

Handbooks of Sociology and Social Research

Ram A. Cnaan
Carl Milofsky *Editors*

Handbook of Community Movements and Local Organizations in the 21st Century

 Springer

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Editors

Handbook
of Community
Movements and Local
Organizations
in the 21st Century

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Community Action and Practice: An Introduction

This book is about community action and practice. In the USA, when we put community and action together, we tend to think of a federal government program launched in 1960s to combat poverty—the Community Action Program—and a requirement that persists today for social service nonprofit organizations to include citizens in their governance processes. It is a shame that the phrase has become a metaphor that squeezes out other important meanings. Community practice is also a concept that is forced into a pigeonhole. In many quarters, it is a synonym for community organization. Yet, it is much more than traditional social workers galvanizing local residents to collectively fight city hall.

One major theme in the chapters of this handbook is “community”—what it is, how it varies, where we find it, and how it is cultivated in different institutional and natural world settings. Community is a way of living and being. The action and practice we talk about arises out of community, when members encounter problems, needs, or political challenges and create associations, organizations, movements, or collaboratives in response. Some of these initiatives may arise spontaneously from the “primordial ooze” of informal social life. Some arise when social entrepreneurs convert local disquiet into a problem and create action movements. Some action groups grow, persist, become institutionalized, and may themselves become communities—as happens with religious congregations.

Communities are not stable entities. They continuously evolve, and often, the evolution is linear and hardly noticed. At other times, it is radical. If any reader thinks about the community of his or her childhood, he or she will realize how the community has been transformed and how it is no longer what he or she recalls. Given that we live and function in communities, their dynamic nature is of great interest.

Other action initiatives become professionalized. This happens when local action organizations grow, become politically legitimized, secure funding, and develop a permanent presence. It also happens when professionally trained people, like applied social workers, public health workers, or city planners, take an interest in an issue or are assigned to help residents resolve a problem—a disaster, industrial pollution, an incident of sexual abuse of children, a shortage of food, crime and violence, or a health problem. Sometimes this professional practice moves in a negative direction, as the energy from an informal community may be coopted, bureaucratized, or the energy dissipated because of government funding. The more important examples for us are those where professionals serve as catalysts to make

resources available, to share expert knowledge with citizens in a non-hierarchical way, and to benefit from and support the knowledge and cohesion that already exists in a community and that can be mobilized to solve problems.

We have emphasized community action and practice to start off this introduction because the goal of the 45 authors who have contributed to this book's 32 chapters is to focus on the interface between communities and associations and to make action and practice central. As editors, we previously (2006) published a volume devoted to community and organizations, but it had little material that directly addressed community practice. The present book is different, having several chapters that focus on community practice (organizing). This might be targeted action with the intention of producing change. This might be a social movement that arises from community life, it might be a self-help initiative by people who share a difficulty or a problem, it might be participatory democracy as a value and a style of organizing, or it might be political interest group involvement in the larger political system. What these chapters share is an emphasis on the complexity, local and external networks, and initiative that comes from the grassroots level of social life. The cultures, commitments, traditions, histories, and values that people share in a place, or in an identity movement, or in an organization or institution are the origin points of action we are talking about.

We contrast this style of political action with initiatives that begin with a macro-level structural analysis, a diagnosis of large-scale social problems, and that might advance certain recipes for change that those who are politically active are expected to sign on to if they want to be *true* change agents. One of the seminal thinkers in community organizing, Saul Alinsky, calls these broad prescriptions for structural change "ideologies".

Alinsky criticized ideologically driven change efforts because they generally cannot take into account the complexities of local cultures and traditions, the wishes and interests of local community actors, and they tend to be guided by larger organizational or governmental agendas so local community involvements are suppressed and lost. It is unfair to minimize or discount community movements for change when they do not also produce large-scale structural change in society. Large-scale movements may be built up out of many local movements in our perspective. Local movements are valuable and important even if they do not scale up. They are built upon the life experiences and influences brought to bear on an issue by most people in any society.

Associations

The overarching purpose of this book is to provide analytic and theoretical frameworks for better understanding what associations are and how they work. From what has been said so far, associations cannot be separated from community on a conceptual level. Associations also cannot be separated from action movements, change efforts, community practice, and social inventions. Associations are different in different contexts, so we have chapters dealing with different institutional areas—education, health care, disasters,

crime and justice, religion, identity movements, and virtual communities. Where associations are concerned, there may not be organizational universals because they are transient, loosely structured, and are not shaped by the forces of organizational isomorphism and homophily that tend to make formal, bureaucratic organizations similar to each other. To understand the variety of community associations, institutional case studies are essential.

At the same time, the study of associations from an organizational perspective is important to those of us whose intellectual roots are in organizational theory—particularly in research related to nonprofit organizations. They play increasingly important roles in social policy and nonprofit management. But there is little research on what they are or how they work. Such research as has been done sits in diverse, heterogeneous locations, and it is neither known nor accessible to those of us who are students of them.

There are other organizations that are very active in many communities that we intentionally skip. The many for-profit organizations that include such organizations as banks, bars, gas stations, supermarkets, shops, and others are important in many communities. We elected to leave them out unless they are referenced by one of the authors. They were not selected for full coverage in this book as space is limited and their existence in many communities is transient and exist only for as long as profit is assured. We acknowledge that being able to shop in one's community is a privilege and a matter of convenience. We cover such issues in various chapters regarding poverty, redlining, and inequality.

The Origin of the Book

When we two editors along with several others formed the Community and Grassroots Organizations Section (CGAP) of the Association for Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) in the early 1990s, the number one thing our 200 members called for and said was a first priority for our group was to assemble materials that would bring theories of this field into view. Many of our members were instructors, and they did not have articles or resources to use in the classroom to convey basic information and ideas. In response to this mission call from CGAP, we produced the first set of community-related papers collected in *The Handbook of Community Movements and Local Organizations* (Cnaan and Milofsky 2006). That book failed to serve as a resource book for teachers or for scholars in less developed countries because it had such a high price that it could not be used in most classrooms. It was successful enough (it won the Virginia Hodgkinson Book Award!) that the publisher asked us to produce a second volume, and that is what the present volume is. We hope not to make the same price mistake this time. This is a book meant to be taught and used. It is not a book for a select few top scholars. It is a book with students in mind. We aim to cover many neglected aspects of community action and practice, and we have asked authors to write them in a way that will be accessible to students today and in the future.

We discovered with the first volume we edited that this material is not just important for university classes and researchers. The level of analysis we

emphasized and the organizational principles we articulated and hoped to develop are critically important for organizers, managers, and leaders in less developed countries. We have been informally sending .pdf copies of chapters from the first volume to people working with indigenous people in New Zealand and Africa and Israel and Northern Ireland. The people who could afford the first edition lived in the developed world, but people in these countries tend to devalue the concepts and values of local democratic action—at least insofar as their politics and national government policies are concerned. We met people working on development projects funded by large first-world foundations but rejected by local citizens, and we met people whose lives were at risk because they were working on democratic organizing and change movements in countries with authoritarian governments. The ideas in the first volume, and we believe that are contained in this present one, are critically important to people concerned with using community to take action around the world.

This is not a revision of the 2006 book. Many successful books are revised with few new sections or a few additional chapters. This book is a major overhaul. It is a brand new volume. Only one chapter was taken from our previous book (Chap. 1 by Hunter—which he has revised and expanded). All other chapters are new, and the overwhelming majority of authors did not contribute to the first book. In many ways, one can look at this book as volume 2 of the first book; but we view it as a parallel yet separate book. Combined these books provide the most comprehensive treatment of community. The new chapters add coverage and specificity to those presented in the first book. Any student or scholar of community will be wise to search both books for relevant chapters.

Teaching

We mean for this volume to be a teaching book rather than the kind of detailed, technical review of sub-fields you might find in an *Annual Review* volume. Most of the chapters are meant to be written in a straightforward narrative way so that the main “story” of that topic will be clear to thoughtful readers with a modest amount of background. They are not detailed technical summaries of the topic. For that reason, we have asked authors to limit bibliographies so that they are informative and will serve as a foundation for literature searches in the area but not so that they are exhaustive (and exhausting).

When we say the book is a teaching book, it is meant partly to be used in classes on associations, community, and community-level activism. However, the book has many more chapters than most people would cover in a semester, and the topics will extend beyond the interests of most teachers and students. We expect readers will put together the collection of chapters that are most relevant to their own focus of interest.

We also mean for this volume (in partnership with the first book published in 2006) to be a sourcebook. We want people doing research or engaged in social action in many fields to come to this book and use the chapter as a frame for organizing their thinking and a bibliographic resource. Since this

field is not well covered or well organized by the research literature or the popular press, the things that have been written and the disciplines that have an interest are fragmented and scattered. The chapters will provide starting points for people who want to read deeply despite this fragmentation of the literature.

Plan of the Book

This book is divided into five parts: (1) Community Theory; (2) Associations; (3) Social and Community Practice; (4) Institutional Examples; and (5) Methods.

Albert Hunter leads off the first part with a general, theoretical review of community theory. We follow with chapters on the “sense” of community (Boyd and Nowell), community climate (Luria, Boehm, and Cnaan), reading community symbol systems (Marsh and Jones), community elites (Danley), and disengagement and alienation (Silva).

The part on Associations is led off by Carl Milofsky who provides a review theoretical writing about associations. We follow with chapters on deliberative democracy (Rothschild), distributed authority (Benjamin), community-labor partnerships (Simmons and Harding), organizational mechanisms in associations (Comas), legitimacy and political effectiveness (Vermuelen and Gnies), local social movements (Stoecker), and volunteers (Einolf).

The third part about **Social and Community Practice** is led off by a chapter by Haya Ithzaky and Edna Bustin who talk about intentional, professionally guided methods for affecting community change. We follow with chapters on community empowerment (Stoeffler), community organizing (Fisher), Alinsky-style community organizing (Post), self-help (Segal), promoting spatial equity in communities (Hillier), and friendship (Adams and Harmon).

In the part including **Institutional Examples**, we have immigrants’ hometown associations (Lambda-Nieves), disasters (Shea), congregations as communities (Cnaan and Heist), community-based environmental action (Kelley and Dombrowski), health and community (Green and Jones), schools and community building (Milofsky), consulting practice in schools (Golightly), and crime prevention (Soska and Ohmer).

In the part on **Methods**, we have chapters on community needs assessments (Feldhaus and Deppen), social issues as a focus of community studies (McTavish), and qualitative methods (Frasso, Shimrit, and Golinkoff).

Our Community

With each community book we have produced, our method for encouraging the writing of chapters has been to have an authors’ conference held immediately before the American Sociological Association meetings in whatever city that convention is being held. Our authors have enjoyed these

conferences in part because small conferences that include lots of smart people always are fun. But the more deeply satisfying part of our sharing is that many of our authors had not before thought of their area of expertise in relationship to the conceptual cut we have made for this book—a focus on communities and associations. They have enjoyed rethinking their usual focus of work in terms of the frame we provide here. They also have enjoyed discovering other authors who think in similar ways about community action and practice, association, participatory organizations and democracy, and community self-help. Most of the individuals who have written chapters are working in fields that seem very different substantively, they mostly have not met each other, and in some cases, they work in different countries.

We emphasize this unexpected sense of community because we hope this also will be a focus for the organization that inspired this effort—the Community and Grassroots Organization Section of ARNOVA. While one goal is to provide a resource that summarizes existing concepts and the existing literature, we also would like to see a process of research accumulation to begin.

A frustration we confront working in a fragmented research area is that when writing a paper one must spend a large part of the narrative explaining and justifying what one is doing, rather than getting down to the work of analysis that is one's goal. Also, when one makes discoveries or achieves advances, it is hard to justify moving on to the next, more detailed and technical level if no one else seems to know what you are talking about (or that you have made advances). We make plaintive calls, saying “more research is needed.” What we really would like is to have allies who understand what we have done, who agree that the next level of depth and sophistication in our research is important, and who appreciate and contribute to that more advanced work as the enterprise moves forward. Perhaps, this book can serve as a base for that kind of community building.

Finally, writing and editing is often a lonely task. We as editors and authors of a few chapters as well as all our contributors would love to hear from readers. There is no better gratification to an author or editor than when readers write to say how they used the text or how it can be improved. On behalf of everyone who wrote a chapter in this volume, we extend an invitation to communicate. And, after all, communicating is the foundation of community action and practice.

Ram A. Cnaan
Carl Milofsky

Reference

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Part I
Community Theory

Conceptualizing Community

1

Albert Hunter

Abstract

The concept of community is a recurring question in social thought and an enduring quest in social life. The purpose of this chapter is to explore classic and contemporary views of community fully recognizing the multiplicity and open-ended evolving meanings of the concept. I refer to this as a “fracturing” of the concept of community. After a very brief look at the nature and fate of community in classical statements (Tönnies, Weber, Durkheim, Marx and Simmel). I begin with the simple but powerful idea that community is both an object, *a thing*, a unit of social organization, and also *a quality*, a variable. The framework advanced here sees the concept of community as a multi-dimensional variable where each dimension may vary by degree. It is an empirical question of the degree to which any given specific social entity, that is communities as objects, exhibit this or that dimension of community. As an empirical generalization the “ideal type” community framework (see Park, Wirth, Hillery) consists of the three distinct dimensions

defined as ecological (space, time), social structural (networks of institutions and interaction), and symbolic cultural (identity, norms and values). These multiple dimensions of community suggest community has “fractured” into various real-world forms and also varied conceptual meanings not only are these three dimensions theoretically informed and elaborated in much empirical research, they are also a heuristic device, a useful tool, for guiding both policy agendas and research questions focused on local communities; and, they inform not only the remainder of this chapter but are exemplified in chapters throughout the volume. The chapter then looks at a number of the different “fractured” products and processes of community as seen in the rich variety of contemporary theories and empirical research. These include, for example, communities “lost, found and liberated” (Gans, Wellman), “misplaced” and “silenced” (Schmallenbach, Hunter) “limited” (Janowitz, Greer), “socially constructed” (Suttles, Hunter), “networked” (Wellman, Castells), “vertically nested” (Warren, Milofsky), and “organized” (Alinsky, Smock), among others. The chapter concludes with a discussion of enduring “dilemmas of community” that include “ambivalence” (costs vs. benefits) of community, and the “ambiguities” (denotative clarity vs. rich connotations) of community.

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The quest for community is a continuing concern in social life and the question of community an enduring enigma in social theory. In both social life and social theory, the idea of community has changed and varied over time and space as much as the reality of communities themselves. In this chapter I will discuss varying contemporary ideas of community by focusing on the local community as a unit of analysis. In short, I am following the model of the anthropologist Redfield (1955) in *The Little Community* in contrast to other uses of the concept such as the idea of a “national community” as developed by Anderson (1991) in his influential book *Imagined Communities* that traces the rise of modern nationalism in the era of the nation-state.

Community is considered here to be one form or type of social organization and as such is an object, a “thing” that can be compared to other types of social organization—such as primary and kinship groups, formal bureaucratic organizations, and social movements among others. Such comparisons are fruitful for highlighting both points of contrast as well as theoretical and empirical points of merger and overlap.

I begin with the simple but powerful idea that community is also a variable, that it is a multi-dimensional variable, and that it varies by degree. It is an empirical question of the degree to which any given social entity may exhibit this or that dimension of community. In short, it is overly simplistic to attempt to reach some summary “zero/one” judgment or determination as to whether something is or is not a community—better to ask about its degree of “community-ness”. As such community may be both an *object*, a “thing,” and a *quality*, an attribute or characteristic of other entities. As an empirical generalization we will see that the “ideal type” community most often defined in the literature (see Hillery 1968) consists of three distinct dimensions: (1) the physical ecological, (2) the social structural, and (3) the symbolic cultural. Not only are these three dimensions theoretically informed and elaborated in much empirical research, they are also a heuristic device, a useful tool, for guiding both policy agendas and research questions focused on local communities.

Each of these three dimensions may be further sub-divided and the multiplexity of these ideas and the variety of dimensions, elements, and characteristics of the community concept focused on by different theories I refer to as a selective “fracturing” of community (Hunter 2004). These dimensions will inform the following discussion of this chapter and indeed to some degree serve as a backdrop throughout the book as a whole.

I begin by looking at what major social theorists had to say about “community” and its fate in modern social life. I then review a “fractured” set of specific narrowed and partial approaches to community characterized as: lost, found, liberated, mislaid, silenced, vertically cleaved, and rationally limited. I then explore theories of how community is constructed, organized and crafted to ideological and utopian ends. I conclude with two caveats or cautions in conceptualizing community: the roles of ambivalence and ambiguity.

1.1 The Great Transformation

How Classical Social Theorists Viewed Four Centuries of Social Change.

Resulting in the Rise of Modern Mass Society and the Decline of Local Communities.

The economic historian Polyani’s (1944) book *The Great Transformation* documents the transition of Western civilization over the past four centuries from dispersed small-scale communal units of primitive agricultural civilization to a highly concentrated large-scale modern urban industrial social order. This massive social change produced a culture shock and various social theorists attempted to describe the nature of this change and to offer various explanations for its occurrence. The very title of Stein’s (1960) classic work *The Eclipse of Community* alludes to the key proposition advanced in this transformation, the eclipse, decline, or loss of community—and he identifies three key processes that are seen too have contributed to

it—industrialization, bureaucratization, and urbanization. To these I would add—secularization (Cox 1965) and, in the American case, immigration (Handlin 1951).

It is difficult to summarize these various social theorists in a brief discussion and what follows should be seen as a mere cartoon outline that identifies each theorist's focus on this or that particular set of key characteristics or concepts, and their own favorite causal mechanisms to explain the transition. I have somewhat arbitrarily arranged them in an historical sequence, which moves from a macro economic and structural emphasis through cultural to more micro-social and interpersonal consequences of the transformation.

We begin with the German scholar Tonnies (1887/1963) who contributed the most enduring conceptual contrast of *Gemeinschaft* (community) versus *Gesellschaft* (society). *Gemeinschafts* were seen to be natural, enduring, “God-given”, uncritically evaluated positively as something “good”, to which people belonged and expressed the warm fuzzy positive sentiments of identity and solidarity. The primary purpose of community was to maintain and sustain their own collective existence. That is, community was an end in and of itself. By contrast modern societies are seen to be artificial, socially constructed by people, flawed and sometimes even evil. Therefore, they often are altered, short-lived and fluid in their organization, existing as a limited contract and a means for people to pursue rationally their own individual ends, and the nature of the relationships is often expressed as the individual versus society. If community exists, it is as a means to the fulfillment of individual interests. In short, community was rooted in the traditional solidarities of blood and land, while modern societies were constructed to further diverse and varying individual self-interests. The cause of all this was the rise of market societies and the transition in the economic order brought about by capitalism.

The French sociologist Durkheim (1893/1964) was to characterize the transition as that from a primitive, simple division of labor (what he called mechanical solidarity) to a more

complex division of labor (or organic solidarity). Where the former small-scale relatively self-sufficient and similar settlements scattered about the landscape remained relatively isolated from one another in a segmented mechanical social order, the larger scale more complex division of labor in urban settlements became interconnected and interdependent with one another in a hierarchical organic social order. In the former (mechanical) solidarity was based on similarity and empathy with only a primitive division of labor based on gender and age, in the latter (organic) solidarity existed based on difference and interdependence brought about by an increasing division of labor into highly specialized occupations. The driving force for this was “man's natural propensity to congregate” into ever larger settlements (urbanization) that produced an ecological density and competition for scarce resources (such as land). This problem of social competition and conflict was in turn resolved into an ecological symbiosis brought about by a parallel increasing “moral density” of diverse interests and groups reflecting normative differences and variation—a degree of social tolerance. For Durkheim then, the transition was one of shift from mechanical to organic solidarity brought about by urbanization and an increasing division of labor with occupational groups being the new unit of cohesion. Overarching all and tying the disparate elements of a society together was a “collective consciousness.”

Like Durkheim, Smith (1776) had earlier focused on the increasing division of labor as a key element of the transition in the economic order that had profound impact on increasing the wealth of industrial nations and the transition in social relations brought about by the rise of modern capitalistic market societies. Smith was clearly an apologist for the increased material wealth brought about by commercial and industrial capitalism and is rightly cited as such by classical and neo-classical economists. He nonetheless foreshadowed issues of alienation and decline in solidarity brought about by the division of labor's narrowing of individual self-interest rooted in market exchanges. Though this might produce the greatest collective good in material

well-being through the “invisible hand” of unanticipated consequences, he also saw it eroding social ties and the solidarity of community. In his neglected work, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Smith (1759) argued for the need of both macro overarching moral sentiments of community and the micro interpersonal empathetic concern for the welfare of others as being required to hold society together in the face of the heightened division of labor and valorization of individual self-interest narrowly construed in economic terms.

Following Smith, one of the most significant economic based theories of community decline is Marx and Engels’s (1848) analysis of the rise of modern capitalism. They highlighted the destruction of the older agrarian feudal order and the increasing concentration of commercial capitalism and later the factors of production that included not only the concentration of ownership in an economic elite, but as well the physical concentration of factors of production and fixed capital in machinery and factories in cities, and the most significantly the concentration of the poor and working class in the slum neighborhoods of the exploding industrial cities. The paradox for community was that the alienation of workers from their own labor would be overcome by the concentrated dense networks of the urban working class as they engaged in class conflict in union and solidarity movements and strikes and social and political conflict. Class interests would supersede territorial communal interests leading to new forms of solidarity. The unity of community would be fractured into conflicting class positions.

Following on Marx, Weber (1958) advanced a number of social and cultural changes that addressed the question of a loss of community. Weber’s (1930) most famous cultural analysis was of course his argument about the cultural shift from *The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism*. Preeminently he emphasized the increasing rationality of modern life, and saw the transition from traditional sacred organization rooted in community giving way to rational secular market-dominated relationships in the pursuit of individual self-interest. Rational organization in the form of a highly bureaucratic

division of labor, and the rational calculation of market relationships of capitalism came to dominate social life in the modern secular Western city. Weber was profoundly ambivalent about the rationality of modern capitalism—awed by the virtues of its power and efficiency and yet saddened by the dehumanizing loss of community, tradition, and mystery it produced. Capitalism was seen as efficient but eroding of collective sentiments of community. For example, he said of capitalism—“the routinized economic cosmos, and thus the rationally highest form of the provision of material goods—has been a structure to which the absence of love has been attached from the very root.” (Weber 1958, p. 355). The rise of the modern Western city though was instrumental in forging new forms of democratic administration according to Weber, nonetheless was defined quintessentially by institutions of the market. More recently Becker (1957) has proposed that this sacred/secular distinction is not necessarily a linear evolutionary change from the former to the latter, but that sacred resurgence can occur within societies often under the direction of charismatic leaders. Warner (1993) has also proposed an interesting and somewhat ironic fusion of Weber’s ideas by suggesting that sacred religious institutions in contemporary society operate in a “religious market” competing among themselves for resources and religious adherents.

Sir Maine (1861) focused on one aspect of the new market economy and the shifting basis of social relationships from the old to the new social order, and used as his empirical indicator of this cultural shift the changing nature of law. The old legal order of feudalism was dominated by social relationships governed by status relationship defined by the tradition of common law and embedded in the communal ties of reciprocal rights, duties, and obligations. Lord to peasant, yeoman to yeoman, freeman to freeman, cleric to lord, etc., etc. in all their possible combinations. A rich tapestry of habit and tradition. By contrast the new market order was governed by contract law. Legally equal and rationally competent individuals entered into pure exchange relationships highly specified, limited, and circumscribed

in time and substance. Individual interests rose paramount over communal responsibility. Even marriage, once a most sacred communal relationship has been transformed into a contractual tie with prenuptial agreements and easily vacated by mutual consent (Jacobs 1988).

The emphasis on the micro social psychology of transitions in social relationships was most clearly stated by Simmel in his classic essay "The Metropolis and Mental Life." Again looking at the money economy of modern market capitalism as the institutional frame, Simmel describes the modern city as a space of heightened activity with marketers hawking their wares, services, and selves through ever more intrusive media in an attempt to break through the "blasé" urban attitude required to survive in this over-stimulating world. This blasé cosmopolitan attitude permits the urbanite to move through the urban landscape unrooted and disconnected as a perpetual stranger "in" but not "of" the community. Accordingly, one of Simmel's (1936) most powerful essays was on the role of "the stranger." Lofland (1985) has picked up this thesis in her sweeping study of urban social life, *A World of Strangers*. In his *Philosophy of Money* Simmel (2004) highlights not just the economic role of money in the marketplace, but how the rational, money, and market mentality penetrates and diffuses through all facets of everyday life... as he says, "in the modern metropolis all things float with equal specific gravity on a constantly flowing sea of money." (See also Fischer 1981; Hunter 1985; Lofland 1998).

Echoing Simmel, the interpersonal component of the transition from the traditional to the modern community is further picked-up by the Chicago School in Wirth's (1938) classic essay "Urbanism as a Way of Life" and his key polarity of the shift from primary to secondary relationships. Again, like Smith, Durkheim, Weber and the other theorists he sees this shift in social relationships arising from the demographic and ecological increasing size, density, and heterogeneity of modern cities, and their increasingly complex division of labor seen in the institutional differentiation and complexity of modern life. Institutional differentiation results in segmented as

opposed to holistic sets of social relationships typified by fleeting anonymous instrumental or rational market transactions occurring among strangers. This is in contrast to the relationships of the idealized small town where institutional differentiation is minimal and people know and interact with one another in multiple roles. The anthropologist Robert Redfield, located down the hall from Wirth in the Social Science Building at the University of Chicago, developed his research on small villages in the Yucatan in his classic *The Little Community* (1955) where he developed the idea of "the folk society" which may be seen at the antithesis of Wirth's "urbanism." Together these two writings led to the development of the widely used idea of a "rural folk/urban society continuum". (Lyon, p. 22) Later writers were to develop out of this distinction in controversial directions such as Oscar Lewis's (1959) "culture of poverty" and Edward Banfield's (1958) "backward society." In today's parlance of social networks, the urban encounters reflect sparse or low-density networks, the village dense multiplex interactions. Many of the case studies that poured forth from the Chicago School such as Thomas's (1923) *The Unadjusted Girl*, Anderson's (1923) *The Hobo*, Cressey's (1932) *The Taxi Dance Hall* and Shaw's (1930) *The Jackroller* pointed to the personal and social pathologies that resulted from loss of primary ties of the local community. As a result, the Chicago School, somewhat inaccurately, became labeled as over-emphasizing the "social disorganization" of urban life. (1991).

In his synthetic "theory of social action" Parsons (1951) elaborated this interpersonal shift from traditional to modern relationships in the form of the "pattern variables." One way of viewing Parson's pattern variables is that they are answers to a set of questions that we must answer as we are about to engage in social interaction with another person. Specifically, how should I behave/How should I treat them? Notice that these are normative questions and what Parsons says is that our Western culture has shifted over the centuries as to the nature of the answer as to what is the preferred normative basis of social action. Focusing on five key questions the shift from traditional to modern were as follows:

- (1) Who should be the dominant beneficiary of the action?

Should it focus primarily on the public welfare of the community or the individual's self-interest? (community vs. self)

- (2) How many different roles with this person should I take into account?

Should it involve many roles, be multiplex, a diffuse relationship versus narrowly restricted to this one specific segmented role? (diffuse vs. specific)

- (3) How unique and special is this relationship, should it differ from all others?

Should it involve special treatment and be unique to a particular other, say a spouse, versus universally treating all people alike, as in an ideal court of law? (particular vs. universal).

- (4) What personal characteristics of the other should I take into account?

Should I emphasize ascribed characteristics such as age, gender, family of origin, versus achieved attributes like skills, intelligence, and education? (ascribed vs. achieved)

- (5) How cognitive or emotive should I be in this relationship?

Should I express sentiments, show affect, and passions versus remaining cognitively and rationally in control of my behaviors? (affective vs. affective neutrality).

In summary what Parsons suggests is that the modern culture shift in social relationships has shifted from formerly privileging communal, diffuse, particular, ascribed, and affective ties rooted in community to self-interested, specific, universal, achieved, and cognitive affectively neutral social relationships in modern societies.

To summarize, almost uniformly these theorists advanced the proposition that local communities were in decline as meaningful units of social organization in the face of the enormous concatenated social, economic, political, cultural, technological and demographic changes characteristic of the modern social order.

1.2 The Fracturing of Community

The hypothesized "loss of community" did not occur in quite the way predicted. Rather, communities changed, took new and varied forms, and the very meaning of community itself as a theoretical concept underwent a corresponding variety of changes and reformulations.

One of the earliest "fractures" was Merton's (1949) distinction between the roles of "**local and cosmopolitan**" influentials and was paralleled by Foley's (1952) contrasting the attitudes and behaviors of "**neighbors versus urbanites.**" By the mid-Twentieth Century the rush to rediscover and reformulate "community" produced a plethora of studies and definitions that were eventually summarized by Hillery (1955) in his landmark article "Definitions of Community: Areas of Agreement." At base, the elements upon which most people agreed were the three elements mentioned earlier—the ecological/territorial, the social structural and the cultural symbolic—and these constitute a further fracturing of the meaning of community. We will briefly elaborate the distinctive meanings of each.

The *ecological dimension* stresses the two "physical" realities of *space* and *time*. The spatial aspect emphasizes geographical location, resources, and shared physical fate. Certain communities are inextricably linked to and defined by a given locale such as Niagara Falls, New York, while others may exist in an undifferentiated and undistinguished setting, perhaps Las Vegas comes to mind, or they may be totally removed from a physical landscape such as virtual communities on the Internet. The degree of spatiality and specialness of location makes a difference for community. Second within this ecological dimension is the question of time. This is significant for the duration of co-presence of community members and can be enduring over a lifetime and even generations as in the classic distinction of "natives" versus "new-comers". At the other pole there are communities

of brief assemblages such as Woodstock, week-end campsite communities, or the annually repetitive almost “tribal” communal gatherings of free spirits at Burning Man, motorcyclists at Sturgis, or sociologists at the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Again, the reality of time is a variable and significant component of the physical ecology of community.

For the *social structural* dimension two distinct but interrelated components are *interpersonal networks* and *institutional density*. Interpersonal networks and social ties of community are highly variable in their number, their structural nature as open or closed, sparse or dense, or multiplex. These may vary for different individuals within a community and perhaps more significantly communities vary in the density and sparseness of such ties, which has enormous implications for the social life of the community. Closely connected to this are the enduring institutions of the local community—stores, churches, schools, voluntary associations and the like that operate as nodes of interaction and both form and are formed by these interpersonal networks. At the collective level of community itself these institutions may vary in their number, their density, and in the degree to which they exist as a second order network among themselves, a communal social infrastructure, a framework that varies from high density to an institutional vacuum. This varying institutional density contributes to the enduring or ephemeral existence of the community itself (Wilson 1996; Breton 1964).

The two aspects of the *cultural symbolic* dimension of community are the interrelated components of *identity* and *culture*. Identity refers first to the individual level of personal identity reflected in varying degrees of merged identity of the self with the community or alienation from it, and varying degrees of commitment and loyalty to the community (Kanter 1972). The “sentiments” and “feelings” of community constitute the social psychological

expression of this identity and commitment. At the collective level one again has the question of identity through names, symbols, connotations, and rituals and these reflect the cultural symbolic aspect of community including its meaning to members, its history however crevice or created, and the defining norms and values associated with the community. Again these elements are highly variable in their consciousness, clarity and consensus and produce profound differences from community to community.

In any given empirical case one or another of these dimensions of community may be strong and powerful or weak, limited or nonexistent. For example, with respect to social structure one community may have dense social networks among residents in a thick kinship system within a large number of interlocking local institutions, while another has sparse networks and a relative institutional vacuum. This is precisely the central comparative point that Klinenberg (2002) makes, for example, in his comparative analysis of why two different adjacent local communities in Chicago had such divergent consequences for death rates of elderly residents due to a summer heatwave. The dense networks and kinship structure of the Latino community of Pilsen resulted in many fewer deaths than the sparse networks of the institutionally impoverished African-American community of Lawndale. As a result of these varying strengths and weaknesses on the three dimensions a given case will be positioned differently within the three dimensional attribute space of community compared to other communities that may be weaker or stronger on that dimension.

To take another significant case much current research is focused on the rise of “virtual communities” via the internet. Clearly whole organizations have emerged and formed social structures of effective political action (e.g. MoveOn.org) and developed cultures of shared beliefs and identities among their members. Yet, only when they come together in the same physical space at mass demonstrations, however

brief, do they mimic fleetingly the spatial dimension of community with its myriad webs of intertwined personal and institutional networks, and temporal endurance.

1.3 The Fractured Focusing on Community

We will now turn to see how these varying dimensions and elements of community played out in some more contemporary conceptions of community that have emerged in the social science literature. Three significant empirical publications clustered in the 1970s are exemplars of the emerging application of the varied and fractured meanings of community. Fischer's (1973) "Urban Alienation and Anomie" highlighted structural variation in individual and community characteristics that result in varying degrees of local community engagement or alienation on the part of residents; Hunter's (1975) "Loss of Community" documented the historical "uncoupling" or "fracturing" of the three dimensions over time with declining local facility use, steady neighboring social ties, yet increasing sentiments and identity with a local community; and Wellman (1979) in his empirical study "The Community Question" found that the network ties to local community were mostly "lost", except among some marginalized ethnic groups where they were "found", but most social ties were "liberated" from local communities and were instead metropolitan in scope. We will use and extend Wellman's framing of the community question as lost, found and liberated to include a series of newer approaches that are more narrowly specific such as community mislaid, silenced, vertically penetrated, and limited; and then, in the following section explore how other specific theories of community have arisen like a phoenix from the fractured pieces stressing human agency in constructing, organizing and crafting communities as ends in and of themselves but also often as means in the pursuit of ideological and utopian ideals.

The **community lost** thesis was associated with the Chicago School of "social

disorganization" as summarized in Wirth's (1938) classic article "Urbanism as a Way of Life". Beginning with an ecological complex of variables he theorizes that the size, density, and heterogeneity of cities leads to increasing complexity, institutional differentiation, increasing specialization and divisions of labor which in turn results in the substitution of secondary ties for primary ties all leading to a loss of social control and increasing forms of deviance and disorganization. From the early case studies through Faris and Dunham's (1939) *The Metropolis and Mental Illness*, the disorganization thesis focused attention on the urban social problems of the day that were centered in cities. Wirth presented a very selective viewpoint. Given the social reform orientation of many of the early Chicago sociologists, reflected in their close connections to Jane Addam's Hull House, it was natural that they would focus their studies on social problems with an eye to reform (Hunter 1991). This is the "bias" that formed the selective empirical basis of Wirth's article. Whether cities were the cause of the disorganization or merely the vessels of selective movement of particular types of people was widely debated, but the correlation of cities with disorganization and disorder was widely accepted and is still advanced today in popular discourse and scholarly debate. Community was clearly "lost" for some.

In the Fifties and Sixties, a new round of case studies began to document the persistence of primary social ties and patterns of local social order—in short, they **found community** in the urban environment. It seems that every ten years or so sociologists have to be reminded once again that primary ties and persist in inner-city local communities and so it comes as some kind of popular as well as empirical celebration to once again rediscover them as social and moral orders—Whyte in *Street Corner Society* (1955), Gans in *The Urban Villagers* (1962), Liebow in *Tally's Corner* (1967), Anderson's *A Place on the Corner* (1978), and Denier's *Slim's Table* (1992). Perhaps the work of Gans (1962) most clearly demonstrates the selective persistence of local networks of community first in his study of

the ethnic neighborhood of Boston's Italian West End reported in his *Urban Villagers*, and later a new form of community found on the suburban rim of cities as reported in his case study of *The Levittowners* (Gans 1967). Finding community in suburbia was echoed by numerous studies such as Whyte's *Organization Man* (1956) on up through Keller's (2003) study of a planned suburban new town aptly titled simply *Community*. Numerous other studies corroborated Gans's findings of persisting social participation and social ties both in inner-city (often ethnic) communities and exploding middle class suburbs all forcing a reconsideration of the overgeneralized hypothesis of social disorganization and loss of community advanced by the Chicago School.

Perhaps no article summarized this new perspective more clearly than Fischer's (1975) landmark "Toward a Subcultural Theory of Urbanism." As a response to Wirth's "Urbanism as a Way of Life" Fischer retains an element of the ecology of the Chicago School by seeing size, density, and heterogeneity as causally producing a "critical density" of diverse like-minded peoples in sufficient numbers to create a variety of subcultures within cities. Within these subcultures people find primary relationships and create normative social worlds and social order that is directly counter to the social disorganization proposed by Wirth. These subcultures may also create local institutions ranging from local media of newspapers, radio, and TV to specialty retail stores, to religious institutions, to numerous voluntary associations all of which serve to reinforce feelings of solidarity. A discussion of the variety of these "urban enclaves" is to be found in the summary work of Abrahamson (1996) detailing enclaves and subcultures ranging from Boston's Beacon Hill, to Chicago's working class "Back of the Yards, to San Francisco's gay Castro community. Community has not been lost, but cities and the tide of modernity they embody are even seen to promote the formation of new forms of subcultural communities (Hunter 1978).

A further fracturing of these subcultural communities from the classical territorial conception of community occurs, according to

Wellman (1999) and others such as Castells (1996), with the new 21st century technologies of communication—specifically cell phones and most significantly the internet. **Community is liberated** from the historical constraints of space. Human ecologists such as Robert Park, Amos Hawley, Roderick McKenzie, and James Quinn (see Theodorson 1982) traditionally maintained that the frequent social interaction of community depended upon physical proximity and shared fates as a function of shared space—what they called "the friction of space". This has been overcome by the ubiquity and immediacy of electronic exchanges. Many people now associate with one another in "virtual communities" through chatrooms and websites devoted to facilitating the exchange of ideas among people with shared interests. I refer to this as "electronic exchanges" to distinguish it from "social interaction" in that the absence of physical co-presence renders the reality of action, and hence social interaction, moot. Social action may still require the movement of bodies in space, and social interaction the joint or coordinated choreographed ballet movement and gathering of two or more bodies in space.

Advances in the technology of communication are unevenly distributed throughout society as is the economic and human capital necessary to take advantage of the new social capital. A new very real "virtual inequality" or "electronic divide" has profound consequences for further fracturing community through segregation, segmentation, and internal homogenization of these emerging communities of interest. These diverse communities may remain segregated in social contact even as they share a common physical space, interwoven yet separate social fabrics.

A further significant question to pose of this technology and these virtual communities is to what degree do they either supplant or supplement traditional spatially based social interactions of community? In a seemingly tangential but clever study about the introduction of an earlier revolution in electronic communication—the telephone—Fischer (1992) found that it did not supplant traditional face-to-face interaction

but supplemented it. It produced more frequent contact and provided a means to schedule face-to-face meetings. In short, it was an add-on not a substitute. There is some suggestion in research by Wellman (1999) that this is true of the internet as well. There is also the hint, as we will see below, that the internet is a mechanism or tool that facilitates social movement mobilization and the physical gathering of these “virtual communities of interest” at given times and places for rallies, demonstrations, and other forms of collective political action.

In addition to the various findings about community being lost, found, and liberated I suggest we social scientists have also **mislaidd community** through a subtle shift in the narrowed meaning and use of the concept of community itself. This shift in meaning reflects both theoretical shifts in thinking about community and methodological changes in the way that social scientists conduct their research on community. The current use of the concept has come to focus on interpersonal interaction and more specifically the attachments, feelings, or the attitudinal and social psychological “sense of community” existing among individuals. Documenting the persistence of these individual ties and sentiments leads researchers to conclude that community is present and persists *in this form*.

This selective narrowing or fracturing of the variables or dimensions by which community is defined reflects a methodological dominance of survey research in the social sciences in comparison to the older holistic case studies of communities. Zorbaugh (1929) in his classic Chicago School case study of one community area in Chicago, the Near North Side, documents repeatedly in different sub-cultures the persistence of interpersonal networks of primary ties—for example among the poor immigrant Sicilian families in the slum, among the *Avant Garde* young “bohemians” of Towertown, and among the exclusive elites of the Gold Coast. And yet, he repeatedly concludes that community is absent from this area. A close reading by today’s community commentators with their focus on interpersonal primary ties would result in an opposite conclusion. Why the difference?

Zorbaugh was emphasizing an institutional and spatial conception of community that equated community not simply with networks of interpersonal ties, but with the diurnal, day-to-day sustenance institutions that provided for the needs of all people who shared a given locale. Community is not simply a network of like-minded people but a network of local institutions that also serve as nodes around which these interpersonal networks can cohere. The local stores, schools, churches, and voluntary organizations of all kinds rooted in a given physical space draw together the diverse social circles, networks and subcultures into a single holistic community. This was the meaning of community put forth by the older human ecology—not simply shared sentiments of interpersonal ties, but shared fates of sustenance institutions rooted in spatial communities. I would suggest that this dimension is still very relevant and variable from community to community, and its absence, for example, speaks to the fate of many poor inner-city neighborhoods studied by Wilson (1996), and its presence may ironically result in an unnoticed, taken-for-granted, and unarticulated aspect of community.

