured the mortgage financing which covered 100 percent of the project cost, and provided an interest reduction grant. Housing unit charges were set to match the low end of market rents in the surrounding neighbourhood. Additional government funding allowed about 30 percent of the units to be directly subsidized according to household income. This structured income mix was particularly attractive to low- and moderate-income women who sought to avoid the stigma and ghetto atmosphere of public housing for which they would have been eligible.¹¹

Within the context of a wider study of women's housing projects in Canada, the residents of these two women's co-ops were interviewed during the summer of 1986. The comments used in this paper come from those 45 resident interviews.¹² Additional interviews were conducted with founding board members and professional co-op housing developers.

The underlying desire behind these women's concerns to produce housing projects that were affordable, self-managed, safe, and secure was the creation of a supportive environment. They chose to create a housing environment that focused on elements which are not usually priorities in most housing development: concerns with aspects of community life in the physical design of the projects, and in the social design of management and decision-making structures. The model of nonprofit housing cooperatives places value on community

development rather than viewing housing development as simply the provision of affordable shelter. Nonprofit housing resource organizations that guide sponsoring groups through the various development stages use the rhetoric of community to differentiate their product from other forms of housing tenure. One development officer said of this practice:

I always use the term community to indicate that it's different from a housing project. I talk about creating community... Some people see that the co-op has some sort of structure—it has committees, and so on. I see that, but I also see the interaction. When I talk about community, that's what I mean.

Development of a supportive community was the express goal of the founders of both women's co-ops. One of the initial objectives was to create an environment where women might obtain support from other women to make changes in their lives, especially after divorce. Another was to provide security of living arrangements and the possibility of a community social life.

The residents' housing histories showed that all but one woman had been renting in the private market sector prior to moving into a co-op. While changes in household composition and financial status were the primary reasons for previous moves, several women also spoke of abusive male landlords who caused them to move.¹³ The greater tenure security of co-op housing, and control over costs, maintenance, and rules made the idea of co-ops very desirable for those without stable high incomes.

SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNITY

Desire for a sense of community was the most frequent reason given by residents of Constance Hamilton and Beguinage for moving into their co-op. In response to the question "Why did you choose to move into this housing co-op?" almost all of the women stated that they were seeking a sense of community. In speaking about what they had gained on moving into the co-op, the themes of security and support predominated:

I have a community that I know I can count on. That is difficult to find in this country. And it's important that I live with women—mutual sharing of experience, support, community. Makes me feel secure—and to have a comfortable house that I can afford.

I've gained lots of friends, security. I've also gained the fact that I'm involved, as I was in my small town. I like being involved.

I've learned a whole new sense of community and neighbourhood that you don't normally get in the city, the downtown core. It's great to be in the tight lesbian and feminist communities, and to live in it too. It's living in a community of women who share my

philosophy, my political perspective. Or at least, if they don't share it, they respect it.

Besides the general gains of security and support, the friendships, and sense of community, there was strong appreciation by lesbian women of a space where they were accepted.

COMMUNITY AND HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Who lives in these housing co-ops? A demographic profile of the residents in 1986 shows a fairly wide range of individual annual income—\$3,000 to \$36,000—with an average of about \$16,500. This reflects the income mix fostered by co-op advocates and built into the funding arrangements of the federal housing program. The profile also shows a range of formal education (Grade 9 to doctorates) with about 45 percent having a university degree. This is a higher level of formal education than that revealed by a survey of housing co-op members in Metro Toronto,¹⁴ where 25 percent were reported to be university graduates, and it is certainly much higher than that in the population at large. Yet, there is no reflection of this high level of education in the income level of the women: many residents earn moderate incomes as employees in the service sector, the arts (theatre and film), or in feminist organisations (women's shelters).

A third of the women in the co-ops live alone; over a third of the households include children, and the remaining women live with partners or friends. The age range of the women is truncated relative to the general population in that no elderly women lived in either co-op; the youngest woman was twenty-two, and the oldest, fifty—the mean age was thirty-four. By far the majority of members were white, a fact that was forcefully pointed out during an interview with a South Asian resident.

While the income mix represented by members of the women's co-ops reflects the housing program's funding requirements, the relative age, racial, and educational homogeneity appear to reflect that group dominant in organized feminist activity—young to middle-aged, white, middle-class, university-educated, urban women—which is not surprising given the feminist network that was used to advertise the availability of these co-op units. Increased sensitivity to the inherent racism and ageism that has resulted should motivate changes in unit allocation and outreach strategies for replacement members. While development of a sense of shared values and common purpose may come more easily with homogeneity of background, feminist objectives necessitate dealing with those forces that separate women, particularly racism.

PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT

The women's co-ops' founders viewed the participatory management typical in most housing co-ops as additional opportunities to address feminist goals to

empower women by being in charge of their environment. Management responsibilities in the women's housing co-ops offer learning experiences for women to gain new skills from one another and develop new models of decision-making. One of the founding members comments on these opportunities:

What's different in an all-women environment? A supportive environment—safe and supportive. Women do the managing and the running; they don't do it when men take over. The women do everything from maintenance to management.

Because of this control these women can set rules to accommodate their circumstances, for instance, in providing for emergency housing subsidies for members who are suddenly unemployed, and in designating units for ex-psychiatric patients or homeless women who need housing subsidy. These policies reinforce residents' shared values of mutual aid and support and further contribute to the feeling of a supportive community.

The women are often faced with responsibilities with which they are unfamiliar, such as the financial management of, and planning for, property worth several millions of dollars. Undertaking these responsibilities involves work, but it also involves learning new skills of leadership, financial management, effective group communication, decision-making, and property maintenance. Skill development was reported as a personal gain by two-thirds of the women interviewed. The type of skills gained were primarily social and negotiating skills, along with administrative skills such as budgeting and property maintenance. Decision-making by consensus, which tends to take more time, is the norm in these co-ops.

I've learned a great deal: I've been on the board. I've learned about building issues, fantasies versus reality regarding living with women.

Autonomy over my own housing, and not 100 percent responsibility. And the possibilities of resolving our difficulties differently.

Working collectively to solve problems, resolve conflicts, and make decisions is a new challenge for most of the women, and the need for patience was mentioned more than once. On the other hand, a resident who is a board director cautioned against romanticizing the opportunities for women to develop a sense of competence and new skills, noting that most of the women have many obligations, and limited time to give to co-op management.

SHARED ACTIVITIES

Residents in the two women's co-ops engage in a broad range of shared activities, thereby creating opportunities for the emergence of social networks and affirmation of shared values. When members were asked to name the types of collective activities in which they personally engaged, all but one respondent reported at least one activity, and some residents reported as many as ten.

Shared activities were of three types: social activities, organizational participation, and exchange activities. The participation category included those formal, organized activities that are part of the management structure of any housing co-op: serving on the board of directors, various committees, and work teams. Social activities are those carried out on a voluntary basis with other members of the co-op, generally within the setting of the co-op: barbecues, sports, parties, dinners, socializing across backyards. These activities were not usually formally organized and involved a variable number of other residents. Barter between co-op residents formed much of the basis of the 'exchange' category. These usually combined social and exchange activities, such as potluck dinners and barbecues, but also included childcare and other services including pet care and job referral, or sharing assets such as cars, cottages, and computers. While we did not specifically ask about the exchange of emotional support, it was frequently mentioned in response to open-ended questions, and it seemed to be a significant aspect of what was meant when residents referred to the sense of community that they felt because of living in these co-ops.

The greatest number of shared activities were primarily social (reported by 77 percent of the women), while 70 percent of residents engaged in formal co-op activities, and 36 percent practised exchange or barter. The high level of participation in formal co-op management is greater than in Metro co-ops at large (64 percent),¹⁵ and may be due to a stronger commitment to direct involvement, or to the relatively small size of these co-ops which necessitates proportionately more work per member.

DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY FOCUS

One structural basis for the creation of a supportive community in these co-ops is grounded in direct member participation in key aspects of the development and management of the housing. Community involvement for the early members began with maintaining control of the development process, as reflected in the words of a founding member of one of the co-ops:

Early on, the co-op made the decision to maintain control of the development process, and, in particular, to hire its own architect rather than giving over the building process to a resource group. It never would have entered our heads to do a thing like that [hand over design responsibility]. We were developing a co-op. We wanted to work with an architect and have a large say in how the units worked. We hired a resource group to save us time—to free us to develop our membership.

In both projects, maximizing control over design and site decisions was an important objective for the founders, despite the years of volunteer work required.

Some of the novel design ideas favoured by the founding groups met with resistance from federal funding agencies and bureaucrats involved in the approval process, such as equal size bedrooms (no 'master bedroom'), a deliberate variety of unit layouts, and floor separation of bedrooms for two women sharing a unit (eg., one bedroom and kitchen-cum-living room on a floor, with a second bedroom and living room on another floor). While these ideas were successfully implemented, other ideas were not, and the women's co-ops do not have a particularly distinctive physical form compared to most multi-unit housing. The existing communal spaces—the laundry room, office space, and meeting-cum-party room—are similar to those in most housing cooperatives.

Initial desires for greater communal space were thwarted by program constraints which strictly limit funding for what are considered non-residential uses. Innovative ideas, like on-site child care or enterprise space which could be used for work-at-home businesses, were also not implemented due to funding constraints. The Constance Hamilton Co-op has no facilities for formal child care, but the co-op is adjacent to a small park which has play equipment and a wading pool. The Beguinage has no child care facilities, nor does it provide shared outdoor play space. It is not common practice for nonprofit housing cooperatives to provide on-site child care. For example, 70 percent of Toronto area co-ops do not provide any form of organized child care.¹⁶

A constant complaint of co-op residents is the lack of space within the projects for meetings and shared activities. Women from both co-ops expressed frustration with government guidelines that limit the capital funding for non-residential space with the result that small housing projects do not have the meeting space essential for collective activities.

There are also limits on how individual unit space can be used, particularly for employment. Units are small compared to Canadian norms. There are occupancy restrictions that are intended to prevent 'over-housing' (eg., a single woman will not be allowed a two-bedroom unit, regardless of her ability to pay). Municipal zoning by-laws that restrict business activity in residential areas are another barrier.

Some of the residents reported that the inability to pursue paid work at home would be one of their reasons for moving out of the co-op even though they felt attached to their community.

I would like to continue to live in the co-op, but I'm going to have to find a way to get more space in the co-op. I'll probably be more self-employed and want to work at home.

I expect to move out of the city into a house with a partner or friend, commuting to my projects when necessary, working out of my home, sending my designs to the city.

The restrictions on employment activities within the co-ops represent a significant contrast to the ways in which the earlier women's communities were able to achieve financial autonomy and the integration of their life activities.

CONCLUSIONS

The Constance Hamilton and Beguinage cooperatives share some experiences and characteristics with the earlier women's communities: the creation of an alternative to the predominant models of male-dominated living arrangements, provision of affordable shelter, small-scale projects, negative and hostile reaction to women's space by outsiders,¹⁷ and the provision of a supportive community. The co-ops differ from the historic communities in two fundamental respects: the public rather than private source of capital, and the inability to accommodate employment opportunities.

Land and development costs, particularly in an urban centre, require a great deal of capital. Private capital was available in the cases of the Woman's Commonwealth and the Beguinages, while the women's housing co-ops were dependent on state provision of public capital. That financial support came with a set of normative assumptions about domestic space for low- and middle-income people. The program severely restricts funding for non-residential space to 15 percent of the budget or 20 percent of floor area. Non-residential space must cover its costs and is not eligible for operating subsidies. Arguments for a greater amount of collective space are not appreciated by government officials who see this program as creating affordable shelter and do not acknowledge the community development functions envisioned by the women. Individual unit space is held to a spatial minimum that reflects ideas of 'modest' housing wherein home is a place of rest, not work.¹⁸ Funding for adaptable space and quality amenities is severely restricted instead of being viewed as a public investment for which long-term utility would be a priority.

Housing policy has often been used as an economic prod for job creation which benefits the male-dominated development industry and construction trades. The economic framework that views housing as a commodity for consumption rather than a site for productive activities attributes little or no value to the domestic and community work that is done mostly by women. The artificial separation of the domestic economy from market exchange is the basis for municipal by-laws that enforce a spatial division between legitimate places of employment and residence. Land use planning since World War II has been based on restrictive zoning to 'protect' residential areas for single families from what was commonly portrayed as the "filth and degrading influence of industry." Using definitions of 'single family' as a tool that

assumed male-dominated nuclear family living arrangements (the 'ideal family' of male breadwinner, housewife, biological children, and no one else), female-headed households have been pushed out of certain neighbourhoods.¹⁹

The isolated position of Western women in the nuclear family structure, reinforced by the ideological and physical separation of employment and home, partially explains why Western women have focused particularly heavy criticism on the family and home life. It also explains the importance of creating both women's networks and communities for supportive and political reasons.

One of the crucial functions of networks lies in providing women with a context in which they can share feelings and problems. The validation they receive from each other is a tremendous influence on the degree to which they accept and internalize male values and thinking. The more support women get for their own perspectives, the closer they come to questioning male perspectives and priorities, a crucial first step in the process of change.²⁰

The form of this change will have to address not only wage and employment inequality, but the gendered division of labour in the domestic economy (unpaid work) that supports this system and the form of household which it creates.²¹

Wekerle and Simon note that the feminist approach in models of transition housing has been:

to use housing first as a secure base from which to develop a supportive community, then as a locus for the delivery of services, and finally as an economic base for the development of on-site employment.²²

Developing and managing housing within a feminist community development framework, rather than as a profit-producing commodity, will require challenging the institutionalized barriers that sustain separated spheres and women's dual burden of paid and unpaid work. Certain aspects of the cooperative housing model can be adapted to such an end, but the barriers woven into complex government legislation must be confronted before we can design homes within communities that do not reinforce sexism in our daily lives.