As noted the fact that community was mislaidd was not due simply to a theoretical shift from institutional level of analysis to an individual level, it was also the result of shifting methodological emphasis within the social sciences as well. The rise of survey research in the post WWII years focused on attitudes and behaviors of individuals as the primary variables of social life. This focus of interests is still with us in community studies that focus on individual level networks, or single institutions even when these are studied by field researchers [e.g. Stack’s (1974), *All Our Kin*; Anderson’s (1978) *A Place on the Corner*; Duneier’s (1992) *Slim’s Table*]. The methodological shift has produced an analytical shift in the debates in the literature producing a shift in the focus on the nature of questions posed and levels of analysis attempted. When the focus of analysis is the community as a whole, as in community case studies, the units shift from individual to collective actors, organizations and institutions. An example of taking

local communities as the units of analysis is Hunter's (1974) *Symbolic Communities* and more recently Sampson's (2012) comprehensive look at the structure and role of neighborhoods of Chicago in *The Great American City*. I would also suggest that this shift has important implications for policy considerations. When policy is directed at ameliorating the lives of individuals different policies are pursued than are pursued when the focus is on building the institutions and infrastructure of community itself as a means to helping the collective life and collective action of its members.

Not only is community mislaid in the discipline, "community" is also often missing in the lay world in which it may flourish. Community is primarily a word that one hears in the discourse of academics and scholars but more rarely in the talk on the street. It is primarily invoked as a concern when change threatens a community or when that which has been lost is missed and longed for and attempts are made to consciously reconstruct it. When it is present in its full glory diffusing throughout the day-to-day quotidian interstices of everyday life it is taken-for-granted, as natural as the air we breathe and the ground upon which we walk, necessary but unnoticed. This is what I call "**the silence of community.**" (Hunter 2001). Schmallenbach (1961) refers to this consciousness of community as "communalism" to distinguish it from the unconscious "community". In being consciously constructed, it is artificial and formally organized and as manifest in his particular case study of the German "Bund" it is not to be confused with the natural, "taken-for granted", crevice creation of the unconscious community. This unnoticed and unspoken community becomes conscious when threatened with obliteration and is thereby turned into communalism. It becomes a labeled and reified entity, objectified, a "thing". It is probably for this reason that "community" is often invoked as a nostalgic remembrance of things past, something lost. A telling example of this silence is found in Gans's (1962, p. 11) study where he says of the Italian residents of Boston's West End, "Until the coming of redevelopment, only

outsiders were likely to think of the West End as a single neighborhood. After the redevelopment was announced, the residents were drawn together by the common danger...".

Schmallenbach's concept of "communalism" is related to the "communalism movement" advanced most centrally by Etzioni (1993) but differs profoundly in its reference to the concept of "community" itself. They both agree that communalism is an attempt to capture a narrow set of selected aspects of community, but they would differ in the ability to do this through conscious social organization. One might create something, but for Schmallenbach it would not necessarily be something that he would recognize as community.

A further fracturing of community occurs from the top down. Communities are often conceptualized as a two dimensional flat Euclidian surface, and theorists often appear to be operating from what I would call the "flat earth assumption." Park (1952) for example, referred to the local communities of a city as a quilt-like "mosaic of little worlds." A number of theorists and researchers have, however, pointed to what is called the "**vertical dimension of community**" (Warren 1956; Walton 1967; Hunter and Suttles 1972; Vidich and Bensman 1958). Although their emphases differ slightly the argument is that local communities are embedded in/penetrated by/or linked to larger units of social structure which both impact profoundly on local communities and which local communities also, may in turn, have impact. Hunter (1992) even suggests that we live not in a singular community but in a set of nested multiple communities, what he has called a "hierarchy of symbolic communities." He has documented both the social organization and the symbolic identification of these multiple communities from the level of the local social block on up through neighborhoods, local communities to the level of metropolitan areas and urban regions (Hunter and Suttles 1972). Community is still spatially and locally rooted but federated and fused through the social and political construction of ever larger communities of interest and identification.

The variable and fractured conception of community being advanced in this chapter has perhaps found its most profound and sustained theoretical development in a chain of articles and books focusing on the idea of a “**community of limited liability**” (Janowitz 1952; Greer 1962; Hunter and Suttles 1972; Milofsky 1988). Janowitz first developed the idea to reflect the varying and partial commitment to local communities by residents, above all noting that the local community is but one component of collective life alongside more intimate associations of family and friends and more distant linkages to occupations, formal organizations, and locally transcendent institutions of numerous kinds (Warren 1956; Skocpol 2003; Hunter 1992). Furthermore, the idea of a community of limited liability stresses a rational calculus of exchange alongside more affect-based sentiments of community with the idea that individuals will rationally invest in their local communities (socially with time, money, effort and psychologically in identity and identification) only to the limited degree that they perceive they are receiving valued benefits from their engagement in the local community. This is a rational actor, cost/benefit calculus of community. As in most exchange theory (Blau 1964; Cook 2001) the calculation of this cost/benefit ratio may lead dynamically to increasing engagement and heightened collective benefits (a positive spiral that underlies most community organizing and community development), or on the contrary to declining benefits or heightened costs leading to disengagement and ultimately leaving the community altogether (Wilson and Taub 2006; Kanter 1972; Erickson 1976; Hirschman 1970).

The community of limited liability also contains within it the basic ambivalence expressed between viewing community as a means for the satisfaction of individual needs and interests versus viewing community as an end in and of itself. The reciprocity between individual costs and benefits and collective costs and benefits permits one to explore the “logic of collective actors and collective action” (Olson 1971;

Coleman 1973) that encompasses as the unit of analysis the *relationship* between the individual and the community.

Not only may an individual’s limited commitments to community vary over their life-course, but within a given community at any given time there is a “division of labor” such that one person’s commitment may be manifest in one way (say by donating money to a local organization), while another person’s is shown in yet another way (say by volunteering several nights a week to serve on a local board—see Hunter (2005)). And though each person’s commitment may be limited and different from one another, collectively summing across the community these varying investments may complement one another and so satisfy the collective needs and functions of the local community. The idea of mobilizing these varying skills of “human capital” within a community is the underlying logic of community development proposed by McKnight and Kretzman (1993) in their model of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD). In short they attempt to marry human capital (hidden skills) with social capital (community organization) to heighten community development. A topic we will now turn to.

1.4 Constructing Communities

Each of the fractured conceptions of community presented above is narrowed, specified, partial and limited in its focus compared to the classic historical holistic view.

Nonetheless, the overwhelming conclusion in response to the “community lost” question is “not quite.” The “half full” glass has in turn led to a realization that specific elements of community could be viewed as a product of human agency and purposeful social action. In short, aspects of community can be consciously constructed, and this has led to the development of a theory of “**the social construction of community**” (Suttles 1972; Hunter 1974; Cohen 1985; Gusfield 1975). The idea grew out of “symbolic

interactionism” (Blumer 1986), and Thomas’s (1937) early idea of “the definition of the situation” more fully elaborated in Berger and Luckman’s *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966). At base it is the simple but powerful idea that “community” is not a preformed, “God-given”, natural phenomenon, but rather a socially constructed entity—at times unconsciously given form and meaning through the everyday social interactions of residents among themselves, and also with those outside of their communities.

The conscious social construction of community is a not an uncommon process. Suttles (1972) has explored the way in which developers have attempted to consciously build in aspects of community in their planning and designs with such attributes as commons spaces for parks and recreation. Much of the “new urbanism” may also be seen to be an attempt to create physical characteristics that promote communal interaction such as building sidewalks for pedestrians and front porches to promote the “parochial order” of the local community (Hunter 1985; Lofland 1998, also see Birch 2006). More recently Molotch et al. (2000) has demonstrated the way in which the construction of communities—both physically and symbolically—is a long continuing process of historically contingent decisions made by numerous actors in a given locality.

Hunter (1974) in *Symbolic Communities* saw the social construction of community as a fairly ubiquitous process of cognitively defining names and boundaries of local areas through symbolic interaction of residents within and especially with others outside of the local community. People attached connotations and meanings about local communities to local geographic areas often in a comparative fashion to others. The evaluative connotations of communities varied as a function of distribution of widely understood social class characteristics—the higher the social class of an area the more positively it was evaluated by residents. However, community sentiments of attachments were found not to vary by social class., but rather were the product of the degree and strength of local social ties. Sentiments that arose from primary

ties were generalized to the setting in which they occurred. Fewer ties meant less strong sentiments. More local ties meant more local attachment. Especially noteworthy were the findings that belonging to a local community organization increased social ties and attachment to the local community. The merging of two theoretical products of the Chicago School, symbolic interactionism with human ecology, giving meaning to space, resulted in what has come to be called the “symbolic ecology of community” (Mickililn and Choldin 1984; Lyon 1987).

1.4.1 From Community Organization to Community Organizing

The social construction of community acknowledges the role played by the network of myriad local institutions in promoting the sustenance needs for the local community’s residents and as serving as nodes of local interaction which in turn foster unspoken silent sentiments and attachments of community. From the Schmalenbach perspective of “community” versus “communalism” these institutions of the local community are a taken-for-granted natural product of individuals going about their daily routines, not consciously thought about but simply accepted and expected as “the way things are, and the way things are done.” Habit and tradition have a central place in community (Camic 1986). We may think of this as **community organization** writ large.

Change threatens communities, old habits must be rethought and traditions give way to innovation. Change may be so drastic it destroys a community (Cottrell 1951; Erickson 1976). Community becomes conscious when it is threatened by change, when the threatened loss of a way of life mobilizes residents to resist or to alter the dynamics of change—whether it be a new ethnic group moving into a community, a new Wal-Mart, or the closing of a factory. At such times community is transformed into conscious communalism which often gives rise to a conscious creation of local community voluntary associations as a response. This collective action

has a long American history as de Tocqueville (1835/2002) early observed the American genius for creating local voluntary associations as pragmatic instrumental means to deal with local concerns. They were the pragmatic answer or solution to specific problems of social life. (Hunter and Milofsky 2007). How to educate one's children, how to put out fires, how to cross a stream. In the process they inadvertently produced as unanticipated outcomes the various elements of community itself (Small 2009)

It was in this spirit that Alinsky (1946) formulated the idea of **community organizing** as a political strategy to satisfy particular needs defined by local residents. Borrowing consciously from the labor movement, his genius was in shifting the focus of organizing from the job site to the home, from the place of production to the place of consumption, from where one worked to where one lived. The focus was on organizing the collective power of relatively poor local communities which lacked resources to use the market to obtain private goods and services or lacked power to influence the delivery of public goods and services. The varying success of these earliest attempts at community organizing has spawned an entire industry that proposes differences in strategies, tactics, and goals among competing community organizing ideologies (Smock 2004). There are institutions that variously focus on training organizers and practitioners, developing funding sources, research enterprises, and policy initiatives at local, state, and national levels. Through national federations they have contributed to bringing the parochial issues and concerns of local communities to national levels (Hunter 1992; Skocpol 2003). The consciousness of community organizing as a means, a tool to solve specific social problems, has produced strategies that vary in their degree of conflict versus cooperation, their degree of autonomy versus dependency on outside resources, their parochial versus national focus, and their endurance and longevity, among others.

The variability of communities and the varying commitments of local residents in their local communities suggests that organizing strategies should be tailored to the specifics of the needs of

any given locale and tailored to the resources available for their realization. In short they should be **crafted** not simply constructed. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993), for example, have developed an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) model that identifies often unrecognized assets that even poor local community residents may possess, skills and material tools that may be mobilized to deal with their specific local problems. In short, community at the local level cannot be mass produced—there is no MacDonalidization (Ritzer 2013) that can be uniformly reproduced across the urban landscape as much as attempts at the “new urbanism” seem to reflect a relatively homogenous Disneyesque landscape of front porches, sidewalks and picket fences. To borrow the distinction from Stinchcombe (1959), community cannot be constructed in a mass production process, rather it must be crafted to the specifics of the case. Certain properties of the product lend themselves to craft over mass production and these include issues of unpredictability. To be sure, broader wider national cultural and structural trends may frame the nature of the community debate, discussion, and desires at any given historical moment, but when brought down to earth at the local community level—the skills of the craftsman must be used that marries broader trends and issues to the immediate needs and exigencies of the given site. Smock (2004) has analyzed the variety of types of local community organizations that have emerged with different structures, strategies and goals to fit the specific needs of their members.

It is in this sense that one is crafting community not simply constructing it. Furthermore the connotation of craft implies craftsmanship—a personal concern and care of skilled investment in and identification with the product. What are some of the skills that the craftsman of community must cultivate? One is a full appreciation in the terms of Dewey's (1935) classical pragmatism of “learning by doing.” This is a development of human capital that follows an apprentice hands-on approach, not a classroom and textbook model that suggests there is one algorithm that fits diverse situations. In this light it is interesting to see the growth of increasing collaboration

between university research centers and local community residents as a mutually beneficial development of these two forms of human capital. An example is the Great Cities Institute at the University of Illinois at Chicago headed by Wim Wiewel that is an urban equivalent to the older Land Grant Colleges' mission to provide expertise in the form of agricultural extension agents to farmers, with the urban equivalent of providing advice and consulting to local community organizations and their residents. Also in Chicago at Loyola University Philip Nyden (1997) has created the Policy Research and Action Group that marries academics and local community organizational leaders in mutually beneficial research projects.

I would suggest that the crafting of community entails a related skill of utilizing local resources and fashioning them into a unique product that fits the needs of the users, the local community. Both end product and the process of production are intimately fused in the crafting of community, and it is in this sense that community is both a means and an end. And on a concluding note craft implies style—an aesthetic that is above all authentic made for and by the users. One is doing something that is both utilitarian and beautiful, with a beauty that reflects the values and tastes of the local culture and in which collective and personal identities are fused.

1.5 To What End?

1.5.1 Ideological Communities: Merging Utopian Communities and Ideological Social Movements

Community has been an enduring question and quest in American social life (Bellah et al. 1985) and throughout American history people have attempted, at various times, to create the ideal community as a present reality. The history of “utopian communities” is one manifestation of this desire. Their varying successes and failures have been studied (Kanter 1972) as well as the

varying episodic waves of waxing and waning of utopian community foundings (Berry 1992). The coincidental founding of a wave of utopian communities sometimes reflects a social movement like development. However, social movements are generally focused on more specific goals and objectives—often expressed in their very naming “The Woman’s Movement,” “The Civil Rights Movement”, “The Anti-War Movement (insert various wars)”, etc. The analysis of social movements as a form of social organization itself has a long history of theoretical development from theories of collective action through social movement organization to resource dependency to frame analysis (McAdams 1996). Throughout, the emphasis has historically been on the organization and mobilization of movements, not their local community context (McAdams 1996). For a few exceptions that stress the critical role played by the local spatial community in fostering social movements see Milofsky (1988), Morris (1984) and the early work of Tilly (1973), and the significant work of Castells (1983).

Mannheim (1966) has made an important distinction that is of use in thinking about this hybridized thing we call “community social movement” and that is the distinction between ideological and utopian thought. Utopias, says Mannheim are concerned with a total transformation of existing society—a rejection of current reality and the substitution of a whole new way of life. As a consequence, says Mannheim, utopias may succeed spectacularly, but more often than not they are doomed to fail miserably. Being revolutionary in nature they tend to be restricted to local experiments far removed from the carrying society to which they are most often in opposition. They are often restricted in scale to that of a local community—“a shining city on a hill”, a retreat far removed in a forest clearing, or a settlement on a vacant plain beside a great salt lake. These are the restricted realities if not the visions of utopian communities. The idea of community as a basis of radical restructuring of society through a community social movement is best exemplified in the work of Etzioni (1993) and his championing of “communalism”.

Ideologies, says Mannheim, are by contrast, partial in their scope and restricted in their goals to specific issues. Civil rights, women's rights, environmental issues, health and illness may all be the specific focus of ideologically based social movements. As advocates for "partial" change as opposed to "holistic" change ideologies are subject to compromise, adjustment and evolution not revolution. It is in this sense that we speak of "ideological social movements" and contrast them with "utopian communities." The idea of utopian social movements certainly exists, and yet the idea of "ideological communities" remains relatively undeveloped (for an early formulation of the concept see Hunter (1975), and for a more recent application see Brown-Saracino (2004)). People settle in communities for ideological reasons, not simply "market" considerations as the economists might tell us, and these reasons may have to do with promoting racial integration, championing a sexual lifestyle, preserving the ecology of a prairie, or social preservation of local "natives" as opposed to their displacement by gentrification. Though utopian communities are noteworthy in their uniqueness, grounded local ideological communities are, I suggest, much more ubiquitous and cut a wide analytical path ranging from social movements through local political mobilization over many issues to urban planning and community development. When thinking of the local communities we are consciously crafting we must ask ourselves are we engaged in a utopian pursuit or an ideological pursuit, is community an end or a means, and when can we, if ever in the modern world, "take-community-for-granted?"

1.5.2 Mutual Interdependence of Social Movements and Communities

Social movements and specifically social movement organizations are often seen to be rooted in communities of "like-minded" individuals having similar interests and pursuing similar goals and values. Engagement and commitment

heighten solidarity and collective identity—clearly these are elements of consciously belonging to a community. In such cases, social movements and communities are seen to be "identities" in both the cultural and the mathematical sense of "identity" (see Rothschild, Chap. 8 and Stoecker, Chap. 13).

I would like to suggest that the relationship between social movements and community might be more nuanced and complex, at times to be sure mutually reinforcing, but at other times independent and possibly even antithetical to one another. Specifically, change oriented social movement organization pursuing specific ideological goals may so alter the larger societal and cultural context resulting in a transformation and even possible decline of community that was a basis of mobilization in the first place. A case in point is the "loss" "decline" or more accurately subtle transformation of the iconic "gay community" as a function of the societal-wide "success" of the "gay rights" movement over the past several decades. Ironically, an unanticipated outcome of the success of the movement is the decline or fracturing and transformation of this community. A number of scholars have noted this transformation and proposed a series of stages of change and new forms in the LGBTQ community. One example is Ghaziani's (2014) comparative study of gay communities in which he identifies three phases of "closet," "coming out," and "post-gay." Over the past decade a number of researchers have further investigated this transformation of more traditional "defended" gay communities (Suttles 1972). Japonica Brown-Saracino (2011), for example, documents the "loss" of an intense lesbian community that has instead become reduced to a "taken-for-granted" background, or what she labels an "ambient community." Similarly, Theodore Greene (2014) has further discovered what he calls a "vicarious community" made up of an increasing number of non-resident LGBTQ individuals who still at times identify with a diminished yet symbolically iconic gay community to which they return and claim "symbolic citizenship." And most recently, Clare Forstie (2018) has uncovered what she identifies as the

“ambivalent community” among LGBTQ residents of a small Midwestern city who at times celebrate their participation and identification with what is a more minimal local gay community while at other times value being more integrated in a non-gay lifestyle.

These studies underscore the irony that communities that were the base from which successful social movements arose so changed the social cultural context they ended up shattering and fracturing their communal base of origin.

1.6 Caveats of Community Conceptualizing; Ambivalence and Ambiguity in the Fractured Community

I would like to conclude with two cautions or caveats in thinking about community that are often overlooked in the pursuit of and analysis of community—and they may be thought of as additional fracturings of the community concept into good and bad (ambivalence), and messy versus neat (ambiguity).

Most of the previous discussion operates under the general assumption that community is an unabashed “good”, positively valued, whose loss whether historical or personal is lamented; and whose creation, construction and maintenance is worth the costs in effort and resources required to sustain it. To question the “worth” of “community” as a central value in American culture is to raise the possibility that community may not be worth the costs of creating and maintaining it as the rational calculus of the community of limited liability might conclude. But even more profoundly, to question the assumption that community is a valued “good” is to entertain the possibility that community itself may be seen to be inherently at times pernicious or “bad” with respect to other treasured values. In short we might want to maintain a healthy **ambivalence** (Smelser 1998), or skepticism about it. The values of individualism, freedom and creativity may clash with the crushing moral closure and conformity of community. Sister Carries still flee the stifling confinement of parochial village

hamlets to seek anonymity and autonomous futures in far off cities. Foley’s “neighbors” become “urbanities” and Merton’s “locals” become “cosmopolitans.” Social and spatial mobility may require breaking the bonds of community, not all social ties to be sure, but producing social change may require altering long held “habits of the heart.” (Bellah et al. 1985).

As the poet W. H. Auden put it:

how squalid existence would be,
tethered for life to some hut village,

afraid of the local snake
or the local ford demon

speaking the local patois
of some three hundred words

Beyond this negative valence of community that may clash with individualism is the possibility that communities may form that are antithetical to other values and to other groups. One of the clearest examples is that by Slayton (1986) in his book on the history of the “Back of the Yards” a poor white ethnic local community in Chicago surrounding the squalor of the Chicago Stockyards. The iconic Saul Alinsky created the eponymous local Neighborhood Council in this community in 1939, his first, to battle Chicago’s City Hall and welfare agencies to obtain city services like garbage collection, street and sidewalk infrastructure, and recreation centers. Over the years the BOYNC morphed into a powerful organization that became a bastion of white resistance in the 1950s and 60s adamantly opposed (sometimes violently) to racial integration from nearby black neighborhoods. Alinsky himself said his primary objective was to give local communities “power” for “self-determination.” What they did with it was up to them.

This is, of course, little different than many socially cohesive white suburban communities that can employ local governmental power in the form of land use controls and restrictions on housing to segregate themselves by race and class from “others.” The above highlight the degree to which structural and ecological processes may produce “commonalities” that result

in cohesive communities underlain by social distinctions, contrasts, opposition, and even conflict *a la* Marx, Simmel and the symbolic interactionist social construction of community resulting in Schmallenbach's transition from "taken-for-granted" community to conscious communalism or in today's language "tribalism" with all the positive and negative valences (ambivalence) these imply.

A second caveat is to be wary of a search for the "correct" conception of community. The fragmenting of the numerous approaches to community is seen by some to produce a confusing cacophony, a fuzzy, vague **ambiguity** that defies clarity of thought and that runs counter to the often heard logico-deductive scientific admonition for precision... "define your terms." Donald N. Levine in his book *The Flight from Ambiguity* (1985) explores the modern mimetic attempt of the social sciences to provide mathematical precision and theoretical rigor like the natural sciences began in the 17th century. Prior to that Levine argues "the best knowledge of human conduct, to be garnered through human experience, travel, conversation, and reflection, was thought to be a kind of worldly wisdom about... the vicissitudes of social life... Congruent with that outlook, the language used to represent human affairs was valued for being vivid and evocative more than for its denotational precision. Metaphor, irony, and analogies of all sorts were the stock in trade of those who trafficked in social knowledge." (pp. 1–2). Fully accepting the need for precision and rigor Levine nonetheless maintains there is enduring value to ambiguity in sociological theory—its concepts and propositions. Two of the positive functions of ambiguity he notes are "the evocative representation of complex meanings and the bonding of a community through diffuse symbols (p. 218) ...[and he adds] ...it is useful for scientific formulations to express an abundance of meanings, for these can ignite a cluster of insights that in turn lead to novel explorations." (p. 1).

Elsewhere I have argued more specifically that the diverse definitions of "community" captured in my idea of a fractured concept serve as a "common whetstone on which to sharpen the

cutting edge of competing ideas." (1975, p. 538) And perhaps no single book better exemplifies the use of metaphor and analogy in conceptualizing community than Redfield's *The Little Community* (1955) wherein the chapter titles analogize community as "family", etc.

One could advance and explore any number of approaches to community, yet there are an enduring set of ambiguous dualities or contrasts with respect to the concept of community not unlike Levi-Strauss's "structural distinctions" such as the "raw and the cooked." These are, respectively, community as: Object versus Quality; Crescive versus Created; Means versus End; Product versus Process. These ambiguities about community are deeply intertwined and difficult to distinguish and differentiate (or "disambiguate" as Levine terms it). It is difficult to write or talk about them distinctly without slipping into one or another of the other dualities creating even more ambiguity. Community as "product" distinct from "process", for example, seems to imply community is "created", while "created" in turn seems to imply a "process." The inherent contradiction is likely to lead to discussion, debate and disputation (and just possibly new insights as Levine suggests). In short, any attempt at "clarity" and "precision" to lessen the ambiguities, though needed at times for empirical research and social action, also runs the risk of possibly stifling creative insights, and unfortunately shrinking the community of discourse about community itself.

1.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have briefly traced some of the classical social science conceptions of community and their elaboration in a fragmented flowering of a variety of contemporary conceptions of community from hypothetical *loss* in mass society, to being *found* to persist among selective settings of suburbia and ethnic enclaves, to taking new "virtual" forms as they are technologically *liberated* from the constraint of proximity in space, to an emphasis on social psychological *sentiments* and sense of solidarity while the

institutional base is ignored or *mislaid*, and the mutual ties are taken-for-granted in *silence*, to advancing a rational calculus of community as a form of *limited liability*, through an emphasis on “agency” for consciously *constructing and crafting* community, through *organizing* local voluntary associations to further *ideological and utopian* ends. In this discussion we have seen how the three dimensions of (i) ecology in space and time, (ii) social structure as seen in individual and institutional networks, and (iii) cultural and symbolic identities have interrelated to varying degrees in producing these various conceptions of community. I note that in this development there seems to have been a linear trend of increasing emphasis on cultural identity with a correlated declining emphasis on the significance of the ecology of space and time in forming the basis of community. I suspect that this reflects an increasing sense of human agency and conscious action of mobilizing individual and institutional networks through the use of modern technologies with respect to community over and against a more “natural” crevice view of community as a given physical and spatial reality of everyday life. However, it is my suggestion that for a thorough understanding and a realistic policy perspective with respect to local communities all three dimensions must be considered in a balanced view of their intertwined complexities. Nature persists as a physical force to be reckoned with, and the social ties and cultural identities of our communities are inextricably bound up with the spatial and temporal reality of shared human fates.

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Community at Work: Sensing Community Through Needs Fulfillment and Responsibility

2

Neil M. Boyd and Branda Nowell

Abstract

Scholars have recently been increasing attention to the topic of developing communities in organizational settings, however there has been a lack of theoretical grounding and empirical science demonstrating the importance of community experiences at work. This began to change when Nowell and Boyd (2010) developed the Community Experience Framework, which proposes that the experience of community can take two conceptually distinct forms: (1) the experience of a community as a resource and (2) the experience of community as a responsibility. This chapter will highlight the recent progression of scholarship on community at work, detail our empirical knowledge on the subject to date, and offer insights into the importance of developing communities in organizational settings.

Scholars have recently focused increasing attention to the topic of developing communities in organizational settings, however there has been a lack of theoretical grounding and empirical science demonstrating the importance of community experiences at work. This began to change when Nowell and Boyd (2010) developed the Community Experience Framework, which proposes that the experience of community can take two conceptually distinct forms: (1) the experience of a community as a resource and (2) the experience of community as a responsibility. In this chapter, we describe the intellectual evolution of the concept of sense of community and what it means to experience community within different social spaces. As Al Hunter notes in Chap. 1, we see community as having ecological, social structural, and symbolic cultural dimensions, and we believe that it is more appropriate to refer to a level of “communityness” as opposed to a community experience as existing or not. We focus particular attention on the practical relevance and importance of developing communities in organizational settings, what drives that experience, and how such experiences may influence both individual behavior as well as entire organizations and even broader social movements. We conclude by situating this discussion within the broader field of management science by discussing the literature to date on the how community experiences relate to other organizational constructs prominent in the field. This chapter

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will highlight the recent progression of scholarship on community at work, detail empirical knowledge on the subject to date, and offer insights into the importance of developing communities in organizational settings.

2.1 Historical Roots of Defining a Sense of Community

In 1974, Seymour Sarason pronounced that the study of a psychological sense of community should be the defining concept for the budding field of community psychology. In his seminal book, Sarason described a sense of community as "...the sense that one was part of a readily available mutually supportive network of relationships upon which one could depend, and as a result of which one did not experience sustained feelings of loneliness..." (p. 1). During the next decade, a variety of scholars began to empirically assess the importance of a sense of community in a variety of settings (Doolittle and MacDonald 1978; Glynn 1981; Riger and Lavrakas 1981), however a consistent measurement framework did not emerge. This changed in 1986, when McMillan and Chavis argued that a sense of community has four subcomponents: (a) *Membership*—a feeling of belonging or of sharing a sense of personal relatedness; (b) *Influence*—a sense of mattering, of making a difference to a group, and of the group mattering to its members; (c) *Integration and fulfillment of needs*—a feeling that member's needs will be met by the resources received through their membership in the group; and (d) *Shared emotional connection*—the commitment and belief that members have shared and will share history, common places, time together, and similar experiences (p. 9). Looking back over the past 30 years, it is clear that the McMillan and Chavis (1986) framework has played a dominant role in the literature on sense of community. Using the framework, researchers have shown that a sense of community correlates with various indicators of well-being including life satisfaction (e.g., Pretty

et al. 1996; Prezza et al. 2001), perceptions of belonging and community connectedness (e.g., Sonn 2002; Sonn and Fisher 1996), mental health symptoms (Ellaway et al. 2001), and loneliness (Pretty et al. 1994). Moreover, a sense of community has been shown to correlate with community involvement types of behaviors such as participation in a community (e.g., Chavis and Wandersman 1990), political participation (e.g., Hughey et al. 1999), and intention to stay in residence (e.g., Perkins et al. 1990). A sense of community has been studied in many social settings including religious communities (Miers and Fisher 2002), immigrant communities (Sonn 2002), student communities (Pretty 1990), internet communities (Obst et al. 2002), residential and geographic communities (Brodsky et al. 1999; Perkins et al. 1990), and the workplace (Cantano et al. 1993; Mahan 2000; Pretty and McCarthy 1991; Pretty et al. 1992).

2.2 Historical Roots of Measuring a Sense of Community

Many measures for a sense of community have been developed over the years, and the vast majority of them anchor on the McMillan and Chavis (1986) framework. Some of the commonly used scales include the Sense of Community Index (SCI), the Brief Sense of Community Scale (BSCS), the Multidimensional Territorial Sense of Community Scale (MTSOCS), the Italian Sense of Community scale (ISCS), the Community Organization Sense of Community Scale (COSOC), and the Psychological Sense of Community at Work Scale (PSCW). The most frequently used scale over time is the SCI (Perkins et al. 1990). The SCI was updated by Chavis et al. in 2008 (the SCI-2), but the SCI-2 has not been consistently utilized in the literature to date. The factor structure of sense of community has also been significantly debated and because of instability in the factor structure of the SCI across settings, sense of community is frequently measured as a unidimensional concept.

The latest measurement development in the literature occurred recently when Jason et al. (2015) developed a new measure called the Psychological Sense of Community Scale (PSCS), which is based on three distinct ecological domains involving the individual, microsystem, and macrosystem. Factor analytic techniques were used to derive a scale that measures three theoretical domains involving Self (identity and importance to self), Membership (social relationships), and Entity (a group's organization and purpose). Given the newness of the scale, we do not yet know how it will hold up across studies and settings, but it might be a promising advance in sense of community measurement.

2.3 Community at Work: How the Literature on a Sense of Community Changed

An interesting twist in the literature emerged in 2010, when Nowell and Boyd challenged the theoretical underpinnings and measurement schemes of a sense of community. They were attempting to understand if a sense of community mattered in work settings, when some of their qualitative data pointed to the fact that having a perception of responsibility for a community was an important component of having a community experience. This observation led to the articulation of the Community Experience Framework (Nowell and Boyd 2010). The framework states that community experiences can manifest in two separate forms: (1) the experience of a community as a resource and (2) the experience of community as a responsibility. They defined these community experiences and deconstructed their differential theoretical logics by showing that a sense of community develops when personal needs are fulfilled and a sense of community responsibility is generated out of personal value and belief systems.

As Nowell and Boyd (2010) proposed (see Fig. 2.1), traditional measures of sense of community (SOC) tend to assess an individual's sense that their community serves as a resource

for meeting key psychological and physiological needs (e.g., see the *Sense of Community Index* (Perkins et al. 1990), the *Sense of Community Index-2* (Chavis et al. 2008), and the *Brief Sense of Community Scale* (Peterson et al. 2008)). The community in a needs-based framework is viewed as a potential resource for meeting physiological or psychological needs of the individual. Their work showed that McMillan and Chavis' (1986) four dimensions (*membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection*) as they have been operationalized to date, principally concern whether or not a community is serving to meet key psycho-social needs such as the need for affiliation (nAffill), need for power (nPwr), need for achievement (Nach) (McClelland 1961), and need for affection (Schutz 1958). Within this logic, when the community is perceived to meet a variety of psychological and physiological needs, members will experience greater psychological well-being. This literature has also proposed that individuals who experienced a sense of community would be more likely to engage in a variety of important pro-organizational behaviors such as organizational citizenship and leadership, and that other individual and organizational outcomes could emanate from their community experiences.

Significant empirical work across a variety of community settings supports these propositions. For example, a sense of community has predicted outcomes like psychological well-being (Davidson and Cotter 1991; Peterson et al. 2008; Pretty et al 1996; Prezza and Pacilli 2007) as well as community engagement, political participation, and civic involvement (Albanesi et al. 2007; Brodsky et al. 1999, Hughey et al. 1999; Peterson et al. 2008).

They also proposed that a sense of community responsibility (SOC-R) represents a different and under-theorized aspect of experiencing community. They defined SOC-R as a feeling of duty or obligation to protect or enhance the wellbeing of a group and its members. It is distinguished from traditional measures of SOC in its focus on feelings of obligation to a community rather than perceptions of what one gets from a community.

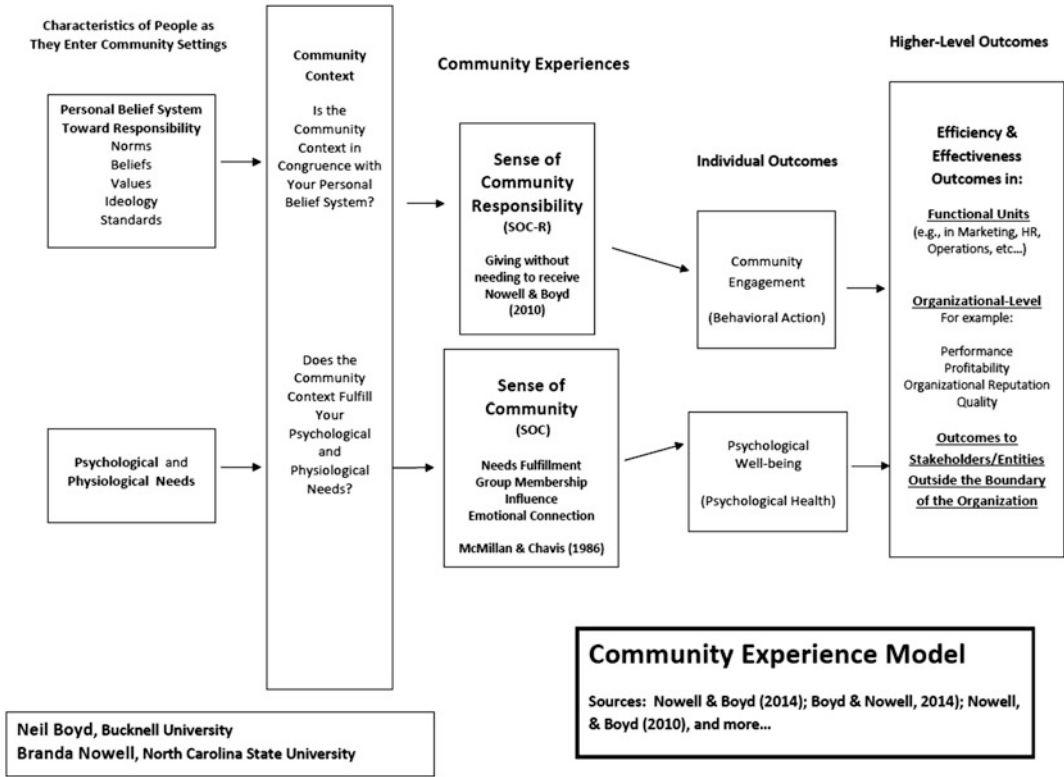


Fig. 2.1 Community experience model

SOC-R occurs as individuals develop personal values, norms, ideals, and beliefs through being embedded in various institutions (e.g., families, churches, schools, neighborhoods, social groups) that they carry with them into new settings. These a priori belief structures interact with specific aspects of a given setting and in some cases, can evoke sentiments of duty and obligation for individuals as they seek to reconcile who they perceive they are in a given setting and their normative beliefs about what a person like them *should* do in such a setting. Once developed, SOC-R perceptions are posited to increase a variety of important individual and organizational outcomes (Nowell and Boyd 2010, 2014; Boyd and Nowell 2014). The Community Experience Framework further posits that SOC, with its emphasis on community as a resource for meeting one’s needs, will be the stronger predictor of indicators related to psychological happiness and well-being, and that SOC-R, with

its emphasis on the desire to create psychological congruence between identity and behavior, will have a relatively stronger direct effect on behavioral engagement with a community relative to SOC.

2.4 Application of Community Experiences to Local Organizations And Community Movements

Local Organizations. Based on the previous discussion it seems reasonable that the community experiences framework is directly applicable to local organizations and community movements. This seems especially true given that empirical work has consistently supported the framework in public service settings. And, given that local organizations are often embedded and serve the citizens of local communities, it is

logical that local organization administrators would be interested in developing communities at work.

Once hired, community experiences could become a central part of the onboarding process where initial trainings explicitly included information and conversations of the type of community the new employee was entering. In addition, the onboarding process could promote that community experiences are an important pillar of the culture of the organization, and that employees are expected to be responsible stewards of that community.

Community experiences could also be measured during annual employee engagement surveys (or more often). Current engagement surveys do not typically include community experience metrics, yet the recent empirical work in this areas provides compelling evidence that community experiences should be measured as outcomes to achieve, and factors that should be assessed in relation to other important employee, unit-level, and organizational outcomes.

The community experiences framework might also assist as local organizations are in the midst of an organization change process. Having community experiences might be important for change agent teams, top executive leadership, self-directed work groups, and other stakeholders during change initiatives (Barczak et al. 1987; Boyd and Bright 2007; Boyd and Angelique 2002). For example, change agent teams typically work in close proximity to each other, and tend to continuously debate and challenge ideas as they are generated. Given its posited relationship to collaborative learning (e.g., Kreijns et al. 2003), there is reason to suspect that community experiences may positively influence a group's ability to generate alternative ideas and solutions to problems.

As local organizations conduct strategic planning, design mission, vision, and value statements, construct organizational policies, and set the future course of the firm, community experiences could be one of the central cultural themes of the organization. It could also be an important organizational goal for top management that either mediates or co-exists among

other traditional organizational outcomes like turnover, absenteeism, productivity, and profit. For example, if sense of community is found to be negatively correlated with absenteeism, managers might consider measuring community experiences and implementing community building interventions in order to foster reductions in absenteeism. And, considering that absenteeism has been found to negatively relate to job satisfaction (see Scott and Taylor 1985), developing a sense of community might increase satisfaction with work. On a macro-level, sense of community might be related to overall organizational functioning. For example, organizations that have a strong community experiences would likely be settings where workers enjoy coming to work and have the opportunity to have fulfilling and thriving lives. In addition, many scholars and practitioners have been promoting the measurement of triple-bottom-line indices that show the organization's commitment to achieving profit, environmental, and social outcomes (see Savitz 2006). Community experiences might be an important social outcome that organizations strive to achieve, yet to date, is not included in typical social outcome reporting. As one can see, there are many potential applications of the community experience framework in local organizational settings. Only the tip of the iceberg has been explored here.

Community movements. Community experiences are also directly applicable to community movements. When we first began our work to export the construct of sense of community to management settings, we anticipated that it would transfer without too many issues. However, it was a fascinating process that led to a new concept and theory (i.e., SOC-R), and over time, it has become apparent that the community experience framework can be used in a variety of settings beyond the workplace.

As noted earlier, sense of community has long been studied in neighborhoods, towns, and locations where citizens reside and commiserate. For example, a sense of community has been studied in religious communities (Miers and Fisher 2002), immigrant communities (Sonn 2002), student communities (Pretty 1990), internet communities

(Obst et al. 2002), and residential and geographic communities (Brodsky et al. 1999; Perkins et al. 1990). However, the SOC-R aspect of the community experience framework has not yet been empirically tested in these settings. Moreover, a sense of community has been linked to increased participation in a community (e.g., Chavis and Wandersman 1990), political participation (e.g., Hughey et al. 1999), and intention to stay in residence (e.g., Perkins et al. 1990), but the latest research on SOC-R shows that it is likely a better predictor of behavioral engagement compared to SOC. This is a ripe area for exploration, because if the community experience framework is correct, citizens who experience a sense of community responsibility would likely be more engaged in their communities. Those citizens would be more apt to help their fellow community members, act in responsible ways toward the community itself, and give without needing to receive anything in return.

2.5 Exporting Sense of Community to the Management Literature

In addition to deconstructing a theory of community experiences, Boyd and Nowell (2014) explored the application of community experience to workplace settings and attempted to show how community experiences are distinct from similar constructs in the field of management (i.e., organizational commitment, organizational identity, team cohesion, psychological contracts, and social capital).

The impetus for this work was created by commentary from management scholars who questioned whether or not community experiences were theoretically and methodologically different concepts from well-established variables in the management literature, and whether or not they had predictive validity on individual and organizational outcomes. The decision to analyze these five management constructs was based on an extensive review of the management literature in which they attempted to find constructs that shared definitional or theoretical commonalities with community experiences. The literature review led them to the belief that these

constructs stand out as ones which are most similar to experiences of community, and the belief that they provide the best litmus test for the utility of community experiences as unique and useful constructs (see Table 2.1).

Team Cohesion. The first related construct they analyzed was team cohesion. Team cohesion has been described as, “the resultant of all the forces which are acting on the members to stay in a group” (Festinger 1957: 274), and “a dynamic process which is reflected in the tendency for a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its goals and objectives” (Carron 1982: 124). In a meta-analytic study, Beal et al. (2003) describe the construct of team cohesion as inclusive of three dimensions: (1) interpersonal attraction, (2) commitment to the task, and (3) group pride.

However, community experiences differ from team cohesion in their level of analysis. Team cohesion is explicitly an attribute of a team or unit, and community experiences are individual level constructs which focus on a person’s psychological sense of connection to a community of actors. Further, while scholars have examined community experiences in aggregate as a property of a collective, they do not necessarily require the assumption of a single “team” or collective task.

Organizational Identity. Although a variety of definitions have been proposed, perhaps the most comprehensive definition of organizational identity is, (1) feelings of solidarity with the organization, (2) feelings and actions of support for the organization, and (3) perceptions of shared characteristics with other organizational members (Patchen 1970). As Riketta (2005: 361) notes in a recent meta-analysis of the concept, all organizational identity definitions “imply that the organizational member has linked his or her organizational membership to his or her self-concept, either cognitively (e.g., feeling a part of the organization; internalizing organizational values), emotionally (pride in membership), or both.”

When looking at organizational identity in direct comparison to community experiences both constructs reference an individual’s

Table 2.1 Analysis of PSOC with other constructs

Analysis component	PSOC	Team cohesion	Organizational identity	Organizational commitment	Psychological contract	Social capital
Definition	A member's feeling of being part of an interdependent community, a feeling that one is part of a larger dependable and stable structure that will meet key needs, and a sense of responsibility for the well-being of that community and its members	The resultant of all the forces that are acting on the members to stay in a group	The degree to which organizational actors have linked his or her organizational membership to his or her self-concept	Staff member's bond of commitment and responsibility to an organization or other organizational target	The perceived obligations that exist between an employer and its employees or the promises an organization is perceived to have made to its employees	A set of resources made available through group members' social relationships
Focus of concept	An individual's cognitive state	A group or task collective	An individual's cognitive state	An individual's cognitive state	An individual's cognitive state	Dyad or collective
Dimensions	Membership Influence Integration and fulfillment of needs Shared emotional connection Sense of responsibility	Interpersonal attraction Commitment to the task/group pride	Cognitive Emotional	Affective Continuance Normative	Transactional Relational	Structural Relational Cognitive
Level of analysis	Individual	Group or unit	Individual	Individual	Individual	Individual or collective
Referent	Connection to a community of actors	Connection to a team or unit	Connection to an organization	Commitment to a target and restricted to bonds that are sentiments of dedication and responsibility	Connection between an employee and employer	Resources, value, or advantage in a collective
Similarity to PSOC	NA	Attraction to a group	Refer to psychological states Affiliation with organization meets key psychological needs for positive identity	Refer to psychological states Affective commitment focuses on emotional	Refer to psychological states Behavior is driven by perceptions about the relationship between themselves and a context	Benefits gained via membership

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Analysis component	PSOC	Team cohesion	Organizational identity	Organizational commitment	Psychological contract	Social capital
Unique to PSOC	NA	Individual versus group/unit level of analysis No assumption of team task—more flexible in underorganized domains	PSOC more narrow emphasis on perceived relationships to members as the mechanism for positive identity	connection to the organization PSOC emphasis is broader than bond of commitment and responsibility	PSOC focuses the relationship between the individual and the social context, and not solely on the relationship between employee and employer PSOC and Psychological contracts operationalize different aims. Psychological contracts focuses on obligations as a driver of behavior. PSOC is focused on phenomenological experience of a social context as a community	PSOC focuses on a psychological state whereas social capital centers on resource flow in networks PSOC focuses on personal perceptions of membership and affiliation

Note PSOC Psychological Sense of Community

cognitive state. They both refer to a sense of membership or connection with the organization that fulfills key needs for a positive identity, but organizational identity is specifically concerned that the individual's values are congruent with the values of the organization. Moreover, while organizational identity focuses on psychological connection to an organization, the specific referent of identification is very broadly defined. Organizations have many facets that may invoke a sense of identification—for example, a staff member may identify with the status or prestige of the organization, the organization's mission, its technological approach, or its leadership. Community experiences are more narrowly focused and concerned specifically with the experience inside a human collective.

Organizational Commitment. Organizational commitment was seminally defined by Mowday et al. (1979, p. 226) as “the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization.” As one can surmise by this definition, researchers treated organizational identity and organizational commitment as synonyms for several years (Riketta 2005). In the late 1980s, researchers in a number of fields re-discovered organizational identity as a unique construct, and after Ashforth and Mael (1989) outlined the significance of social psychological theories to organizational behavior research, studies on organizational identity as a separate construct to organizational commitment flourished. In 1990, Allen and Meyer distinguished three forms of organizational commitment: affective, continuance, and normative. This three dimensional framework has emerged as the most prominent model for conceptualizing organizational commitment (Cohen 2007).

Specifically, organizational commitment represents a unique type of bond which emphasizes a stance of dedication and responsibility, and it is pre-disposed based on instrumental and normative expectations as well as organizational context. These themes offer clear parallels to the literature on community experiences. Both constructs share a common level of analysis, representing the psychological experience of a relationship by an individual. The literatures of

both constructs have recognized that relationships can be rooted in affective, instrumental, and normative bases. For example, sense of community dimensions of membership and shared emotional connection tap into an affective rationale. The dimensions of needs fulfillment and influence focus primarily on an instrumental rationale while the dimension of responsibility is based most strongly in a normative rationale.

However, several key distinctions between community experiences and organizational commitment constructs are also apparent. Whereas organizational commitment may be associated to a range of targets including a contract or goal (Klein et al. 2012), community experiences cannot. Community experiences are not applicable outside of the context of a defined social collective. Second, community experiences and organizational commitment differ in their focal emphasis. For example, Klein et al. (2012) assert that the concept of organizational commitment should be restricted to bonds which are defined by sentiments of dedication and responsibility. Organizational commitment focuses its definitional boundaries on the nature of a bond (i.e., commitment), while being nonspecific on the nature of the target (e.g., Klein et al. 2012). Community experiences seeks to be specific on the nature of a target (community) and the content of the bond (e.g., membership and influence) while being inclusive of a range of bond types (e.g., instrumental, commitment, and identification). As such community experiences are likely a more appropriate construct for investigating organizations as communities as it seeks to capture a more holistic and multi-dimensional picture of the experience of community.

Psychological Contracts. Psychological contracts refer to the perceived obligations that exist between an employer and its employees (Atkinson 2007) or the promises an organization is perceived to have made to its employees (Ho 2005). The literature on psychological contracts has sought to characterize the nature of psychological contracts within organizational settings and investigate the outcomes of contract fulfillment and violation or breach on employee

attitudes and behavior (Rousseau 1995; Turnley et al. 2003). The basic thrust of this literature argues that the employer/employee relationship is characterized by a number of transactional and relational obligations. These perceptions are important because the perceived fulfillment or breach of psychological contracts has been shown to have a significant relationship with a number of important employee outcomes such as job satisfaction, intention to stay, and organizational citizenship behavior (e.g., Bal et al. 2008; Robinson and Morrison 1995; Sutton and Griffin 2004; Turnley and Feldman 1999; 2000).

The literature on psychological contracts shares some common themes with community experiences. Psychological contracts is focused at the individual level of analysis. Both constructs presume an underlying logic that an individual's behavior within a given social context is driven, in part, by their perceptions about the nature of the relationship between themselves and that context. However, psychological contracts involve a very specific relationship within a social context—that between an employee and their employer. Community experiences focus on the perceived relationship of an individual to a social context such as a workplace. Moreover, the literature on psychological contracts focuses on the notion of obligations within a social context and whether perceived obligations are fulfilled or breached as a driver of behavior. Community experiences are focused on the experience of a social context *as a community*.

Social Capital. Oh et al. (2006) describe social capital as a set of resources made available through group members' social relationships. In their review of the literature on social capital in organizations, they identify four types of resources that can be obtained through social relationships. These include information, political opportunity and influence, emotional support, and mutual trust. However, like organizational commitment, social capital has been subject to a great deal of debate concerning its definition and conceptualization. Adler and Kwon (2002) characterize the diversity of definitions as varying along two dimensions. First, scholars have varied in whether they focus on the substance,

sources, or effects of social capital. Second, definitions differ on whether they adopt an individual or collective level of analysis. At the individual level, the focus is on the relations an actor maintains with other actors. At the collective level, the focus is on how the characteristics of relations among a collection of actors facilitates goal accomplishment of the collective.

In examining the relationship of organizational social capital and community experiences, there are some similarities. Both constructs emphasize benefits that can be gained via membership within a defined social structure. However, the measurement of these two constructs suggest some key points of divergence. First, the level of analysis for community experience is inherently individual. Social capital varies in its application as an attribute to an individual versus an attribute of a collective. However, a collective such as an organization cannot have a high level of community experiences absent of the aggregated level of community experiences of its composite members. Conversely, organizations *can* be theorized to possess social capital that does not necessarily disaggregate to social capital for its individual members. Further, predominant conceptualizations of social capital focuses specifically on resources, value, or advantage made possible through networks (Adler and Kwon 2002; Coleman 1988; Oh et al. 2006). Different from community experience, social capital is not the perception of advantages made possible through membership, it is the advantage itself and the social structure that confers that advantage. Accordingly, social capital is not a psychological phenomenon but rather a sociological phenomenon defined by its function (Coleman 1988). Consequently, the actual nature and patterns of individual ties among actors in the network is paramount to understanding social capital. These measures are not generally considerations in measures of community experiences. Indeed, it is theoretically possible for an individual to psychologically experience a sense of community with a community of individuals to whom they have relatively limited personal relationships while someone with a great number of personal ties could still feel limited

community experience. Even cognitive dimensions of social capital require some measure of consensus or similarity among members and a confirmation that these shared cognitions lead to some individual or collective outcome of value. Measures of community experience require no such reciprocity in cognition.

2.6 Empirical Advances in Community Experiences at Work: Answering the “So What?” Question

As a follow-up to their theoretical work (Nowell and Boyd 2010; Boyd and Nowell 2014), a series of empirical studies were conducted in an attempt to determine if a sense of community and a sense of community responsibility would have predictive validity in accordance with propositions in the community experience model. Their first empirical study (Nowell and Boyd 2014) was conducted in a collaborative network organization in North Carolina in which leaders of multiple healthcare agencies and organizations come together in order to work on regional state-level healthcare issues and problems. The study had several key findings. First, a sense of community was found to be a unique construct from a sense of community responsibility. Second, consistent with the community experience model, a sense of community was found to be a better predictor of psychological well-being measures (i.e., satisfaction with the group) compared to a sense of community responsibility. Moreover, a sense of community responsibility was found to be a better predictor of behavioral engagement (i.e., member leadership action).

A related study by Nowell et al. (2016), also conducted in the North Carolina healthcare collaborative, investigated the intersection and relative contributions of two “other-regarding” motivational constructs in predicting peer nominations of leadership in community collaboratives: public service motivation (PSM) and psychological sense of community responsibility (SOC-R). Individuals who possess a motivation for public service are thought to seek public

service careers where they can give to “others,” and once hired in public organizational settings (i.e., non-profits, NGOs, and public agencies), a public service motivation drives them to be highly psychologically and behaviorally engaged in their work. A key purpose of the study was to introduce SOC-R to the field of public management as well as clarify the theoretical relationship of PSM and SOC-R to each other as well as to indicators of collaborative leadership. The findings indicated that while SOC-R was significantly related to being identified as thought leaders and champions of a collaborative, PSM has no significant direct relationship to either indicator of collaborative leadership. However, PSM was significantly and positively related to SOC-R and was shown to have a significant indirect effect on indicators of collaborative leadership. A major outcome of these findings is that SOC-R is a promising construct for understanding prosocial organizational actions.

A third study by Boyd and Nowell (2017) was conducted in a large healthcare organization, and was the first empirical assessment of SOC and SOC-R within a traditional single organizational setting. The study had multiple aims including, (1) to replicate the previous empirical finding that SOC and SOC-R were unique constructs, (2) to determine if SOC was a better predictor of employee well-being compared to SOC-R, and (3) to determine if SOC-R was a better predictor of organizational citizenship behavior compared to SOC. Overall, the findings supported the basic propositions of the Community Experience Framework and demonstrated its applicability to the workplace context. Findings were remarkably consistent with the Nowell and Boyd (2014) collaborative network study in demonstrating that SOC and SOC-R are separate and unique constructs that have the ability to predict employee psychological well-being and behavioral engagement outcomes. In addition, the data showed that both SOC and SOC-R had a significant unique effect in predicting psychological well-being, but SOC was a slightly better predictor of well-being compared to SOC-R. In contrast, SOC-R appeared to consistently predict organizational citizenship better than SOC.

These findings provided additional empirical support for the propositions put forth by Nowell and Boyd (2010) that a values-based SOC-R would be a stronger driver of behavioral action taken on behalf of an organization and/or in support of its members. An additional finding is that, in general, community constructs were better able to predict organizational citizenship behaviors toward individuals (OCBIs) compared to organizational citizenship behaviors toward the organization as a whole (OCBOs). This is an interesting finding, and may relate to the fact that the development of a community experience tends to occur within proximal relationships to other individuals at work compared to the entirety of the organization, which is more distal to the action of community development within organizations. For example, performing OCBIs to help co-workers might require the individual to pay attention to co-worker needs, provide personal suggestions, engage in direct one-on-one interaction with the co-worker, and handle potential resentment that could arise if the helping behavior was ultimately unwanted.

Finally, two studies which are currently under review (Boyd and Nowell; Boyd et al.) add additional empirical support to the community experience model. The first study (Boyd et al.) was conducted in a large healthcare organization, and it shows that SOC and SOC-R are stronger predictors of psychological well-being and behavioral engagement respectively, compared to public service motivation. These findings add to the public management literature by showing that community experiences are important direct predictors of public servant outcomes, and add to the literature which supports the notion that PSM is more suited as a predictor of who seeks public service jobs compared to its ability to specifically predict motivation of public servants when engaged at work. The second study (Boyd and Nowell), conducted in a mid-sized University, demonstrates that SOC is the best predictor of psychological well-being (i.e., job satisfaction & thriving) and SOC-R is the best predictor of employee engagement (i.e., organizational citizenship & job engagement) relative to organizational identity, commitment, and public service

motivation. These findings are important because they appear to demonstrate that community experiences might be better predictors of employee outcomes compared to constructs in the field of management and public management that have long been revered as important contributors to employee motivation.

2.7 Final Thoughts

At their core, organizations are collectives, comprised of individuals who participate in coordinated action. While workplaces differ in important ways from geographic communities such as neighborhoods, they also share many similarities. Individuals seek membership into these collectives for a variety of reasons including the desire to obtain resources, gain influence, attain a sense of belonging and affiliation, find and develop positive relationships with others, and engage in responsible stewardship of the collective. As such, the metaphor of community applies to organizations as much as it does to neighborhoods or towns.

In this chapter, we introduced the community experience framework and showed how it has utility in organizational settings and other domains of inquiry. In the field of community psychology, a sense of community has been a fruitful construct for explaining important outcomes such as citizen participation, residence, psychological health and well-being, and voluntary engagement in community betterment efforts in neighborhoods and schools. New research has discovered the importance of a sense of community responsibility, and how it may drive a variety of behavioral actions within organizations. SOC and SOC-R have the potential to impact outcomes such as organizational citizenship behavior, staff retention, and employee wellness, and these types of issues should be of concern to practitioners and scholars of local organizations and community movements. Moreover, there is great potential for the community experience framework to translate to other settings and issues that are located in community movement domains. However, in

order for this potential to be realized, more empirical research is needed to uncover all of the potential outcomes which can be predicted by SOC and SOC-R, and we need more clarity on the antecedent conditions that stimulate the development of SOC and SOC-R in the social settings where they can proliferate. In addition, we need a greater understanding of the applicability of the community experience framework in various divergent community settings. This work echos the calls of management authors like Mintzberg (2009), Block (2008), and others who believe that community building is the next major domain of development for managers, and those who believe that developing a sense of community and a sense of community responsibility are important endeavors in all sorts of collective settings.

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Community Climate: Adapting Climate Theory to the Study of Communities

3

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Abstract

The goal of this chapter is to employ the concept of climate—often referenced in organizational psychology as a measure of organizations or their departments—in the analysis of communities. We propose that communities provide a new level of analysis for measurement and understanding of the climate concept. We review the literature on level of analysis in climate research and explain how community provides a new level for the measurement of climate that is not captured in the existing levels of analysis in climate research (department, organization). We discuss the process in which climate will emerge in communities and

measurement/methodological issues that are relevant to the new level of analysis. We suggest several facets of climate that are relevant to community studies (road safety, participatory, political, education, homophobic, and adolescent violence) and propose a model that includes antecedents and consequences of community climate. Finally we propose ways in which climate can serve in community change efforts.

3.1 Introduction

“Community” is a key concept in numerous fields, including community social work, community development, community planning, community psychology, and more (see Hunter, Chap. 1). It has been studied from various perspectives, some of which are described in the present book, such as sense of community, community capital, or geographical and functional communities. However, the concept of “community climate” has not received the attention it deserves, and it is important to fill this gap. In discussions of the social arena, many researchers have found the climate concept essential to explaining various social phenomena (Alтчul et al. 2008; Brown and Lesane-Brown 2006; Krysan and Couper 2003; Wilkins 2008).

The aim of the present chapter is to employ the concept of climate—often referenced in organizational psychology as a measure of

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organizations or their departments—in the analysis of communities (see Boyd and Nowell Chap. 2). We propose that communities provide a new, different level of analysis for measurement and understanding of the climate concept. Likewise, the climate concept is meaningfully distinct from concepts traditionally used in the literature of community. The idea of applying organizational research to the study of community is not new. Many studies have suggested the complementary contribution of organizational and community studies (Boyd 2014, 2015; Boyd and Angeli 2002, 2007; Bryan et al. 2007; Chilenski et al. 2007; Keys and Frank 1987; Perkins et al. 2007; Townsend and Campbell 2007). However, none of this research explains how to integrate the climate theory into community studies. We suggest that climate can contribute to communities by providing a valid measure to predict community outcomes and help communities make positive changes.

In this chapter, we discuss the definition of organizational climate and the various levels on which existing literature analyzes the concept of climate. We clarify concepts such as “climate level” and “climate strength,” which are commonly used to measure organizational climate and use the idea of “organizational climate” to illuminate “community climate.” We then discuss ways to implement the concept of community climate in community practice. We provide several examples of community climate: community climate of road-safety (based on our previous research), participatory climate, political climate, homophobic climate, educational climate, and youth violence climate. These examples are at a conceptual level and are in need of valid and reliable scales. Finally, we conclude with a short discussion and conclusions.

3.2 Organizational Climate

Organizational climate refers to workers’ perceptions of an organization in terms of policies, procedures, practices, routines and rewards (Jones and James 1979; Rentsch 1990). The

concept of climate originated with Lewin et al.’s work (1939) on social climate in the classroom. Lewin (1951) later suggested that behavior is the function of the person and the environment. The concept subsequently evolved into an abstraction of the environment, a gestalt based on the patterns of experiences that people perceive as a whole rather than as isolated parts (Schneider et al. 2000). Building on the gestalt approach, climate researchers have argued that individuals behave according to their perceived pattern of the policies, practices and procedures for behavior in their organizational environment (Zohar and Luria 2004). Looking at the organization as an open system, (Katz and Kahn 1966) we take this approach a step further by arguing that the organization is only one part of the environment and, therefore, may not capture the whole array of perceptions and the wide variety of influences that individuals experience.

In recent decades, a growing interest in the concept of climate has led to a better theoretical understanding of the concept as well as progress in measurement. Many reviews of the climate concept have been written (Flin et al. 2006; Luria 2016; Schneider 1975; Svyantek and Bott 2004). These reviews and many empirical studies (Dietz et al. 2004; Luria 2008a, b; Zohar 1980; Zohar and Luria 2004, 2005, 2010) have contributed to the development of the concept of climate.

One of the main developments in climate theory is its specificity, having evolved from a global concept to a facet-specific concept. The global organizational climate construct refers to employees’ perceptions of an organization in terms of supervision, co-workers, employee competence, decision-making, and performance rewards (Jackofsky and Slocum 1988; Joyce and Slocum 1984), providing a measurement of the atmosphere in the organization, in general. The global climate measure approach is based on the assumption that better organizational atmosphere will lead to better outcomes. In contrast, Schneider (1975) proposed a facet-specific climate, arguing that global climate is too amorphous, inclusive, and multi-faceted. Facet-specific climate is defined as the shared perception among members of an organization with regard to

aspects of the organizational environment that inform role behavior, that is, the extent to which certain facets of behavior are rewarded and supported in any organization. The most relevant indicators in this regard are formal and informal policies, procedures, and practices concerning focal organizational facets (Schneider et al. 2000; Zohar 2000; Zohar and Luria 2004, 2005).

Since the concentration on specific facets of climate, many have been studied in a wide variety of organizations. Facets to which the climate concept has been applied include: quality (Luria 2008b); safety (Hofmann and Stetzer 1996; Luria 2008b; Zohar 1980); service (Schneider et al. 2000); sexual harassment (Fitzgerald et al. 1997); justice (Naumann and Bennett 2000); ethics (Luria and Yagil 2008; Victor and Cullen 1988); support and control (Bacharach and Bamberger 2007); involvement (Richardson and Vandenberg 2005); empowerment (Chen et al. 2007); diversity (Pugh et al. 2008); innovation (Klein and Sorra 1996); and learning (Bowen and Kilmann 1975). Later in the chapter, we present examples of specific facets within the community context.

Indeed, most of the recent climate studies have abandoned the global climate approach in favor of adopting the facet-specific climate approach. By concentrating on a specific facet, the majority of climate studies today conceptualize climate as the perception of signals in the environment that relate to the importance of that specific facet (Schneider et al. 2000). Climate perceptions thus serve an adaptive function by providing information for behavior-outcome expectancies, such as the probable consequences of good or bad service, in the case of service climate, and high or low participation levels in the case of a participatory climate.

Based on construct or role theory (Katz and Kahn 1978), social learning (Bandura 1986), and expected utility (Vroom 1964), a number of studies have postulated a positive relationship between climate and role behavior (Dietz et al. 2004; Schneider et al. 2009; Zohar and Luria 2004, 2005). These studies demonstrate the shift from a global approach to a facet-specific approach in climate research. Based on this

growing body of research, we propose that the most adequate conceptualization of the community climate concept is the facet-specific approach.

3.3 Levels of Analysis in Climate

Climate research has not only concentrated on facets in the environment, but also on the specific level of analysis in the environment. That is, because the environment is complex, it may be perceived differently when analyzing it on different levels. As such, the personal immediate environment of an individual may be perceived differently from his/her social group environment, which may again be different from the wider organizational environment (Dietz et al. 2004; Luria 2016; Zohar and Luria 2005, 2010). Climate research has defined the different levels on which individuals perceive and analyze the environment as follows:

- a. **Individual level.** Early studies of organizational climate concentrated on the individual level (Schneider and Bartlett 1970), measuring the concept that was defined as “psychological climate” (Hellriegel and Slocum 1974). These studies have shown that the way in which the individual perceives his/her environment predicts the individual’s behavior.
- b. **Group and organizational levels.** Most of the recent climate studies deal with the group-level variable defined as “organizational climate,” focusing on aggregated group-level data to assess relationships between clusters of perceptions and organizationally relevant outcomes (Luria 2008b; Schneider et al. 2000; Zohar and Luria 2004, 2005, 2010). Individual perceptions are aggregated at the group level (e.g., departmental) or at the organizational level, and the aggregation is validated if the organization or the group members have similar perceptions of their organizational climate (James et al. 1993). This level-of-analysis research has demonstrated that, because the environment is

complex, different climate perceptions may be formed at different levels. For example, Zohar and Luria (2005) found that some departments within organizations had a significantly different group-level safety climate from that at the organizational level (similar results were found by Dietz et al. 2004, in their study of service climate).

Climate measurement was developed for the measurement of group-level variables, and the two measures used for higher-level measurement (Ostroff et al. 2003; Schneider et al. 2000) are as follows:

Climate level. Operationally, climate is assessed by aggregating individual perceptions with respect to the required unit of analysis and by taking the mean to represent the climate level for an organizational entity, such as a group or department.

Climate strength. Homogeneity is expressed in the climate strength measure, which reflects the agreement within a unit with respect to the climate level. The climate strength is measured with such statistics as within-group correlations (r_{wg} ; James et al. 1984, 1993); interclass correlation (ICC; James 1982); and Average Deviation Index (ADI; Burke et al. 1999).

Climate measure can be assessed at each and every level of analysis. That is, the mean of the organizational members' perceptions of their organizational environment will define the organizational climate level, and the agreement between the members of the organization will delineate the organizational climate strength. At the same time, the mean of the perceptions about the social group environment of the members of each department will capture the group climate level, and the agreement between the members of the department will determine the strength of the group climate.

The aggregation of individuals at a higher level of analysis, such as the group and organizational levels, are examples of "collective structures" (Morgeson and Hofmann 1999; Weick and Roberts 1993), which may be studied as a system of interaction. This interaction is the basic building block comprising collective

structure because it creates the context from which shared meaning emerges (Weick 1987). Blumer (1969) suggested that meaning is socially constructed, evolving not from things, but from the interactions of people attempting to understand those things. Interaction between individuals is thus a collective sense-making process. As explained by Weick (1995), complex environments present many transient and unexpected cues conducive to "negotiated" (i.e., socially construed) agreements that make an environment more understandable.

According to this interactive approach, groups can develop strong climates, leading to a homogeneous understanding of events, if the group members interact while attempting to understand those events. This claim is supported by previous findings of positive correlations between the social interactions of unit (group, organization, etc.) members and climate strength (Gonzalez-Roma et al. 2002; Klein et al. 2001; Luria 2008a; Zohar and Tene-Gazit 2008). In other words, members of the same unit interact and form shared perceptions about their environment. In line with Morgeson and Hofmann (1999), who argued that the system of interactions between unit members can be analyzed at any level of analysis, we propose that a meaningful group level of analysis for the climate concept is provided not only by formal organizational structures, but also by community interactions.

3.3.1 Community Level

We propose that the community level offers the possibility for a higher level of analysis than the organizational level. Studies of culture have demonstrated that a higher level than organizational culture exists, and cultural studies have measured culture even at the national level (Hofstede 1980; Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 2000; Luria et al. 2015, 2016). Culture is defined as the shared values and basic assumptions of a group (for example nationality) and it is a distinct concept from climate that focuses on shared perceptions (Schneider et al. in

press). However, climate studies have not concentrated on the national level, probably because, theoretically, this level is too broad to assume interactions between members. On the other hand, we propose that the community level may constitute a social unit that is broader than the organizational level, but still small enough to form a cohesive social network with shared climate perceptions between its members (McMillan and Chavis 1986; Sarason 1974; Schriver 2001). Thus, based on the framework within which facets of climate have been studied in organizations (safety, sexual harassment, innovation), we suggest that climate can be applied to describe facets of the community.

We found several examples of empirical measurements of climate. The environmental influences of the community on an individual, creating racism, were described as “racial climate” and were measured since the 1940s in America with a survey about racial attitudes, sampling ordinary Americans and aggregating their responses (Krysan and Couper 2003). The concept of political climate was suggested by Nagel (1995) in a qualitative study using interviews in order to explain why people who previously had described their race as non-Indian later identified themselves as Indian. Harris et al. (2002) aggregated a measure of depressive symptoms to the school level and operationalized this indirect measurement as “normative climate,” finding it to increase girls’ risk of sexual onset. Tallman et al. (1999) asked subjects to evaluate the conditions in their family when they were growing up (from “very warm” to “very cold”) and suggested that the results capture the “emotional climate” of the family.

It seems that when the climate concept was empirically measured, researchers have used different operational definitions of the climate concept. We argue that a standardized operational definition of climate would benefit the field of community and that the lack of conceptual standardization creates conceptual confusion. It is suggested that the operational definition frequently used in the fields of applied sociology and psychology can also be applied in the sphere of community. The examples we reviewed did

not systematically measure perceptions regarding the importance of a facet, as is customary in studies of climate. However, we suggest that these examples point to climate facets that can contribute to the field of community, and demonstrate that the climate approach can capture theoretical content beyond the content that other social variables describe.

We suggest that the organizational level climate studies can also point to potential climates that may be relevant for communities. Safety climate (Zohar 1980) can be relevant in explaining geographical communities’ road safety behavior and help in the prevention of accidents in these communities (Luria et al. 2014). “Involvement climate” (Riordan et al. 2005) can be applicable in predicting community members’ active involvement and participation in community activities. “Ethical climate” (Luria and Yagil 2008; Victor and Cullen 1988) can help in the understanding of the sources of community members of unethical behaviors. “Sexual harassment climate” (Fitzgerald et al. 1997) may provide an explanation for higher rates of harassment incidents in some communities than in others and point to the social change needed in order to eliminate this phenomenon. “Learning climate” (Bowen and Kilmann 1975) may be useful in the understanding of systematic differences between communities in promoting education. Later in this chapter, we describe how some climate facets are reflected on the community level (see Sect. 3.13).

3.4 The Emergence of Climate Within Communities

A review of the literature reveals that there is no single agreed concept of community. However, community is usually defined as a group of people that share common experiences, goals, relationships, interactions, attitudes, culture, beliefs, access to resources, and institutions (Poplin 1979—See more details in Chap. 1 in this volume regarding the nature of communities). It is customary to differentiate between

geographical communities—defined on the basis of place and geographical borders, where people share the same location, such as a village or a neighborhood (Lowe 2000; Rubin and Rubin 2008)—and functional communities, in which the geographical basis of definition is loose or nonexistent, such as a community of bike riders or the LGBT community (Hurtado-de-Mendoza et al. 2015; Schriver 2001).

The distinction between “a community of identity” and “a community of interests” may help to clarify the concept of community climate. A community of identity reflects a framework with which a person has a sense of commonality, solidarity and reciprocity. A community of interest, in contrast, stresses the joint objectives of community members, their instrumental relations and interdependence (Schriver 2001; Valtonen 2015). It should be noted that the two communities, that of identity and that of interests, are not necessarily two distinct, dichotomous forms; one community might simultaneously include characteristics of a community of interest and of a community of identity. Interests and identity may be expressed in both geographical and functional communities.

Numerous studies have confirmed the existence of shared norms, values, and behaviors in communities, demonstrating the vital influence of community in a variety of ways (Antonishak et al. 2005; Hill et al. 2014; Liechty 2008; Oetting et al. 1998; Wickrama et al. 2006). These studies show that community is a social unit that not only influences its members but may also generate shared climate perceptions. According to Ashforth (1985), community members may communicate and discuss their understanding of community (geographical or functional) events and develop a shared interpretation of that environment. Thus, a community may be defined as a social framework or network involving a high level of interactive relations, mutual activities, and reciprocity between members who share the same values and interests and have a common sense of solidarity (Colombo et al. 2001). Accordingly, the interactive approach (Blumer 1969) used to explain the development of climate in organizations (Klein et al. 2001; Luria 2008a;

Zohar and Tenne-Gazit 2008) may also be applied to the emergence of climate in communities, whether geographical or functional.

However, given conflicting evidence of weakening and strengthening communities (Schriver 2001), it is possible that not all communities are similar regarding the assumption of a significant interactive relationship. Some communities may not always function as cohesive social systems in which the members regularly interact, and shared climate perceptions may not accrue due to lack of sufficient interaction. A variable that may explain which communities provide the necessary conditions for the emergence of climate is “sense of community”, a term coined by Sarason (1974), which serves as a key concept in community research. Sense of community is defined as “the perception of similarity to others, an acknowledged interdependence with others, a willingness to maintain this interdependence by giving to or doing for others what one expects from them, and the feeling that one is part of a larger dependable and stable structure” (Sarason 1974; p. 157).

A decade later, McMillan and Chavis (1986) presented a more comprehensive definition, comprised of four elements: (a) membership; (b) influence; (c) integration and fulfillment of needs; and (d) a shared emotional connection. Despite subsequent criticism of this four-pronged approach (Tartaglia 2006), McMillan and Chavis’ concept remains a basic theoretical framework for a long time (Arcidiacono and Procentese 2005; McMillan 2011; Obst et al. 2002; Peterson et al. 2008). According to this model of sense of community, feeling part of community is a function of the individual’s sense that the community fulfills his or her physiological and psychological needs. Nowell and Boyd (2010, 2014) offered an alternative approach—a “sense of community as responsibility.” They argued that sense of community is also rooted in values and responsibility (see more details in Chap. 2 of this volume). Accordingly, the members of a community express a sense of responsibility for the well-being of the other members and the partnership as a whole that is not necessarily rooted in an expectation of personal benefit.

Both of these approaches to sense of community concur that the sense of community should capture the level of interaction and identification with other community members. The literature on the concept of sense of community provides evidence of the existence of social interaction in a wide variety of communities (McMillan and Chavis 1986; Rappaport 1987; Sarason 1974). On the one hand are studies examining the attachment of people to their territory, that is, geographical community at different levels, such as a block, neighborhood, or city (Brodsky et al. 1999; Fagerholm and Käyhkö 2009; Tate 2012). On the other hand, studies are focusing on functional communities. For example, researchers have examined interest communities (Obst et al. 2002); distance-learning groups (Rovai and Jordan 2004); the gay community (Holt 2014); and virtual communities (Parks 2010). In sum, all of these studies on sense of community demonstrate the possibility of the existence of community as a strong social group in which individuals may be attached and interact with other community members (in both geographical and functional communities). Therefore, the existence of sense of community, even in communities of individuals who do not share a geographical location, can provide a social structure that will lead to the emergence of shared climate perceptions among its members. Boyd and Nowell (2014) have pointed to the possible contribution of sense of community to organizational research and, in this chapter, we continue and suggest its link with other variables from management and organizational behavior fields.

3.5 Composition of a Multi-level Model of Community Climate

In order to understand the community level of analysis, a composition model of community must be discussed. Composition models specify the functional relationships between phenomena or constructs at different levels of analysis that reference essentially the same content but are qualitatively distinct at different levels (Chan

1998; Rousseau 1985). Chan (1998) discussed few possible composition models in which lower-level structures are used to establish the higher-level construct, both in climate research specifically and in multi-level research generally (Fig. 3.1).

The first composition model is the *Additive Model*, in which a higher-level model is simply the summation of lower-level units with no regard to the variance among the lower-level units. We suggest that this model may be problematic for use at the community level because members of communities may differ in their individual-level perceptions, and the average score may be far from the score of each member of the community.

Another possible composition model for community research is the *direct consensus model*, in which individual-level data (e.g., the psychological climate of each member of the community) are aggregated together after a consensus has been established. This composition may be more valid than the additive model for representing community climate, because it reflects a cohesive collective structure in which the members of the community have homogeneity among themselves, and the summation of all of them may be a good representation of most members in the community. Yet, we suggest that this model is still not sufficient to represent the community-level climate, because it only shows similarity at the individual level between members of the community without necessarily demonstrating agreement about the community as a whole.

In our opinion, the most appropriate composition model for community climate is the *referent shift consensus model*, in which the lower-level units being composed by consensus are conceptually distinct, though derived from the individual-level data. That is, community-level climate should have a shift in the referent prior to the consensus assessment from the individual level to the community level. In other words, members of the community should report their perceptions about the community. It is the agreement about how members perceive community affairs that should be used

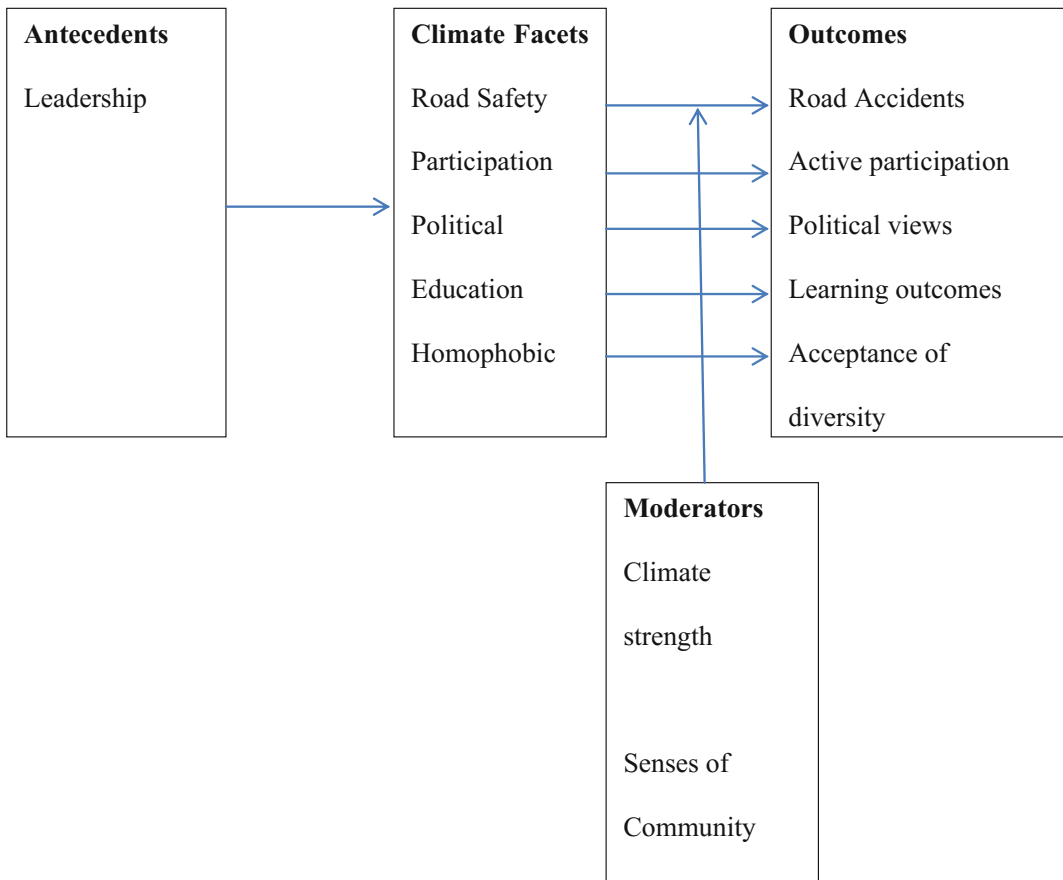


Fig. 3.1 Proposed model of community climate

as a community climate score, and not just the aggregation of individual-level perceptions for which their referent is not the community.

The use of the *reference shift consensus model* will allow the comparison between community-level climate and other levels of analysis that are measured in climate studies, such as organizational-level climate. Members of the community may also be members of organizations and, according to the referent shift model, the perceptions of the same individuals that refer to different collective structures may be aggregated together. Individuals can report their community climate perceptions and, at the same time, report their organizational climate perceptions. The climate perceptions regarding the community will be aggregated together to form a community climate score, and the climate

perceptions regarding the organization will be aggregated together to form an organizational climate score, assuming that sufficient homogeneity was found at each level of analysis.

It is important to note that, as far as we know, no previous studies reported in the literature have measured climate at the community level. Such a referent shift model has been used in climate research in order to compare between departmental-level climate and organizational-level climate (Dietz et al. 2004; Zohar and Luria 2005, 2010). The community example may provide a unique situation because, unlike groups (or departments) that are nested within organizations, organizations are not necessarily nested within communities, and vice-versa. When groups are nested within an organization, a top-down influence may be hypothesized, in which the

organizational level influences each of the groups within it (Kozlowski and Klein 2000). Such alignment between levels of analysis and top-down influences are not relevant when comparing community-level climate and organizational-level climate because the two levels of analysis may not be fully aligned. That is, members of the same community may work in different organizations, and workers of the same organization may be members of different communities.

The few studies reported that used climate and community variables were based on the assumption that the organizations were part of the same geographical community due to their location. For example, Pugh et al. (2008) demonstrated the effects of community on the organization's members within the geographical community, though they did not measure community climate. This and other such studies (Dietz et al. 2003) treated the organizations that are located within the geographical borders of a community as units of the higher level of analysis in the community. That is, the organizations are seen as lower-level variables that are nested within the higher level of the community. It should be noted that such alignment between membership in a geographical community and membership in an organization may not be the case in all community samples. That is, not all the members of an organization necessarily share the same influences of the geographical community. For example, many employees may commute to work from a different geographical community.

3.6 The Application of Climate in Communities and Community Practice

Based on the theoretical background of climate and level of analysis theory, we suggested that the climate concept should be studied as a facet-specific climate in community practice. We propose that the *referent shift consensus model* should be used in order to account for the composition of individuals at the community level and (if needed) simultaneously measure the

climate concept of the same individuals at different levels of analysis.

3.7 Community Climate, Strengths, and Weaknesses

A study of the facet-specific climate in a community can enrich perspective on community strengths (such as climates of community involvement, volunteering, and road safety) and community weaknesses and problems (such as climates of sexual harassment, violence, and homophobia). The identification of climates that reflect strengths and problems of the community may serve those involved in setting aims and goals of action, such as those associated with reducing a climate of violence or with empowering a climate of tolerance and participation. A community might simultaneously include both strengths and problems associated with the same kind of climate. It may, for instance, have characteristics of a climate of participation and of a climate of indifference to involvement. Knowledge of the combination of contradicting types of climates could enable those involved in community practice to focus on reducing the negative climate, empowering the positive climate, or working simultaneously on both.

3.8 Recognition of Climate in the Community (Community Facets)

According to the extensive literature on community practice, action aimed at community change usually begins with familiarization with the different characteristics of the community, such as its socioeconomic status, needs and desires, internal conflicts, loci of power, common values, and the like. In the present chapter, we suggest that the process of getting to know the community should include consideration of community climate as a central component that directly affects the behavior of the population.