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NOTES

¹ See Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Passing of the Home in Great American Cities." *Heresies* 11 (April 1981, originally 1904):53-55; Dolores Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1981); and Gwendolyn Wright, "The Woman's Commonwealth: A Nineteenth-Century Experiment." *Heresies* 11 (April 1981):24-27 for several examples of a materialist and spatial view of feminism.

² Ephraim H. Mizruchi, *Regulating Society: Marginality and Social Control in Historical Perspective* (New York: The Free Press, 1983): 54.

³ Elise Boulding, *The Underside of History: A View of Women Through Time* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1976): 428. According to Boulding, the Beguinage movement waned overtime, but technically continues today.

⁴ Mizruchi, *Regulating Society*, p. 55.

⁵ Boulding, *The Underside of History*, p. 423.

⁶ Gwendolyn Wright, "The Woman's Commonwealth," p. 24-27.

⁷ See Wright's article for a photo of the Central Hotel and a site plan of all the buildings.

⁸ See Larry S. Bourne, "Recent housing policy issues in Canada: a retreat from social housing?" *Housing Studies* 1 (1986):122-128. The federal program was cut completely in 1992, but the larger provinces continue to fund cooperative housing.

⁹ See Gerda Wekerle, *Women's Housing Projects in Eight Canadian Cities* (Ottawa: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, April, 1988) for descriptions of women's housing projects.

¹⁰ See Gerda Wekerle and Sylvia Novac, "Developing two women's housing cooperatives," in *New Households, New Housing* (eds.) Karen Franck and Sherry Ahrentzen (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1989) for spatial descriptions of the projects.

¹¹ Gerda Wekerle, *Women's Housing Projects in Eight Canadian Cities* (Ottawa: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 1988):12.

¹² The response rate was about 80 percent for those women who were asked to participate in the study, however, we were unable to contact some of the women over the summer; the 45 women interviewed represent about 60 percent of the total number of residents. For more on the research methodology see Gerda Wekerle, *Women's Housing Projects in Eight Canadian Cities* (1988); and Sylvia Novac, *Women and Housing, Women's Housing* (Toronto: Major Paper, Faculty of Environmental Studies, 1987).

¹³ We were surprised to discover that a third of the women reported being homeless at some time in their lives.

During the marriage, he drove me out sometimes. The house was his house. I went to friends, and considered a shelter.

When I first left home, there were two months when I was just kicking around Toronto. Sometimes I stayed with friends, slept at work, or in parks.

I spent three months in rooming houses, separately from my kid who was for a time with a sister in Quebec, then boarding with a friend.

¹⁴. Myra Schiff, *Housing Cooperatives in Metropolitan Toronto: A Survey of Members* (Toronto: Cooperative Housing Foundation of Canada, 1982).

¹⁵. *ibid.*

¹⁶. Cooperative Housing Federation of Toronto, "Co-op Questionnaire Results." (Toronto: CHFT, 1985).

¹⁷. In the case of Constance Hamilton, residents from the nearby established residential area actively resisted municipal approval for the women's co-op which they portrayed as undesirable (e.g., a site for prostitution). The Beguinage is in a mixed use area, next to public housing projects, plus small industrial and commercial sites. There has been interpersonal hostility directed at members and their property (e.g., homophobic taunts and vandalized cars).

¹⁸. See Wekerle (1988) for an extended discussion of CMHC policy regarding standards in nonprofit housing.

¹⁹. See Marsha Ritzdorf, "Women and the city: land use and zoning issues." *Urban Resources* 3 (Winter 1986); and Sylvia Novac, "Not seen, not heard: women and housing policy," *Canadian Woman Studies* 11 (Fall 1990) for more on discriminatory effects of municipal zoning.

²⁰. Lisa Leghorn and Katherine Parker, *Woman's Worth: Sexual Economics and the World of Women* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981): 28.

²¹. Maureen Mackintosh, "Gender and Economics: The Sexual Division of Labour and the Subordination of Women." In Kate Young et al., *Of Marriage and the Market* (London: CSE, 1981): 12.

²². Gerda Wekerle and Joan Simon, "Housing Alternatives for Women: The Canadian Experience." *Urban Resources* 3 (1986): 13.

COOPERATIVES AS PLACES OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Heléne Clark and Susan Saegert

COOPERATIVES AS SYSTEM AND LIFEWORLD

System and lifeworld are conceptual categories of social theory, employed to illuminate the means through which society reproduces itself, both at the level of the society and its institutions as a whole, and through transmission of cultural knowledge and values. The system perspective describes the steering mechanisms of the society and is focused on the achievement of economic goals and the accumulation of power. The lifeworld perspective describes the norms and values of the participants in the society. The system acts as a limit on the social integration based on norms and values.¹

This distinction helps us understand differences and similarities in the operation of for-profit and nonprofit housing providers. The rational action that normally governs housing operations, and therefore residents' actions vis-a-vis housing management in a private market economy usually requires the maximization of profit as well as the creation of a livable environment. The nonprofit sector, on the other hand, begins with a different goal. These goals vary depending on context, but usually include the creation of housing units, access of low- or middle-income people to secure, reasonable-quality housing and reduction of the cost of housing. The nonprofit sector must still act rationally, in an economic and operational sense, to meet these goals. In fact, many of the issues of cost remain the same in the nonprofit as in the for-profit sector, and so issues of efficiency, economies of scale, and provision of service and amenity will all affect the balance sheet.

Cooperative housing, as a sub-sector of nonprofit housing, of course, shares these concerns. Yet, under conditions of resident control other goals vie for equality or primacy of importance. Unlike an outside provider, for whom meeting the technical requirements of providing the housing are paramount, residents must incorporate their housing decisions into the logic of their daily life. This logic is rooted in normative values, communicative practices and needs for the reproduction of the material, cultural, and social spheres of existence. As Johnston Birchall (Chapter 4) says, collectively controlled housing exists primarily to serve housing needs rather than private profit.

Two questions immediately emerge upon making the distinction between the for-profit and the nonprofit sector, and then between bureaucratic and resident control. One is whether the difference in goals corresponds to a fundamental reorientation in the meaning of rational action, and then, under what conditions such a reorientation occurs. The second question is what are the implications for social change and individual or collective empowerment of different rationalities.

Answers to these questions require not only theoretical clarification, but empirical evidence derived from the details of day-to-day decision making and capable of uncovering the meaning structures behind them. To claim any real possibilities for social transformation stemming from transformations in rationality, we must be able to show that cooperatives support resident struggles to sustain their lifeworld, both in its normative content and its material substance.

However, the history of cooperative housing has not only been hidden in terms of the extent of its existence, or its connections to popular ideology. What has also been hidden are the experiences and actual activities of those living in and managing the housing. Therefore, we have very little information about what it actually means to be 'collective' and what this means for those living inside it.