Based on our review and analysis, it is possible to recommend directions for the

examination of community climate. Such an examination should first test the emerging climate facets in communities, that is, define the issues and facets, strengths and problems on which members of communities interact. One option is to begin with a qualitative study in which members of communities are interviewed regarding the issues and facets on which they interact with other members of their community and through which they feel the community influences their behavior. Facets that are frequently suggested by members of different communities may be indicative of possible climate facets in the community climate. Furthermore, qualitative study may point to the ways in which community climate emerges, such as formal community meetings or informal conversations, as well as the specific community practices which members of the community perceive as being important to each climate facet.

Following and building on the results of the qualitative study, a quantitative study can be conducted. Measuring a community climate quantitatively with a climate questionnaire can provide initial tests of homogeneity in climate perception within the community (i.e., community climate strength). According to climate theory, members of the same community are likely to share the same perceptions about the community and a strong climate should emerge as a result.

Qualitative and quantitative research on community climate can be used to obtain a picture that reflects the character of the community. An order of priorities based on types, level, and strength of the facets discussed in any community reflects the meaning and character of that community's life. For example, communities that concentrate on the educational facet, compared with those that focus on the facet of politics or the environment, demonstrate different focal interests and character.

3.9 Community Climate and Sense of Community

From our review, we hypothesize that sense of community serves as a central moderator for the relationship between climate and outcome. That

is, climate may be related to relevant outcomes in cohesive communities in which the community serves as a meaningful unit for each of the participants, but not in communities with a low sense of community in which the community may not be a dominant level of analysis.

In other words, the failure to identify the level and strength of community climate might indicate a low level of affinity with the community. In order to strengthen a community climate (such as a one of road safety or education), the community practitioner must first examine ways to empower the sense of community of the members.

3.10 Climate as a Predictor of Social Behaviors

Application of the concept of climate in community practice can contribute to an understanding of the social processes by which community influences the behavior of its members and can provide a linkage between community processes and community outcomes. Previous climate studies in organizations have shown climate to be a good predictor of outcomes that are relevant to the specific facet of the climate. For example, safety climate predicts safety outcomes, such as injuries (Zohar and Luria 2004), and provides a valid measure for safety level in organizations (Zohar and Luria 2005). It is suggested that the climate measure can serve as a complementary predictor of outcomes (such as social behaviors) in a community in addition to the predictions provided by other measures currently in use. For example, it is expected that communities with a higher health climate will have more community members participating in health programs, such as blood donation and HIV prevention. Thus, health community climate can serve as a key concept for predicting participation in social and health programs.

Additional examples are a volunteer climate that empowers the voluntary action of community members in different age groups and different areas; a violence climate that encourages

verbal and nonverbal violence in families and in the community; or a homophobic climate that could lead community members to harass, injure, or be cruel towards members of the LGBT community.

3.11 Linkage Between Organizations and Communities

Members of communities are frequently also members of organizations, and the concept of climate can provide a linkage between at least two meaningful social environments in which an individual takes part. By measuring both the organizational climate perceptions regarding a specific issue (e.g., road safety) and the community climate perceptions regarding the same issue, one can compare the level of alignment between these two concepts and understand the dominance of each social unit over an individual's perceptions. For example, for some facets, the community climate may have a stronger influence over the individual's behavior than the organizational climate and, therefore, serve as a better predictor of outcomes. To the best of our knowledge, such cross-level climate relationships between the level of the organization and the level of the community have never been studied, and the relationships between organization and community remain poorly specified. The multi-level approach appears to provide an effective means for testing such cross-level research questions (see review in Kozlowski and Klein 2000).

Such knowledge is important to community practice. For example, recognizing the intensity of a violence climate in the community (and not in organizations) may serve as the basis for a decision of community practitioners to focus their efforts on changing this climate as a goal and as a first step in reducing the violence in the community. In comparison, the violence may be the result of an organizational climate in the organizations in which the community members work (and not in the community). In this case, the community practitioner will have to find

ways to change the climate in the organizations or strengthen a community climate that counters the violence rooted in the organizational climate.

3.12 Community Leadership and Community Climate

Leaders can have a strong impact on the development of organizational climate (Luria et al. 2008; Zohar 2002; Zohar and Luria 2003). Thus, we assume that community leadership is also likely to have a strong impact on the development of community climate. This is particularly true of transformational leadership, which creates significant change in the lives of people and the community, reshaping its shared perceptions and values. This type of leadership is based not on exchange relations between the leader and individuals, but on the ability of the leader to bring about change by means of inspiration, based on a common vision and shared goals of the community as a whole. A transformational leader may enhance a community climate by generating a collective process in which community members come together to clarify complex situations and produce a common identify and understanding.

3.13 Examples of Community Climate

In this section, we present several examples of community climate. We begin by describing research that we conducted on a community climate of road safety, followed by five short additional examples of community climate: participatory climate, political climate, homophobic climate, a climate of education, and youth violence climate. The last five examples are drawn from our theoretical knowledge and practical experience in community practice. They reflect characteristics and patterns of communities, such as policy, expressions of discourse and the media, networks, and relationships, and incentives and sanctions that affect the behavior of members of the community.

3.13.1 Community Road Safety Climate

In an earlier study of community climate, which focused on road safety in geographical and functional communities (Luria et al. 2014), we used a two-stage design. First, we conducted a qualitative interview-based study (n = 61) in order to explore community influence on road safety and develop a safety-climate scale (Study 1). We then conducted a quantitative questionnaire-based study (n = 132) to test that scale (Study 2).

Study 1 indicated five main themes; on this basis, we developed the following five items regarding road-safety climate (see Table 3.1 for description of the scale with comparison to organizational safety climate scale). For each item, we also present an excerpt from one of the responses obtained.

1. Road safety is an important topic in our community. For example: “The community takes the issue of road safety very seriously. I remember there was a demonstration recently at the neighborhood in order to close a street for vehicles, because it wasn’t safe for the pedestrians” (respondent from a neighborhood).
2. My community publicizes information regarding road safety. For example: “The community highlights road safety, and

- provides information and tips for safe riding” (respondent from cyclists group).
3. Our community members are expected to follow road safety rules. For example, “In Tel Aviv it is very common to take a taxi when we go out, so we won’t drink and drive, and there are many posters around the city and near pubs and clubs about the subject” (respondent from the young adult’s community in a city).”
 4. In my community, we tend to comment to a member who doesn’t follow road safety rules. For example: “Members who receive fines or penalties for safety violations are not allowed to use the kibbutz vehicles” (respondent from Kibbutz).
 5. Members who try to improve road safety receive recognition and praise from the community. For example: “I personally tried to initiate advanced driving courses ..., and received a lot of encouragement from them” (respondent from car fans’ community).

To evaluate the reliability of the scale and the relevance of the items in a wide variety of geographical and functional communities, we counted the frequency of irrelevant participant responses. We also tested the variance of the community road-safety climate scale across communities.

Of the participants, 83% found the scale relevant to their community, and only 17% found

Table 3.1 Example for community road safety climate items

Community climate	Organizational climate
Road safety is an important topic in our community	Management considers safety when setting production speed and schedules
My community publicizes information regarding road safety	Management provides workers with a lot of information on safety issues
Our community members are expected to follow road safety rules	Management insists on thorough and regular safety audits and inspections
In my community we tend to comment to a member who doesn’t follow road safety rules	Management considers a person’s safety behavior when moving–promoting people
Members who try to improve road safety receive recognition and praise from the community	Manager says a “good word” to workers who pay special attention to safety

From Luria et al. (2014) and parallel items of organizational safety climate scale from Zohar and Luria (2005)

most of the items irrelevant. Similar to the findings in Study 1, members of geographic communities reported high relevance of the scale to their community. Only 3% of participants in these communities reported that all the items were irrelevant, and in most items frequency of irrelevance was less than 10%. Conversely, in functional communities, 22% of participants found the whole road-safety climate scale irrelevant, and in most items frequency of irrelevance was 30–40%, i.e., lower relevance of road-safety climate in functional than in geographical communities. However, it is important to note that even in functional communities most participants found that all scales, and each item in the scales, were relevant.

The research findings indicated group processes that lead to a community climate of road safety. Communities convey certain expectations and a sense of the importance of specific issues. In the specific case of road safety, there is a dialogue within communities about how one should behave on the road. According to the data, a safety climate is particularly likely to emerge in communities, geographical or functional, that share road risks.

3.13.2 Participatory Climate

Participation is defined as the activity of individuals and of the collective in the community aimed at promoting their quality of life and that of others and making the community a better place to live. Participation is expressed in the influence of individuals and the collective in the community on decisions and policy, and their involvement in planning and implementation of plans (Boehm 2007; Cnaan and Park 2015).

A participatory climate exists when:

1. Members of the community are supported and rewarded for acting as representatives of the interests of different groups in the community.
2. Many members in the community are rewarded for acting and for consistently and significantly affecting the policies and actions of the institutions within the community.

3. Community leaders and members try to generate a perception of democracy based on the right of citizens to influence decision making and take an active part in shaping the environment.
4. Community members are expected to consult and hold a dialogue with the organization.
5. The community members are encouraged to take partial or full control, as actual partners, in the decision-making processes in the organizations. (In this case, the members of the community have the potential to institute significant changes.)

3.13.3 Political Community Climate

A political community climate may derive from two points of departure. The first is related to empowerment of the ability of community members to develop an independent, morally sensitive position regarding different political issues. In the second, community members are expected to demonstrate unconditional loyalty, without reservation, for a certain political view (a party, ideology, or religion). Both points of departure create a political community climate. According to the first view, there is room for discourse, judgment, and greater involvement before a decision is made about the direction of the action. According to the second view, the community members are expected to act in a certain direction, according to a preset decision.

A political climate may be influenced by positive or negative views within the community regarding involvement in the political system and political activity (corresponding to the two points of departure). On the one hand, there may be esteem among community members for those who take an active part in politics on the local level. Political activity may take many different forms such as supporting members of the community:

1. Joining political forums, coalition-building.
2. Turning to the media or public speaking on radio, television, and community-public networks.

3. Sending letters by mail or e-mail to elected officials or candidates.
4. Participating in elections.
5. Protest action, such as signing petitions and participating in rallies and demonstrations.
6. (In exceptional cases), members of the community might be expected to take part in civil disobedience against institutional wrongdoing.

In contrast, there may be messages in the community that discourage a climate of political participation:

1. The community consider politics a “dirty word,” immoral, involving deals and manipulation.
2. Politics appropriate for only a small group of politicians.
3. Political activity perceived as complicated, an area in which rank-and-file members of the community have no place.
4. Political activity is viewed as not reflecting the true interests of the community members.
5. The participation of community members in political activity may be portrayed as unnecessary, or even detrimental.

3.13.4 Climate of Education

A climate of education reflects the expectation that community members will obtain education in elementary school, high school, higher education, and formal and informal institutions of supplementary education. A climate of education is associated with the degree to which the community members are challenged to study, obtain high educational achievements, and value quality education. Climates of education may differ according to the character of education expected of community members. For example, the community might expect members to study the exact sciences, such as mathematics, physics, and chemistry, or computer studies, and not social sciences, or it may place more emphasis on studies in sociology, psychology, and the

humanities, literature, languages, religion, and philosophy. Some communities may only expect young people to acquire a vocation, or even drop-out and get a job.

A community climate of education is empowered when:

1. There is a clear tendency to support the education of members in the community.
2. There is a clear tendency to promote the inclusion of people who excel academically, as well as people with disabilities in study frameworks.
3. The educational level of individuals serves as a criterion for key positions in the community.
4. Better educated people enjoy greater influence in decision-making processes.
5. Those who do not study or who achieve poor results are made to feel uncomfortable.

3.13.5 Homophobic Community Climate

Homophobia is an irrational fear of homosexual men and women, an extreme repulsion to spending time in their company, and a degrading, humiliating, and aggressive approach towards gay men and lesbians. Based on Riddle and Sang (1978), and Worthen (2014), a homophobic community climate is strengthened when:

1. Homosexuality is seen by the members in the community as a “crime against nature.” Gays/lesbians are sick, crazy, immoral, sinful, wicked, etc. Anything is justified to change them: prison, hospitalization, behavior therapy, electroshock therapy, etc.
2. Heterosexuality is seen as more mature, and certainly to be preferred. Any possibility of “becoming straight” should be reinforced, and those who seem to be born “that way” should be pitied, “the poor dears”.
3. Homosexuality is seen just a phase of adolescent development that many people go through and most people “grow out of.” Thus,

- gays/lesbians are less mature than “straights” and should be treated with the protectiveness and indulgence one uses with a child. Gays/lesbians should not be given positions of authority because they are still working through their adolescent behavior.
4. The community member expresses that there is something to accept. Characterized by such statements as “You’re not lesbian to me, you’re a person!” or “What you do in bed is your own business.” or “That’s fine with me as long as you don’t flaunt it!”.
 7. There is a lack of clarity regarding the role of the family and of educational institutions in educating towards tolerance and prevention of violence.
 8. Families in the community refrain from taking responsibility for educating their adolescents and preventing delinquency.
 9. Leaders of the community and of educational institutions serve as negative models of behavior through their failure to take responsibility for handling issues of violence.
 10. The leadership prevents reports of verbal and physical violence, and the cases that are reported are not handled in correspondence with their severity.

3.13.6 A Climate of Adolescent Violence

Similar to adult violence, adolescent violence involves the use of physical and psychological power. It usually entails injury to people, but may also be expressed in harm or intended harm to animals, plant life, and objects. Adolescent violence in a community includes offenses such as hitting, torturing peers, extreme verbal expressions, bullying, driving offenses, graffiti, damaging community buildings, sexual offenses, bullying on the internet, as well as burglary and murder. A community climate of adolescent violence is strengthened when:

1. There is a discourse of injury about the dignity of youth and adults in the community and the right of adolescents to protection of their emotional and physical welfare, decent behavior, and privacy.
2. Violence is not considered unacceptable; it even arouses positive feedback.
3. Clear boundaries are not set between what is permitted and forbidden in interpersonal relations, or in personal, social, and status competition.
4. Adolescents lack trust and become suspicious of their peers and other groups.
5. There is a sense of insecurity and lack of protection against acts of violence.
6. Weak adolescents feel unprotected and threatened by other teenagers.

3.14 Applications: Community Climate Supports Community Change

Change of community climate can be employed as a means to support different strategies for community change. For example, a community climate of participation and partnership is required in order to implement a strategy of community development that is based on trust relationships among groups in the community and organizations. Similarly, a community climate of willingness to wage a battle is needed for a strategy of community action or to negotiate in an arena of confrontation; a climate of social enterprise is necessary for practices of community reform to find alternative ways of action and plan innovative new services. In other words, community climate may serve as a foundation for strengthening strategies of community change. In this chapter, based on current knowledge, we provided only one valid example of a community climate scale (community road safety climate). In addition, based on integration of the literature regarding climate and the literature regarding the other proposed climate facets we attempted to identify topics that can help develop future measurement scales. We hope that this will aid researchers and practitioners to build measures and study climate in communities.

3.15 Conclusion

In this chapter, we posited that the conceptualization of community climate contributes to a better understanding of the nature of communities and adds value to the organizational level of analysis. Our review indicated that the community and organizational levels of analysis comprise social environments that provide complementary information about two central social influences in the lives of individuals. In the final section of the chapter, we presented six examples of community climate. As mentioned, the first (road safety climate) is based on previous research. However, the other five examples (participatory climate, political climate, homophobic climate, a climate of education, and youth violence climate) are based on our theoretical and practical knowledge. We suggest that these climates be investigated in detail through further research and practical experience.

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Reading Social Symbol Systems

4

Ben Marsh and Janet Jones

Abstract

Social organizations are symbolic constructions, deriving effectiveness through the creation and expression of shared meaning. Symbol systems contain coherent grammars of meaning that can be read by participants and observers. The construction and alteration of symbol systems is a powerful way in which social units define reality for themselves and others. Contemporary analysis of social symbol systems focuses on the structure of the symbol systems but also on the power relations inherent in the production and consumption of meaning. This chapter explores how socially relevant symbol systems are created and used by group members, and how they may be interpreted by students and researchers. Standard methodologies for reading visual symbols are much less well developed than those for verbal symbols. Case studies highlight the modalities of symbolic presentation (music, cultural performance,

language), contested symbols (e.g., the Confederate flag), the cultural landscape (e.g., architecture and identity), neoliberalism and public symbol systems (e.g., sports stadium naming rights), and the use of symbols to define the boundaries of identity (e.g., Amish separateness).

4.1 Introduction

Social organizations of all scales are symbolic constructions. Communities function effectively through the ways that they enable members to share meaning about themselves as individuals and as community members, and thus share an identity (Hunter 2017). At the most basic, the members of a community express common values and goals. That commonality is created through symbolic communication, the process of constructing meaning for the community.

The ways that communities define themselves symbolically are local instances of wider cultural processes. All of culture is symbolic; the elements of culture convey meaning from the actor to observers and from the actor to themselves. Dress, foodways, language, kinship relations, rituals, and interpersonal behavior are sets of symbols to be interpreted to provide meaning about the cultural actor.

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Symbolic communication and symbol formation should be an important component of our analysis of communities and organizations at two levels. First, the community defines itself through a share symbolic discourse that elaborates the form, purpose, membership boundaries, and the declared strengths and vulnerabilities of the community. Second, social communication is mediated by explicit symbols—visual, behavioral, and verbal forms of various complexities. This is a powerful discourse that is widely underappreciated—perhaps because of its subtlety—within social research.

This chapter seeks to introduce the developing scholar to both of these uses of symbol systems as they support the study of communities and organizations. The particular emphasis is on supporting in observers a facility for interpreting community-relevant symbolism in ways that help them understand how community members themselves read those symbols.

4.2 Community and Meaning

Writing about ‘the social construction of community’ in the 1980s, Cohen forcefully centers the maintenance of community in meaning:

culture – the community as experienced by its members – does not consist in social structure or in ‘the doing’ of social behaviour. It inheres, rather, in ‘the thinking’ about it. It is in this sense that we can speak of the community as a symbolic, rather than a structural, construct. In seeking to understand the phenomenon of community we have to regard its constituent social relations as repositories of meaning for its members, not as a set of mechanical linkages. (Cohen 1985)

We focus here on the discursive aspect of community, the ways in which organizations and associations derive their form from exchange of meanings. The very word ‘community’ carries that reference—it is a first cousin to the verb ‘commune’, to converse intimately. Community formation relies on a wide range of symbols. The symbols are shared within narratives that convey the importance of the community, its origin, its proper form, and its boundaries.

4.3 Being Amish

An example of the uses of symbol construction to manage the boundaries of community, and to strengthen the core of it, is provided by the Amish, one of the most long-lived and well-maintained cultural groups in America. The Amish, and similar Anabaptist groups, have lived in the midst of American culture for about 300 years, maintaining their separateness and their distinct identity in the face of the great hegemonic forces of western capitalist culture. Living though they do in many cases in the near fringes of the eastern US megalopolitan axis, the Amish have maintained the basic religion, family relations, language, and technological simplicity of their medieval ancestors (Kraybill and Olshan 1994).

Amish society exists in a dense web of social symbols that can illustrate the symbolic modalities of community construction, the power of such tools, and the complex ways that societies negotiate ongoing challenges to their coherence through updating and redefining their symbolic environment.

According to Kraybill and Olshan (1994), the Amish construct their separateness—a key attribute of their relationship to the rest of society—through a wide range of symbolic forms. Dress, of course, epitomizes the Amish to the casual observer, and creates a visual distinction, as do language and other cultural features. The resulting differentness is functional to Amish society externally—creating a clear boundary against the larger world—but also internally, as it highlights the similarity of the adherents.

Technological choices—such as avoiding complex and expensive machinery and invasive infrastructure like electricity that would intertwine Amish society with the modern Western economy—are similarly symbolic, bearing a message for both the external observer and the Amish themselves. The buggy defines Amishness for the casual viewer. The seemingly banal advertisements of the commercial interests that are parasitic on Amish society in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere use the buggy as visual

shorthand for the Amish world. But on closer examination the buggy illustrates the intricate nature of symbol systems. First, the choice to eschew cars is linked upward into the cultural superstructure of Amish culture—cars offend Amish values about simplicity, pride, and separateness (Kraybill and Olshan 1994). But buggies are also connected downward to the infrastructure of Amish culture as well: they serve to isolate and protect Amish communities, to increase inter-reliance, and to create more sustainable ecological relations on the farm. Buggies, of course, carry more symbolic freight within the society than is obvious to the casual ‘English’ observer. The long-lived Amish communities of Kishacoquillas Valley in central Pennsylvania identify themselves in four sects according to four different buggy colors (Peachey 1930).

The Amish construct an entire symbolic landscape—or a symbolic overprint onto their parts of the general landscape. The symbolic/technological choice to farm with draft animals creates a visual symbol, like the buggy. It also shapes the lived world of the Amish and their neighbors. Draft horses necessitate smaller farm holdings, which create a much denser settlement pattern, bringing community members closer to each other. And small farms with abundant labor are more profitable than the conventional Eastern US grain and animal farm. More kinds of crops can be produced, with higher return per acre, so the Amish can outbid other farmers for the land in the many areas where the Amish are expanding into new-for-them landscapes.

The landscape-scale result is a coherent pattern of both subtle and overt Amish symbols—a dense collection of rambling houses for big families, a lack of electric wires from the road, single-color laundry drying on a line, buggy and draft horses in the barn yard or visible on the roads, extensive gardens, one-room schools, and of course the presence of the Amish people themselves in the fields and farmsteads.

Amish culture illustrates the general patterns that characterize many symbolically supported cultural forms. It is supported by numerous more or less subtle symbols in a wide range of symbolic forms: dress and grooming, language,

reliance on horses, rigorous observance of the Sabbath, and a powerful work ethic. The most important symbols are culturally coherent—horses are connected to farming, which is connected to family size, etc. The symbols are both large and small, from a cap style to an entire farming landscape. The symbols are to be read—and read differently—by insiders and outsiders. The symbols derive, within the cultural logic of the participants, from deeply held values—separateness and humility, for the Amish. But the symbols finally control fundamental aspects of Amish way of life, aspects as basic as the value of real estate. Symbolic systems are maintained and updated to accommodate legal and economic challenges, but those changes are deeply conservative, acting to hold onto the ways-of-life of the traditional community. And, finally, the symbol system is highly effective—the Amish population is growing rapidly, in the face of the dominance around them of the cultural power of capitalism.

4.4 The Symbol

Symbols are elements of visual, verbal, or behavioral communication that an audience interprets—anything that can be understood to stand for something else. A symbol system can effectively be processed as a text, that is, an array of markers meant to be read in its specific context by an experienced audience (Eco 1976).

Symbolic communication carries meaning in both a more complex way and a more flexible way than literal, descriptive communication does. Jung differentiates the *sign*, as he uses the word, which stands directly for another known thing, from a *symbol*, which is indeterminately complex. A symbol is a way of describing and formulating an object that is not completely knowable (Jung and Hull 2000). Thus the symbol can convey intricate ideas, ideas that connect directly to the emotions of the audience. But the symbol is also always ambiguous, open to reinterpretation by each audience member.

A given set of symbols can convey very different meanings to different audience members

while still expressing the unity of the community. “If symbols had a very exact content, we would not need them.” (Skogen and Krange 2003). Or “Symbols do not so much express meaning as give us the capacity to make meaning.” (Cohen 1985). For this reason social symbols can be flexible and inclusive, enabling community members to agree in their use of symbols even when they may differ on interpreting them.

Symbols are studied in many fields, in many ways. Semiotics is a formalization of the study of symbols based on a quasi-linguistic model (Short 2007). Semiotics can be disaggregated into a useful series of subordinate studies that consider different aspects of the symbol: semantics considers the relation between symbols and their referents, syntactics considers the structural relationships between symbols in their use, and pragmatics considers relationship between signs and sign-users.

4.4.1 Semantics

Symbols must be taken to refer not to objective items in the world, but rather to mental concepts (including concepts about objective items in the world, of course). These concepts are formed in large part from other symbols; tracing the meaning of symbols leads us not to reality but to an illimitable chain of symbol-referent sets. ‘Dog’, the linguistic symbol, guides the hearer not to some flesh-and-fur animal, but to the hearer’s mental conceptions of dogs in their lives and in culture, to abstract concepts about domestication and loyalty, and to the emotional traces of dogs in their pasts. Thus meaning is specific to the array of symbolic experiences of each audience member.

4.4.2 Syntactics

Symbols exist in symbol systems. As well as being connected to other symbols through meaning, symbols also connect to symbols syntactically, within the structure of the system (Leach 1976). In language, syntax is roughly

what is specified by grammar—the arrangements of words that are ‘well formed’ such that the meaning of a word is clarified by its form and its position in an utterance. Operating as texts, symbol sets can exhibit appropriate or inappropriate arrangements. Symbol sets act like sentences in the way that they are inter-interpreted. A well-formed ceremony, like a conventional wedding, presents a specific arc of symbolic events; any significant divergence from that is disturbing or confusing.

4.4.3 Pragmatics

Symbolic texts are not simple repositories of meaning about the world; their use tells much about social structures within which they are produced. They convey the explicit cultural values of the producer, they contain implicit information about the producer, they convey assertions of relative status of the producer and observer, they convey an argument about the position of the producer in a power hierarchy, etc.

4.5 Symbols and Their Social Functions

4.5.1 Types of Symbols

Socially relevant symbols include a wide range of cultural phenomena. Language is symbolic, of course, and is a key method of creating social meaning. Graphic symbols—religious symbols, trademarks, flags, etc.—are powerfully condensed vehicles of complex meaning.

Dress is an infinitely varied symbolic text, bearing specific and rapidly changing meanings for narrow or wide sectors of society. Dress conveys meaning about status, gender identity, class, age or age affinity, ethnicity, etc. Dress offers a ready demonstration of one aspect of the creation of symbols. In many modern communities, young people demonstrate their social standing by being *au courant* in dress and otherwise; this status is automatically ephemeral

because other actors adopt that style, and a new newest style must be created.

Architecture and urban design is a ubiquitous public symbolic system, as it attaches symbolic content to some of the most expensive investments of a corporation, government, or individual. Monuments on the landscape bear highly explicit symbolic messages, but also a constellation of hidden or indirect messages. A wide range of components of the cultural landscape serve to narrate the world of geographic-scale experience, structuring space and place into significant forms. These symbols include architecture and monuments, but also city layout, place names, historic markers, touristic signs and literature, local festivals, parks, the commercial landscape, and public attractions. These elements teach community members and outsiders what is important, who is worthy of attention, and what kinds of events define a given place or a local community. Monuments demonstrate another aspect of the creation of symbols. Being expensive, monuments are produced by government action, or they are endowed by the very wealthy. In either case, monuments tend to further highly conservative aspects of a community, celebrating the values of the powerful.

Ritual and public performance, both formal and informal, are exceedingly powerful symbolic phenomena because the participants present their beliefs in embodied action, in physical behaviors. These behaviors include religious ritual, but also civic ritual (like the involuted set of flag-related behaviors), cultural ritual (the calendar of holiday behaviors—when do we picnic, when to we feast on turkey, when are fireworks expected), and commercialized mass rituals like sports events or concerts. Ritual is highly conservative, linked as it is to the deep memory of body and muscle. Failure to obey ritual expectations can be deeply disturbing to others—not responding correctly to the National Anthem, e.g. Rituals evolve slowly, in grudging response to changing social context (such as the more egalitarian modern marriage ceremony) or widespread cultural changes (the rituals of attending baseball games giving way to the rituals of watching football on television).

Communities and organizations maintain their shared mythos through social symbols, in forms that would be familiar to the ancient Greeks. Communities share founding myths, celebrating the critical events of creation. Communities specify and amplify the heroic characters in their past. Communities increase their own importance by connecting their pasts to bigger histories. Communities identify with totemic identities—the animal representing the high school football team, and the explorer or the generic workman whose character is commemorated in some park or summer festival.

4.5.2 Watching Symbols in Use

Symbols are tools that can serve to summon or create a shared sense of meaning within a community. Language and other symbol systems bind communities through their powerful effects on identity and difference (White 1989). Any careful observer of community functioning should be alert to the ways symbols are being used. A shared symbol set generates group identity. Clearly visible shared symbols—standardized dress, for example—reinforce the commonality of the group members and permit members to recognize one another. Symbols define the boundaries of a group. The reality of a community's boundary—and, in an important sense, of the community itself—is a symbolic construction (Cohen 1985). Symbols construct shared identity, but also construct emphatic difference from non-group members.

Symbolic constructions reinforce appropriate behavior, through role models and morality plays/narratives. Symbols define the roles of individuals within a community. Many cultures are rich with readily identifiable symbols that specify hierarchy or power, like clothing, form of address, the interpersonal positional behaviors of standing or bowing, or symbols of power such as attendants, which reinforce the status of one individual above another.

Symbols should be recognized in their more sinister form as well. Symbol use, like essentially all modern cultural activity, has been refined as a

highly effective way for the powerful to further exercise power within society. The symbolic construction of assent, cooperation, and identity—which underlies all social groups—is now effectively manipulated by commercial, political, and ideological interests to reinforce and expand their wealth or power. The popular media may be the most effective way outside the family for symbolic messages to be created and conveyed (Kellner 2011). Patriotism, for example, is an extraordinary tool for suppression of dissent, control of resources, mustering of labor, etc.; cynical evocations of patriotism for political purposes are a cliché. Herzfeld shows in detail how bureaucracy reinforces itself by symbolic amplification of ideologies of efficiency, service, and safety, as well as patriotism (Herzfeld 1993). Much of the most rapid evolution of national-scale symbolic forms today is driven by self-conscious and self-serving manipulations by agents of the economic or political elite.

All symbol systems are multivocal—meanings of symbols vary between groups and within groups. Group members attain unity by sharing symbols, but also preserve individuality to the extent that the meanings of the symbols are different to different members. As Cohen puts it, “...there is nothing more fatal to social organisation than too precise definition of terms. It is only thanks to this flexibility of symbols that a measure of ordered social life is possible.” (Cohen 1976). A given symbol—the Madonna, for example—can be deeply valued across a group, but interpreted very differently by different actors: women versus men, clergy versus laity, partisans for one or another local manifestation of the Madonna, etc.

Symbols can be highly mutable between groups and across time. Symbols that are affirmative within a group can be used in a pejorative way from outside—e.g., the Star of David is used as a negative marker in racist symbol systems. Conversely, pejorative symbols—‘gay’ and ‘queer’ as slurs—can become assimilated and repurposed by the marginalized group as affirmative markers, as an important step toward self-control of the group’s public identity.

But symbols are also inherently conservative, deriving their meaning through past uses. Symbols tend to reinforce, rather than invent, social facts. Symbol systems evolve, but at a deliberate rate, such that the new meanings are still attainable to older users.

4.6 Forms of Symbolic Presentation

A brief overview of social symbols in their functional contexts can give a sense of the breadth of their application. Any deep observation of the functioning of a community is likely to recognize these forms.

4.6.1 Music

Music is a frequent link to group identity. Musical genres carry powerful clues to group membership—hip hop versus country music versus mariachi, for example (Peterson and Berger 1975). Music is widely used as a component of the construction of community. Music summons immediate emotional connections in people, music is memorable, and music can be powerfully twinned with verbal messages within its lyrics. The ubiquity of anthems as nationalistic symbols reflects these attributes, as does the role of special-purpose music in religion and in community practices like festivals and rites of passage (graduations, weddings, e.g.).

4.6.2 Ritual

Because it embodies group identity through physical activity, especially shared physical activity, ritual is powerful as a social symbol. The power of religious ritual is obvious, either as it involves audience directly or through the proxy of a priest-figure. Civic ritual includes displaying the flag, saluting or pledging to it, voting, decorating veteran’s graves, and rising for the anthem. Formal social groups usually have their own rituals of speech, gesture, or activity.

4.6.3 Performance

More extended and flexible shared symbolic activities provide opportunities for expression of group identity (Alexander 2004). Sports events, which link players and fans into an erstwhile community—and in opposition to the players and fans on the other side—are vivid, stylized, flexible, engaging opportunities for group formation. Music, dress, and ritual (such as local cheers) are central to these mass communities. The symbolic centrality of athletics to high schools and colleges and universities capitalizes on this power. Parades, critical to small-town identities, are sequences of performances—patriotic, musical, expressive, community-centered, child-centered—that bind the performers to each other, and generate powerful connections to the audience. Parades are typically thematic, and linked to a spot on the calendar—patriotic on July Fourth, childhood-affirming on Halloween, sports- and community-oriented for Homecoming, etc. County fairs provide a venue for a wide range of social performances to affirm the character of a rural community.

The performance of government integrates citizens into political groups—political campaigning, inaugurations, protests, local-scale municipal decision-making, etc. Social ceremonies—weddings, funerals, christenings, and shared celebrations of life events like anniversaries and retirements—define super-family groups and reward the skills of effective speakers and social actors.

Food and drink are often irremovable elements of performances (McIntosh 2013). Wedding food, for example, brings into the event a message about social class, about ethnicity, or about the host's style. Street fairs and carnivals imply types of food and drink with strong group meaning, such as ethnic recipes, conventional 'fair food' or event-specific drink choices.

4.6.4 Signs

Literal signs are obvious and widespread bearers of social symbols. Embodied religious

symbols, such as crosses or head coverings, announce group affinities of course. Informal clothing—tee-shirts and caps—often bears explicit signs about group affinities: political affiliation, college choice, sports teams, favored recreation activities. These explicit presentations of identity enable individuals to bond with people with similar interest whom they don't otherwise know. At a slight remove in intimacy, bumper and car window decals can carry huge amounts of personal affective and identity data.

4.6.5 Narratives

People share stories about the world that convey powerful messages about group membership and group identity. The stories come to the group member in written and verbal histories, in ceremonies, in songs, by the names of famous people on buildings and endowments, as well as in literal stories that people share informally with each other and with children. Essentially every group has a creation myth that ties today's group values back to earlier times when values were more inchoate, when emotions were larger, when options were wider (or so we are to believe). Groups share stories of heroism or devotion that clarify the nature of virtuous action. Groups share morality plays about good and bad choices. Groups explain their traditions by linking them back to critical choices made in earlier times.

4.6.6 Language

Sociolinguistics tells us that language form—dialect, accent, level of formality, word choice—is a powerful, and maybe unavoidable, channel to transmit social symbols (Edwards 2009). Shared choices about slang create a unity between individuals. Slang, like music, evolves rapidly to stay new, and thus also carries generational information. Language use tells about class, about place of origin, and about ethnicity of the speaker.

4.6.7 Style

Clothing, hair-styles, slang, make-up, accessories, tattoos, and other voluntary aspects of personal appearance are powerful symbols for identifying and reinforcing group identity. Frequently elements of style like these also differentiate generations within a larger group; because styles change over time, people of different ages are identifiable by the styles they adopted at some critical moment in their social development.

4.7 The Use of Symbol Systems in Social Research

The study of symbols should be an important component of social research about group formation. Symbol use is buried more-or-less deeply in the subconscious for most people, and thus it provides a window into unguarded aspects of people's vision of themselves and their role in the world. Symbols directly access emotional aspects of people's worldviews, making the lessons all the more powerful.

Because the symbols operate at a subconscious level, observers need to learn to look at what is not usually seen. Most novice researchers continue to operate inside the symbol systems, to interpret the symbols immediately, thus they see the meaning rather than the symbols. The closer the community under observation is, culturally, to the observer's own, the harder it is to look not through the symbols but at the symbols themselves.

Analysis of symbols and symbol systems is not presently a well-established community research methodology. Typically studying symbols is an adjunct to a larger research agenda, and not a stand-alone method. As these research techniques become better developed, especially for analysis of non-verbal symbols, the study of symbols can gain more centrality in community research.

There are multiple methods of research can be brought to bear to the study of symbols. The

research can focus on the semantics, the systems of meaning; it can focus on the syntactics, the structure of symbolic texts, or it can focus on the pragmatics, the uses of symbols by different actors and the construction of new functions for symbol systems.

Asking about semantics, about the meanings of individual symbols, is a highly accessible introduction to social symbolic communication for the student. The task involves recognizing the symbolic aspects of an organization's identity, and looking for the immediate referents of the symbols. Different types of symbols need to be interpreted differently. Visual symbols—signs, costume, much of the cultural landscape—present unfamiliar challenges to most researchers. Methods for analysis of visual images are poorly developed in social sciences overall with the visual frequently treated as subordinate to the verbal. Language and visual communication both access the more-fundamental and far-reaching systems of meaning that constitute our cultures, but each does so by means of its own specific forms, and independently (Kress and Van Leeuwen 1996).

Studying the syntax of symbolic communication should lead to a close reading of series of symbols as a text—linking the components of a public performance like a parade or a sports game, or identifying the requisite structural elements of a memorial. The symbol system is like a sentence, and the meaning of the parts is dependent on their positions in the 'utterance'. Some sequences will be recognized as well-formed, while others are not. An analysis of narrative as a symbol system brings the student immediately to the syntactical components of it.

The pragmatics of social symbol systems draw the observer to a consideration of the roles that symbols serve in social discourse. This is a high-level analysis, requiring the interpreter to consider the social, ideological, or political purposes of the symbols, and the role of symbol systems in structuring social systems, especially through the cues in which group members use what symbols.

4.8 Case Studies

We provide here a series of instances of symbol formation acting to define or structure the operation of a social group, as examples of ways to use symbols to understand community development.

4.8.1 Policing the Boundaries of Group Identity

The existence of a community implies both a similarity of interest with those within it, and a difference from those outside of it. Boundary is a crucial element of social construction, and symbol systems are highly effective in specifying and embellishing boundaries, that is, in delimiting the inside from the outside of a social group (Lamont 1992).

Groups may be most vigorous in defining community's boundaries where they perceive an existential threat, as from assimilation. Orthodox Jews, like the Amish, indicate their differences from outsiders with spatial, behavioral, linguistic, and costume markers. Cultural groups with wide spatial extent show the most pronounced expression of cultural symbolism at the edges of their cultural regions where they may be in greatest risk of submerging into adjacent cultural groups. Meinig observed this phenomenon while evaluating the expression of Mormon identity, which he found to be greatest at the periphery of the culture region in the Intermontane West (Meinig 1965).

Ethnicity represents a potential differentness whose strength and specific manifestation change over time and by cultural circumstances (Nagel 1994). Explicit symbolic markers of ethnicity or racial identity are developed most rapidly in times of de-stabilizing change. The tensions of the nascent national civil rights movement in the 1960s corresponded with a development or elaboration of a Black identity manifested by adoption of strongly symbolic forms of dress, embodied aesthetics, and language.

Symmetrically, the perceived erosion of White privilege subsequent to the 2009 economic downturn, and the national expansion of the minority political voice during the Obama administration, created stresses on traditionally dominant White, patriarchal, Christian populations, which rapidly constructed or adopted a narrative of oppression against Christians and Whites and a strongly held belief in the illegitimacy of the authority of Black and female officials. This symbolic presentation of an unfair world for White Christians generates a powerful 'us-versus-them' construction of an embattled community—here, of the majority community.

Relatively casual voluntary associations are a significant fraction of the identities that many modern Americans express (Gamm and Putnam 1999). People identify with spatially ill-defined assemblies of people with, perhaps, a narrow commonality: Harley-riders, Civil War re-enactors, Grateful Dead fans, Great Dane fanciers, etc. Often simple literal symbols—bumper stickers—suffice to assert membership; because the stakes of membership are low, the boundaries of these groups need not be policed carefully. Occupational groups—fire-fighters, veterans—work from a stronger sense of group pride, and the boundaries are more carefully specified, by formal identification through official organizations, for example.

Colleges and universities invest enormous resources in generating a sense of belonging by the students and former students to the collegiate community. This symbolic construction (manufacturing?) of community is closely linked to the big business of alumni fundraising, of course. The endeavor draws upon extensive historic and modern bodies of practice in the business: one should foster class-year identity; use varsity sports to specify an inside and an outside; liberally use visual symbols like banners, mascots, or images of campus architecture; speak only of affirmative characteristics of the group; and construct a careful language of inclusion. The details of this kind of community creation are well known to most students.

4.8.2 Defining ‘Other’: Symbolic Formulation of Difference

The process of defining ‘outside’ a community boundary is not symmetrical to defining inside (Bail 2008). While inside may be based on an amorphous cloud of attributes, outside can be defined with great emphasis and clarity; usually outside can be well defined by negative characteristics. English is rich with negative terms for outsiders: heathen, alien, barbarian, infidel, and pariah. Mainstream American society has consistently constructed symbolic categories of outsider status for many groups based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, education level, regional identity, etc.

Nativism and appeals to racism are venerable themes in American politics. Both operate by using a fear of ‘other’ to generate a nominal shared interest with the demagogue. The negative attributes ascribed to the outsiders vary over the years—a propensity to crime, taking our jobs, supporting terrorism, using tax-supported services, overwhelming the Christian culture—but the formula is consistent and effective.

Fear is a potent incentive for establishing boundaries. A recent newspaper story about the use of fear of violent aggressors to sell guns describes a salesman’s strategy like this: “He calls the approach ‘tribal marketing.’ It’s based on generating revenue by emphasizing the boundaries of a community. ‘We all have the NEED TO BELONG,’ he wrote in a presentation entitled ‘How to Turn One of Mankind’s Deepest Needs Into Cold, Hard CASH.’ In a section called ‘How Do You Create Belief & Belonging?,’ he explained, ‘You can’t have a yin without a yang. Must have an enemy.’” (Osnos 2016).