Some of the chapters in this volume go behind the mask of terminologies—tenant management, resident control, collective—to explore organizational practices, the meaning of participation and resident experiences. We categorize those chapters as taking a 'lifeworld' perspective. Other chapters describe cooperative history as it is enabled or prevented by national legislation, financing schemes and ideology. We categorize those as taking a 'system' perspective. We need both perspectives to reveal the role of cooperative housing, because it simultaneously requires and changes the system of housing provision (however slightly) and the daily life of its inhabitants.

Our work in New York City (see chapter 9), and the earlier work by Leavitt & Saegert (1989,1990) on the initial organization, development, and maintenance of limited equity cooperatives immediately raised the radically different perspectives that we later identified as system and lifeworld. We came to understand this dichotomy as a fundamental flaw, and its recognition as vital, if we were to break out of the mold of viewing housing and housing programs from the point of view of policy, efficiency, and economics, hiding the lives and experiences of residents.

To provide an example of the danger of explanation by recourse to events and priorities of the economic system alone, rather than both system and lifeworld, the term "abandonment" is useful.

Abandonment has been defined by urban theorists in different ways, however, with certain common assumptions. P. Marcuse has defined abandonment as follows:

Abandonment of a unit occurs when its owner loses any economic interest in the continued ownership of the property beyond the immediate future, and is willing to surrender title to it without compensation. Physical condition is a good, but not sufficient, indicator of abandonment: some units that appear physically abandoned may instead be on hold pending re-use, and others that have actually been abandoned by their owners may still be maintained in tolerable condition by their tenants. Abandonment of an entire neighborhood occurs when public and/or private parties act on the assumption that long-term investment in the neighborhood, whether in maintenance and improvements or in new construction, is not warranted. It is only a matter of time before residents of an abandoned unit or an abandoned neighborhood are displaced. (P. Marcuse, 1986).

Thus "abandonment" is a term that applies to the capital investment status of a building or neighborhood, rather than one that describes whether or not residents continue to live there. The purely economic use of the term abandonment is even more stark when we compare the situation in New York City, where buildings are described as abandoned, although people continue to live in them, with Coin Street in London (Tuckett, Chapter 2) which was an empty site, with neither buildings nor residents, but which was never considered abandoned, because it was economically valuable.

The second aspect of the abandonment definition that is significant is the assumed inevitability of the lived experience ultimately following the investment logic. Displacement of the tenants from their homes is "only a matter of time" according to P. Marcuse. Limited-equity ownership defies this inexorable course. So, in the case of housing issues, "abandonment" is a system term that leaves out the daily lived experience of residents in "abandoned" neighborhoods.

How can we explain the invisibility of the tenants in our characterization of their housing and their neighborhoods? How can we account for their creation of an alternative to their inevitable displacement? To do so, it is necessary to come to terms with the difference between the realities of the economic marketplace and the realities of lived experience. At the same time, the limits set by one upon the other, and their interdependence, are crucial.

Limited-equity cooperative housing in New York City reveals the close interplay between the competing realities of the system and the lifeworld. We learned much about this dynamic as we talked with residents, attended meetings and were allowed to observe the daily decision-making processes involved in running a building. However, the particular buildings and tenants that are involved in the limited equity alternative did not evolve this way by accident. They are responses to crises in living, and are the combination of

direct, empowering actions by residents and certain institutional circumstances that extended the normal limits for tenant control (see Leavitt & Saegert, 1990, for a fuller discussion).

Drawing on the preceding chapters we can locate other combinations of site occupation and economic value, thereby uncovering differing relations between the cooperative residents and the system. In Great Britain, for example, where cooperatives were often built on land outside the city that was vacant, cooperative housing development was also not hotly contested, but deemed appropriate. Similarly in Denmark, undesirable locations were increasingly chosen for cooperative housing as the economic system increasingly determined cooperative housing production. The context of the buildings and the transition to tenant ownership are, of course, factors in a larger economic process of shifting capital resources, and thereby operate within limits set by the system of economic and political forces such as investment return and public policies as well as prevalent ideologies. But the consequences of the actions of residents resisting displacement have the potential to change the existing limits and call into question some of the mechanisms of power that had previously seemed "natural" or immutable.

COOPERATIVE HOUSING—SITES OF RESISTANCE OR BUFFER ZONES?

Cooperative housing can be seen as mediating, or acting as a buffer between system and lifeworld; as a point of integration. However, it is also a site where the conflicts between the needs of the two emerge. Wallerstein (1984) and others have argued that households act as such a buffer, and are therefore sites of potential resistance. Leavitt & Saegert (1990) argued that the cooperatives they studied in New York City operate as an expansion of the household to the building as a whole. The actual composition of a household in terms of race, gender, and income may be co-determining factors along with its place in the hierarchy of social relations in understanding its potential for resistance.

Critical theory has not yet fully incorporated gender and race into the development of theoretical perspectives concerning the system and lifeworld or social change. Some bridges remain to be built between feminist critiques and critical social theory. In the case of housing cooperatives, where the focus is on the intersection between the total context of housing provision and the maintenance of individual sites for the cultural and material reproduction of life, the feminist analyses of the spheres of the public and private are particularly relevant. The socially constructed gender differences in styles of organization of action also make it important to include a discussion of the connection between gender and forms of rationality, where action organization is theoretically linked to conceptions of rationality.

Whether a particular chapter focuses primarily on system or lifeworld, the tension between the two is evident in all the accounts of cooperative housing. For example, Richman describes the transformation of the Danish cooperative sector from a system of worker controlled and owned homes to a method by which the government and large development organizations provided housing for lower-income segments of the population. As decision-making about housing moved further away from actual or potential residents, decisions were made to require methods and forms of housing construction that were considered undesirable by the majority of residents. Vestiges of the lifeworld orientation of early cooperative housing remain, in that residents usually retain control over some aspects of daily operations and budget priorities. However, selection of residents, hiring and firing of staff, and choice of a manager rest with parent development corporations. While hardwood floors, other design amenities, and communal facilities remain, cooperatives must use prefabricated building components. These and other regulations introduced to rationalize building production and finance from the governmental perspective have resulted in huge "bleak modernist buildings in new communities on the urban periphery" (Richman, Chapter 8). Surveys indicated residents were unhappy with the buildings, as did high vacancy rates and occupancy by primarily those with few or no choices.

Using our frame of analysis, it is clear in Richman's report that the transformation of the cooperative housing was driven by system imperatives and involved the progressive separation of decision-making from the discourses of residents related to the kinds of daily living they sought. Yet lifeworld-based movements of young people, acting as squatters or as more affluent consumers unwilling to accept the standardized products of the system, have resulted in a new form of limited equity cooperative, planned and developed by small resident groups apart from the large nonprofit developers.