‘Framing’ is the term used for the set of ways that actors socially construct their positions and the positions of their opponents (Benford and Snow 2000). The negative symbolic weight put upon the definition of outsiders in a political discourse is part of a framing process, for example. A pair of organizations with opposing goals can easily come into being, with broadly symmetrical perspectives—the ‘fors’ and the ‘against’. But the language used by the two

groups to define themselves—the symbolic construction of their positions—will not be symmetrical. Each group names itself in an affirmative way, and thus the two names aren’t symmetrical. Abortion rights supporters, for example, select from a range of terms for themselves emphasizing the affirmative aspects of their position—most commonly ‘pro-choice’. The opposite position is not, of course, self-identified as anti-choice, but rather ‘pro-life’—suggesting in turn that their opponents may be ‘pro-death’. A wide range of loaded symbolism is used by both sides in this debate. The term ‘women’s rights’ connects one side to the venerable liberal history of the Enlightenment—the Rights of Man, human rights, the Bill of Rights. The anti-abortion position foregrounds emotionally powerful allusions to the potential human life involved, calling a fetus a ‘pre-born child’ or an ‘unborn baby’, “Both the New York Times and the Washington Post advise staff to avoid the terms ‘pro-choice,’ ‘pro-life’ and ‘right-to-life’ because those terms are coined by advocates in the abortion controversy and should be viewed as loaded terms ... The Times uses ‘abortion rights advocate’ or ‘anti-abortion.’” (Shepard 2010).

A community can inoculate its members from contrary arguments if it can construct the other group, the outside, to be beyond the bounds of legitimate discourse. If parties to one side of a policy debate are convinced that the other side is venal or dishonest, then that other side is robbed of its capacity to influence the first. If climate scientists can be seen as only being motivated by getting more research grants, then their arguments can be dismissed without engagement (Hoffman 2015). A wholesale version of this inoculation is produced by the recurrent assertion of a ‘mainstream media liberal bias’. This argument, as made by conservative advocates, is that most media outlets bear an inherent liberal bias, and are therefore untrustworthy. Thus access to ‘facts’ is limited by the form of the discourse itself. Ironically, the opposite framing, that the media are mostly owned by large corporations, is used by liberal advocates toward a similar end.

4.8.3 Confirmation Bias

The remarkable capacity of doomsday cults to overlook the obvious failures of predictions by their leaders, and perhaps then to accept the next prediction, gives a clue to the powerful mental processes that reinforce group constructions of reality. It is clear that the emotional needs of the members of such a group to believe in its goals are affecting the rational processes that might otherwise lead them to conclude that the predictions failed (Festinger et al. 2008). This process is variously described as cognitive dissonance reduction, motivated reasoning, or inferred justification (Lodge and Taber 2000).

But this effect is at work in essentially every group; all group members are prone to rationalizing away evidence that challenges the foundational principles of the group. Members of groups that are active within policy debates about emotionally freighted issues like gun control, gay rights, global warming, immigration, abortion, or economic equity will have a diminished capacity to rationally process information that challenges the groups' positions. Symbols operate at an equivalent emotional level, and have the same enormous power to resist rational evaluation.

4.8.4 Contested Symbols

Symbols are linked only to elements of other symbol systems, not to some underlying reality, so symbols do not have fixed meanings. A given symbol can connect to significantly different referents for different groups. Many powerful symbols carry meanings with diametric valences for different groups. In some cases, the meanings are central to the identity of two groups, yet the meanings are thoroughly incompatible.

The Confederate Battle Flag is used as a central identity marker for numerous communities connected to traditional White Southern

culture (Apfelbaum 2015). The flag has meanings associated with personal valor of Confederate soldiers, sense of place for White Southerners, historic associations with ancestors, and the pervasive glorification of the Confederate cause within the commemorative landscape of essentially every Southern town. Dozens of organizations have used the flag as an identity marker—such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy, for many years—and it is incorporated into the state flag of Alabama.

On the other hand, the origin of that flag is irreducibly linked to the political and military defense of American slavery. The flag is therefore deeply offensive to many descendants of enslaved Blacks, and its pervasiveness on the public sphere has been a powerful affront. (The state of Alabama erected a historical marker in Montgomery, AL, in 1983, describing the life the civil rights hero Rosa Parks. Because it was a state historical marker was topped with the symbol of the Confederate flag.)

The example of the Confederate flag shows both the mutability of symbols—'heritage not hate' was the pro-flag groups' explanation of why this symbol was acceptable—and also the linkage of socially significant symbol systems to political power. State governments invested their political capital into maintaining the centrality of these signs that were widely decried as racist. These actions sent a powerful signal to the entire political landscape that Black concerns about the racial discourse were less important than White attachments to Confederate symbology. While state support for the display of the Confederate flag is in decline as the importance of that same symbol to overt and violent racists becomes more widely appreciated, a parallel controversy is now playing out about the centrality of monuments and other commemorations to Confederate generals, symbols that are more ambiguous about their racist meaning.

Almost a reverse case of the Confederate flag controversy is presented by the widespread use of trivializing and culturally mis-appropriated Native

American imagery, usually as sports team mascots (King 2010). In this case, the marginalized community opposes the use of symbols which nominally refer to themselves but do so in demeaning and decontextualized ways. The name and branding of the Washington Redskins football team is the most widely discussed of these, but hundreds of high school and college teams have their own versions of insensitive representations of Indians as their mascots. Presumably most of these uses of Indians as symbols were seen as affirmative when the organizations chose them—after all, these symbols are essentially totems, from which the group had thought to draw symbolic strength—but they were adopted with little concern for the subjects’ perspectives on this. The current discourse frequently pivots on the legitimacy of the Indians’ objections. The relatively small number of Indians in most communities decreases their voice, and a debate over who can speak for the entire population of Indians diluted the impact of objections.

A political discursive tool that can be deployed effectively to mute opposition in situations like this is the ‘political correctness’ ploy—the assertion that certain objections to demeaning statements and symbols are simply ‘political correctness gone awry’, that these are meaningless or trivial slights whose importance is exaggerated by over-sensitive people. The ‘political correctness’ framing is an effective wholesale way to denigrate the concerns of minorities by denying their significance.

4.8.5 Cultural Landscape: The Spatial Structuring of Community

The cultural landscape is the world that humans have constructed for their lives. This landscape includes the literal construction of cities, highways, fields, and mines, but also the symbolic construction of meaning into the landscape (Marsh 2013; Hunter 1987). Communities use

the structure of the landscape as a tool to define and elaborate their identities, to connect the place to one particular set of residents, and to differentiate potential members of the community (Cosgrove and Daniels 1988).

A city, as a place, is the product of a long sequence of symbolic actions by innumerable actors. Place is a physical manifestation of collective memory (Hayden 1997). Memories get separated from the landscape by action or inaction, so a city is also a place of forgetting. Meanings are removed or edited, by construction and destruction, or by renaming and repurposing. Any urban planner or other preservationist chooses to preserve one past, and thus to remove the others (Marsh and Jones 2011). A nation can define or redefine itself by selectively erasing or foregrounding significant landscapes. In Turkey, the early 20th c. leader Kemal Ataturk moved the modern nation away from its Ottoman past, which he felt to be pre-modern and constraining, by shifting the capital from Istanbul to rural Ankara in 1923; In the 2010s, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan reversed that modernizing movement by remaking the landscape of Istanbul into a visually simplified and modernized glorification of the Ottoman Empire.

Spatially specific communities define themselves by specifying their boundaries. Cultural landscapes often map community boundaries as literal boundaries, to define social communities through use of space. Boundaries are often functional, in limiting access to a community’s resources, or disenfranchising ‘other’ people (Marsh et al. 2010). Tools for exclusion include literal boundaries, or well-placed impediments like wide highways. But boundaries are important symbolically as well. Communities shape their edges carefully to clarify inside from outside, with gates or portals, signage, and other landscape treatment (Clay 1980). The effect is to create a turf, a protected space, that is recognizably distinct, a place where outsiders should be clear about that status. Urban gangs mark their spaces with graffiti toward the same end.

Landscape symbols are used to define ‘place’ in numerous ways, to create an insider’s identity for a community (Hague and Jenkins 2005). Simple style decisions—signage, pendants, street lights, and even architectural design standards—create a visual ‘inside’. Every geographical community has a non-physical symbolic identity, as well, which is built up from innumerable messages, signs, and narratives on the land. Recurrent festivals, street fairs, and parades are powerful symbol systems, containing implicit and explicit messages about community character. What personages, occupations, values, or heroes do we celebrate? Is it logging? Religion? Patriotism? Sports? Education? These performances are powerfully participatory, with young and old re-enacting the rituals of shared meaning carried in parades, speeches, games, or wreath-laying.

Such events are mapped onto the landscape, spatializing the belief system. What specific places are memorable, are patriotic, are imbued with community identity? Whose graves do we visit, or what monument or park defines the town? What places are central to the origin myths of the community? Is it the waterfront? The first settler’s house? The civil war memorial? The sports hero’s grave? The football stadium? One can read the towns ‘autogeography’ from the signs on the streets, from the arrangement of monuments, from the pictures used to illustrate civic literature, and from the paths that parades follow.

Communities ceaselessly narrate the landscape that they occupy through the numerous symbols that are attached to parts of the landscape. These markers are ubiquitous and well understood at a subconscious level, but we rarely attend to them as an explicit symbol system. Street names delimit a symbolic mapping of a town: What do (or did) we find notable? Is it the market, the river, the tree types, the famous people? Historic markers tell the stories that the community wants to be remembered by, as do tourist brochures, parks, annual house tours, web sites, and other public narrations. A good story is worth a lot; veracity is also useful when convenient.

Monuments and markers, big and little, connect the present to the past within a community

(Doss 2010). What has been considered to be of note? Soldiers? Capitalists? Architecture? Natural features? And what has been ignored? The pre-European occupants? A tragic fire? Are the monuments only about men? Are non-dominant cultures acknowledged in the monumental narrative? Is nature a subject—the story itself—or is it an object, of note because of our dominance or exploitation of it?

Monuments need to be read carefully. They are emphatic and highly public texts; often the explicit meaning is clear, literally written in stone on the plinth. But the subtexts are as important. Monuments should be seen, for example, as celebrations of their creators as much as of the nominal subject. Monuments are meant to reflect on the civility or patriotism or progressiveness of the patron who paid real money for the construction—although that personal purpose of the investment isn’t inscribed as clearly as the surface purpose. The dates of monuments are an important observation; the commemorated event is often a marker for a current controversy at the time of erection. A rush of Civil War memorials was erected in the early 20th century, functioning as pro-militarist arguments in the debate about the wisdom of US involvement in the Spanish-American War (Loewen 1999).

The hardest part of the monumental landscape to read is the missing part—what is not being commemorated? Catastrophes—floods and fires—are rarely given the note that they deserve, considering their effect on the shape of communities. The rich and powerful choose what is remembered on the landscape and what is forgotten. (See for example, Khalili’s mapping of ‘absent memorials’ in Lebanon (Khalili 2005).) The lives of significant earlier community actors with weak or absent voices are under-represented: Indians, enslaved workers, immigrant workers. The mansion district is well-narrated with historic markers, but not the tenement district.

Town landscapes are shaped by community values, and they shape those values as well, but the longevity of the built environment can make this exchange hard to read; the messages in the landscape may be decades old (Lewis 1979). The temporal continuity of the landscape permits

the observer to read obscured messages about changing values. For example, by discerning the landscape chronology from architectural styles, or by reading the erection dates off cemetery markers, observers can recognize certain historic value changes in a community. In Pennsylvania, both housing and grave markers emphasized similarity and community into the mid-19th century—most houses were the same vernacular styles, and cemetery markers drew symbols from a small vocabulary of religious or repurposed classical themes on fairly uniformly sized stones. These landscape features served as notations the ways that people sought to fit into their community. Abruptly in the 1870s and 1880s, houses and grave markers became highly differentiated by size and stylishness, noting how some people were wealthier or more urbane than the rest of the community. Class became clearly expressed on the land at this moment when industrial wealth created large income disparities. In the mid-to-late 20th century another transition happened, as the vocabulary became unstandardized, and houses and grave markers both became more idiosyncratic expressions of the personality of the relevant person—grave stones began to tell the individual stories of the deceased—their car, their hobbies, their home. This moment matched a time of increased valuation of individual self-expression within American culture (Marsh and Jones 2007).

4.8.6 Public Symbol Systems as an Exercise of Power

Because of the effectiveness of symbol systems as methods to generate or define identity, symbol systems have become tools of social manipulation and control. The clearest example of this phenomenon is the broad suite of symbol systems created to support the legitimacy, and therefore the authority, of the state. ‘Patriotism’ describes a long list of symbols that integrate citizens into a system of political support for the state—the flag and the flag-associated rituals, overt veneration of soldiers and veterans, symbolic construction of past politicians as heroic

folk, the forest of patriotic and militaristic monuments in many cities, as well as the narratives of creation (Valley Forge), threat (Pearl Harbor), and salvation (D-Day) that citizens learn and that are commemorated on the land and on the civil calendar. These symbols creep into the exercise of many nominally non-patriotic organizations, like schools, some churches, and civic clubs, as well as minor civil government (Loveman 2005). This symbolic engagement of power by the state is important to legitimating a wide range of more mundane civic activities like taxation, bureaucracy (Herzfeld 1993), police use of force, and other coercive activities. Capital cities show how entire urban landscapes can bear intricate symbolic, verbal, and numerological structures supporting the political ideologies of their creators, like Imperial Rome or Washington, DC (Cosgrove 1989).

The power of capital appropriates symbolic construction of communities within its exercise of expansion and self-preservation, to the detriment of public use of public space (Sorkin 1992). A private company recently registered “Yosemite National Park” as its own trademark. (Fuller 2015). Professional sports franchises succeed when they can effectively create synthetic communities within the larger identity of American cities, communities that are based on artificial symbols system about place attachment, relying on shared attachments to team identity or personalities, and using specific physical symbols like mascots, trademarked images, and color schemes. Sports teams privatize place identity by intimately linking city names to their product. The animosity and betrayal that is generated when team abandon cities for richer markets can last for decades, a sign of the strength of the emotional attachment that had been created.

Personal identity in the neoliberal world can be connected to wealth as much as to place or traditional community. Many important symbolic markers of community today create identity through a shared appreciation for expensive commodities and brands, wealthy vacation sites, prestige educational institutions, or recreation activities. Wealth permits people to privatize what might otherwise be public spaces, creating

their own simulacra of civic communities. Parts of towns are gated, creating communities defined by income and separated from the rest of society by privatization of normally public services—roads, police, zoning, schools, etc.

Tourism is recognized as a complex interaction between identity, consumption, and cultural appropriation, relying deeply on symbolic construction of (other) societies. Modern Western tourism creates a marker of prestige for the tourist, who often values most highly the tourist experience that breaks down most thoroughly the cultural barriers around the touristic subjects (MacCannell 1976). The tourist buys close access to another's community, compromising the community's integrity in the process. Tourism can be seen as a way to consume the identity of the subjects, by appropriating the distinctiveness of their cultural symbols into a commodity for the tourist to control on-site and then to take home via artifacts and pictures, in exchange for the tourists' money.

4.8.7 Constructing New Systems

Symbols are constructed or reconstructed at a significant rate. Because the meaning of the symbol is itself symbolic, the reality of a symbol is nominal, readily subject to inflation, deflation, or outright creation. Communities frequently create a convenient past that may be more acceptable than the factual past. As a form of forgetting or misremembering, the unpleasant aspects of the past—slavery, violence, criminality, environmental disaster—are polished away. The heroic is foregrounded or expanded. A passing interaction with fame, for example, becomes a meaningful relationship—the ubiquitous and disbelieved “Washington slept here” is a humorous trope referring to this construction of an elevated history. Historic periods are given harmonious modern names: ‘Victorian’ stands in for 19th century industrial, isolated becomes ‘bucolic’, etc. The human capacity to interpret

symbols permits playful and fluid attachments of meaning to social symbols. Every form of a symbol permits its opposite, or an ironic or sardonic version of that symbol.

4.9 Summary

Group identities are products of the shared and contrasting symbols that we use in constructing our social world. Community is a product of symbolic transactions with those in our own groups, and against those in diverse groups. Symbols are essential to the creation and maintenance of social units, by creating commonality, or by emphasizing separation.

Symbols come to us in systems—in structured text-like forms, and in coherent narratives and ceremonies. The systems are webs of meaning—the meaning of one symbol is contingent on the meanings of others. Systems are rhetorical, permitting symbols to be combined in some ways but not others—demonstrating nuance of gender, formality, activity type. Systems are functional, causing related symbols to work toward particular purposes, and for particular classes of people.

Symbol systems are structurally conservative in that they must maintain meaning to be comprehensible. They are operationally conservative as well, because they generally work to maintain group identities. They are often politically conservative, in the way that the expression of symbol systems is controlled by the most powerful members of societies—patriarchs, corporations, governments—to ensure their continual dominance.

But symbols are also flexible because symbols may be interpreted anew by each member of society individually, so symbols can be tools for insubordination and sabotage.

The operation of symbols is frequently obscure to the casual observer in actual use, but a readable discourse lies near the surface within all symbol systems. Some tools for effective analysis of symbols are still being developed, but to a

careful observer, symbols provide access to deep and critical elements of social structure.

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Community Elites or Community Elitism? the Democratic Challenge of Empowering Community

5

Stephen Danley

Abstract

This chapter links a historical literature on community elites to a modern debate about the nature of governance, the movement towards networks, and the implications of these changes for communities. The chapter looks at community elites through the lens of two critical questions: (1) Does empowering community elites at the local scale lead to more democratic governance? (2) Does empowering community elites at the local scale lead to justice or empower those prone to Not-In-My-Backyard (NIMBY) policies? In addressing these questions, the chapter draws from an interdisciplinary literature base including writing on new governance, community elites, and the Right to the City, and provides illustrations from cases in New Orleans, LA.

5.1 Introduction

As Abzug¹ writes, the study of community elites is largely outdated. This is particularly troubling as community elites have rarely been a more important tool for understanding the world around us. This chapter argues that now is a critical time for studying community elites, but that to make that study applicable across a wide variety of disciplines grappling with concepts of community, the concept of community elite needs to be reconceptualized. This chapter (1) lays out the ways in which the previous study of community elites reached a dead end, (2) introduces a diverse array of theoretical traditions that are grappling with community/participation and are in need of a reinvigorated study of community elites, (3) redefines community elites and uses examples from post-Katrina New Orleans to demonstrate the importance and complexity of this redefinition and (4) it shows the promise of this new study of community to consider the critical question of the intersection of community elites and social justice.

The early definition of community elites as who holds power in communities—typically urban communities—has evolved over time.

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¹Abzug, R. (2007). Community elites and power structure. In R.A. Cnaan & C. Milofsky (Eds.), *Handbook of community movements and local organizations* (pp. 89–101) Springer Science & Business Media.

Early giants such as Hunter² and Dahl³ debated the role of economic elites, a debate that drifted from a discussion of urban elites to a discussion of those who hold national influence.⁴ Gradually academics have moved away from the language of “community elites”. The demise of a thriving debate about the role of community elites is unfortunate, as community participation in governance, the role of community in participation more broadly, and the understanding of ways in which communities can contribute to efficient government have become more visible over recent decades. A host of disciplines are wrestling with key questions about the role of communities and their elites. In economics, the *Wisdom of Crowds*⁵ shows how aggregated community perspectives can lead to more accurate predictions. Prediction markets are now a regular part of political analysis and used to understand the impact of everything from political debates to the likelihood of a recession. In political philosophy, deliberative democracy⁶ focuses on the ability of everyday community members to come together and influence policy. Within public administration and public policy, a European discourse on network governance⁷ focuses on what happens when governance expands to include nongovernmental actors in negotiations about how municipalities should function. In many ways, these discourses are wrestling with an evolved “community elites” discussion—no longer one focused on who has power, but on the consequences of a networked world that requires participation from communities. In particular, these approaches to

understanding governance and democracy struggle with the potential corrupting influence of elites who have the power and potential to manipulate the types of open systems that encourage community participation. This chapter seeks to link the historic literature on community elites to these new conflicts—in particular, looking at urban issues such as the tendency towards Not-In-My-Backyard (NIMBY) activism and the inherent democratic contradiction of involving community. Community participation may perpetuate a form of elitism rather than have the intended democratic effect. This chapter redefines community elites from those with power, to those who represent their communities. In doing so, it enables a shift from the community elites literature’s origin question—who has power?—to a related question—how do community elites impact justice?

5.2 The (Now Defunct) Study of Community Elites

The study of community elites has traditionally been tied to the study of cities. Early giants in the field, such as Robert Dahl, focused on local cities. Hunter⁸ focuses on Atlanta, Georgia (though the study was published without identifying the city). Dahl⁹ writes about New Haven, Connecticut. And Baltzell¹⁰ writes about Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This chapter follows in this tradition by examining the case of post-Katrina New Orleans, Louisiana. These studies present competing views and theories about elites within communities. Hunter¹¹ identifies economic elites, focusing on the financial and industrial executives. Dahl¹² counters with an account that places politicians at the center of a pluralist decision-making structure. Running parallel to these notions of elites is Baltzell’s¹³

²Hunter, F. (1969). *Community power structure: A study of decision makers* University of North Carolina Press.

³Dahl, R. A. (1961). *Who governs? Democracy and power in an american city* Yale University Press.

⁴Baltzell, E. D. (1958). *An American business aristocracy* Collier Books.

⁵Surowiecki, J. (2005). *The wisdom of crowds* Anchor.

⁶Gutmann, A., & Thompson, D. (2002). Deliberative democracy beyond process. *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 10(2), 153–174.

⁷Sorensen, E., & Torfing, J. (2005). The democratic anchorage of governance networks. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 28(3), 195.

⁸Hunter (1953).

⁹Dahl (1961).

¹⁰Baltzell (1958).

¹¹Hunter (1953).

¹²Dahl (1961).

¹³Baltzell (1958).

focus on class. In Baltzell's *Philadelphia Gentlemen: The Making of a National Upper Class*, Baltzell¹⁴ redefines community elites not as those who have power, but as those "individuals who are the most successful and stand at the top of the *functional* class hierarchy".

Baltzell's title, with its focus on the national upper class, marks the start of a shift away from the question of who has the power to enact changes within a community, to one of who from a particular community has power that extends beyond community boundaries. This discussion naturally blended into a wider discussion of what entities have power—moving beyond individuals to networks¹⁵ and then to corporations and corporate elites.¹⁶ The study of community elites moved from those with power in a community, to those in a community with power, eventually simply to those with power or entities with power. Left behind were the conceptions of community in which the original idea was grounded. To make matters more confusing, Lyon and Driskell¹⁷ argue that the definition of community in these studies is constantly shifting from urban neighborhoods,¹⁸ large corporations,¹⁹ the scientific community²⁰ and beyond.

The goal of this chapter is to reorient and regroup the study of "community elites" firmly within the study of communities and community organizations, and in doing so to change the frame away from "who has power?" to one which asks what happens when representatives from a community have more power in local

governance. In doing so, the community elites discussion is made relevant to a thriving debate about the ways local governance is changing to incorporate participation. Shifting the conversation away from an inquiry of "who" to an inquiry of "what impact" connects the discussion about community elites to a wider discussion about justice. How does involving community elites in governing processes further or undermine justice? Asking such a question requires a new definition of community elites, and a clear definition of the types and traditions of justice.

5.3 A New Orleans Illustration: The Limits of Asking "Who Has Power?"

The community elite literature, as examined above, is best understood as an evolution of who is important to communities (and later, who is important *in* communities). Scholars debated the role of economic elites, political elites, corporate elites and other elites within a community. In a way, this approach to addressing community elites is counterintuitive in that it is disconnected from the other ways community is discussed. It is divorced from the idea that community input is a necessary and beneficial component of governance, an idea that has become so doctrinaire that nostalgia for community is common. In other words, in the study of "community elites" the community represented little more than a location for said elites, not an explanation of the type of work and representation these elites conducted. This section uses New Orleans to show how the traditional study of community elites—asking "who has power"—misses key aspects of the community story.

By focusing on the power of "elites" while minimizing the role of "community" an entire line of inquiry is missed. The New Orleans example can provide a face for the limits of such an approach. On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans. The city's flood protection system, the responsibility of the United States Corps of Engineers, failed, resulting in

¹⁴Baltzell (1958, p. 6).

¹⁵Perrucci, R., & Pilisuk, M. (1970). Leaders and ruling elites: The interorganizational bases of community power. *American Sociological Review*, 1040–1057.

¹⁶Useem, M. (1984). *The inner circle: Large corporations and the rise of business political activity in the US and UK* Oxford University Press.

¹⁷Lyon, L., & Driskell, R. (2011). *The community in urban society* Waveland Press.

¹⁸Suttles, G. D. (1972). *The social construction of communities* University of Chicago Press.

¹⁹Minar, D. W., & Greer, S. A. (1969). *The concept of community: Readings with interpretations* Transaction Publishers.

²⁰Kuhn, T. S. (2012). *The structure of scientific revolutions* University of Chicago press.

\$60 billion in damages.²¹ Much has been made of the racial and economic disparities uncovered by the storm, and the ways in which recovery efforts and policies were discriminatory.²² Vicious rumors spread about a group of business elites attempting to ensure the city would return with fewer poor people. Local businessman James Reis became a public advocate of this plan, arguing that “those who want to see this city rebuilt want to see it done in a completely different way: demographically, geographically and politically” and that elites “would leave the city unless New Orleans improved its services and reduced the number of poor people”.²³ That these comments were seen through a racial lens is of little surprise given the economic and racial disparities historically present in the city, and laid bare by pictures and video from the storm. The mayor, under intense pressure after meeting with business leaders in Houston who were suspected of advocating for a richer, whiter New Orleans, gave his famous “chocolate city” speech in which he proclaimed:

We, as black people, it’s time. It’s time for us to come together. It’s time for us to rebuild a New Orleans—then that should be a chocolate New Orleans. And I don’t care what people are saying uptown or wherever they are, this city will be chocolate at the end of the day. This city will be a majority African American city. It’s the way God wants it to be.

In the traditional study of community elites, this is the limits of the inquiry. The conflict would be defined by two traditionally powerful entities clashing over the future of the city and that conflict would be framed as one between economic elites and political elites. Barry’s²⁴ *Rising Tide* tells a similar story, explaining how economic elites gathered in 1927, forcing the mayor to blow

the levees north of New Orleans to protect businesses from potentially catastrophic flooding. In 1927, this is where the story ended—community interests were unable to counter economic interests and residents the largely black residents of St. Bernard’s Parish were forced to bear the economic brunt of the decision to blow up the levees. The story of post-Katrina New Orleans was different. Gratz’s²⁵ book about post-Katrina was titled *We’re Still Here Ya Bastards*, and it speaks to resilience and community impact. In this account, individuals emerge as heroes to represent their city in a time of need. Throughout New Orleans after the storm, stories of neighborhood leaders helping rebuild their communities, rising to political influence, and building local neighborhood associations became a key component of understand the city’s recovery. But, if the study of community elites focuses solely on “who has power”, it misses these critical aspects of community involvement and community leaders.

5.4 Putting the “Community” Back into “Community Elites”

This section addresses the key failure of the community elite literature—that its focus on power ultimately leads away from a study of community—by redefining community elites as those who represent communities through participatory mechanisms.

Box and Musso²⁶ and Chaskin and Garg²⁷ echo Gratz’s understanding of community resilience. For them, local participation in governance is critical because the incorporation of local knowledge into decision-making can make

²¹Birkland, T. A. (2006). *Lessons of disaster: Policy change after catastrophic events*. Washington, D.C.: Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

²²Ishiwata, E. (2011). ‘We are seeing people we didn’t know exist’ Katrina and the Neoliberal Erasure of Race. In C. Johnson *The Neoliberal Deluge. Hurricane Katrina, Late Capitalism and the Remaking of New Orleans*.

²³Gratz, R. B. (2015). *We’re still here ya bastards: How the people of new orleans rebuilt their city* Nation Books.

²⁴Barry, J. M. (1997). *Rising tide: The great Mississippi flood of 1927 and how it changed America* Simon and Schuster.

²⁵Gratz (2015).

²⁶Box, R. C., & Musso, J. A. (2004). Experiments with local federalism. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 34(3), 259–276.

²⁷Chaskin, R. J., & Garg, S. (1997). The issue of governance in neighborhood-based initiatives. *Urban Affairs Review*, 32(5), 631–661.

for more optimal decisions. Tiebout²⁸ makes a similar case for local involvement in government because of its potential to create a market across localities where residents choose their optimal level of service. Berger and Neuhaus²⁹ and Boyte and Chatten³⁰ argue that technocratic government bureaucracy needs mediating institutions emanating from community. From participatory budgeting to public comment at planning boards, local voices are seen as critical to governance. This view has become so pervasive that Gibson and Cameron argue,³¹ “Community has become a cult, an object of warm-and-fuzzy ritual worship for politicians of all stripes, academics and the rapidly expanding new class of social commentators. Nobody can get enough of the c-word.” The study of community elites is startling in contrast with these narratives about the benefits of community participation, because community elite discussion gives little weight to the concept of community power. Without considering the influence of community participation in local governance, the community elites discussion rings hollow. It is just a discussion of power in a particular place (or the powerful in that place). Shifting the discussion away from the types of people who have power, to the types of people who represent their communities in these participatory processes allows for a discussion that incorporates communities as actors in a wider governing system. Of course, there is overlap here; those who choose to be community leaders often are economic elites, corporate elites, or from what Baltzell³² argues is the national upper class of well-educated and powerful elites. Redefining community elites as

leaders of communities also opens up new debates. Beyond testing communities for who has power, the study of the way in which individuals rise up to represent their communities allows for study about the impact of their advocacy, the comparative impact upon competing communities, and the ways in which vulnerable populations are served (or not served) by such systems. In short, the conversation can shift from who has power to what it means when power resides with community leaders. For the literature and study of community elites to again connect to modern and current debates around local governance, the definition of community elites needs to shift from one based upon classes of individuals who have power in communities to one about leaders who represent their community through participatory mechanisms.

5.5 Theoretical Traditions Already Grappling with This Definition

By adopting such a shift in definition, the community elite literature becomes linked to current debates across fields of study about the impact of including community in governance. From economics to urban studies, public administration to political philosophy, scholars are wrestling with the role of community in governing. Each of these discussions begins with what Gibson and Cameron³³ call “warm-and-fuzzy ritual worship.” They begin with systems that see community participation as good, both from a moral and a practical perspective. But each of these fields of study is now wrestling with the implications of communities and their elites garnering influence within governing systems. Can community elites truly represent their communities? Are such systems inequitable across communities? Are they inequitable within communities? Each of these problems require specific study: systems which emphasize community participation by community elites are not by nature more

²⁸Tiebout, C. M. (1956). A pure theory of local expenditures. *The Journal of Political Economy*, 64(5), 416–424.

²⁹Berger, P. L., & Neuhaus, R. J. (1977). *To empower people: The role of mediating structures in public policy* AEI Press.

³⁰Boyte, H. C., & Chatten, H. (1980). *The backyard revolution: Understanding the new citizen movement* Temple University Press Philadelphia.

³¹Gibson, K., & Cameron, J. (2001). Transforming communities: Towards a research agenda. *Urban Policy and Research*, 19(1), 7–24.

³²Baltzell (1958).

³³Gibson and Cameron (2001)

democratic, an assumption Purcell³⁴ calls the “local trap.” Similarly, Sørensen and Torfing³⁵ argue that these community networks need to be examined for their “democratic anchorage.” Democratic justice, in which community elites actually represent their communities, is a first hurdle for systems of participation. But it is far from the only one. Such systems also run the risk of creating inequitable competition by pitting communities against one another. If governing requires community participation, then communities with fewer resources find themselves at a disadvantage despite greater need. The participation of community elites across municipalities may reinforce economic injustice. And finally, the participation of community elites has the potential to create a “not-in-my-backyard” (NIMBY) sentiment that risks development and discrimination of vulnerable populations. This second concern, that empowering communities and community elites would lead to more discrimination, is a key concern of urban scholars^{36,37} who argue that the history of empowering communities comes with an equally ugly history of those communities using such power to discriminate.

5.5.1 Tradition #1: New Governance

The common threads across these conceptions of community participation are about informality and the widening number of actors involved in governance. Kooiman³⁸ argues that the term governance has changed over time to reflect the involvement of a wider set of actors (including communities) and calls this “new governance”. Clarke³⁹ codifies the old view of governance by arguing that:

Ever since Edmund Burke’s famous speech to the electorate of Bristol in 1774 the British way of politics has been to leave decision making to the politicians and the policy experts. The role of the public (or at least those that had the franchise) was to periodically pass judgement on their leaders at election time. This passivity has become an entrenched part of the British political culture.

But Crozier⁴⁰ argues that “Public policy is less of a governmental dictum and more of an ongoing negotiation among government and non-government actors.” Stoker,⁴¹ Forrest⁴² and Gunasekara⁴³ deny a change in governance, instead pointing to a change in the ways in which we study and talk about governance. They argue governance has always included these community actors. Regardless of whether the change in governance is a change in perception or a trend to include more actors, defining governance more inclusively is critical for disciplines seeking to understand the potential of involving community in governing decisions. Many theorists across disciplines are creating frameworks that explain the impact of participation by actors outside the traditional governance system. In each discipline, unaffiliated, non-governmental actors are theorized as bringing value and influence. It is in this framework that community participation occurs and has the potential to be beneficial. Arnstein⁴⁴ famously creates a ladder of such participation,

³⁴Purcell, M. (2006). Urban democracy and the local trap. *Urban Studies*, 43(11), 1921–1941.

³⁵Sørensen and Torfing (2005)

³⁶Marcuse, P. (2009). From critical urban theory to the right to the city. *City*, 13(2-3), 185–197.

³⁷Purcell (2002).

³⁸Kooiman, J. (1993). *Modern governance: New government-society interactions* Sage.

³⁹Clarke, R. (2002). *New Democratic Processes: better decisions, stronger democracy* Institute for Public Policy Research. As in Gaventa, J. (2004). Representation, community leadership and participation: Citizen involvement in neighbourhood renewal and local governance. *Report, Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, Office of Deputy Prime Minister*.

⁴⁰Crozier, M. (2008). Listening, learning, steering: New governance, communication and interactive policy formation. *Policy & Politics*, 36(1), 3–19.

⁴¹Stoker, G. (1998). Governance as theory: Five propositions. *International Social Science Journal*, 50(155), 17–28.

⁴²Forrest, J. B. (2003). Networks in the policy process: An international perspective. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 26(6), 591–608.

⁴³Gunasekara. (2008). *Network governance amidst local economic crisis*. Taylor Francis Ltd.

⁴⁴Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 35(4), 216–224.

arguing that participation can happen at many levels. At the bottom rungs of the ladder such participation is ignored, it is a hoop to jump through, or tokenism. At the middle rungs, it is advisory and taken into account as traditional entities make decisions, and at the highest rungs it involves devolution of decision-making power or even systems which empower participating communities to make their own decisions.

5.5.2 Tradition #2: Deliberative Democracy

Deliberative democracy wrestles with similar conceptions of participation. Gutmann and Thompson⁴⁵ define four characteristics of deliberative democracy: (1) reciprocity between actors (2) accessibility to the deliberations (3) a binding power behind deliberations and (4) willingness to a change of mind on the part of the participants. They argue that meeting these conditions leads to a democracy more able and willing to respond to communities than other forms of democracy. Embedded within the theoretical discussion of deliberative democracy are the same issues that catch the attention of governance scholars. Scholars are creating a wider theory to highlight the potential of a less formal, networked system to work together to find positive solutions outside of formal government bureaucracy (for more on deliberative democracy, see Chap. 10).

5.5.3 Tradition #3: Network Governance

Governance scholars such as Sørensen and Torfing⁴⁶ call this “network governance” and describe a similar set of characteristics: (1) Governance involves multiple actors. (2) The actors are non-hierarchical. (3) The actors involved in policy decisions use negotiation as their primary tool to make policy. There is direct overlap between these two theoretical

frameworks. Both include an expanded group of actors, not the government officials of a representative democracy. And both use some informal form of decision-making, calling these forms “deliberation” and “negotiation.”

5.5.4 Tradition #4: International Economic Development

Echoes of the same ideas and values are present in other fields. Scholars such as Easterly⁴⁷ and Moyo⁴⁸ have argued that these dynamics need be emphasized in the debate on foreign aid. Easterly makes the case that grassroots development is much more dynamic, and ultimately successful, in part because it avoids centralized structures and decision-making processes. Such thinking is actually deeply embedded in classic liberal economics, where aggregated decision-making by consumers outperforms top-down, centralized market planning.

5.5.5 Tradition #5: Economics (Prediction Markets)

The *Wisdom of Crowds*⁴⁹ movement makes a similar case for predictions, arguing that aggregated predictions can often outperform experts. There has been an explosion in prediction market sites, which are now regularly used by political pundits as indicators of performance in political debates, conventions, primaries and by the sports analytics movement as evidence of team quality.

5.5.6 Tradition #6: Urban Studies (The Right to the City)

Urban studies and the study of urban social movements has developed a similar concept, aptly

⁴⁵Gutmann and Thompson (2002).

⁴⁶Sørensen and Torfing (2005).

⁴⁷Easterly, W. (2013). *The tyranny of experts: Economists, dictators, and the forgotten rights of the poor* Basic Books.

⁴⁸Moyo, D. (2009). *Dead aid: Why aid is not working and how there is a better way for Africa* Macmillan.

⁴⁹Surowieki (2005).

named the Right to the City which Lefebvre⁵⁰ calls “a cry and a demand. This right slowly meanders through the surprising detours of nostalgia and tourism, the return to the heart of the traditional city.” Harvey⁵¹ writes of Lefebvre that “the cry was a response to the existential pain of a withering crisis of everyday life in the city. The demand was really a command to look that crisis clearly in the eye and to create an alternative urban life that is less alienated, [and] more meaningful and playful.” Purcell⁵² similarly explains the Right to the City as case that “enfranchisement is for those who inhabit the city. Because the right to the city revolves around the production of urban space, it is those who live in the city—who contribute to the body of urban lived experience and lived space—who can legitimately claim the right to the city.” The Right to the City has been used in housing advocacy^{53,54} and to bolster participatory planning.⁵⁵ It is closely linked to the participatory budgeting movement in Brazil.⁵⁶ In contrast to many of the theories above, “the idea of the right to the city does not arise primarily out of various intellectual fascinations and fads (though there are plenty of those around, as we know). It primarily arises up from the streets, out from the neighborhoods, as a cry for help and sustenance by oppressed people in desperate times”.⁵⁷ It is a slogan as much as a theoretical tradition, but one which shares in its roots the same core concepts as

deliberative democracy, the wisdom of crowds, and network governance. As a branch of urban social movements, the Right to the City is dependent on an informal governing process—one which includes protests and negotiations. It also specifically embraces and prioritizes residential, or lived, perspectives.

5.6 A New Orleans Illustration: Community Elites and Participation

The dynamics described by these various traditions manifested themselves in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. There citizen participation was pitted against “expert” policy in the plans, discussions and negotiations for rebuilding the city. This was the political context in which rebuilding was planned and undertaken.

Alongside the conflict of economic elites over who would return to the city there was a second, related debate over *reducing the footprint* of the city. Noting that the oldest neighborhoods in New Orleans had avoided flooding in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, many planners argued that the most sustainable way to rebuild the city would be to create a smaller, denser city while low-lying communities were to be committed to other uses. Such an idea has racial and class consequences, as the cheapest land was also low-lying, and also where much of the city’s blue-collar and communities of color lived. The mayor created a Bring New Orleans Back commission, which hired the Urban Land Institute to create a recovery plan. The plan leaned heavily on the conventional wisdom of planners and focused on, among other things, reducing the city’s footprint. Famously, the plan included a map with green dots over neighborhoods that were to be converted into park space and flood lands. Neighborhoods were given four months to prove their community’s viability, or have their neighborhoods become parkland. To avoid becoming a park, each neighborhood was required to show that 50% of its citizens were returning.⁵⁸ Quickly dubbed the Green Dot Plan, it

⁵⁰Lefebvre, H. (1996 [1967]) ‘The Right to the City’, in E. Kofman and E. Lebas (eds) *Writings on Cities* (pp. 63–184) Blackwell

⁵¹Harvey, D. (2012). *Rebel cities: From the right to the city to the urban revolution* Verso Books.

⁵²Purcell (2002).

⁵³Grant Building Tenants Association. (2001). Grant building saved (for the moment). *Grant Building Tenants Association, San Francisco*.

⁵⁴Olds, K. (1998). Urban mega-events, evictions and housing rights: The Canadian case. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 1(1), 2–46.

⁵⁵Daniel, C. (2001) Participatory urban governance: the experience of Santo Andre, United Nations Chronicle Online, 38(1).

⁵⁶de Souza, M. L. (2001). The Brazilian way of conquering the “Right to the city” successes and obstacles in the long stride towards an “Urban reform”. *disP-the Planning Review*, 37(147), 25–31.

⁵⁷Harvey (2012, p. xiii).

⁵⁸Gratz (2015).

was greeted with immediate virulence. Residents had struggled to return to the city, many of them risking bankruptcy to rebuild homes while waiting for insurance payouts or the state Road Home program to produce reimbursements. Now, they were forced to organize to preserve the existence of their neighborhood. Roberta Gratz writes:

The report was so overreaching, so absent of legitimate local input and disdainful of the democratic process that it served as a startling wake-up call regarding the new elite agenda for the city. And it was only January at this point, less than five months since Katrina and Rita. Clearly, the citizens had no choice but to develop their own battle plans. The report energized nascent local organizations all over town that were ten steps ahead of officials and already jump-starting the process of rebuilding their city.

The neighborhood associations and local organizations which fought the plan became a mainstay of the post-Katrina political context, where it was a common sight to see candidates for local office at neighborhood meetings as these candidates looked for voters in a fractured and recovering city. The sentiment that such organizations were doing critical work in the light of bungling state and national politicians and policy makers became a type of defiant political identity, manifested through local blogger Ashley Morris' cry of *Fuck You, You Fucking Fucks*.⁵⁹ Morris, who later died of heart problems, was the godfather of the post-Katrina blogging scene, and the award to the city's most influential blogger is named after him and presented annually at the Rising Tide conference. Roberta Gratz⁶⁰ captures the same sentiment with her book. Academics took a similar position, whether Harvard University working with the Broadmoor Improvement Association to create a neighborhood guide to recovery,⁶¹ or the libertarians from the Mercatus Institute studying local organizations as evidence of the capacity for

self-governance.⁶² Kristina Ford, the city's master planner at the time, would go on to write *The Trouble with City Planning*⁶³ which focuses on how planning, as a field, needs to incorporate citizen voice and participation, and which points directly at the Green Dot fiasco as its primary case.

The same political approach took hold amongst the city's activists, where local knowledge and local perspectives were seen as paramount to creating good policy. In one story, likely apocryphal, activists in the city found themselves arguing that houses (and porches) should face the street when the C. J. Peete public housing project was redeveloped. This stood in sharp contrast to conventional wisdom, which recommended that houses (and porches) should face a central green space. Former residents, the residential advisory board and others testified that they preferred housing facing out, while planners and policy-makers condescendingly insisted on the opposite. Finally, when someone asked the residents *why* they had such a preference, they explained that the housing project was on a Mardi Gras Indian parade route, and they had grown up watching and participating in these parades from their porches. The housing projects were built with porches facing the street. That such stories are urban legends are of little importance to the activists who tell them. They are told to establish the primacy of local perspectives and values, to give public officials a reason to listen to those who choose to participate.

5.7 Putting the "Elitism" into "Community Elites"

Myths such as this reflect, alongside academic theories such as deliberative democracy, network governance and the Right to the City, a growing

⁵⁹Morris, A. (2005) *Fuck you, you fucking fucks*. *Ashley Morris: The blog*.

⁶⁰Gratz (2015).

⁶¹Hummel, R., & Ahlers, D. (2007). *Lessons from Katrina: How a community can spearhead successful disaster recovery* Broadmoor Project, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

⁶²Chamlee-Wright, E., & Storr, V. H. (2009). The role of social entrepreneurship in post-katrina community recovery. *International Journal of Innovation and Regional Development*, 2(1-2), 149-164.

⁶³Ford, K. (2010). *The trouble with city planning: What new orleans can teach us* Yale University Press.

political and academic consensus that governance extends beyond government, and that community has a critical role to play by participating in governance processes. But such a consensus can veer from constructive to nostalgic, what Gibson and Cameron⁶⁴ call “warm-and-fuzzy.” This section lays out how many of the theoretical traditions examined above are critical of such participatory mechanisms and argue they may ultimately hinder social justice goals.

Just as consensus about the importance of community participation has grown, theorists, academics and practitioners alike have begun to wrestle with the possible negative aspects of such systems. For deliberative democracy theorists, the concept of deliberation itself has been challenged. In particular, as the field has moved from a theoretical approach to what Dodge⁶⁵ calls “an empirical turn.” The theory of deliberative democracy requires that, for deliberation to work, those involved in the deliberating must leave behind individual needs, wants and preferences, and instead think of the common good. This assumption has been challenged as it has moved from one of theory to one of practice. Participants in deliberative democracy struggle to put aside their own self-interest for the greater good and this is unsurprising given that even few politicians are unable to separate personal race, class and gender identities from their own votes.⁶⁶ Some scholars even argue that asking deliberators to put aside self-interest can be counter-productive.^{67,68,69}

Dodge⁷⁰ uses protest and advocacy over environmental justice in New Mexico to show that in deliberations there are often conflicts and competition over “storylines”.⁷¹ These deliberations “do not merely identify a problem, but advance a particular moral or political orientation through which to view it. In other words, claim makers’ language frame the problem, bringing with it certain understandings about the problem’s nature, thus suggesting certain cases and solutions”.⁷² This is a radical departure from deliberative democracy theory, and opens the door to even sharper critiques. If deliberations are about conflicts over storylines and values, and winning such conflicts leads to certain solutions, deliberations are about power. As such they can be manipulated.

Sørensen and Torfing⁷³ make a parallel claim about network governance, arguing that, “Governance networks might contribute to an efficient governance of our complex and functionally differentiated societies, but the question is whether governance networks also lead to democratic governance.” Klijn and Skelcher⁷⁴ argue there is a “incompatibility conjecture” which argues the use of network governance is, at its root, undemocratic. Sørensen and Torfing argue that⁷⁵ “Governance networks have been accused of being undemocratic due to their closed and opaque character and lack of accountability.” Sørensen and Torfing make two such arguments: (1) networks draw power away from representative democratic institutions by including a wider network in decision-making and (2) “that governance networks suffer from

⁶⁴Gibson and Cameron (2001).

⁶⁵Dodge, J. (2009). Environmental justice and deliberative democracy: How social change organizations respond to power in the deliberative system. *Policy and Society*, 28(3), 225–239.

⁶⁶Carnes, N. (2013). *White-collar government: The hidden role of class in economic policy making* University of Chicago Press.

⁶⁷Deveaux, M. (2003). A deliberative approach to conflicts of culture. *Political Theory*, 31(6), 780–807.

⁶⁸Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. *Social Text*, 56–80.

⁶⁹Young, I. M. (2001). Activist challenges to deliberative democracy. *Political Theory*, 29(5), 670–690.

⁷⁰Dodge, J. (2014). Civil society organizations and deliberative policy making: Interpreting environmental controversies in the deliberative system. *Policy Sciences*, 47(2), 161–185.

⁷¹Hendriks, C. M. (2005). Participatory storylines and their influence on deliberative forums. *Policy Sciences*, 38(1), 1–20.

⁷²Dodge (2014).

⁷³Sørensen and Torfing (2005).

⁷⁴Klijn, E. H., & Skelcher, C. (2007). Democracy and governance networks: Compatible or not? *Public Administration*, 85(3), 587–608.

⁷⁵Sørensen and Torfing (2005).

the absence of open competition, legitimacy problems, and the lack of transparency, publicity and accountability”.⁷⁶ Kiln and Sketcher⁷⁷ divide scholars between this “incompatibility conjecture” and a second “complementarity conjecture.” The second conjecture holds that these networks increase democratic anchorage and ultimately complement the existing democratic institutions. There are a host of different logics within the complementarity camp. Jessop⁷⁸ and Esmark⁷⁹ see networks as serving a linking capacity with existing democratic institutions, thereby amplifying their connection to representatives. Rhodes⁸⁰ argues that these networks provide an alternative to existing representative democratic institutions, and assuring better anchorage. Kooiman⁸¹ argues that networks allow democratic institutions to be more flexible in their relationships within communities. These arguments harken back to an argument made by Berger and Neuhaus⁸² and Boyte and Chatten⁸³ about the technocratic nature of democratic institutions, and these democratic institutions need mediating institutions in order to reconnect with the populace. Thus, the debate about network governance is about two competing images of how networks function. The first is of a smoke-filled back room where insiders make decisions outside of the light of public—the very image of elitism. The second is of a technocratic government in dire need of community movements which help reconnect them to the communities they represent.

⁷⁶Sørensen and Torfing (2005).

⁷⁷Klijn and Skelcher (2007).

⁷⁸Jessop, B. (2000) ‘The Network Society, New Forms of Governance and Democratic Renewal’. Unpublished paper, Center for Offentlig Organisation og Styling, Copenhagen. As in Sørensen and Torfing, 2005.

⁷⁹Esmark, A. (2003) ‘Network Governance between Publics and Elites (Working Paper 5)’. Roskilde: Centre for Democratic Network Governance, Roskilde University. As in Sørensen and Torfing, 2005.

⁸⁰Rhodes, R. A., W., 1996, the new governance: Governing without government. *Political Studies*, 44(4), 652–667.

⁸¹Kooiman (1993).

⁸²Berger and Neuhaus (1977).

⁸³Boyte and Chatten (1980).

The Right to the City represents such a reconnection movement. Framed differently than both network governance and deliberative democracy, the Right to the City is framed by Lefebvre⁸⁴ as a way to reorient the use of urban space towards the objectives of residents rather than those of the tourism industry or development interests. In part because doing so means empowering residents who often lack capital in struggles against wider economic forces, the Right to the City has been picked up both as a means of fighting systems of capitalism⁸⁵ and as a means of empowering vulnerable populations.⁸⁶ The slogan has been used to oppose the clearing of slums and in support of participatory budgeting.⁸⁷ These examples narrow the wider theoretical expanse of both deliberative democracy and network governance to the particular urban context, and to community-based movements attempting to influence policy. While embodying wider principles, such as deliberative democracy and network governance, the Right to the City differs from these traditions in that it starts not as a theory, but comes “from the streets, out from the neighborhoods, as a cry for help and sustenance by oppressed people in desperate times”.⁸⁸ This grounding in practicality may explain its similarities with the empirical strains of deliberative democracy, which highlight conflict rather than idyllic deliberation. Similarly, empirical studies of network governance, such as that of Nyseth⁸⁹ in the town of Tromsø, emphasize the competitive nature of these negotiations. Just as with deliberative democracy and network governance, the Right to the City, with its emphasis on movements and protest, manifests itself through informal mechanisms of influence such as deliberation and negotiation, and, just as with deliberative

⁸⁴Lefebvre (1967).

⁸⁵Harvey (2012).

⁸⁶Marcuse (2009).

⁸⁷de Souza (2001).

⁸⁸Harvey (2012).

⁸⁹Nyseth, T. (2008). Network governance in contested urban landscapes. *Planning Theory & Practice*, 9(4), 497–514.

democracy and network governance, there are concerns about the ways in which these informal systems reinforce or oppose democracy. Purcell⁹⁰ writes about the “local trap” in which increasingly local scales of government are assumed to be more democratic. Purcell points to the example of slavery and states’ rights in the US South, in which more local scales were used to make a community less democratic. Purcell’s first critique leads to his second, which is that while local scales are often conflated with “more specific ideas such as ‘indigenous’, ‘poor’, ‘rural’, ‘weak’, or ‘traditional’, there is nothing essentially local about any of these categories”.⁹¹ The combination of the two examples points out one of most debated aspects of the Right to the City—the potential for misuse to abuse the vulnerable urban residents that the concept is designed to protect. Indeed, localism has often been the engine behind segregative movements in the United States. The rhetoric against school busing, which focused heavily on maintaining the character of neighborhoods,⁹² would fit squarely under the Right to the City movement and closely parallels the language used by neighborhood advocates in New Orleans. Harvey⁹³ argues “the right to the city is an empty signifier. Everything depends on who gets to fill it with meaning. The financiers and developers can claim it, and have every right to do so. But then, so can the homeless and *sans-rapiers*.” Marcuse⁹⁴ looks at the same problem and makes a case that the definition should specifically limit the phrase to vulnerable populations. Purcell⁹⁵ looks at the Right to the City and wonders if it will exacerbate racial conflicts and pit neighborhoods against one another.

5.8 Do Community Elites Undermine Justice?

These critiques fall under a common umbrella of justice. Concerns about democratic anchorage and the local trap reflect a concern with democratic justice. The Right to the City, and its emphasis on residents’ rights rather than the rights of entities with capital, reflects a concern with economic justice. And Purcell⁹⁶ specifically highlights the possibility of racial discrimination, which reflects a concern with racial justice. That community might be fractured and ambiguous (see Chap. 1) and might even be a “myth”⁹⁷ has long been present in the study of communities. These three concerns might reasonably be grouped under the definition “social justice,” which has long been a key part of Catholic social teaching, is a key concept within political philosophy, and with the advent of “social justice warriors” has taken a political meaning within the public consciousness. The Catholic Catechism⁹⁸ defines social justice by arguing, “Society ensures social justice when it provides the conditions that allow associations or individuals to obtain what is their due, according to their nature and their vocation. Social justice is linked to the common good and the exercise of authority.” Though beginning with a different framework, Rawls⁹⁹ comes to a similar definition. He explicitly reframes justice as “fairness” which manifests itself in two principles: (1) basic liberties and (2) equal opportunity. Recently, the phrase “social justice warrior” has come in vogue, even being added to the Oxford Dictionary, to describe “a person who expresses or promotes socially progressive views”.¹⁰⁰ The

⁹⁰Purcell (2006).

⁹¹Purcell (2006).

⁹²Delmont, M. F. (2016). *Why busing failed: Race, media, and the national resistance to school desegregation* University of California Press.

⁹³Harvey (2012).

⁹⁴Marcuse (2009).

⁹⁵Purcell (2002).

⁹⁶Purcell (2002).

⁹⁷Gujit, I., & Shah, M., (1998). The myth of community. *Gender issues in participatory development*.

⁹⁸Rhonheimer, M. (2015). The true meaning of ‘Social justice’: A catholic view of hayek. *Economic Affairs*,35 (1), 35–51.

⁹⁹Rawls, J. (2001). *Justice as fairness: A restatement* Harvard University Press.

¹⁰⁰Ohlheiser, A. (2015, October 7). Why ‘social justice warrior,’ a gamergate insult, is now a dictionary entry. *The Washington Post*.

Urban Dictionary definition is slightly less neutral¹⁰¹:

A pejorative term for an individual who repeatedly and vehemently engages in arguments on social justice on the Internet, often in a shallow or not well-thought-out way, for the purpose of raising their own personal reputation. A social justice warrior, or SJW, does not necessarily strongly believe all that they say, or even care about the groups they are fighting on behalf of. They typically repeat points from whoever is the most popular blogger or commenter of the moment, hoping that they will “get SJ points” and become popular in return. They are very sure to adopt stances that are “correct” in their social circle.

The SJW’s favorite activity of all is to dogpile. Their favorite websites to frequent are Livejournal and Tumblr. They do not have relevant favorite real-world places, because SJWs are primarily civil rights activists only online.

Traditionally, academics see social justice and democracy to be at odds with one another.¹⁰² But Shapiro¹⁰³ argues that a historical and political reading of the history of democracy puts democracy and social justice as complementary, not contradictory, forces. He argues that many democratic movements through history have been grounded in addressing social justice issues, and the commitment to government and opposition in democratic theory supports those in need of social justice rather than pitting them against a majority. The justice frame is particularly apt for the debates discussed earlier about community and informal systems. Tensions between justice and democracy are amplified in systems that depend on negotiation, deliberation and protest, as the ability to engage in such governance might be dependent upon privilege, resources, or other factors.

It is here that a reimagined study of community elites is both required and pertinent. The types of studies conducted by Dahl¹⁰⁴ in New

Haven, Hunter¹⁰⁵ in Atlanta, or Baltzell¹⁰⁶ in Philadelphia would answer the call in fields such as network governance¹⁰⁷ and deliberative democracy¹⁰⁸ for empirical studies to complement theory. If such studies were reoriented specifically around the nature of informal negotiations and networks, they could directly address these justice concerns. At the center of these critiques are questions about the individuals themselves who choose to participate. In a newly imagined study of “community elites,” in which community elites are leaders who represent their community through participatory mechanisms, these studies could show how those in leadership positions are critical to issues of democratic and social justice. In the case of democratic justice, the link is reflexive and almost definitional—if these community elites are not representative of their communities, or are not supported by democratic structures, they lack democratic anchorage. Perhaps even more worrying, community elites may pursue an agenda which directly contradicts social justice (and that decision may itself be linked to the ways in which a community elite comes to represent a community). In short, community elites are the central musicians in the symphony of informal governance. If communities are to play a central role through participation, then study of who represents those communities is the key to addressing key theoretical critiques about justice. This is the heart of the argument within this chapter for redefining “community elites” away from *who has power?* and towards leaders who represent their community through participatory mechanisms. Doing so opens the door to studying the common questions across the study of informality in governance, the thread that ties together network governance, deliberative democracy and the Right to the City.

¹⁰¹Ohlheiser (2015).

¹⁰²Shapiro, I. (2001). *Democratic justice* Yale University Press.

¹⁰³Shapiro (2001).

¹⁰⁴Dahl (1961).

¹⁰⁵Hunter (1953).

¹⁰⁶Baltzell (1958).

¹⁰⁷Bogason, P., & Musso, J. A. (2006). The democratic prospects of network governance. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 36(1), 3–18.

¹⁰⁸Dodge (2009).

5.9 A New Orleans Illustration: Tensions Between Community Elites and Justice

Many of these same tensions and conflicts manifested themselves in New Orleans after the storm. Community elites sit at the center of this local approach and ideology. Leaders of local organizations can become cult heroes within their communities for successes, and some (including Broadmoor Improvement Association President Latoya Cantrell, who later was elected mayor) use the platform to launch political careers. These leaders of local organizations—community elites by our new definition—theoretically are democratically elected by their organizations. A survey conducted with City Works¹⁰⁹ showed that 85% of neighborhood associations held elections for these positions—but such elections were rarely contested. Instead, they were seen as a burden upon the volunteers. The presidents of various associations describe being elected as “a battle of attrition” or being “thrown under the bus.” One former association president, from the Irish Channel Neighborhood Association, claimed she was elected because she was late to a meeting and someone volunteered her before she could arrive. Neighborhood associations struggle to recruit volunteers in part because advocacy for one’s neighborhood is exhausting and rarely rewarding. Advocates share an almost universal experience of burnout.

Such accounts undermine the democratic claims of these associations—the extent to which burnout is prevalent among volunteers likely limits the ability of residents from vulnerable populations to run for these offices, making it less likely that those from vulnerable populations are chosen to represent their communities. In New Orleans, some neighborhood associations were accused of being elites who hid behind letterhead—an argument (often made by those seeking to discredit such associations) that they were vehicles to give community elites more power. The

leadership of community elites may undermine the ability to represent their communities justly.

Neighborhood associations largely share an ethic of protecting their neighborhoods (and their property values). That manifests itself through crime prevention—many associations raise money, even choosing to tax themselves, to pay for extra security—and through NIMBYism. In Carrollton, a racially and economically diverse neighborhood in New Orleans, two adjoining neighborhood associations came down on vastly different sides of a proposed development including a Walgreens Pharmacy and a Robert’s Grocery Store. The Fontainebleau Improvement Association, a largely affluent community that adjoined the development site on one border and Tulane University on the other, had created a committee years before the storm to recruit a grocery store to the neighborhood. A grocery store was seen as the last required component to complete their idyllic, walkable neighborhood. The adjoining Northwest Carrollton Neighborhood Association was more mixed-income and skeptical of the development. That skepticism was grounded in the history of the proposed site for the development which was owned by Walgreens and had lain vacant for years. Northwest Carrollton activists suspected that Walgreens, which had a store close by, had bought the property to prevent competition from another pharmacy and then simply let the land sit vacant, causing a blight and eyesore in the neighborhood. The already skeptical association became much more skeptical when initial plans for the development included no pedestrian entrances for local residents, who were cut off by the back of the buildings while the grocery store and pharmacy faced the street. To add insult to injury, the plans called for the back of the buildings to be lined with dumpsters, potentially devaluing local properties, and certainly creating a daily nuisance. The ensuing debate became the center piece of a City Council election—Shelly Midura, the eventual winner, launched her campaign at the site of the development. The proposed development also pitted the two neighborhood associations directly against one another—the Fontainebleau Improvement

¹⁰⁹City-Works, (2010) ‘The Neighborhood Mapping Project’. City Works.

Association had recruited Robert's to the development, while the Northwest Carrollton Improvement association engaged in what they called "gorilla" tactics including hanging a sheet that read "Walgreens Kills Neighborhoods" over existing buildings on the lot.

Across the city, in Faubourg Lafayette, a historically black neighborhood struggling with disinvestment and high crime, an association was launched with similar NIMBY concerns. There, the Historic Faubourg Lafayette Association was inactive prior to the storm after years of activism. Its most famous conflict also had been over a grocery store development which would have displaced historic homes.¹¹⁰ The grocery store was never built, and the neighborhood—already the site of severe disinvestment—remained a food desert. In the years after Katrina, the neighborhood saw an influx of young families drawn to the community, in part because Faubourg Lafayette had not flooded and was within walking distance of the Central Business District and the French Quarter. One such family became distressed by the impact of a local homeless shelter, the Mission, on its home. The mother, new to the community, went to her City Council representative to report that each morning, when the Mission let the homeless out of the shelter at 6 a.m., individuals walked across her lawn, stopping to urinate against her house, leaving empty beer cans and even needles behind. Each morning, she would go out to clean up the mess so that her children could play in the yard. She advocated that the Mission be moved to another location where it would not impact families with young children. In response, her City Council representative suggested she start a neighborhood association to advocate for the community. It would be easier, the council representative said, to oppose the Mission if a neighborhood association so advocated instead of a lone parent. The mother returned to her neighborhood and

relaunched the Historic Faubourg Lafayette Neighborhood Association.

These two examples identify many of the theoretical dynamics at play in informal governance scenarios. In Carrollton, a more affluent neighborhood recruited a much-needed grocery store, leaving a less affluent neighborhood to face the negative practicalities of the development. In Faubourg Lafayette, a white, middle-class family new to the neighborhood started a neighborhood association specifically to reduce services for the homeless population. These examples highlight the complications of the origins of community elites, how they come to represent their neighborhoods, and how such a creation might privilege individuals of a certain class or race. They demonstrate how neighborhoods might be set against one another—in part because the physical consequences of development might privilege one community over another. And they demonstrate how the legitimate needs of one community—in these examples the housing needs of the homeless and the food needs of residents in Fontainebleau, Northwest Carrollton and Faubourg Lafayette—might be sacrificed for priorities such as property values, preservation, or even the safety of children. NIMBYism plays, to a certain extent, across each of these actions—in Northwest Carrollton, the opposition to the pharmacy because of the ways in which the design is hostile to residents, in Faubourg Lafayette a opposition to a grocery store which would destroy historic homes, and years later in the same neighborhood, opposition to a homeless shelter because it was inappropriate to have such a facility close to young families.

5.10 The Future Study of Community Elites

Each of these cases involved informal advocacy of the type deliberative democracy would consider deliberations and network governance would consider negotiations. They often also dealt with competing avenues of justice. These cases show the complexity, the potential dangers, and the potential benefits of such community

¹¹⁰Danley, S. (2015). Creative coercion in post-katrina new orleans: A neighborhood strategy to address conflict in networks. *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 7(1).

participation within local governance. They also highlight the central roles that community elites play in these outcomes, and the ways in which community elites prop up NIMBYism—likely because to emerge as a community elite has class connotations.

The existence of these values in New Orleans, and of the potential danger of an informal democratic system there, shows the need for a line of study focused on these common questions. Such study is of theoretical importance, but it also has profound practical value. At the most generalizable levels, additional theory about the ways informal governance intersects with justice would be a breakthrough for those practicing advocacy, activists who protest, or simply local citizens interested in the impact of politics on their community. For cities, the traditional location for much research on “community elites,” such study would be critical in the wider debate over the potential of citizen movements to combat the global pressures of neoliberalism.¹¹¹ This chapter puts an empirical face on the potential benefits of studying community elites, by examining the neighborhood movement in post-Katrina New Orleans. Doing so points out the ways in which a specific and targeted study of community elites could contribute to an empirical approach to answering the wider questions of informal governance.

The study of community elites, redefined in this chapter as *leaders who represent their community through participatory mechanisms*, can make a critical contribution to the wider understanding of informal governance.

As disciplines such as public administration, political philosophy, economics and urban studies wrestle with the implications of theories such as the Wisdom of Crowds, Deliberative Democracy, Network Governance and the Right to the City upon justice issues, community elites emerge as central figures. In some accounts, they are democratic heroes, stepping into the gap created by bureaucracy and technocracy. In other accounts, community elites are a manifestation of a wider elitism, one which undermines democracy and justice. Those who represent communities in these negotiations are the fulcrum for a host of justice issues—those of democratic justice, economic justice, racial justice and social justice. More study is needed to identify the ways in which the selection of community elites, and their representation within policy networks impact their communities. Studies in the tradition of Dahl,¹¹² Hunter¹¹³ and Baltzell¹¹⁴ are needed to tease out the effects of such elites across different cultures and communities. The case of New Orleans, examined here, shows the necessity of understanding such systems and starts to unpack the complications of such informality. In New Orleans, community elites were largely seen as contributing to efficient governance, but they also contributed to NIMBYism, and elites functioned in a world of complex and competing priorities. Understanding the origins and influence of community elites is the key to ensuring that such systems do not systematically disenfranchise a community’s most vulnerable residents.

¹¹¹Purcell, M., & Purcell, M. (2008). *Recapturing democracy: Neoliberalization and the struggle for alternative urban futures* Routledge.

¹¹²Dahl (1961).

¹¹³Hunter (1953).

¹¹⁴Baltzell (1958).

Disengagement and Alienation in Modern American Institutions

6

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Abstract

The term “community” often engenders feelings of longing, togetherness, and social connectedness. Yet in practice, there is a great deal of evidence that Americans have become increasingly distrustful of public institutions and each other, especially across lines of race, class, and political affiliation. This chapter will examine the causes and consequences of growing disengagement from institutions. I will focus on variation in levels of distrust and disconnectedness across social class in particular. I also examine Americans’ turn to the market to meet the needs once met by informal and formal community organizations, and discuss this shift in terms of its consequences for inequality and social mobility.

tions. Much of this literature takes as a starting point the enduring tensions in American society between individualism and commitment: how do we resolve the conflict between individual freedom and mutual obligation? How do we temper the self-interest of the market with concern for the public good? Community ties make collective action possible, ensuring the health of institutions that in turn protect individual freedoms and promote social equality; yet there is growing evidence that American people have become increasingly individualistic and isolated in the last third of the twentieth century. In this chapter, I examine the social, cultural, and economic causes and consequences of social unmooring, paying particular attention to the implications for social mobility and inequality.

There is a long intellectual tradition in the United States of critically examining the health and vibrancy of its basic political and social institu-

6.1 The Decline of Community

The political scientist Robert D. Putnam (2000), in his seminal *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, demonstrated that Americans have grown increasingly disconnected from each other in the last third of the twentieth century. Central to Putnam’s thesis is the concept of *social capital*, defined as “connections among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness

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that arise from them” (19). Like human or physical capital, social capital has value, increasing the productivity and efficiency of individuals and groups and creating a foundation of reciprocal trust that “lubricates social life” (21). Social capital can take diverse forms and functions in different ways, encompassing formal groups such as unions and civic organizations as well as more informal ones like internet chat groups or even one’s fellow regulars at the local bar.

Putnam presents a vast array of evidence to demonstrate that over the past several decades, Americans have experienced a sharp decline in social capital. This finding is alarming because democracy flourishes when social capital is high—that is, when people join political parties, clubs, and other kinds of civic organizations that connect them to other people, they are better able to distribute knowledge and create shared goals and the impetus for collective action. Indeed, the French political theorist de Tocqueville observed in the 1800s that American society is comprised of civic and political associations that serve to identify and address issues of the common, rather than the individual, good. Putnam argues that social capital enables information flows, norms of reciprocity and mutual aid, and collective action by fostering broader identities (a sense of “we”) and social solidarity. When people are civically engaged, they share decision-making in defining how to allot resources in the community and in reforming or replacing institutions that do not serve the common good.

High social capital also has crucial benefits for individuals. A robust literature links social capital to individual health, happiness, and well-being: people who have close family, friends, and community ties have been found to be less likely to die prematurely and more likely to have a speedy recovery from illness than those who are socially isolated, even after controlling for individual risk factors, socioeconomic status, and preventative health care measures (Putnam 2000: 329). Furthermore, people with close friends, neighbors, and co-workers are less likely to experience depression, low self-esteem, loneliness, or problems with eating or sleeping (332).

One’s chance of being the victim of a violent crime in a neighborhood depends more on the sense of “collective efficacy”—shared norms and relationships of reciprocity—than on the socio-economic characteristics of the neighborhood or even the transience of its residents. Social capital affects economic mobility, providing social ties that connect people to employment opportunities, provide information, and vouch for one’s character in the hiring process (321). On a more collective level, spaces with high social capital engender mobilizing to confront problems of public concern (e.g., a hazardous waste facility) and creating arrangements that benefit the group as a whole (e.g., a child-care cooperative or a micro-lending group).

However, the dense networks that characterized the first two thirds of the twentieth century have sharply declined. Social connectedness has been increasingly confined to people’s own neighborhoods and immediate families, and it has even decreased within these intimate spheres. Participation in spaces where Americans used to regularly meet—fraternal organizations, choral societies, bowling leagues, and civic do-gooding clubs—has plummeted. An examination of membership in thirty popular civic organizations (e.g., Jewish women in Hadassah, African-Americans in the NAACP, Catholic men in the Knights of Columbus, youth in 4-H.) shows that composite membership market share dropped from its peak in the early 1960s to levels not seen since right after the Great Depression. To provide some examples, the League of Women Voters has lost 42% of its members since 1969. In the domain of schools, PTAs nationwide plummeted from almost 50 members per 100 families with school-age children in the early 1960s to less than 20 members per 100 in 1997. Overall, in 1975–76 the average American attended a club meeting once a month. By 1999, that figure had dropped to only five meetings annually. Church attendance is also down by roughly one third since 1960s.

Informal social capital also has declined. In 1975, the average American invited friends over more than 14 times yearly. By 1998, the average American invited friends over only eight times

per year. The evidence suggests that social isolation is increasing. For example, one study found that from 1984–2004, the percentage of Americans reporting zero close confidantes stood at one quarter. The fraction of married Americans who say “our whole family usually eats dinner together” has fallen from around 50 to 34% over the past several decades.

Shrinking social capital is closely related to falling levels of trust in both the government and in other people. In 1960, approximately three-quarters of Americans trusted the government to do the right thing most or all the time in 1960, a statistic that sounds laughable compared to its 2015 response of 19% (Pew Research Center 2015). While 55% of American adults in 1960 believed that others could be trusted most or all of the time, only 30% did so in 1998.

Importantly, there are generational differences in trust, as American youth show much less trust in institutions than other cohorts. Millennials, which pollsters defined as people aged 18–29, have lost trust in a wide range of public institutions and leaders, including the President, the military, Congress, the Supreme Court, and the federal government. As the Pew Research Center (2014) reports, “Asked a long-standing social science survey question, ‘Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people,’ just 19% of Millennials say most people can be trusted, compared with 31% of Gen Xers, 37% of Silents and 40% of Boomers.” Further reflecting their detachment from traditional forms of social connectedness, half of Millennials label themselves as political independents and 29% are not affiliated with any organized religion.

What has driven this stark retreat from collective life? One crucial explanation is the amount of time and energy that Americans have to devote to civic and political life. As the structure and culture of American family life has changed, the majority of women now work outside the home: while in 1970, about 43% of women ages 16 and older were in the labor force, by 2000, 61% of adult women were in the labor force. This substantial increase means that all the unpaid work that women used to do—

volunteering, organizing, making dinner, investing in the neighborhood—is left undone. Interestingly, commuting to and from work also plays a role: each ten minutes of additional commuting time cuts all forms of social capital, whether church attendance or spending time with friends, by 10% (Putnam 2000). Finally, television plays a significant role in decreasing social connectedness: per person viewing hours increased by 17–20% during the 1960s, 8% in the 1970s, and yet another 8% into the 90s. By 1995, television viewing was more than 50% higher than it was in 1950, meaning that time that used to be spent outside the home, engaged with others, is now spent inside and alone. On a related note, the average Millennial spends about three hours per day on their smart phone (Connected Life 2015).

It is important to consider whether too much social cohesion and strong institutions could potentially impose social conformity and restrict individual freedoms, leading one to wonder if freedom and community are inherently at odds with each other. Indeed, the newfound tolerance and social freedoms gleaned in the 1960s were accompanied by the decline of social capital (Putnam 2000: 352). Americans are freer today than ever before to define their own life course, to escape the constraints of gender, race, and class that were “irrationally constricting” (Bellah et al. 1985: 83) for previous generations. As various theorists of modern society argue, the standard life course has become increasingly de-institutionalized (Giddens 1991, Beck 1992). Globalization and rapid technological change have lifted social relations out of local contexts, disembedding individuals from the institutions that once ordered their lives (Giddens 1991: 2). In the wake of the decline of Keynesian economics and the growth of flexible labor market policies, individuals can no longer depend on full-time, long-term employment within one organization or even one career. As a result, working people must themselves remain “flexible,” altering their life trajectories according to the constant fluctuations of the labor market. Simultaneously, as industrial capitalism has crumbled, the gendered division of labor that was its hallmark (Weis 1990) has become

anachronistic, thereby de-stabilizing traditional gender roles and family arrangements. As Giddens explains (1991: 5), “The more tradition loses its hold, and the more daily life is reconstituted in terms of the dialectical interplay of the local and the global, the more individuals are forced to negotiate lifestyle choices among a diversity of options.”

Consequently, people today live out their lives with more individual freedom and less institutional guidance than in generations past: “in our present day world, the self, like the broader institutional context in which it exists, has to be reflexively made” (Giddens 1991: 3). New cultural discourses construct the self as an autonomous agent in control of her own destiny and responsible for the person she becomes. As Beck (1992: 92) elucidates, “By becoming independent from traditional ties, people’s lives take on an independent quality which, for the first time, makes possible the experience of personal destiny.” In the absence of institutionalized life trajectories, individuals are faced with the challenge of creating narratives of self on their own: “Self-identity becomes a reflexively organized endeavor. The reflexive project of the self, which consists in the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised, biographical narratives, takes place in the context of multiple choices as filtered through abstract systems... Reflexively organized life-planning... becomes a central feature of the structure of self-identity (Giddens 1991: 5).”

The consequences of these unprecedented freedoms were famously discussed in *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, in which Bellah et al. (1985) explore the radical individualism that permeates American society. Their central concern is one of meaning, asking how a “morally coherent life” (xli) is possible without institutions that demand that people take “*responsibility for the welfare of their fellows and for the common good.*” But without the institutional girders of religion, family ties, work, or politics, Bellah et al. question whether we have become too unmoored, possibly leading to a crisis of meaning—“It is hard to find in [today’s individualized culture] the kind of story or narrative, as of a pilgrimage

or quest, that many cultures have used to link private and public; present, past, and future; and the life of the individual and the meaning of the cosmos” (83). As our institutions have shifted toward more voluntary commitment, social ties are more liberating yet also more fragile. Bellah et al. caution that our shared language for tempering self-interest with concern for a greater good is weakening, thus allow self-interest to grow unchecked.

It is important to note the potential danger in critiquing self-interest and personal freedom, as it threatens to obscure how the sacrifice of personal freedom for the larger collective good was and is still largely undertaken by women. Feminist scholars point to the exploitative nature of volunteering as *unpaid labor* done by women within a patriarchal system that permits men to be self-interested economic actors and relegates women to subordinate caretaking and support roles (Folbre 2007). In a study of thirty-one countries across the world, the UNDP Women and Development Report of 1995 found that women work longer hours than men, yet men earn greater “income and recognition” for their economic contributions while women’s work remained “unpaid, unrecognized, and undervalued.” In this perspective, the societal cohesion and political democracy that stem from voluntary civic participation come at the cost of women’s largely unrewarded time and efforts.

However, recent scholarship has argued that, while unpaid labor often takes place within in exploitative context, the *meanings* of volunteering may be changing under conditions of late modernity. That is, volunteering is not necessarily incompatible with individualism (Inglehart 2003). On the contrary, contemporary volunteering may instead be motivated by personal goals, a search for self-fulfillment, or even a desire for entertainment—thus enhancing, rather than stymieing, self-development (Hustinx and Lammertyn 2003). As volunteering becomes less bound by a sense of duty that requires the subordination of the self to community concerns, though, it changes in duration and intensity, as people are more like to adapt their volunteering to their preferences and whims (Wuthnow 1998).

More evidence supporting the connection between volunteering and self-interest stems from studies of economic and cultural elites, which find that elite colleges and consulting firms interpret certain types of volunteering as status symbols and use them to make crucial admissions and hiring decisions (Rivera 2012). While elite institutions view volunteering as a signal of valuable “soft skills”—teamwork, self-cultivation, flexibility, proactiveness, and passion—they are often blind to the ways in which volunteering carries an unseen burden to economically disadvantaged youth in the form of foregone earnings or equipment and travel costs. The larger debate over the meanings of volunteering and its connection to self-interest and obligation suggest that the larger social, political, and economic context is crucial in mediating its meanings, costs, and benefits at both the individual and societal level.

These themes of tensions among elites, self-interest, and community are picked up in Christopher Lasch’s *The Revolt of the Elites and the Betrayal of Democracy* (1995). Lasch fears that American society is becoming increasingly divided along lines of education, region, and lifestyle. Lasch places blame on the cultural elite—the educated, cosmopolitan middle class. Binding community ties, according to Lasch, depend upon a shared sense of place which is disrupted by the cosmopolitan transience of contemporary elites. Lasch points to the “decay or abandonment of public institutions in which citizens meet as equals,” as people are more and more confined to lifestyle enclaves where they interact only with people like themselves, of the same social class (117). Increasing class-based residential segregation has exacerbated this problem (Reardon and Bischoff 2011).

American culture, according to Lasch, has grown increasingly divided ideologically between the haves and the have-nots: among the political and cultural elites, ordinary citizens—or Middle America.

...ha[ve] come to symbolize everything that stands in the way of progress: ‘family values,’ mindless patriotism, religious fundamentalism, racism, homophobia, retrograde views of women. Middle Americans, as they appear to the makers of educated opinion, are hopelessly shabby, unfashionable, and provincial...absurd and vaguely menacing...not because they want to overthrow the old order but precisely because their defense of it appears to deeply irrational that it expresses itself, at the higher reaches of its intensity, in fanatical religiosity, in a repressive sexuality that occasionally erupts into violence against women and gays, and in a patriotism that supports imperialist wars and a national ethic of aggressive masculinity (29).

In response, elites have taken themselves out of the public sphere, ceasing “to think of themselves as Americans in any important sense of the word,” turning to the private market rather than the public sphere to meet their needs (Lasch 1995: 47).

For the non-elite, ordinary citizens, politics have since become removed from everyday life, dominated by ideological rigidity and media polarization rather than the “opinions and interests of ordinary people” (112). Policy decisions have come to favor political donations and preferences of elites, leading to alienation and distrust. A recent empirical study by political scientists Gilens and Page (2014) analyzed 1779 policy outcomes over a period of more than 20 years. The authors find that “...economic elites and organized groups representing business interests have substantial independent impacts on U.S. government policy, while mass-based interest groups and average citizens have little or no independent influence.” When examining policy outcomes, the authors found that the probability of policy change is nearly the same, perhaps surprisingly, whether a tiny minority or a large majority of average citizens favor a proposed policy change. In contrast, a proposed policy change with low support among economically elite Americans (when one out of five are in favor) is adopted about 18% of the time,

while a potential change with high support (when four out of five are in favor) is adopted about 45% of the time. This clear case of the “imperialism of the market” (Walzer 1983) weakens trust in institutions and stymies collective action: “When money talks, everybody else is condemned to listen” (Lasch 1995: 22). In this vein, I now consider the relationship between the rise of neoliberal economic policy and the decline of trust and commitment in the public sphere.

6.2 Neoliberalism and the Triumph of the Market

It is also illuminating to consider the cultural aspects of disengagement and distrust, particularly in terms of how emerging cultural discourses interact with historical shifts in economic and social life. Scholars argue that the devastating poverty of the Great Depression and the traumas and triumphs of the Second World War led to decades of unprecedented prosperity and a sense of common purpose. The risks of modern capitalism that proved so devastating during the Depression—namely, lack of income as a result of old age, unemployment, sickness, or disability—were reconceived as collective social problems from which it was the duty of the collective to protect its citizens (Taylor-Gooby 2004). In turn, the United States government embarked on a political project of pooling the risks of millions of citizens, providing a basic floor of protection even for those with limited abilities and resources (Hacker 2006). Within the postwar era of secure wages, low unemployment, and stable nuclear family structures, Americans felt confident that their institutions were responsive and benevolent, and believed that they had a say in the future direction of their country (Putnam 2000: 47).

Since the 1970s, however, the American economic, political, and social landscape has changed dramatically. As mounting stagnation, inflation, and fear of communism in the 1970s called into question the feasibility and desirability of government intervention in the global economy, drastic economic and political restructuring seemed urgent, opening the door for

what is labeled neoliberal ideology and policy (Harvey 2005). Milton Friedman, who later became the economic adviser to Ronald Reagan, advocated a free market system with little intervention by government in the belief that only by allowing capitalism to function unhindered could economic health and political freedom be restored. Friedman (1962) argued that the government should exist only to protect private property, calling for the *privatization of risk*—an end to all currency controls and trade barriers, labor laws, and social welfare programs that were put in place to protect citizens from the market. In the 1980s, neoliberalism gained widespread support, solidifying “America’s sweeping ideological transformation away from an all-in-the-same-boat philosophy of shared risk toward a go-it-alone vision of personal responsibility” (Hacker 2006: 34) and privatized risk.

The rise of neoliberalism in the economic sphere has been accompanied by a radical transformation of social relationships in the public sphere. As an ideology, neoliberalism calls for self-reliance, rugged individualism, and untrammelled self-interest, equating lack of state interference and labor market efficiency with human freedom (Sewell 2009). Its cultural logic is best articulated by Margaret Thatcher’s 1987 declaration: “Who is society? There is no such thing! There are individual men and women and there are families and no government can do anything except through people and people look to themselves first.” Clearly, this statement is a far cry from the social connectedness embodied by the post-war generation. As a policy paradigm, neoliberalism has spurred the deregulation of labor, the loss of institutional protections from the market such as unions, the decline of risk-pooling, and the relentless pursuit of profit (Sewell 2009). In its wake, the social contracts forged in the decades following the Second World War have been severed. Freedom has been reduced to freedom from government intervention; allowing flexibility to corporations is the hallmark of neoliberalism.