Each chapter contains some such example, whether it be the satisfaction of residents with cooperative housing services and management in England and the simultaneous judgment of Housing Corporation monitors that management systems were unsatisfactory, sometimes to the point where co-ops were forcibly shut down (Birchall, Chapter 4), the Danish dissatisfaction with system-produced cooperatives described above, the demands for homes rather than office buildings or hotels at Coin Street (Tuckett), or the planting of flowers by San Jerardo women as legal and political battles raged about them (Bandy, Chapter 1). In cooperatives, rationalities inevitably meet and clash. When cooperatives survive, they find ways of bridging the conflict.

CREATION OF COOPERATIVES

From all the chapters collected here, we see a broad range of means for cooperative creation. However, every story, every history, has one thing in common.

Cooperative housing is only used when other, more conventional, methods have failed. Only when the private market and state ownership have been fully tapped, do cooperative alternatives emerge. Sometimes they emerge from the system itself, meaning that reformers or other political forces, such as labor unions recognize a need for lower cost housing and are successful in implementing legislation that allows or encourages collective housing in some form, and access to financing goes through fairly normal channels. Under this formation, sites are given by government or negotiated.

In other cases, such as Coin Street, San Jerardo, and the TIL (Tenant Interim Lease) program in New York City, cooperatives emerge not from the recognition of others that housing is needed, but from the direct, personal experiences of people that the existing system cannot provide for them. In these cases, legislation and financing often have to be created and sites are more likely to be disputed than negotiated.

A study of the history of cooperative housing indicates that up until the 1970's, the former, system-type provision was prevalent. In Leavitt's history of cooperative housing in the United States, Richman's in Denmark, and Birchall's in Great Britain, we have a history of examples of collective forms that were produced by, or negotiated with, politicians, bankers, and even public opinion, such that the cooperative alternative didn't undermine the private market or the control of the state. As a result, cooperative housing has been most often a housing alternative for the working class, rather than for the very poor.

Since the 1970's there seems to be a change in focus. Initiatives for some housing cooperatives have come from people about to be displaced, with nowhere else to go. They are not concerned with ensuring that a cooperative alternative fits nicely into the overall private economy. Rather, they are waging a political battle over rights to occupy and control space. Since this is a battle that only needs to be fought by those whose security and ability to live somewhere is most tenuous, it more often involves the poor than the working class.

But political struggles can only succeed when they either fit into some system agenda, such that they do not threaten the balance of power and economic distribution, or when they find some gap, or contradiction in the system which can be exploited to gain power. In the case of cooperative housing, the form of power to be gained is territory.

It has been hypothesized by some social theorists that institutions which develop within the lifeworld will divert an informal, nonprofit sector out of the main economic system, and create a "politics in the first person" that is both expressive and democratic (Huber, 1980). Such counterinstitutions can remove some domains of action from the control of money and power and return them to a sphere of action-coordinated-through-understanding. The limited-equity cooperatives we became familiar with seem to be doing just that. A concept of "liberated" areas may apply to these cooperatives.

Further, the low-income tenants, already among those most affected by growth in the complexity of the system, are often also fairly removed from the core of the economy (Hirsch, 1980). Therefore, they can be considered to be part of the peripheral amalgam that Habermas locates on the other side of a line of conflict separating the productive core from those outside of it. This location provides these tenants with few resources but also places them at a distance from system control.

MEDIATION AND RESISTANCE

According to Habermas, technical action is oriented to control outer nature and communicative action to reproduce inner nature. Inner nature, or consciousness, requires recourse to validity and justification, that technical control of objects does not. Later, we will reinterpret this distinction to reflect our objection to the separation of consciousness from biological life. However, we do accept the difference in goals of control versus reproduction.

It is through communication, not technical mastery, that emancipation is possible, because the notions of truth, freedom and justice are inherent in every act of communicating. Communication is the primary mechanism through which cooperatives maintain themselves. That this is so is apparent in the importance placed on participation by every cooperative organization and by virtually every commentator on cooperatives. Although many of the previous chapters do not examine day-to-day operations of co-ops, all refer to participation as a critical element.

Two interesting points are revealed by how the various authors treat the topic of participation. One, no single definition or "norm" seems to be agreed upon, either by the authors or by different cooperatives. Two, participation is linked most often with verbal communication, such as attending meetings, talking with others in the cooperative (especially officers), explaining problems, and engaging in problem-solving. It is less often, although sometimes, also considered to mean performing tasks, such as cleaning or bookkeeping. However, such tasks usually follow from decisions made and volunteering offered through verbal communication, and are based on an agreement among members that such task is necessary. It is also interesting in this regard that in a study of a large mutual housing association of affiliated cooperatives, member satisfaction with housing was more strongly related to participation in decision-making processes than to either holding office or doing tasks for the cooperative (Van Ryzin, 1991).

The concepts of communicative and technical rationality, allow us to interpret the process of meeting the goals that arise in each. With the evidence at hand, of which there is little, we can say that it appears to be true that residents' actions and decisions are based on the norms accepted by the group, are aimed at achieving understanding and consensus, and must be validated by their ap-

propriateness to group values. Leavitt and Saegert (1990), Bandy, Heskin (1991), and Rodman and Cooper (Chapter 10) all illustrate the kinds of discussions and strategizing that emanate from the goal of life world reproduction. This rationality produces not just decisions but also the definition of the community and its members identities.

On the other hand, the decision-making process of private providers is oriented directly to fulfilling technical goals, such as lowering costs per dwelling unit, maximizing profit, weighing the costs and benefits of entering the housing market with other investment alternatives, etc. Although certain normative standards will affect the decisions made, this is so precisely because to violate them would lower the marketability or feasibility of the project. The primary logic guiding action is not oriented towards understanding, but rather is oriented to the fulfillment of a technical goal, that of constructing housing units.

The basis for the private provider's actions are not incorrect, rather they are rational for the task at hand. What is rational for one concerned with the investment potential of home construction and what is rational for one concerned with sustenance of their home and social world are two different things. The disagreement about the quality of housing and management noted in the histories of cooperative housing in England and Denmark illustrate the discrepancy. The recognition that they are different is the first step towards recognizing the emancipatory potential inherent in resident control.

Habermas' emphasis on communication tends to focus the idea of the lifeworld on the reproduction of social norms and values. However, through this process individual and group identities emerge and the physical requirements of reproducing life are fulfilled in a socially acceptable mode. Our research suggests that the process of communication does not simply reproduce norms. Rather, by serving as the basis for the coordination of action, it simultaneously remakes the physical habitat and the personal and social identities of residents, thus affecting the nature of future norms and the quality of every day life. These emergent norms and the nature of the physical habitat are tied to the identities of residents. Thus, the distinction Habermas makes between conflicts over distribution and conflicts over social norms fades. Residents both expect heat and hot water at affordable prices and to acquire these goods through democratic processes and in ways that conform to the social norms of the building.