The neoliberal turn has had grave consequences for the American people. According to researchers at the Economic Policy Institute

(Mishel et al. 2015), the wages of middle-wage workers have remained totally flat or declined over the past three decades, with the sole exception of the late 1990s. The wages of low-wage workers have suffered even more, falling 5% from 1979 to 2013, even though productivity has risen. However, the wages of high-wage workers rose 41%. Even more striking, the wages of the top one percent grew 138% over this time period. In the wake of these economic and social shifts, the broadly distributed prosperity of the postwar generation has given way to soaring levels of income and wealth inequality, crippling economic insecurity, and declining social mobility. Since 1979, for example, the top 20% of earners have captured 75% of overall income gain, while the bottom 20% gained only 4%.

Researchers link rising economic inequality and unfairness to plummeting social trust. One area of inquiry in this vein is how the white working class, once a bastion of class solidarity, has shifted to the Right and embraced political platforms that seem to work against their broader interests. In the three previous presidential elections, for example, the Democratic candidate lost among white working-class (defined as non-college-educated) voters by an average of 22 points. In 2012, Obama lost this group by a staggering 26 points (62–36%) (Teixeira and Halpin 2014). Why has class solidarity faded among the working class? One major explanation is that the white working class is fueled by racial resentment—in other words, that gains in opportunities for women and ethnic minorities that were mandated in the workplace in the 1970s arrived just as stable manufacturing jobs were leaving it, breeding competition and resentment among those fighting for a slice of the rapidly-diminishing pie (Cowie 2010). As civil rights groups, unions, activists, and the court system fought to make the “all-white textile mills, strictly gendered office spaces, lily-white construction sites, and segregated hiring practices at steel mills” a remnant of the past, working-class whites felt left behind (Cowie 2010: 240). Robert Reich recently predicted that white working-class men would swing back to

the Left now that their economic fortunes have become more closely tied to the poor and minority communities they once abhorred: “It’s not hard to imagine a new political coalition of America’s poor and working middle class, bent not only on repairing the nation’s frayed safety nets but also on getting a fair share of the economies’ gains.”¹ But studies of the American working class generally find that they embrace a go-it-alone cultural ethos that blames people for economic failure (Silva 2013).

My own work, *Coming Up Short: Working-Class Adulthood in an Age of Uncertainty* (2013), examines pathways to adulthood among black and white working-class young men and women who were in their mid-twenties and thirties at the onset of the Great Recession. My informants bounced from one insecure job to the next, fearing the day when an economic shock would erode the little stability they had. Through 100 in-depth interviews, I found that experiences of powerlessness, confusion, and betrayal within the labor market, institutions such as education and the government, and the family teach young working-class men and women that they are completely alone, responsible for their own fates and dependent on outside help only at their peril. As they grow up, they learn to see their struggles to survive on their own as morally right, making a virtue out of not asking for help; if they can do it, then everyone else should too. In other words, they learn the hard way that being an adult means trusting no one but yourself.

When I began this research, I expected working-class young adults to express anger at social institutions for failing to guide and support them into a stable adulthood (or at least to support unions and universal healthcare). However, I found exactly the opposite: working-class men and women staunchly embraced a moral code of personal responsibility and self-help, mocked those who blamed structural constraints for their failures, and scorned the idea of mutual obligation. One respondent stated succinctly, “You’re not owed a single thing in this world from anyone.”

¹<http://robertreich.org/post/72770488951>.

Thus, instead of turning to politics to address the obstacles standing in the way of good jobs, affordable tuition, or affordable housing, the majority of the men and women I interviewed constructed deeply *personal* coming of age stories, grounding their adult identities in recovering from their painful pasts—whether addictions, childhood abuse, family trauma, or abandonment—and forging an emancipated, transformed, and adult self (see Illouz 2008). As the sources of meaning and dignity of the adulthood of their parents' and grandparents' generations—community ties, the daily toil of the shop floor, the making of a home and family—became unattainable and undesirable, the young men and woman I spoke with were working hard to remake dignity and meaning out of emotional self-management and willful psychic transformation. Stuck in an unpromising present and wary of the future, working-class men and women are launching into adulthood from the *past*, using the pain and betrayal in their relationships with family members and partners and their interactions with institutions as a platform for self-transformation.

This withdrawal from community and public concern among the disadvantaged is confirmed in both national and international studies. Increasing income inequality has not bolstered support for downward redistribution in the wake of the Great Recession (Kenworthy and Owens 2012). Mayer's study of French low-income voters in the 2012 elections revealed that class-based voting had actually *declined*. Rather than foster solidarity, the economic hardship born of the Recession had served to deepen divisions within the working class and pushed those most fearful of downward mobility to the far right (Mayer 2014: 193). Moreover, recent studies have found that young adults are "fed up" with the politics of their parents' generation and searching for new forms of civic engagement that happen outside traditional arenas (Pilkington and Polluck 2015). In an era of "disavowing politics," where traditional forms of political engagement are treated with suspicion and apathy (Bennett et al. 2013), turning inward and focusing on controlling and managing one's own self-growth may replace the

outwardly-directed political engagement of decades past.

While the feminist slogan "the personal is political" was once intended to reveal the often-hidden but profoundly collective nature of social problems, contemporary young adults have created an endless array of individual narratives of identity that are not tied together with a common purpose. Without a collective sense of structural inequalities, the suffering and betrayal born of de-industrialization, inequality, and risk is interpreted as individual failure: their family members are seen as unworthy individuals and their addictions and illnesses as private vices. Having rejected social institutions as sites of betrayal, young adults are therefore not mobilizing to reform them, instead choosing to go it alone.

This shift toward individualism may have grave implications for the future of American democracy. Survey data already point to the increasing disengagement of working-class youth, as young adults from less educated and impoverished backgrounds are less prone to take part in social organizations, to volunteer, or to vote—the cornerstones of American democracy. Drawing on data from the US Census Bureau, which asks a representative sample of Americans about their civic habits including belonging to a voluntary organization, attending a public meeting, engaging in a boycott, working with others to fix a neighborhood problem, or contacting a public official, Putnam (2015) finds that more than twice as many high-school-educated youth are completely detached from virtually all forms of civic life, compared to college-educated youth, while more than twice as many college-educated youth engaged in more than one of these activities. Furthermore, the class gap in voting has increased over the last several decade: in the presidential election of 2008, seventy-eight percent of college-educated youth between the ages of twenty and twenty-five voted, as compared to forty-one percent of those who did not have any education past high school (Putnam 2015). When disenfranchised youth feel that they have no voice, it is possible that they will turn away from

legitimate means and embrace political radicalism or extremism.

6.3 Who Bears the Cost of Disengagement?

Why should we care about growing distrust and disengagement from social institutions? Is it simply a form of nostalgia to look back on the golden era of civic engagement and wish to return to the past? One compelling argument about why we should be concerned with withering social capital and disengagement from civic life is the effect of social isolation on children's social and economic mobility prospects. The decline in membership in civic, neighborhood, and religious associations and more families living apart from extended kinship networks have compounded into what researchers call "the privatization of childhood," where responsibility for children now lies within their own immediate families and homes.

Rutherford's *Adult Supervision Required: Private Freedoms and Public Constraints for Parents and Children* (2011) draws on an analysis of parenting advice in readily accessible commercial magazines over time, documenting the increasing privatization of childhood and what this trend may portend for freedom, autonomy, and democracy. She traces the increasing equation of parental supervision within the home with good parenting. Central to this shift is the decline in informal community networks and the increasing formal intervention of the state in parents' lives: without a publicly shared sense of responsibility for raising children, parents are now left on their own to figure out how to raise a child equipped for the rigorous demands of 21st century life. Consequently, parents are increasingly concerned with raising "my kid" in the private sphere rather than "our kids" (Putnam 2015) in the public one. The true cost of this privatization is born by poor and working-class children whose home environments can't make up for the shrinking public sphere. To the extent that good parenting is increasingly defined as within the home

environment, children whose homes do not include material and cultural resources are significantly disadvantaged.

With fewer public sources of guidance, middle-class parents have turned to the market to ensure their children's success—they *outsource* the carework formerly done by the community. They buy into neighborhoods with resource-rich schools, send their children to private schools, encourage volunteering, and fund travel to exotic locations (Holme 2002; Khan 2011). A new market of paid experts who promise college acceptance—whether tutors, private schools, standardized testing classes or college coaches—has flourished (Clarke et al. 2000). At the same time, the creation, rapid growth, and professionalization of the college consulting industry underscores parental reliance on the market for guidance (Smith and Sun 2016). For working-class children, whose families have grown more fragile and socially isolated over the same time period, adults who can guide their pathways into a stable and secure adult life are scarce. Their parents are less likely to volunteer in their schools, even though they would benefit more from involvement than their middle-class peers (Schneider and Stevenson 1999). Furthermore, nearly two thirds of children from the top income quartile (64%) report having some social support beyond their extended family, while nearly two thirds of children from the bottom quartile (62%) do not (Bruce and Bridgeland 2014).

Recent research suggests that civic engagement and social connectedness have also become too costly for working-class children (Snellman et al. 2015a). Struggling with budget cuts and deficits, many school districts have cut back on their funding for drama clubs and music programs and either reduced the number of after-school sports offered or put a high price tag on participation. The rising costs of sport teams and school clubs, combined with parents' uncertain work schedules and precarious household budgets, have made extracurricular activities a luxury for children. For example, Arlington school district in Massachusetts charges \$500 to join the football team and \$480 to wrestle. To play on the

tennis team in the Riverside Local school district in Ohio costs students \$874. Other school districts have introduced fixed fees for all athletics: the Westerville school district in Ohio charges \$240 for every sport and \$50 for choir, marching band, and the theater club.

Consequently, an increasing number of low-income students find themselves isolated afterschool. In a recent study, Snellman et al. (2015a) examined trends in extracurricular participation from the 1970s to today. And their findings are alarming: while upper-middle-class kids have become more active in school clubs and sports teams since the 1970s, working-class students have become increasingly disconnected and disengaged, their participation rates plummeting in the 1990s and remaining low ever since.

Decades of research point to a strong link between participating in social activities and graduating from high school, going to college, getting a job, and participating in political and civic life as an adult. Even after controlling for family background and cognitive ability, involvement in extracurricular activities predicts higher grades; higher college aspirations, enrollment, and completion; greater self-discipline, self-esteem, and resilience; lower risky behavior such as drug use, delinquency, and sexual activity; and lower truancy rates (Zaff et al. 2003). Furthermore, the effects of extracurricular activities appear to extend well beyond college: students who are involved in clubs and sports later earn higher wages, advance further in their careers, and even vote and volunteer more frequently than their less-involved peers. Additionally, “soft skills”—personality traits such as working well with others, leadership, grit, self-discipline, and endurance—are also cultivated through participation in extracurricular activities. Scholars have found that these non-cognitive traits are at least as important as cognitive abilities in predicting educational attainment and income ten years down the road, even after taking into account family background.

Extracurricular activities also help build important connections to mentors, such as soccer

coaches, bandleaders, and youth group pastors, that can be paramount in a young person’s life. Take the example of Carlos, an 18 year old high school senior chronicled in an article by Snellman et al. (2015a, b). By middle school, Carlos had already been pulled into a gang in his neighborhood. He was inspired, however, by a woman in the neighborhood who was going to college classes, working, and raising three children; she caught his attention one day when she loudly mocked the clothes the gang members were wearing. After becoming friends with this young woman, Carlos decided to leave the gang and do better in school. When he failed classes, he repeated them in the summer. He also started taking mixed martial arts lessons as an outlet for his anger—while he resisted the lessons for a while because he couldn’t get a signature from his dad promising to pay the fees (he didn’t even ask, knowing it was too expensive), the coach told him that he could wash his car in exchange for lessons. Carlos’ love of martial arts led him to the school wrestling team, where he is one of the top competitors—he has even begun to hope to wrestle in college.

Studies of mentoring programs like Big Brothers/Big Sisters and Philadelphia Futures Sponsor-A-Scholar have shown that these programs have broad positive social and academic impacts on adolescents like Carlos. The Big Brothers/Big Sisters program connects adult volunteers with youth from single-parent households to provide youth with an adult friend. Economists Jean Baldwin Grossman and Joseph Tierney studied the effects of Big Brothers/Big Sisters program through a comparative study of 959 10- to 16-year olds who applied to the program in 1992 and 1993². Half of the children were randomly assigned to a treatment group, who all were matched with an adult mentor. The other half was put on a waiting list. The results after eighteen months were striking: the youth who had been assigned a mentor were less likely to have initiated drug or alcohol use, to have hit someone, to have skipped class or a day of school, or to have lied to their parents; they also

²Grossman and Tierney (1998).

had higher average grades and were more likely to feel competent in their school work and report a better relationship with their parents.

Similarly, the 2011 National Survey of Children's Health asked children from middle school through high school about adult mentors in their lives. Almost one in five low-income children reported not having any mentoring relationships through school, neighborhood, or community. In contrast, only five percent of middle-class children reported not having any important adult connections outside their immediate family.

Rising economic inequality and increasing social isolation of families compound into unequal opportunities for the next generation of American children. In one light, these findings suggest a disturbing future of xenophobia, political alienation, and gridlock among disadvantaged youth that could threaten democracy and even fuel right-wing extremism as it has in Europe. If we want to improve the plight of American democracy, it is urgent that we understand the economic, cultural, and social barriers to civic participation. Otherwise, we will continue to talk past each other as alienation rages on.

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Part II
Associations

Systemic Theories of Associations: Macro and Meso Approaches

7

Carl Milofsky

Abstract

This chapter gives two perspectives on associations. One is based on theories about how democracy works in terms of the whole society—the macro perspective. The other is based on the level of whole communities or metropolitan areas—the meso or middle level perspective. Associations have long been understood as essential for involving citizens in political activity and for leading political leaders to be accountable and responsive to citizens. The United States, in particular, is seen as a society where people join many associations. Those associations then mediate between the

individual and the state by shaping their sense of identity, educating them about political and policy issues, and encouraging them to support moderate, lawful political leadership. Associations also have been recognized as important elements in building a sense of communities fostering trust and mutual commitment, and encouraging people to identify with their community on a symbolic level. Different organizational mechanisms are involved at the macro and the meso level as this chapter explains. On both the macro and the meso level, the argument is that the structure and dynamics of individual associations are less important than bringing into focus an interactive system made of many associations where their workings as collectives produce important effects. The system of associations is somewhat like the economic market where individual firms are less important than the way a large number of firms participate and make the whole system dynamic and effective.

Although Carl Milofsky is entirely responsible for the contents of this chapter, it represents a three-year working partnership between Milofsky, Margaret Harris, Brandn Green and Jordi Comas. Comas, Chap. 11 in this volume is also a product of this partnership. One version of the present chapter was presented with the title, “Towards an Organizational Theory of Associations Using Embedding and Mechanisms”, at meetings of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), Denver, CO, November, 2014. Another version of this paper authored by Milofsky was presented at meetings of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), Washington, DC, November 2016.

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7.1 Systemic Theories of Associations: Macro and Meso Approaches

This chapter lays the foundation for building organizational theories about associations. It argues that associations are best understood if we

see that individual units exist within larger interactional systems. We need to understand the dynamics of those larger systems to see how associations are relevant. Associations come and go and we learn little by trying to understand them directly, as we might try to understand more formal organizations (Galaskiewicz 2001). They are crucially important for allowing larger systems to work, however.

Associations were important for social theory in the first three-quarters of the Twentieth Century but they have not been a focus since about 1980. This chapter relies heavily on the older social theory with the hope of making its relevance clear for a 21st Century audience.

One body of literature involves a macro-theory of society emphasizing the importance of political pluralism for the effective functioning of democracy. Associations are the social units that make up that pluralism of social action.

The second body of theory describes communities as symbolically constructed groupings (for more explanation of symbolic communities see Chap. 1 in this volume) and asks how those symbolic universes are built. Many scholars view communities as being in decline. They think individualism, self-interest, social mobility, and a decline in the community supports that help to build identity are responsible for eroding community. These factors result in people lacking a sense of purpose in life, a feeling called *anomie* (Durkheim 1951). Putnam (2000, 2015) blames the loss of community on a decline in the density and effectiveness of associations. Real as Putnam's observations may be, this chapter argues that communities are being built up at the same time they are dissolving. Associations play a crucial role in building symbolic community and drawing residents into a commitment to them.

The core assertion of this chapter is that associations working together create a stable system of mutual exchange at both the local and the societal level. Associations do essential work for society carrying out important tasks, allowing for multiple, contrasting political perspectives to be given effective expression, and providing settings for community building and for feelings

of commitment and moral action among citizens. At the societal level, it is the system of associations that governs and that makes society effective. Governments are part of the system but they may only be bit players. The system of associations is like the system of firms that makes up an economic market. The market as a cohesive interactive system is what makes the economy work, not the individual firms that make up the market. Centralized government decisions cannot make the overall society function efficiently. The cohesion and energy of the interactive system of associations is what makes society work. This chapter calls these interactive systems, made up of associations, "stable anarchies".

7.2 Macro and Meso Systems

Associations only make sense as elements of larger interactive networks. They make the central organizational dynamics of these holistic systems possible through processes of democracy (Rothschild, Chap. 8 and Comas, Chap. 11 in this volume explore ways of thinking about organizational dynamics in associations) and by mobilizing and stabilizing resources.

Many discussions of how associations foster democracy have a political science orientation and they make governance and the way government works the point of analysis. This chapter suggests that government may or may not be a central actor in the network of associations. Indeed, in one society we studied the system of civil society organizations operated quite independently of the authoritarian government that ruled the society.

I will offer the concept of "stable anarchy" (Milofsky and Nega 2013) to conceptualize the overall operation of the system of associations. A stable anarchy is "a social arrangement in which contenders struggle and defend durable resources, without effective regulation by either higher authorities or social pressures." (Hirschleifer 1995: 27). This does not mean that government has no role, it just enters the system as one institutional competitor among many that may have more or less influence. Somewhat

unexpected, given that we may think of them as chaotic and disorderly, is that anarchies endure over time and have a highly structured system of competition and exchange.

On both the macro and the meso levels, particular associations tend to be organizationally trivial. This makes them hard to analyze as firms (Milofsky 1987). When we view them as the basic units of interactive resource exchange and decision-making systems, they are important, however. We lack theoretical frameworks that could guide empirical research and that would help us to conceptualize what we observe when we study associations. The goal of this chapter is to articulate such frameworks for the macro and meso levels of analysis.

7.3 Defining Associations

Associations are informal organizations created by a group to achieve a purpose. Some version of this definition is given by various authors who have provided particularly good analyses of associations (Sills 1957; Perrow 1970; Sarason 1974; Pearce 1993). It helps to distinguish between communities or families, which are settings for living and that are based on a sort of organization that anthropologists or social psychologists would recognize (Banton 1968), and collective efforts that are purposive and focused (Billis 1992). We imagine that as people live together in communities or families, challenges arise where people believe something should be done to address and solve a problem. A few individuals accept the challenge of solving the problem and they create a structure—the association—to do this work. This gives us an intuitive image of what an association is.

7.3.1 Instrumental Associations

A strength of this definition is that it links in a natural way to the theory of formal organizations. Organization theorists from the 1960s and 1970s like Thompson (1967) and Stinchcombe (1983) centered their discussion of an organization on its

“technology”. This is a division of labor that transforms raw materials into a finished product, that has value to constituencies, and that can provide access to an ongoing flow of raw materials. The organization achieves a goal or produces a product that can be sold or used to justify new grants, which allows the process of production to start over again. In this framing, management, hierarchy, membership boundaries, and ownership only exist if they are needed for the division of labor to be successful. Management and administration usually are taken as the main focus in contemporary management analysis. They define “the” organization (Tschirhart and Bielefeld 2012).

From the Thompson/Stinchcombe perspective, the formal, highly structured organizations that concern nonprofit management scholars just represent one type (Smith 1997a, b, 2000). Increasingly we recognize entities like network organizations (Powell 1990) that are not legally incorporated and have no clear boundaries as well as democratic organizations (Rothschild-Whitt 1979; Rothschild and Whitt 1986; Rothschild, Chap. 9 in this volume) that have no standard roles and that are not set up as hierarchies. This perspective fits the way Perrow (1970) and Pearce (1993) discuss associations.

This beginning framework, the division of labor or *instrumental* approach, is inadequate for fully defining associations as they are explored by social scientists. We need four other frameworks. These are the interactive, affective, advocacy, and linking perspectives. The frameworks mostly come from Pearce (1993) following Etzioni (1964), although the linking type is not in her typology.

7.3.2 Interactive Associations

Some associations are primarily *interactive*. In these it matters less what they do than that members are together. Self-help groups are probably the most important example (Borkman 1999). While authors talk about these groups as therapeutic, their greater value comes from people simply being together and sharing the reality

of a challenged identity (Messer 1994; Schrock et al. 2004).

7.3.3 Affective Associations

Some associations are primarily *affective* and focus on ritual and symbolic behavior. The substantive content of their activities matters less than the emotional impact and spiritual meaning that comes from group events. Religious worship is the most familiar example. Although worship usually happens in the context of a formal church organization, the emotional impact can be produced during informal prayer camps and meetings (see Adams and Harmon, Ch. 27). It also can be produced in secular settings like Chen's (2009) example of the Burning Man Festival or in political movement actions like those of the AIDS activist organization, ACT UP (Aronowitz 1996).

7.3.4 Advocacy Groups

Some associations are primarily *advocacy* social movements where people come together to advance a social cause. Fluid organizations are created and they may be formally constituted, but those structures are abandoned when political expediency requires new strategies and new alliances (Keck and Sikkink 1998). Periods between issue crises require a stable organizational presence that can bridge between crises or flare-ups. During periods of activism entrepreneurs and strategists take over, often pushing stable leaders and activists to the side in favor of new, effective alliances and the requirements of dramatic political action.

7.3.5 Linking Associations

Finally, some associations are primarily *linking* or representative groups. They are important in democratic political theory as interest groups that

represent community constituencies and link them to political representatives (Dahl 1961; Meyerson and Banfield 1955; Couto 1999). They may link local groups and constituencies vertically through the political system (Hunter 1993; Skocpol 2003). They also may link major institutions in local communities, serving as what Warner and Lunt (1942; Milofsky 2008b) call "secondary associations". Finally, movements organized through social media like revolutionary movements that were so effective during Arab Spring in 2011 (al-Saleh 2015) shifted their purposes with a minimum of internal structure and yet effectively challenged governments.

7.3.6 Failure of Definition

Providing a definition for associations is challenging because of this variety of perspectives. Within each category we also find such variety in particular examples of associations that some theorists have said it is simply impossible to produce general concepts (Knoke and Prenskey 1984).

Evolutionary theories related to the development of bureaucratic organizations tell us we should expect great structural variety. If formal organizations become more similar and more homogenous in their form through the processes of evolution, they must have started as diverse and different. Only with this variety do the processes that cause organizations to evolve and become more isomorphic over time have raw material to work on (DiMaggio and Powell 1988). Indeed, some of the strongest theories of associations treat them as proto bureaucracies (Rothschild-Whitt 1979; Wood 1992) or proto oligarchies (Michels 1949). One of the important themes in the associational literature has to do with rules and procedures that have been adopted to block bureaucratic evolution allowing the democratic, participatory, and spiritual qualities of associations to be preserved (Green and Woodrow 1994; Hopewell 1987; Messer 1994; Rothschild and Whitt 1986).

7.4 Associations and Systems

These definitions help to clarify the subject of our discussion. They also deflect our attention from seeing associations in collective terms by making them seem like a type of organization. This chapter offers two collective frames, the polity and the local interorganizational field.

The polity is a term borrowed from political science and it is useful because it relates to the entire domain served by a governmental unit. It is an unfortunate term because it places government at the center. In contrast, the focus in this chapter is on the interactive network of civil society organizations—the stable anarchy. Governmental officials and public organizations are participants but whether or not they dominate is an empirical issue. Government may have a presence as just one more institution, competing for influence and providing benefits to citizens.

The local interorganizational field is a concept that was offered fifty years ago by Warren (1967). He studied of the collection of institutions, culturally and professionally distinct from each other, that have hegemonic power to make decisions for a community, and to provide programs in specific social service arenas. Warren's usage is different from that of Dimaggio and Powell (1988) who focused mainly on the professional cultural fields and resource systems in which organizations are embedded.

The focus Warren gives to a specific geographic area downplays associations that lack a geographical focus, like social media groups. However, the locality focus helps us to clarify what should be meant by an interorganizational field that functions as a stable anarchy. Scholars of the future can discuss what the field idea might mean when applied to associations that are not geographically tied.

Warren focused on specific organizations and the way a metropolitan area divides up legitimacy to act into separate, substantive institutions. He called these “community decision organizations (CDOs)” and included the institutions of health care (Barr 2016: 42–80), law and justice, education, social welfare services, government, and the economy among other institutional

systems. Most CDOs are more formal as organizations than the associations that are the subject of this chapter. Two ideas from Warren's discussion are key. (1) A circumscribed local area exists as the functional domain within which a collection of associations is embedded (Granovetter 1985) and within which they relate. (2) There is an enduring, interactive network whose members symbolically define the nature of a local community (Hunter 1974; Suttles 1972). Together, these make up the local interorganizational field that will be the focus of our discussion.

7.4.1 The Self-maintaining Dynamic of the Pluralist Polity

Individual units—the particular associations—may be important to us personally but they come and go and have no specific, enduring importance. In this respect they are similar to particular firms that operate in the context of an economic market. The market is made up of a collection of firms operating independently, producing goods, responding to the needs of consumers, seeking to maximize their individual self-interest, and sometimes failing and ceasing to exist.

The entrepreneurs who create firms are likely to remain in the system even as their particular businesses go bankrupt. They create new firms and try to make new ventures succeed. It is the system, the way members pass information back and forth, adjust to each other, supply each other with products that meet their needs, and that operate with no central direction but via mutual adjustment, that makes the system work. The same logic that applies to firms and markets applies to associations and polities (Milofsky 1987).

The polity is similar to the market in being made up of a large number of autonomous organizations and associations that interact, compete, and jointly make decisions for the whole collective. The polity operates on the macro level when it encompasses an entire societal or urban-level social system. It is made up of associations that have come into existence

to address problems in the community, to advocate for interests that concern citizens, as venues where people enjoy leisure activities together, to further democratic participation, and to provide services to different people.

Some of the associations become formal organizations. We imagine an evolutionary model of organizations where, in the world of civil society, the entities may start as associations and movements but develop and evolve into formal, sometimes large, CDOs. They receive grants, and serve as extensions of government in terms of providing quasi-public services or lobbying to influence government and political decisions (Salamon 1987; Smith and Lipsky 1993). However, following the ideas of anarchy and embeddedness, civil society organizations may operate entirely outside of the realm of government while carrying out diverse and valuable social functions.

Cnaan (2006) has demonstrated this by measuring the value of social programs provided by congregations and religious organizations in Philadelphia. He shows that their monetary value is several times as great as the services provided by the city government (see Chap. 23 in this volume). A study of civil society organizations in Ethiopia (Milofsky and Nega 2013) found that even when the government outlawed them, civil society organizations continued on, provided services and functioning as an integrated democratic and service providing network.

Pluralist political theory talks about how civil society organizations operate as a group and how they relate to government (Dahl 1982). An enduring, effective system of socially engaged associations is necessary to create a “strong democracy” (Barber 1984; Fung 2003; Hirst 1994; Warren 2001, 2011). Pluralist theorists talk about “influence” as the main currency developed and traded in pluralist systems. It is important to keep in mind that the framework offered in this chapter differs from most political theory treatments in that we treat government as just one of the interest groups that compete to acquire resources, carry out projects, and win the hearts and minds of the population.

We often trace back to the writings of de Tocqueville (1945) discussions of the interplay between civil society organizations and government—collectively they together make up activities of the polity. This is partly because Tocqueville made astute observations of American society but also because it is useful to contrast French ideas about democracy with those that prevail in the United States.

In France, the democratic vision has been that citizens relate directly to the state. Citizens, in the French view, do not work their way through intervening structures to engage and be recognized by the state. In the United States, complicated lower levels of government and elaborate systems of interest groups, ethnic movements, and the private associations make the case that disadvantaged sub-populations are truly American and deserve the full rights of citizenship. In France, until recently, new ethnic groups and others that might challenge hegemonic cultural ideas and values were simply French and thus full citizens. Intermediate associations were generally viewed as special interest groups that were working to preserve privilege and work against egalitarianism for all citizens. The French arrangement with its assertive views about equality has led to periodic mass political upheavals that sometimes led to lots of aristocrats being killed. Tocqueville in his writing was an aristocrat and a conservative in the sense that he came from a tradition where the masses could not be trusted to be well informed and rational.

At the same time, de Tocqueville (1945) was thoughtful and observant enough to see that in America democracy was less dependent on educated, rational, moderately active citizens than is democracy in France. When Americans share an interest or have a concern or perceive that action is needed they form and join associations at the local level. These associations are then linked to higher levels of government. Tocqueville perceived that individuals are likely to belong to several associations.

When political decisions are being made individuals may find themselves members of associations that have opposed interests or

perceptions. Individuals may be pulled in opposite directions when public issues are debated and, because this is true, democratic debate may be more moderate in America than was the case in Tocqueville's France. In Europe, conservatives feared mob rule. In Tocqueville's view, there was less for elites to fear in America because of the moderating influence of voluntary associations.

The idea of political pluralism or polyarchy (Dahl 1971; Lindblom 1977) placed the nature and activity of associations at the center of social theory in the first half of the Twentieth Century in America (Sills 1968). At the simplest level, clashing associational interests create checks and balances that counter political extremism.

Aristocrats and elites still fundamentally did not trust citizens to feel responsible for the overall well being of society, to support practices of fairness and concern for the needs of minority groups, or to develop leadership and governance skills. The counter perspective is that of *civil society* (Ferguson 1995), which has its roots in the writings of English liberals like Locke (2003) and Scottish moralists like Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson (Hunter and Milofsky 2007). These thinkers sought a minimal role for the state and for any sort of central authority.

In their perspective, individuals had clear understandings of their own desires and self-interests. Collective social controls only were necessary for specific and narrow purposes. Smith's (2016) theory of the economic market is one example of how individual choice could create a collective mechanism, "the invisible hand", that would produce efficient solutions. Civil society, in his view, grows out of the tendency for people to be mutually empathetic. This concern for others creates a social system where individuals feel a responsibility to contribute to the whole while also expecting that they have certain private rights (Smith 2002).

Modern elite theorists criticize the pluralist model saying that business corporations and individuals of extreme wealth continue to dominate the system, a pattern that seems to have become more pronounced at the end of the Twentieth Century (Domhoff 1979; Lindblom

1977). This form of elite domination does not overlap with the older, conservative aristocratic perspective of Tocqueville. Rather some observers see corporate elites as equivalent to capitalists in the Marxist theoretical framework, working only for their own class self interests and showing little concern for either the welfare or the representation of the mass of citizens. Marxists of the 1970s and 1980s (Bowles and Gintis 1986; Bluestone and Harrison 1982) are the most direct expression of this point of view.

The back and forth argument between modern economic elite theorists and pluralists is important for this chapter because it makes associations central for understanding the political sociology of the whole system. Not only legitimacy in governance but social order in the whole society depends on there being a functioning, somewhat incoherent system of interest groups that citizens trust and believe in sufficiently to motivate their participation. If citizens are not actively involved and effective at generating "people power" (see Chapter 33 on the Alinsky organizing style), then, as Dahl and Lindblom (1953) argue, elite leaders may just ignore them and act as they wish without any accountability.

If citizens relate to many voluntary involvements, they will tend to belong to associations that have cross cutting ideological positions—Bernie Sanders supporting gun ownership; socialist Catholics opposing abortion. One consequence is that the mixed motivations of members will make it difficult to mobilize and sustain extreme political positions without encountering opposition from within their own political movements [Coser 1956, Simmel 1955, call these cross-cutting networks and a web of affiliation].

A second consequence is that this same dynamic creates pressure for politicians to make ideologically unsavory compromises if they wish to reach decisions (Meyerson and Banfield 1955). If politics are not partially bi-partisan and if citizens do not use interest groups to make conflicting demands on their leaders, politicians may choose to not make decisions. A rich fabric of competing interest groups creates stability and gradual ideological change throughout whole

societies. When such groups are lacking or ineffective, it opens the way for politicians to develop a cult of personality where their pronouncements have little relationship to actual policies or real political disagreements (Milofsky and Harris 2017).

The critical dialog between elite theorists and pluralists is not just an academic argument about which perspective best describes contemporary political culture. Political scientist Paul Arthur considers the presence of a variegated, effective system of interest groups a variable and one that centrally determines whether diverse, oppositional groups can co-exist and govern (Arthur 2001, 2005). His example is Northern Ireland where he argues that historically there simply have been no “politics”. Saying that, he explicitly points to the United States where, in his view, politics exist and operate and where these politics drive decision making in the political system.

In Northern Ireland the primary political groups, Catholics and Protestants, dominate the political system, are mutually exclusive, and they squeeze out all of the “secondary” interest groups (like feminists, gay activists, disabled activists, or artists). In the wake of the Good Friday Agreement in 1999, leaders of the political/social system explicitly set out to organize political interest groups that would address issues having nothing to do with the sectarian divide. The hope was that strong interest groups (like medical care providers or industrial economic development groups) would form and force a moderate governance system (Acheson and Milofsky 2004).

Northern Ireland provides an example of the conflict and chaos that can result when there is a lack of politics in Paul Arthur’s sense. The example of Hitler and totalitarianism in Nazi Germany is another case where the theory of how associations moderate and stabilize politics has been crucial. Post-World War II social theorists asked how a prosperous, previously democratic society like Germany could be taken over by a racist, genocidal, totalitarian government. One question is why citizens who previously had expressed humanitarian values could participate in the barbarism of Naziism (what Hughes

[1972] termed “good people and dirty work”) or stand by and allow the government to operate.

The most powerful answer is that society in Germany became atomized in the late 1920s or early 1930s. That is, individuals did not affiliate with or believe in the power of associations. Rather, they lived increasingly privatized lives. The result was a “mass society” (Ortega y Gasset 1932) where society acted as a mass (rather than as a collection of particles—interest groups). Mass society lacks the moderating structure created by the “web of affiliations”. More importantly, it lacks the educational machinery built into the associational structure.

Political information and interpretations pass down the political structure from politicians to local activists just as influence passes up the structure from activists to politicians (Couto 1999; Skocpol 2003). Lacking the moderation produced by associations and lacking the transfer of political information, demagogues are able to define issues of concern to society with a minimum of concrete, accurate data. Being ideological leaders, they are able to create mass citizen movements to support their governments and this legitimates their extreme political actions, as was the case with Nazi governmental practices (Kornhauser 1959).

Mass society theory was invented to explain events of the 1930s and 1940s but important contemporary social research and theory expresses concern about the decline of associational involvement in contemporary society. Beginning with “Bowling Alone: Democracy in America at Century’s End” (1997, 2000), Robert Putnam documented the decline of association memberships in American society. Although Putnam is a political scientist, he does not seem to view the decline of bowling leagues in terms of political representation.

Rather, in his recent book *Our Kids* (Putnam 2015), written with the support of Silva (2013—see Chap. 7 in this volume), Putnam describes the lack of informal supports for working class young people in terms of shaping a meaningful identity and benefiting from the way associations used to provide access to industrial jobs. His

emphasis is on what Merton (1938) following Durkheim (1951) called *anomie*. Putnam's perspective does not emphasize youth crime, but his point of view is very close to the way Cloward and Ohlin (1960) used the theory of *anomie* to explain delinquency.

Associations play a critically important role in identity formation and in the linkage between identity and political participation. This is the main thrust of Skocpol's (2003) work on associations. In the early 20th Century local fraternal organizations not only provided a framework for the structure of community life but their regional and national associations and policy processes carried out the pluralist work we have described in terms of vertically expressing political interests while passing information down the structure.

According to Skocpol, contemporary mass democratic organizations, like the National Organization for Women, have mastered the technology of running society-side organizations with millions of members while at the same time not including members in the vertical participatory structure in a meaningful way (Skocpol 2003, Ch. 6). Other scholars have talked about national associations in a way that explores and analyzes the vertical organizational dynamics of franchise-form organizations (Andrews et al. 2010; Hunter 1993; McCarthy and Wolfson 1996; Zald 1970).

Skocpol's argument, that the thinning of local and vertical associational networks is weakening the framework for stable politics and encouraging movements that promote extremism, is well articulated by Aronowitz's (1996) analysis of the AIDS activist organization ACT-UP. ACT UP used intense, conflict-oriented political actions both to form and strengthen identity and to use unconventional, disruptive tactics to achieve important political changes.

Like it or not, once political innovations like those of ACT UP are introduced into the political arena, activist movements of all political orientations and in all national contexts learn new things that work. When they apply these techniques, they tend to undermine the process and the efficacy of democratic stability models. These assume that network interconnections and mutual

accountability are the bases of influence in democratic political systems. Innovators like Donald Trump explore new ways of building coalitions and influence and reject or ignore old pluralist truisms (Milofsky and Harris 2017).

7.4.2 Organizations that Create Community

The term "meso" refers to social systems that operate in "the middle range" (Merton 1951). Analyzing associations at this level allows us to work down to the level of particular organizations and communities. Yet we still will be focusing on the whole system—on the polity. Indeed, we have important examples of pluralist research and theory that was carried out at the level of a single city, like Dahl's (1961) study of New Haven, CT, *Who Governs?*, or Meyerson and Banfield's (1955) study of Chicago, *Politics, Planning, and the Public Interest*.

The difference will be that where pluralist theory talks about the influence system of exchange in a framework comparable to the economic theory of the market, this section will talk about communities and how they come to be. As we see in other chapters of this book (Hunter, Chap. 1, Rothschild, Chap. 8, Harding and Simons, Chap. 10, Shea, Chap. 23, and McTavish, Chap. 31, for example), communities exist and develop as symbolic creations. That is, their boundaries, central commitments, and feelings of trust come about as a physical territory and/or a set of interests and commitments are defined as social processes and as residents recognize those boundaries are important in terms of their personal identities. Associations are the main actors in the symbolic creation of community. This section will talk about how this happens.

In the last section, the system of anarchy at this level was described as an "interorganizational field" of actors. On one hand there are institutions or cultural systems comprised of formal organizations and network organizations that act on behalf of and make decisions for local regions. Warren (1967) called these "community decision organizations" while Long (1958)

referred to “an ecology of games”. These discussions take a “top down” perspective treating whole systems as the unit of analysis—albeit systems located at the level of a metropolitan area.

We also want to take a “bottom up” perspective that starts at the level of smaller non-profits, informal groups that act with respect to issues, and local political and cultural collectives. These may be formal to a greater or lesser extent. They may come and go in response to local issues and controversies and they represent historical affinities and alliances. They may extend beyond local community boundaries to provide technical assistance (Milofsky 2008c; New World Foundation 1980) or to link to larger institutions (Berger 1977; Couto 1999). Communities vary in terms of how densely populated they are with these groups. Coleman (1957) refers to this as their degree of associational pluralism and Putnam (2000) might describe this in terms of the density of social capital that is present.

7.4.2.1 The Community in Decline Perspective

Putnam (2000, 2015) claims that public involvement in and support for associations is in decline. Many place-based communities (as opposed to issue- or interest-based communities) have lost their vitality. European immigrants’ community involvement in the first half of the Twentieth Century was related to personal identity. This was an organic or natural outgrowth of the way people built multi-dimensional relationships in communities. These fostered strong trust and commitment to local teams, rituals, and features of the physical place. Community grew out of status positions people experienced and the relationships between status groups (Warner and Lunt 1942). As local status groups became less important to people, community life seemed to thin out and decline. The cultures of local communities with European heritages have indeed been in decline (Brown and Schafft 2011: 33–101).

This community decline perspective has neglected, however, counter-trends that foster

community building and creation. The pattern we see with older European communities often is not true for immigrant ethnic communities [see Klinenberg (2002) and Chap. 21 in this volume]. Immigrant communities have generational life cycles where first-generation communities tend to be rich with social capital and third generation communities, where many of the younger people have become assimilated into the broader American society, are structurally weak. An ecological division of labor exists where certain functions are performed by neighborhoods that are reproduced from generation to generation. Community succession occurs when new ethnic groups move into a space and push out the older ones.

The community decline perspective also overlooks community building that occurs through a process called “the community of limited liability” (Strauss 2014/1961). This view emphasizes individualism, social mobility, and a loss in informal social relationships of the sort that used to grow out of associations. That same individualistic, utility maximizing and cosmopolitan orientation that observers like Putnam (1995) and Wirth (1938) say dissolves social cohesion can be a source for new building by emphasizing the symbols of community and the importance of feelings of membership.

7.4.2.2 The Community of Limited Liability Perspective

The community of limited liability process occurs when an organization, acting on its own narrow self-interest, recognizes that it can only grow and prosper if people near by believe that they are part of a meaningful community and act accordingly. The organization and others acting in concert may sponsor and organize events designed to encourage local residents to feel that their area has meaning and definition as a neighborhood and a community (McQuarrie and Marwell 2009).

The owners of businesses that sponsor community-building events may themselves have little identification with the local community (although they may also be deeply committed to the community). They and their

organization benefits when local residents develop a stronger sense that their local community exists, needs to be supported, and is personally important to them in terms of their psychological identity.