In our study, the initial abandonment of buildings by the system enlarged the scope of lifeworld rationality and action. [However, in achieving the material as well as social goals of the residents, this distance was necessarily diminished.] The co-ops that emerge, in our New York example and in papers describing co-ops elsewhere, then become zones of interference in which lifeworld directives and system imperatives daily contest the territory through the words and actions of residents.

The empirical finding that almost all cooperative situations experience difficulties with social conflict may be connected to the underlying assumptions each resident holds about the decision-making process. An action orientation that is aimed towards understanding places great importance on the ability and willingness of others to understand you, and of the fairness and truth of what others say to you in their effort to be understood.

If these are called into question, then not only are participants disagreeing about the best means to an end, they are violating the norms of their social relations. This then has an impact not only on their social relationships as such, through a breakdown in friendship or development of mistrust or hostility, which are common to all social systems, but an impact on the management and quality of their housing as well.

This is peculiar to organizations which ground their actions in communicative rationality and solve problems through discourse. Habermas defines discourse as that mode of communication that is rationally motivated and aimed at solving problems and producing solutions. The agreement to enter into discourse as a means of coordinating action depends on the assumption that the communication will meet certain basic criteria. Habermas refers to these as validity claims. Namely, to even bother talking to someone else in order to solve a problem it is prerequisite that we believe that the other person will be sincere, appropriate and authentic in their representations.

Furthermore, for the decisions reached to be valid, they must be the result of rationally motivated consensus. To judge the rational motivation inherent in the discourse, Habermas invokes the idea of the ideal speech situation. The ideal speech situation has the following features: Each party has an 1) equal opportunity for expression of needs, interests and interpretations, 2) equal opportunity to initiate discussion, 3) equal opportunity to make claims, challenges and recommendations and 4) equal opportunity to command and resist command, be accountable and demand accountability. In short, the ideal speech situation assumes an equal balance of power between communicators and freedom from constraints imposed external to them.

Clearly, in the real world the ideal speech situation cannot therefore be met, since power is rarely equally distributed and constraints are imposed either by the exigencies of the economic and political system, or naturally, through the impossibility of removing time and space constraints from discussion. However, as a standard against which to judge a particular situation, the ideal speech situation can serve as a means by which to determine how rationally motivated a consensus is, and in what ways it is prevented from being so.

Rodman and Cooper's account of how richer and poorer residents came to understand rent subsidies in two Canadian co-ops illustrates this process well, as for example the discussion of how higher income groups came to better under-

stand that they themselves were being subsidized as a result of communications from officially subsidized residents. Conversely, Henry discusses the difficulty for co-ops in situations when communicative rationality does not lead to a solution to disagreements and the action consequences of the disagreements threaten the cooperatives ability to survive. Many of the examples he gives, for example non-payment of rent, most likely have their source in the discrepancy between the residents' ability to command resources from the system and the system demands for money from the co-op, in the form of making payments for fuel, utilities, etc.²

A problem that arises from action coordinated by communicative rationality is that it must meet up, at points, with actions coordinated technically. Policy-makers, professional housing managers, bureaucratic overseers, and the various suppliers of goods or services to cooperatives necessarily operate through instrumental, rather than communicative, rationality. Cooperative leaders themselves, as managers or treasurers or procurers of resources, must be able to appropriately move from one means of coordinating action to another. In some cases, technical decisions must arise out of the lifeworld and be subordinated to the consensus of shared meaning, and in other cases they must conform first and foremost to system demands.

This is a fine balance to maintain, and probably an impossible one. Errors in orientation appear to residents as violations of the norms of the shared lifeworld of residents. The usual outcomes of this problem include blaming difficulties in operating the technical housing systems on character defects and moral failings. Actions based on these presumptions would then introduce new difficulties in accomplishing technically regulated repair and maintenance activities. These failures would feed back into the system of blame, increasing the bitterness of the social conflict. Such cycles eventually seriously threaten the material as well as social existence of the co-ops.

Several of the co-ops we studied five to ten years after tenants bought their buildings illustrated these problems well. In one building, an application for a loan to replace a boiler was inexplicably delayed during processing. The leaders failed to understand the problem and therefore to communicate it to the tenants. Caught between an apparently impenetrable bureaucracy and a demanding and critical tenant faction, leaders judged the complaining tenants to be disruptive and uncooperative, both unworthy and incompetent to deal with necessary management decisions. Identification of the disruptive faction with previous alleged fraud sealed the case for the leader, and often for the technical assistants and bureaucrats with whom he interacted. From the point of view of at least some of the residents, they received little information and were excluded from participation. The management style and lack of success in resolving the boiler problem were interpreted as signs of the leader's dictatorial nature and basic incompetence. As a result, many residents stopped paying monthly

maintenance charges, they said in protest to the leader's handling of co-op management. This rent stoppage made it more difficult to resolve the loan problem, acquire a new boiler, and run the co-op effectively. For both groups, all of the criteria of the ideal speech situation were being seriously and intentionally violated. These intertwined outcomes exacerbated the blame each side placed on the other and further precluded the re-establishment of control of technical requirements by communicative rationality.

In other cases, presidents of shareholders associations tended to blame their paid managers for imposing priorities on co-op decision making, while shareholders blamed the president and members of the board who were in favor of retaining the manager. In still other cases, leaders decreased the number of others on the board and the frequency of shareholder meetings. Through these tactics and persistent resistance to engaging in dialogue with residents, the leaders isolated themselves from the communication situations that highlighted the tensions between system needs and lifeworld priorities. They often at the same time cut off or limited relationships with technical assistance and professional organizations which would have forced them to confront these tensions from the opposite perspective.

On the other hand, the most successful cooperatives may be those where this balance is most well-maintained. Leaders who develop the knack of using technical assistance and outside resources to fulfill the communicatively arrived at needs of residents, rather than vice versa, may keep the empowering element of the subordination of system imperatives intact.

The sensitivity of technical assistance groups to the need to subordinate technical rationality to communicatively arrived at goals also contributes to the success of cooperatives in handling these inherent tensions. Professionally trained staff may find this subordination difficult, as described by Heskin (1991) in his account of the relationships of professional staff to the board of a federation of cooperatives and by van Wezel (1990) in his description of the conflicting interpretation of repair priorities between cooperative housing staff and residents.

The material and social functions of the household under conditions of landlord abandonment in New York help reveal the problem of equating the material dimension of life with the system. Since households living in landlord-abandoned buildings had been required to employ some collective survival strategies previously, and since they frequently shared other aspects of social identity such as race, gender, residential and occupational histories, and since they inhabited a shared material lifeworld, the communicative rationality of the lifeworld could be substituted as the steering mechanism for the material production of the shared habitat. If the lifeworld were devoid of any conditions for material reproduction, the buildings would have become abandoned in fact as well as in system terminology.

GENDER AND COMMUNICATIVE RATIONALITY

The actions and orientations of women in the cooperatives we studied underline the continuity between the material and social nature of the lifeworld. Whereas Habermas tends to equate the system with the outer world and the lifeworld with the inner world, this distinction seems more or less absent from the perceptions of the home held by co-op residents of formerly landlord abandoned buildings, especially women.

As Leavitt & Saegert identified in their book, *From abandonment to hope: Community households in Harlem*, the process of organizing collectively was in itself an empowering experience. Their book developed the idea that the coping experience was by no means gender-neutral, but based on a model of social relations and values that was linked with domestic life and the skills and experiences of the women who emerged as leaders. Women extended their social ties that had been essential in maintaining their households to define and achieve the collective goal of building survival. While this expansion of the household outward required an increased flow of communication within the social network, it also involved simple acts of housekeeping and the employing of strategies previously used for household survival for the good of the building, from chasing drug dealers off the stoop to cleaning the halls and repairing the building themselves.

Women have historically been identified with the household and its domestic, as opposed to economic, organization. Bernard (1981) has described the world of women as organized around the "integrity" in contrast to the organization of the world of men around the economy. Boulding (1976) has made a similar argument in her massive analysis of women's dominant roles in world history. As the name implies, "integrity" has as its main function the maintenance of connectedness and mutual care among the members of society. Women's domestic and community functions focus on the activities of care, not as sentiment, but as a set of actions that promote life in all its material, social, psychological, and spiritual forms. However, in times of crisis and resource shortage, creating and sustaining the material basis of the life of the group obviously have priority.

Gilligan's (1982) analysis of differences between the characteristic modes of moral reasoning employed by women and men suggests that the domestic tradition of women involves a particular rationality. In trying to solve moral dilemmas, women seek first to maintain connection and communication with others. They more often organize their moral thinking around an ethic of care and responsibility as compared to a tendency among men to take an ethic of rights and obligations as the first principles of morality. In her view, the fully mature person encompasses both perspectives in moral decision-making. We argue that it is women's situatedness in the lifeworld that provides the basis for

a distinctive ethic. This distinctive ethic corresponds is supportive of communicative rationality, except that it does not depend on a distinction between inner and outer life.

Our research also indicates that the socially constructed location of residents with regard to the system affects their likelihood of employing a system perspective or a lifeworld perspective.

In the (Leavitt & Saegert, 1990) study of the New York cooperatives, women most frequently described styles of leadership and organizational communication that derived from the imperatives of the lifeworld, the need to maintain homes and communities. Men recognized these goals but portrayed their contributions to the organization more often in system terms, as replacements or adjuncts to their jobs in the labor force and as bearers and enforcers of the demands of technical rationality in housing maintenance and management.

As women leaders became more entrenched in management roles within the cooperatives, this distinction was not as clear, although a sort of dual system of rationality often seemed to characterize their actions. On the one hand, they feel compelled to enforce the technical requirements of the transactions with banks, government agencies, lawyers and so on. On the other, the running of meetings for boards and shareholders fails to follow a technocratic and efficient formula. Personal experiences and needs constantly challenge the technical demands and analysis of priorities. Sometimes the meetings include elaborate meals of home-made food. At such times, each contributor of a dish would make special note of whether we as researchers or technical assistants who were present sampled their particular contribution and participated in the event wholeheartedly.

Since male leaders were few in our own research, our analysis must remain tentative. However, in one case of a strong male leader in New York City, he systematically cut off communication of personal perspectives, claiming that he understood the situation better because of his key role in the technical procedures of running the building. Although he was very negatively regarded by at least half of the building, and the meetings he ran lacked all democratic pretense, he was highly thought of by the technical assistance groups and professionals to whom he represented the building. He was also very active in these forums. In the earlier study by Leavitt and Saegert, male leaders identified themselves with the technical and authoritative aspects of running a building, often leaving the social aspects to a wife or other female resident. Some male residents who preferred not to participate in co-op activities said they did so because they needed to pursue their professional activities. Others scoffed at the paucity of financial resources and power the female co-op officers could command.

In the few cases where leaders balanced the competing demands relatively well, they included large numbers of shareholders in positions of some responsibility. In one case, the female leader developed a long list of offices with

some technical responsibilities and insisted on personal involvement by the shareholders in the physical upkeep of the building, an activity to which she herself devoted many hours of what was essentially housework at the building level. Thus the habitat of the cooperative was being constantly produced not only through the judicious use of low interest loans obtained through elaborate application procedures, but also through daily actions of people in their lifeworld. A male leader who managed his cooperative very successfully took care of most technical decisions and many external contacts, but he designed a system of floor captains who garnered input and enforced decisions. His wife and sister-in-law spent large amounts of time socializing. They saw themselves as the real organizers of the building and the male leader as useful in handling technical work and public contact.

Does gender affect communication and decision making in the other co-ops described in this book and elsewhere? To the extent that gender continues to be related to a social division of labor that places women more squarely in the lifeworld and men closer to the system, we think it does have an effect.

By focusing on the logic of the lifeworld, new questions about co-op organization and functioning will emerge. In answering these questions, it will be necessary to look at the daily lived experience of residents as fully as one examines the political resistance of women, handicapped and elderly people, and others whose physical and social lives are more isolated from decision making and actions generated by the system will be better understood.³

Every building has its own unique history and personalities living within it, so the larger story emerges from a composite of the ways in which tenants organized and saved their buildings, rather than from a series of identical circumstances. However, emerging and established limited-equity cooperatives do confront similar problems and clear differences have emerged between those that can handle them successfully and those who cannot. Leavitt and Saegert (1990) compared these processes in successful co-ops, struggling co-ops and rental buildings, and found that in successful co-ops the social life of the tenants was more connected to the co-oping process than in any of the other buildings. The process of organizing to take control of and manage their housing increased the amount of communication among residents, bringing decisions about housing into the realm of the lifeworld. In our later studies in co-ops that have been longer established, we found a strong link between the level of social integration and the functioning of the cooperative (Clark, Saegert, Glunt & Roane, 1991).

An important component of the tenants' ability to change the way their housing was provided and managed was a base of common experiences and values. Our data were collected in low-income, predominately black neighborhoods in New York, most often Harlem and all of Leavitt and Saegert's work was in

Harlem. Moreover, we found that the average length of residence was seventeen years in the building, and many had been on the same block even longer.

So, for our data at least, a shared lifeworld was one of the starting points for changing the management of the building from an economically driven action orientation to a communicatively based one. As Habermas has pointed out, the lifeworld is organized by shared norms and values and reproduces both cultural and individual identity. The shared lifeworlds in our study were found at both personal and historical levels. As people lived in the same building and the same neighborhood, they developed friendship, mutual support, and mutual knowledge. Even antagonisms had the characteristics of expected and usually manageable encounters. In the New York co-ops, residents usually shared a history as a social group as well, in part because of Harlem's significance as a capital for African-Americans, and also because many participated in common generational pilgrimages from the agricultural South to a new life in the industrial North. The subculture shared by Harlem residents encompassed a shared oppression, as well as African-American traditions of cultural and community resistance. The predominantly Hispanic co-ops usually housed expatriates of a particular Latin American country who shared both the culture of origin, the economic and social conditions of that country that promoted migration, and the experiences of immigration. Similarly, Bandy's account of the struggle of Latino farm workers show their struggle to be based on common experiences of culture, occupation, and oppression.

In Heskin's (1991) study of a multi-cultural federation of housing cooperatives, the absence of shared social histories, and the extent to which cultural differences limited personal sharing of daily life, contributed to conflict and factions based on different cultural norms. His paper with Heffner (1987) outlines the need for special attention to communication and the development of shared understanding in such circumstances. The successes of the co-ops he studied occurred almost always when the process of communication was sustained sufficiently to allow the definition of priorities to emerge from a consensus of values and needs. When time ran out and decisions were made that alienated a particular group, the strength of the cooperative federation lay in the ability to sustain discourse and continue to search for what he calls "substantive" rather than "procedural" justice (Heskin & Bandy, 1985). He defines this discourse as "public talk," "a form of conversation that permits a community to discover its mutuality, clarify its values, develop affinity, and take action." "Public talk" could be defined as communicative rationality. Indeed, the variety of criteria by which Heskins judges his federation to be successful seem to be the characteristics of the ideal speech situation. So strong is the commitment to open and democratic decision making that at one point the leader of the federation declares she would rather see the housing lost than to subvert these principles.

However, internal politics and communicative styles do not fully determine the kind of rationalities employed or the full content of action and the opportunities within the lifeworld are set by the larger system. So, for example, tenants may agree to run their building and make repairs. But they may not have the legal right to collect their own rents and take over management. They may be legally powerless to prevent their displacement. It is necessary, if one wants to protect the tenants' ability to stay in their homes and improve them, that the political/bureaucratic sphere not cut off this option. Initially, a legal means did not exist for tenant control for most of the co-ops described that formed in opposition to losing their homes. Organized tenants both resisted efforts to remove them and initiated the legal, economic, and political changes that would support their efforts to retain their homes.

A shared interest in saving their buildings, and a shared set of norms on how to go about this could not, without encountering a point in the economic/political system that would allow entry, have brought about the limited equity housing alternative that now exists. Some forms of resistance create their own break in the system that allows for change. In the case of the limited equity cooperatives in New York City, the initial conditions were set by the operation of the system itself. Both literally and abstractly, the space was open for new action. The buildings had been left behind, with no physical or economic interest.

Aspects of the system and spheres which acted as buffers between the household and the larger political system were available domains for tenant interaction. The need for legality to continue the progress toward tenant control in turn required a policy that would provide for it. On the other hand, tenants needed to develop expertise to handle the technical aspects of running a building and managing a budget. Technical assistance organizations, sympathetic professionals, and sometimes professional staff were critical in helping tenants develop skills and cope with bureaucracies.

In the New York co-ops, both the larger household of building residents and the technical assistance organizations served the role of a buffer between the individual and the system. They provided the means to reach out both horizontally and vertically. The household, expanding to include residents not within the nuclear family unit, acted as a strong, socially integrated sphere with shared values. The availability of technical assistance to tenants was critical, on the other hand, in providing both information and means to reconnect the buildings back into the political/bureaucratic system, which was necessary to establish legal control and procure financial and building management resources.

The material significance of lifeworld reproduction has not been fully recognized. We disagree with Habermas's assessment that alternatives seeking to defend and restore communicatively formed domains of action stem only from problems of social integration and symbolic reproduction and not from distri-

bution problems. The ownership and management of housing is a central function of capitalist distribution, and alternatives which challenge the housing sector's traditional role in the division of class, race and labor, are forms of opposition in the areas of both symbolic and material reproduction. Struggles for identity sometimes are simultaneously struggles for real space. The home, as a site for both material and symbolic reproduction, is an important place in which women can achieve identity and empowerment. Without attaining control over the space—the housing—the increased sense of self and achievement that resulted from the protection of the home would not occur.

Harvey (1987) has identified cooperatives as forms of local political practice, that reflect the possibilities presented by the dynamics of the flexible accumulation of capital for decentralized community control. As the papers in this volume demonstrate, housing cooperatives are not always characterized by decentralized or community control. However, when both the form of organization and the role of cooperative housing in the larger national (and international) system are considered, it is apparent that under certain conditions housing cooperatives can be empowering, provide resistance to forms of domination that threaten the social reproduction of residents, and perhaps even serve to transform social practices.

It is critical that if cooperatives are to be seen as collective agents of social change, that they not be analyzed only as local resistances or local successes. They must be understood both as real, material, meaning-filled places, and as one form of social and spatial practice within the system of advanced global capitalism. Cooperative housing's emancipatory potential also depends on changing the realities of isolation and subordination to bureaucratic modes of operation that most cooperative organizations face.

One challenge facing the development of truly empowering forms of collective housing is the undermining of those very mechanisms that are crucial to real resident control. Most national programs or policies for cooperatives limit the rights of ownership in a collective form, so that tenure and continued cooperative existence is not ensured independent of the state. Most governments promote either collectivism for the fulfillment of many social and service needs (Europe) or ownership as the most desirable housing form (United States). The ideology of private home ownership in the United States has not prevented the acceptance of collectivity in other spheres, if the private market and the state couldn't provide the needed services. Credit unions and consumer cooperatives are seen as legitimate types of collective service provision. However, the combination of collective activity and ownership has been either marginalized as in the U.S. or compromised, as in Europe. Together, collective action and legal control really can shift the power to the residents,

and hence has been too threatening to even those governments interested in the benefits of providing low cost housing in this manner.

Power is inscribed in material life through the rights to use and control space. If domination of space is in itself both a form and a source of power, then nonprofit housing cooperatives can be seen as either the giving (by the state) or the taking (by residents or workers) of power for low- or moderate-income people.

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NOTES

¹ The only other work to our knowledge that brings Habermas' theoretical frame work to an analysis of tenant actions and the nonprofit housing sector was carried out at two sites in the Netherlands, by Ruud van Wezel. The premise of the paper describing that work (van Wezel, 1990), is that as tenants attempt to carry out building management, they must interact with the larger system of Dutch housing renewal, represented by housing associations and landlords. During this interaction, the "lifeworld" orientations of the tenants meet the system needs embodied in the manager or landlord. Specifically, van Wezel means that the tenants talk about having made the houses into homes, the social aspects of maintenance, and their idea about how their homes should be maintained. The landlord, or housing association manager, on the other hand, overseeing a large budget and following statewide regulations and efficiency measures, speaks in terms of cost-benefits and technical rules.

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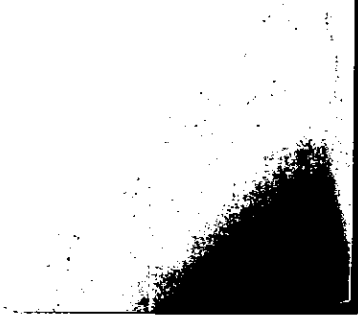
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