As an analytic perspective, this approach sounds to some people like it is cynical and manipulative. For example, I studied a small rural church congregation where the pastor self-consciously followed a policy of identifying issues of importance to the surrounding community, trying himself to become a leader of the community identifying and addressing key issues (in this case drug abuse), and seeking to use his activism as a way to draw members into his failing congregation (Milofsky 1997). Some commentators on this study were disapproving that the pastor seemed to be manipulative about bringing members into his church rather than simply relying on his ability to make a straightforward spiritual appeal to people who walked through the doors of the church. However, this is not an uncommon methodology and it is not so unpopular when used in other religious contexts (Mead 1991).

Similarly, it came across as an ingenious and committed strategy when it was used to strengthen a rural school district (Milofsky and Green 2015). Although his district included some suburban neighborhoods, most of it was made up of farms and very small towns. There was no population center and without some psychological identification with a community, the Superintendent worried residents would not support the upcoming tax referendum that would raise necessary funding. To create more of a sense of community, the Superintendent launched a private fundraising project to renovate sports fields at the school. Once built, the fields would be opened for community residents to use the track and youth sports teams would be allowed to use the fields. Since maintenance and upkeep would not come out of the school district budget, he hoped residents would see the school facilities as a center of community and would come to value the community as something they identify with and want to support.

The community-building strategy the church pastor and the superintendent used is traced back to the Chicago School of community sociology. One of its key members, Morris Janowitz (1952), used the term “community of limited liability” to explain why local community newspapers survive in a metropolitan area like Chicago when residents are also served by major media and news sources. His answer was that neighborhood newspapers provide news of small-scale events like church festivals and children’s sports events that interest neighborhood residents. Local newspapers survive, he argued, because local businesses and civic organizations need them and advertise in them to promote their own products and to encourage a sense of community affiliation.

Janowitz recognized that in a major city most residents have a precious sense of their busy schedules and prefer not to get involved in community events unless they receive a clear benefit. There may be some active involvement in the community but residents’ participation is not very deep. They are reluctant to volunteer because they want to limit their liability in terms of being expected to be involved in activities that would not interest them. A later Chicago School member, Strauss (2014/1961) linked Janowitz’s concept of the community of limited liability to Wirth’s (1938) article, “Urbanism as a Way of Life”. Wirth argued that an urban life style that was based on cultivating cosmopolitan tastes in the city and pursuing individualistic career goals was a positive aspect of modern society. For communities and the small organizations that depend on their vitality, however, narrow self-interest among residents must be overcome. This happens when residents are drawn to participate in and appreciate affairs like community festivals or other civic events that are sponsored by local businesses and publicized by the local press.

7.4.2.3 The Community of Limited Liability as Organizational Theory

Unfortunately, there has been little work following up on the organization-theory aspects of

Janowitz's (1952) book. His work has been most important in stimulating the symbolic communities perspective in urban sociology (Hunter and Suttles 1972; Strauss 2014/1961; Suttles 1968, 1972; Hunter 1974), which makes the important point that communities do not objectively exist but are symbolically constructed by residents who develop an identity connection to them. However, this work focusses on whole communities and is not concerned with the way businesses and associations help to build community identification.

Janowitz's (1952) work is important for this chapter because it prompts us to expect entrepreneurs and activists to produce associations and to build community identification among residents. We see specific strategies that could be presented as a theory of association management of the sort Comas helps to articulate in Chapter 11. It would be helpful to have more analytic case studies that explored the variety of organizational approaches that could make this strategic approach successful.

Following the community decline perspective, we acknowledge that communities and community contexts will not be equally fertile grounds for developing associations because the density of social capital varies from community to community (Cattell 2011; Pearce 1993). In communities with weak social capital, like Klinenberg's (2002) North Lawndale, the ecology of associations will also be sparse, as he notes. We can imagine organizers working to build up the density of associations and trying to strengthen community identification (Kretzman and McKnight 1993; McKnight and Block 2010). Other communities, like Klinenberg's South Lawndale have dense social capital and here we will see a rich variety of associations.

While dense social capital is generally a positive thing, we lack field-level theorizing about complexities that arise when associational networks are dense. Some communities are highly "pluralistic"—which is to say that they have many associations and a long history of community and political competition among those associations. According to an old, but exhaustive, study by Coleman (1957) it turns out

that conflict tends to be more frequent in communities that have dense networks of associations. When it occurs the conflict is more intense where there are many associations and those associations have been active in local political decision-making.

The challenge for communities is to effectively identify and act upon new social problems. Cattell (2011) shows us that communities with too strong bonding social capital cannot break through their strong boundaries to bridge and ally with other near-by communities or with outside influentials. These ties are needed to build consensus that a local situation is truly a problem and then to initiate collective action to deal with the problem. In sociological terminology, this is called the process of socially constructing a social problem (Kitsuse and Spector 1973; Spector and Kitsuse 1973; Spector and Kitsuse 1987; Hilgartner and Bosk 1988). "Moral entrepreneurs" (Gusfield 1955, 1986) must exist in a community for problem advocacy to happen and they then must be supported in building associational networks that can initiate a successful community response (Milofsky 2008a).

Communities with relatively few associations tend not to define local challenges as "problems" at all. They are less likely to form oppositional conflict blocks. To the extent conflict occurs it tends to be individualized (between individuals rather than groups [Coleman 1957]). Interestingly, a different book than Janowitz dealing with the community press tells us that the local press is more involved in these conflicts when the community is pluralistic. Where there are fewer associations, residents orient more to national media for news rather than to local press sources, which are more likely to report on controversies (Tichenor, Donohue, and Olien 1980).

Whether associational networks are dense and prone to conflict, effective in terms of their bridging and linking social capital (Putnam 2000), or weak so that communities cannot define social problems, community action comes out of the interactional system. It is not imposed from above by a governmental system or by a disconnected set of elites. This is the central dynamic of what this chapter has called stable

anarchy—the process by which an interactive system generates collective action and decisions.

7.5 Conclusion

The core argument of this chapter is that energetic interactional networks are an important presence at both the macro and meso level of society. Associations are the entities that drive these networks but as organizations they are hard to study. Associations come and go. They may be more focused on process than on products. They lack the sharp boundaries and focus on creating products that we may not find in larger, more formal organizations. They create a collective environment that builds symbolic commitments to communities and to society as a whole.

This chapter advanced the concept of “stable anarchy” to describe the nondirected system of associations. Individually associations are vague and weak. They only become powerful when we see them in terms of actors being embedded in a local ecology in which residents and other organizations have created a social and political history. Granovetter (1985) uses the term embeddedness to describe the background matrix of relationships that is necessary for institutionalized values to develop. He is particularly talking about the economic market and challenging those who think participants are atomized and self-interested. The system would only be predictable and have legitimacy and stability if underlying values and norms were in play.

The same applies to local associational fields as we see when we review the literature of community network studies. There is a foreground of ambitious, self-interested actors who work to identify and popularize social issues and to foster community feeling. Behind those active, immediate activities there is an influence system that has developed over time and that includes actors who are locally recognized as powerful elite actors (Laumann and Pappi 1976). The background system is a repository of local community values and also of historical affiliations and political divisions. They usually are

hidden in the routine patterns of everyday life. They spring to life when the right issue or conflict arises, taking the form of new social movements and community factures that spread may spread rapidly and energize community involvement and action.

This chapter argues that associations are critical to the vitality of social, political, and economic life. We should appreciate that they have a continuing dynamic, energizing role in our social world. We also can recognize specific organizational dynamics if we understand how the system of stable anarchy works. Much of what we perceive as the organizational ambiguity of associations comes about because we do not understand the way these organizations relate to and energize larger systems in which they are embedded.

Associations seem insignificant if we look at an organization like the PTA but they become more important if we recognize the importance of the work they do linking the school district to other institutions like the juvenile court. Thus at the community level we perceive a different organization to be at work if we recognize that the church, the school district, or the PTA is doing more than just carrying out its narrow activity. A primary focus of their work also is to encourage surrounding residents to develop commitment to community as a meaningful, shared reality and space. Similarly, at the macro level we see a technical assistance organization or a diocesan office doing more than providing nuts and bolts instruction to groups at the neighborhood level. These organizations also are embedded in linking, franchise-like systems that perform vital, intermediate linking functions. Without them local and regional activity are not tied together. As we see in Chap. 20, where disasters are the focus, without this linkage regional response organizations simply cannot act effectively at the local level.

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Creating Participatory Democratic Decision-Making in Local Organizations

8

Joyce Rothschild

Abstract

Organizations at the local level that seek to resist hierarchy and conduct themselves along participatory democratic lines appeared so radical in the 1970s that they were called “alternative institutions”. They were born in social movements that wanted to create a more egalitarian, just and democratic society. In the last couple of decades, their model of inclusive decision-making has spread by the thousands into the non-profit sector, the public sector and even the for-profit sector. Indeed, it has become almost ubiquitous and a whole industry of consultants has developed to facilitate organizations’ efforts to develop more inclusive, participatory and empowering decisional processes. This paper seeks to explain how participatory democratic decision-making norms and practices have evolved over these decades, and in so doing, it identifies nine foundational elements of participatory democratic decisional processes and contrasts these characteristics with the processes used in representative democratic systems of decision-making, along these nine dimensions. Next, this paper examines four

examples of participatory democratic organizations in action, each drawn from the recent research literature—a food cooperative, certain self-help groups, a Quaker meeting and some public organizations led by professional consultants seeking to advance voice and democratic participation in decision-making. From this investigation, it is evident that participatory and deliberative practices of decision-making can vary enormously between groups that share these goals. Nevertheless, these examples show that these efforts to guarantee voice to all members of the group can succeed in reconciling individual differences of views that may have existed, are generally very satisfying to the people involved, and, most importantly, may be essential for personal transformation to take place. Further, the author shows that these emergent “Democracy 2.0 standards” for decision-making, as she calls them, are not just about the right of members to share thoughts and experiences on an equal footing; they also pre-suppose an obligation on the part of the group to consider, deliberate and seek consensus. Thereby, these newer participatory decisional processes are catalyzing in participants not only greater capacity to speak, but also greater capacity to listen. When we turn our attention to group process characteristics that can give rise to personal growth, a feeling of connection with others and a sense of

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belonging to an enduring community, then we come to understand why so many people in recent decades have chosen to build or get involved in local organizations that offer equal and ample voice to all who would be affected by the decision at hand and where listening, consideration and consensus-seeking are the organizational practice.

Over the past few decades in this country, thousands upon thousands of organizations have been created at the local or community level that seek to utilize participatory-democratic or deliberative democratic methods of decision-making. Some of these are public sector agencies that are seeking a new approach to gaining citizen input and engagement in some policy or budget at hand, some are not-for-profit organizations that seek to build volunteers' engagement in this way, and some are movement-based organizations that have an a priori commitment to encouraging the voice and participation of everyone who wants to be included. Examples abound: from self-help groups that operate in this fashion to giving circles that seek to raise and distribute donations in this way; from public agencies to workers' and consumers' co-operatives. And too, this has become the normative way speaking, listening and making decisions in many social movement based organizations. In part II, this chapter seeks to describe the specific characteristics of participatory-democratic decision-making and to explain exactly how it differs from the representative democratic norms of decision-making with which we are all familiar. In part III, I discuss how democratic decision-making works in four illustrations, each chosen *because* they operate so differently from the other three and *because* they each represent hundreds or thousands of similar examples. My conclusions in the final part of this chapter are based on the decision-making practices we observe in each of these four illustrations and what their comparisons reveal. In an effort to explain *why* so much participatory-democratic activity has developed at the local level in this country, I begin this

chapter with a very brief history of the evolution of 'democracy' in America because, as I see it, the democratic aspiration and its partial frustration at the national level, are at the heart of our genesis story in the United States and go far in explaining face-to-face democracy's enduring appeal at the local level.

8.1 A Brief History of the Idea of Democracy in the United States: All Roads Lead to the Local Level

Ever since January of 1776, when Thomas Paine published his tract *Common Sense*, Americans' disposition against autocracy, in all of its various forms, and desire for self-determination and local control has been announced and heralded. This is the sentiment that ignited the American Revolution, and it is at the very center of our genesis story. 'Democracy' as a form of governance was not yet well known in the late 18th century, except to political theoreticians, but historians of the colonial era suggest that the colonists were largely, and sometimes fiercely, against the monarchic, theocratic and aristocratic forms of governance that had ruled Europe for centuries, and that they had fled. Most of the settlers to America wanted to break from the monarchical political system and the feudal economic relations of Europe. They were proud of their work ethic and of the local assemblies they developed as their alternative to monarchy, and in the years leading up to the Revolution, they saw them as possessing great value and authority (Wood 1991). Thus, when Thomas Jefferson first released his *Declaration of Independence* on July 4th of that year, the residents of the colonies were ready, and generally happy to learn that this would be a nation like no other: No government would be accepted as the legitimate authority unless it had obtained "the consent of the governed", a concept that drew directly from J. J. Rousseau's famous work of 1762, but that had not yet been put into practice. The view that

the British monarchy had not obtained the consent of the governed set off, of course, the American Revolution. Equally importantly, *the Declaration set a new standard* that would soon need to be met by governments all over the world. It put forth an idea that spoke to people's hopes and dreams the world over, and it inspired democratic revolutions for the next 235+ years. It had and still has an intuitive power to it. It is this document upon which Abraham Lincoln later (in 1858) grounded his debate with Stephen Douglas, arguing that the *Declaration's* statement "that all men are created equal" was the morally and historically correct position; it won him the better end of that debate and launched his career.

Before the American "experiment", as it was called, Rousseau's conception (1762) that a government could exist in such a way as to protect the equality, moral agency and free choice of its citizens *if* it was made to reflect the "general will" of the people was theoretical or hypothetical. At the Constitutional Convention in 1787 in Philadelphia, the framers of the American Constitution put meat on the bone, describing at least in skeletal form, the rights and responsibilities of each of three independent branches of government and a series of "checks and balances" they were to have on each other. However, important scholars of the Constitutional era have argued that the framers who met in Philadelphia did not wish to see much power rested in the states or in the people. Rather, it was average persons who insisted, sometimes violently (recall Shay's Rebellion and other rebellions), on a constitution that would protect their individual rights and more local rights to govern themselves (Holton 2008; Kramer 2004). The public's debate of the Constitution was vigorous, and it was the "unruly American" who rose to resist elite and centralized control and to defend democratic rights (Holton 2008). This new Constitution, as the people saw it, was to be "the people's charter", and not "a lawyer's contract" (Kramer 2004). This is why it was the state conventions that were most fiercely protective of state's rights and individuals' liberties and why, without the addition of the "Bill of Rights", the

states would not have ratified the Constitution, as historians Berkin (2015) and Maier (2011) make clear in their examinations of the historical archives from several of the states' ratifying conventions.

Jefferson's now famous exposition of "self-evident" truths put forth in the *Declaration* were apparently *not* self-evident to everyone, as they unleashed heated debate at the Constitutional Convention and in the subsequent essays of *The Federalist*. In the first essay in *The Federalist*, Publius (pseudonym for Hamilton) begins by asserting his trust in the people for "reflection and choice", based largely on his assumption of a people unified by a common language, ancestry, customs and mores, but his trust is soon challenged in subsequent essays written by Hamilton, Madison and Jay who fear what "the passions of the people" might entail (Levinson 2015). These controversies are reflected in the final draft of the Constitution in which the framers came to a careful system of checks and balances between the separate branches of a federal government, with several avenues for representative democracy but no avenues for direct democracy. A number of important Constitutional scholars have decried the absence of direct democracy in the US Constitution (Dahl 2001; Holton 2008). However, 49 of the 50 state constitutions, *do* contain opportunities for direct democracy, most typically the opportunity for direct referendum and recall, and 21 of the states permit what is known as the "voter initiative", meaning that citizens can actually initiate legislation not undertaken by their representatives (New York Times 2015). Despite the Constitution's limitations (Dahl 2001) and the climate of acrimony and partisan politics that characterized its drafting (Berkin 2003, 2015), the final document has succeeded and lasted to an extent that its framers never expected for their handiwork (Berkin 2003). Most legal scholars characterize the U.S. as a constitutional democracy or a democratic republic, meaning that it sets forth a governance structure for a representative democracy, carefully constrained by the cross-checking structures and super-majorities.

The concept of a more inclusive and profound democracy was not put forward until Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address in 1863. In 200 memorable words, Lincoln forever connected the very purpose of America and the sacrifices of its soldiers "so that government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from this earth." This phrasing has been repeated by *every* American president—in an unbroken line from Lincoln to Obama—without a single exception. This conveys something very significant about the American aspiration for democracy. Before Lincoln, a "republic" had been defined as a government "for" the people, not necessarily "by" the people. Thus, the concept of a republic allows for the possibility of monarchic, theocratic and/or aristocratic control (or the joining of all three of these), supposedly on behalf of the people. Lincoln's formulation of democracy makes clear that this is not possible: that to have democratic control, governance must also be "of" and "by" the people. Thus, it was President Lincoln, not the framers, who expanded the American conception of "democracy" to the one that most people defend today, and it was only in the aftermath of the Civil War that the southern states' efforts to deny the civil rights of Black people led most people to see, for the first time, the Federal government as the *protector* of individuals' civil rights and the state governments as the potential *usurper* of such rights (Foner 2014). In other words, it was the Civil War and the aftermath to it that led many Americans to 180° switch in how they viewed the federal government vis-à-vis the state governments (Foner 2014). Following Lincoln's stated aspiration for America and use of the federal government to extend and defend civil rights, the arc of American history has swung toward greater inclusivity in our governance processes and democratic rights for our citizens. As Professor Jamal Greene, Vice Dean of the Columbia Law School points out, *every* amendment to the US Constitution (with the exception of the 18th—Prohibition) has *expanded* who is a citizen and has *expanded* the rights of citizens.

Despite the honor of being the first modern democracy, the system of governance laid forth

in the U.S. Constitution may seem very institutional and remote to many citizens. Some of its structures, like the electoral college, have been criticized by numerous political scientists and legal scholars as unnecessarily indirect and causing unforeseen negative consequences such as presidential campaigns that focus almost exclusively on "swing states," to the neglect of voters in the rest of the country. Other important structures established by the US Constitution appear also to have lost popular legitimacy, such as Congress, which in recent years has fallen to as low as 8% approval in the eyes of the public.

Perhaps *because* the opportunity for participation and voice at the federal level appears remote, even tiny, to many citizens, the biggest movement for more participatory and/or deliberative democracy over the past 30 years has taken place at the *local or regional* level. At the community level, thousands of initiatives have been undertaken, involving the efforts of public, private and non-profit organizations sometimes in partnership, seeking to "empower" people to come together, deliberate, make decisions and act collectively to improve some aspect of their lives. This chapter is devoted to understanding how these experiments in deliberative democracy at the local level are unfolding and what challenges they may be facing. For example, as participants in community groups air their perspectives, they inevitably find that they do not all agree. Within the legal system, we have a system of rules and courts by which we resolve conflicts, but this adversarial system leaves one party "the winner" and the other party "the loser" (Mansbridge 1980). Can a more participatory and egalitarian system of decision-making and set of norms take us past this chasm to a system where differences are discussed to the point where they can be reconciled to everyone's satisfaction? Once the right to engage and participate in these community organizations is established, do conflicting views on the matters at hand tear these groups apart and produce dis-engagement? Or, does the sharing of experiences and perspectives, and the process of reconciling differences, draw members closer?

I begin (above) with a brief history of the evolution of “democracy” in America in order to provide context for the presently evolving meaning of democracy at the local level in the US. How much democracy to allow into each branch of government and who would get to participate in said democracy was at the epicenter of fierce debate at the Constitutional Convention in 1787, and I would say, it remains at the heart of political debate today, even though it is seldom addressed directly by politicians. At the federal level, our nation’s concept of what is “democratic” has become hugely more inclusive over the years and the franchise has been extended to many more groups of citizens, yet it is still experienced as woefully inadequate by many citizens. I see the current efforts in community organizations to build citizen engagement and participation in decision-making as the newest chapter in a long history we have in the United States of seeking to extend what is meant by “democracy”, and it is not a surprise that it is occurring at the local level which, by virtue of the Constitution, remains far more open to experiments in deliberative or participatory democracy.

8.1.1 What Does Deliberative or Participatory Decision-Making Look like?

Over the past several decades many tens of thousands of grassroots community-level organizations have formed and structured themselves as participatory or deliberative democracies, in contrast with the representative form of democratic governance with which we are all familiar. Examples range from artists cooperatives to food cooperatives, from self-help groups of all kinds to giving circles, from public sector initiatives in inclusive governance to international micro-credit groups based in communities around the world.

The table below summarizes the main differences between these two forms of organizational governance. Table 8.1 lists nine elements of decision-making practices and contrasts participatory-democratic practices from

representative democracy practices along these nine criteria. In his review of the meaning of “democracy”, philosopher Christiano (2008) emphasizes the point that *all forms of democratic governance are defined by their decisional methods*. I offer the table below to help clarify the differences between what I call Democracy 1.0 and Democracy 2.0 (i.e., participatory vs. representative) types of democratic decision-making. Note, both are democratic, but they are quite different forms of decision-making.

The previous theoretical model I offered of the collectivist-democratic organization contrasted the eight ideal typical features of bureaucracy, as outlined by Max Weber, with the ideal typical characteristics of the collectivist-democratic organization (1979). The table below takes the next step, as it drills down and draws distinctions along only one key dimension of organizations: their decisional processes. Many (not all) non-profit organizations might be examples of Democracy 1.0, if they make decisions by elected and/or representative bodies rather than by executive fiat. The collectivist-democratic organization sets a higher standard for itself in decision-making practices, what I call a Democracy 2.0 standard, and this includes not just the right of members to speak in decisional forums, but also a deliberative process and consensus-seeking obligation on the part of the group, as well as a concomitant emergent norm that individual participants in these groups will, in the end, support (and not try to block) the consensus-seeking, cooperative arrangement of which they are a part and from which they benefit.

In their actual empirical operation, few organizations are “pure” types. For example, observers of actual bureaucracies may find nepotism and favoritism present, both throwbacks to a patrimonial form of organization. This does not render Weber’s model of bureaucracy wrong: it simply underscores that ideal-types are seldom achieved and especially in their early stages of development may evince throwbacks to a previous and more familiar form of organization. Similarly, a collectivist-participatory organization that is struggling to develop Democracy 2.0

Table 8.1 Elements of decision-making in representative versus participatory forms of organizational governance

Elements of decision-making	Democracy 1.0 (formal, representative form)	Democracy 2.0 (collectivist/participatory form)
Major decisions made by senior officers or Boards of Directors	Yes	No
Major decisions made by general assembly	No	Yes
Decision norms or rules	Majority rules	Norms of deliberation and consensus-seeking expected, though unanimity not necessarily required
Election to top decision-making positions	Yes, terms of office may vary in length (and can be long) and re-election to consecutive terms may be common	Generally no top positions, but where there are such elected positions, terms are of short duration (2 years or less), consecutive terms are not allowed and job rotation in and out of such positions is expected
Rules and procedures	All decisions must lie within codified rules and be made in accordance with established procedures	Formal rules and procedures are minimized; instead, decisions based on bedrock (substantive) values on which members agree
Duration of decisions	Decisions generally stand until further notice	Decisions seen as provisional and may be re-visited in short order
Values/Purposes of the organization	Stated in mission statement	Referenced at almost every decisional occasion
Social relationships that attend decision-making	Allies (instrumental) or adversaries; self-interested and competitive	Cooperative and personal; search for common ground
Inclusivity of decisional process	Elites or representatives: Only authorized parties may participate in major decisions	All members of the organization/community are invited to participate in major decisions

standards of decision-making may experience occasions where it feels the need to fall back on the more familiar norms of Democracy 1.0. This would not change its orientation to being and becoming an ever fuller participatory-democratic organization, unless of course its use of Democracy 1.0 methods became habit (Rothschild 2016).

8.1.2 Illustrations

8.1.2.1 Food Co-ops

The mid-1970s- 1980s saw the development of a huge wave of food co-ops in the US. Many of these adopted a collectivist-democratic manner of making decisions, opening up decisions to group discussion in which all members were invited to participate. They also relied upon members' volunteer labor and rotated jobs

around (Rothschild and Whitt 1986). Their motto was, "food for people, not for profit."

Haedicke (2016) observes a successful west coast food co-op today, started in the 1970s wave, "when the co-op's founders sought to build a foundation for a de-centralized and democratic food system... and a challenge to what they saw as the selfish character of American capitalism" (Haedicke 2016: 133–134). In this co-op, "selling organic was an agenda for social change" (2016: 134). Over time, what happened to this agenda? Haedicke shows that their internal discussion process leads to a set of compromises between the desire for market growth and their social change purposes. When even Walmart and Kroger get into the organic business, the co-op members see the incredible success their movement has had in changing the views and buying habits of the American people, but they also see that this didn't alter Capitalism.

On the one hand, Haedicke describes how they want to be responsive to the consumer. As one manager put it, “we want Republicans who voted for George Bush to think they can come in here and buy organic just like anyone else, although in my heart I don’t believe they can be voting for Bush and believe in organics. So we stayed clear of putting ‘Impeach Bush’... signs on our lawn” (Haedicke 2016: 155). The co-op members struggled with this. They knew their own values and convictions, but they didn’t want to “impose” their beliefs on others or “alienate” part of their customer base. Haedicke shows how this “assumption of consumer sovereignty” leads them to compromise some of their earlier collectivist practices (no more job rotation or reliance on volunteer labor, and now some pre-packaged foods are finding their way to the store’s shelves).

But, how does this continuing conversation (and potential conflict) within the group effect the group itself? Has it led some in the group (perhaps those most committed to its original social change purposes) to dis-engage? Or, has the effort to reconcile different perspectives knit the members closer together? One of Haedicke’s most interesting observations is that although nearly all of the co-op members he interviewed acknowledge the tension between commercial success and the expression of political values, *conflict between members or factions of members is rare* at the level of the stores (Haedicke, personal correspondence, June 13, 2016). There are two reasons for this: First, members and shoppers at today’s food co-ops may be less involved in the day to day business decisions than they were in earlier decades. Second, the consensus-oriented decision-making of general assemblies in earlier decades have given way to governance by elected Boards of Directors and professional staff members. Indeed, even term limits (for Board members) were abolished in the co-op Haedicke studied in the interest of lending stability and reducing turnover in the governance structure. This was described by one of the leaders as a “helpful evolution” in the co-op’s governance: wherein the co-op went from “what you could call a workers’ collective where

everybody tried to run the business as a group” to a “co-op” with a Board and paid staff, along with charters or by-laws that define the role and limits of the directors. Apropos my table above, Haedicke’s food co-op has shifted its governance structure from direct or participatory democracy (with general assembly meetings deciding things in the 1980s) to representative democracy (with elected Boards of Directors) today. For my purposes, one of the most interesting things about this shift is that many of his co-op leaders and members see this shift in governance as giving rise to *less* internal conflict than did the older collectivist decisional style (Haedicke, personal correspondence, June 13, 2016).

8.1.2.2 Self-help Groups

Since the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1935, the basic method that AA pioneered has given rise to hundreds of thousands of 12step/12 tradition self-help groups. Each of these groups brings together, on an entirely voluntary basis, people who find themselves with a common problem—from parents of a child with a particular disease to stutterers. Their essential method for achieving personal support and transformation is to share experiences on an equal footing and to learn and gain strength from each other. In the 1960s, many self-help groups employed a paid professional to advise and help them, but over time, most found that they gained more from the open and equal sharing of experience that results when there is no hierarchal relationship in the room (Borkman 2006).

Based in decades of study of such self-help groups and review of the extant literature, one of the leading scholars of self-help groups, Thomasina Borkman, found surprisingly few references to conflict within such groups (Borkman, personal correspondence, 2016). In the relative absence of inter-personal conflict, the self-help groups are like Haedicke’s food co-op discussed above, but for reasons that are entirely different. Borkman shows that the 12-step/12 traditions approach was historically developed by the founders of AA *in order to* prevent or minimize conflict among members of a group or between groups (Borkman 2016). *This set of principles did give rise, as*

intended, to practice norms that do, in fact, minimize conflict (Borkman 2016). For example, each group is designed to operate autonomously, and it is easy to establish new groups because no money or specialized knowledge is required to operate a group. That the groups are to conduct themselves in a voluntary and egalitarian sharing of experiences, avoiding the engagement of professionals to manage them or lecture them, goes back to tradition #8; that the groups are to eschew to pursuit of money, property or prestige goes back to traditions #6 and #7. Borkman observes that on the rare occasion when a highly disruptive or controlling personality does emerge in one of these groups, these practice principles make it easy for other members to break off and start a new group, thereby returning to a group that offers democratic and equal sharing of experiences and the mutual support that can be productive (2016: 2–5).

The very first principle of these 12 step groups—that group unity is paramount, and the 10th principle—that members should maintain their singleness of purpose—provide additional support and direction as members seek to avoid internal conflict and find their way back to focusing on their own sobriety or whatever their original purpose was. Their practice of rotating leadership and seeing leaders as “trusted servants”, not as dictators or heads of anything, which stems from tradition #2, also crucially helps them to sustain the sort of democratic and open sharing that is conducive to personal transformation. One study of a large sample of self-help groups found that those with shared or rotating leadership had fewer problems with recruiting and keeping new members, even though burn-out problems remained (Meissen and Volk 1994). Borkman’s well known study of three national self-help organizations for people who stutter found that they chose *not* to merge specifically because they wanted to maintain more leadership opportunities for their members. Indeed, these shared or rotating leadership positions were prized because they helped their members to gain practice and competence in public speaking, their central purpose for being in these groups in the first place (Borkman 1999).

In sum, while Haedicke’s food co-op found that if they left governance by general assembly behind, in favor of decisions by an elected Board and paid staff, they could avoid internal conflict, Borkman’s self-help groups found that by sticking with their original principles of everyone sharing on an equal footing, without the domination of anyone and without paid professionals to direct things, they have been best able to accomplish their personal transformation purposes. Inter-personal conflict turns out to be rare in both types of groups. As will be discussed to follow, the Quakers have found a third way of achieving unity.

8.1.2.3 The Quakers’ Meetings

The Religious Society of Friends (also known as the Quakers) has governed itself according to principles of direct, participatory democracy since the 1650s–1660s, making it the longest running use of the directly democratic method of decision-making in the US and in the world. In 1981 a member of the Seattle chapter brought forward the question of whether this Friends chapter would be willing to perform gay and lesbian marriages. This chapter had about 200 members, about 150 of them active participants at monthly meetings, and some 20 standing committees. This particular decision would prove especially thorny for them, and it took the group some eleven years to come to a sense of unity on it. Leach (1998) observed this whole eleven year process, and her work offers perceptive insights into group processes that can lead, without the domination of any individual or oligarchy, to unity out of discord.

First, for the Quakers, consensus means “gathering the sense of the meeting.” They believe that “unity is always possible because God’s will is revealed directly to the collectivity” (Leach 1998: 21). Second, a Quaker meeting contains many spaces of silence. It is normative at a meeting for the group to maintain silence, for example, after each person speaks, in order to give the members time to weigh and consider what has been said. This too is a crucial part of their decision process (1998: 22). Third, in their

search for unity, they are encouraged to take the “long view”, asking themselves what will be best for everyone and in the long term. If no unity seems to be emerging in the group, the Clerk may table the discussion for another meeting, and this often happens, but no vote is ever taken (1998: 23). If a member disagrees with the sense that is developing at a meeting, they may register their dissent, but then “stand aside,” by saying “I disagree but do not wish to stand in the way.” If their dissent is stronger than this, they may say, “please minute me as opposed”, which means they are asking for a minute of silence for others to consider what they have said. If a member’s dissent is still stronger, they may say, “I am unable to unite with the proposal.” This is the most serious form of objection. In virtually all cases, even if only one person is unable to unite, the Meeting will not proceed (Leach 1998: 24).

On the gay marriage issue, it took the group eleven years to reach unity, with one or two people consistently blocking unity for that amount of time. In other cases, such as the Friends discussion of slavery in the 18th century, what began as the objections of a few people, over the years grew into the sense of the whole Meeting (i.e., to oppose slavery). The final stage of decision-making at a Friends’ Meeting is when unity is reached. “As we continue to address an issue, as we lay aside any need to win, as we turn increasingly inward in order to transcend differences, long focus brings us to the Source of resolution and clarity...” (Morley 1993). As S. B. Loughlin puts it, “the final result is not a compromise of conflicting views but a synthesis of the best thought” (reported in Leach 1998: 29).

In this case, by 1991 the discussion had become extremely contentious, and the chapter received nine letters from members seeking to leave the chapter. This is what researchers of group process would expect: Conflict leads to dis-engagement. However, not long thereafter, unity *was* reached, and the minutes recorded, “we are ready to support couples in naming their own relationships as we take them under our care,” meaning that whether a gay couple wishes to have their ordained relationship called a

“marriage” or a “celebration of commitment” or something else is entirely up to them. Everyone stayed in the group and continued to participate. No one objected anymore.

Of course, as both Leach (1998) and Morley (1993) note, most secular groups do not demonstrate the sort of patience, nor thoughtfulness, needed to arrive at a true consensus (or “unity” as the Quakers put it), and any organization trying to operate in a competitive market would not have this kind of time in which to come to decisions. Still, Leach shows that this slowly mounting process of building “unity” in the group, does build group commitment to the decision finally made, ensuring that its implementation will go quickly and smoothly. As almost any manager in a bureaucracy knows, decisions imposed from above can easily be sabotaged in the implementation stage by those whose objections were never heard. Leach shows that by slowly building a complete “sense of unity” on this issue, and dealing thoughtfully with objections that were heard, the chapter did build a feeling of ownership of the decision and obligation to enact it within the community. Thus, it stabilized the community, and helped early opposers of this idea to identify with and align themselves with the needs of the whole group. As Leach puts it, “this is definitely a story of a conflict being resolved and bringing people in the community closer together, despite (*or because of*) how difficult it was to achieve (personal correspondence, June 4, 2016).

8.2 The Use of Deliberative Democracy in the Re-Building of New Orleans Post-katrina and the Development of a Whole Profession of Democracy Consultants

I want to juxtapose the quiet, thoughtful, slowly mounting “unity” of the Quaker meeting, in use for some 350+ years now, with a new method of achieving citizen consensus that has been exponentially growing over the past 15 or so years

and that has given rise to a whole new profession of deliberative democracy consultants and facilitators. As described by sociologist Lee (2015) on the basis of five years of participant observation and analysis, many firms, cities and public agencies have turned to this new profession of deliberative democracy consultants to produce events that will elicit ideas, get people talking face to face and leave participants feeling empowered, a “21st century town meeting” as some call it.

For example, when hurricane Katrina set in motion the need to re-build New Orleans, it also provided a catalyst to try out a new method for figuring out *how* citizens wanted the re-development to go, and a large pot of government money was set aside to facilitate this process. Firms (or non-profit organizations) grew to meet this need, drawing committed staff members often from among former activists from the 1960s and 70s social movements and from the sort of collectives that I studied in the 1970s. These deliberative democracy consultants are committed to offering citizens the sort of “voice” and “empowerment” that those previous movements had struggled to bring forth. So, what do these newer examples of deliberative democracy in action look like?

Lee (2015) begins her new book on this subject at Community Congress III, an event taking place in Dallas and bringing together former residents of New Orleans to offer their input on a draft of the 14.5 billion dollar Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP), as one part of a multi-sited and sequenced set of events to solicit input and, frankly, to get “buy-in” from citizens. After so much Katrina-induced suffering, citizens are given the red carpet treatment at a fine hotel and offered the respect that seeking and listening to one’s opinion implies. The morning begins with mental focus exercises; in time, participants are asked to review options and to bear in mind what would be best for other citizens’ interests. The event is fast-paced. Although writers of a *Handbook for Democracy Facilitators* outline some 60 methods in use and emphasize the differences between each set of consultants, Lee

observes common methods at all these events: new Age wisdom circles, the use of digital keypads for voting and also, importantly, for gathering information to ensure that the group is demographically representative of the stakeholders, homespun testimonials, art projects, strategy games, didactic videos, even recorded clips of pop hits blasted at ear-splitting volume and at precise times to get people “in the mood” to deliberate. Predictably 90%+ of the participants say they are highly satisfied with the event and feel listened to and empowered by it.

Also, predictably, the facilitators and sponsors frame the issues and the information presented about each option such that the spontaneous ideas and preferences offered by citizens (or consumers) have been anticipated by the facilitators and sponsors. Participants leave these events fired up and committed to whatever change has been discussed, but the relationships formed are fleeting, and in time, the enthusiasm dissipates. Lee describes these new democracy facilitators as smart, committed and sincerely trying to create authentic experiences of engagement and empowerment. Nevertheless, they end up delivering “buy-in” to their sponsors, not substantively new ideas nor mobilization to change anything. Even Ganuza and Baiocchi (2012), early researchers of the participatory budgeting initiatives in Porto Alegre, Brazil, seem unsure of the validity of the deep democracy movement, now that it has spread to thousands of efforts worldwide. The last three US Presidents (Clinton, George W. Bush and Obama) have all made a point of showing up at celebrated examples of citizen collaboration. Today, there are professional associations for democracy consultants, certification programs, and one group, Open Space, says they have organized some 20,000–30,000 events using their methods. It is not just cities, public agencies and NGOs that are using these methods today, but also many large corporations such as Unilever, Shell, Daimler Chrysler, Allianz, Kraft and many others, along with global institutions such as the World Bank, the UN, the IMF, Ford Foundation and so on. In other words, these

participatory democratic methods for structuring citizen discussion (and information about) many different public issues (from discussion of climate change to discussion of healthy food choices) has spread far and wide.

As Lee shows, the facilitators definitely *want* to make decision-making more participatory, more local, more fair and equitable, less bureaucratic and hierarchical. Does this mean that the movement for participatory or deliberative democracy that started in the 1960s and 1970s has succeeded beyond its wildest dreams, or, is this something else?

Consider the contrast with the Quaker meetings described by Leach. One is quiet, slow, and reflective. The norm is to listen carefully to what the other person has said and respond only after thoughtful consideration. It takes forever to make a decision, but once made, the group can implement quickly because true unity on the issue had been achieved. The other is fast-paced and lively, and is not really looking for true harmony or deep relationships, but rather just to spread the word and allow for input on the issue at hand. (Which seems more fun and exciting to participate in? Which seems more profound, i.e., likely to produce real consideration and movement toward another person's point of view)?

Most people, even those most skeptical at the start, leave these gatherings highly satisfied, according to Lee's surveys. Their opinions have been solicited and listened to; they have contributed to the collective good. They may not realize that these same methods are being used to build a feeling of deliberative democracy on a large host of issues. They may not realize who has sponsored the event and what it is they want from it. They may not realize that highly skilled facilitators have carefully framed the problem, the options available and the information on each in order to arrive at group support for predictable, even canned, choices. But, they have found a way to scale up and to offer thousands or even millions of people the opportunity to engage and deliberate on an issue of relevance for them.

8.3 Conclusions

In his encyclopedic analysis of democracy around the world, Tilly (2007) defines a regime as "democratic" to the degree that political relations between the state and its citizens feature broad, equal, protected, mutually binding consultation. Therefore, *democratization* is indicated where there is a net movement toward broader, more equal, more protected and more mutually binding consultation. *De-democratization* is a net movement toward narrower, more unequal, less protected, and less mutually binding consultation. Using indicators such as these, at least two institutions—Freedom House and the Legatum Institute—evaluate the level of democracy and individual freedom achieved and defended at the national level (i.e., the level of political rights and civil liberties) by various nations.

However, beginning with Pateman's classic examination of participation and democratic theory (1970), political scientists and political sociologists have understood that people must have *local organizations, workplaces or institutions* that are set up as face-to-face democracies if they are to learn the skills and habits of mind required of a democratic polity. Accordingly, many researchers of democracy have turned their attention to how effective and empowered participation can be developed at the local level (Fung 2004; Briggs 2008; Sirianni 2009). As political philosopher Carol Gould concludes, logically, "inasmuch as people are social beings... engaging in common or joint activities with others can be seen in itself as one of the prime conditions for their freedom (Gould 2014: 87), and thus, "if none are to dominate in these joint activities, they must have equal rights to participate... Democracy is thus a form of decision-making involving equal rights of participation among members of a given community or institution" (Gould 2014: 88). And, who should enjoy these equal rights to participate? Sociologists, political scientists and philosophers who study participatory or deliberative democracy at the local level have arrived at the same answer: "all those affected" by the decision at hand

(Rothschild and Whitt 1986; Dryzek 2002; Gould 1988, 2014).

In each of the four examples of face-to-face democracies I describe in this chapter, their members would agree that there should be an equal right to participate in the decisional process, and indeed, that *this right to participate is an essential part of the value of the organization*. What can we learn from their manifestly different approaches to doing democratic decision-making?

First, *where personal transformation and/or a sense of belonging to a larger community are essential to the purposes of the group, there is simply no substitute for direct participation in decisional processes and on an equal footing*. No other method of sharing or decision-making produces the same result, not representation and certainly not autocracy. Now, where the main purpose of the organization is not personal transformation, such as in Haedicke's food co-op, then representative democracy can suffice and even work well. However, as Borkman's study of self-help groups makes vivid, members appreciate and appear to benefit greatly from the opportunity to share experiences and observations on an equal footing and in an accepting context. In this case, they are not so much trying to make group decisions, as they are seeking to deepen individual members' insight and resolve. Similarly, in Lee's large-scale deliberative democracy forums, participants seem happy for the chance to express their insights and preferences and to learn from others, on an equal footing, even when their observations do not alter the substance of the decision at hand. In both cases, it is the chance to share experiences with other people who are perceived to be in the same boat, to be treated as having an equal voice, to feel the respect that listening implies—this is what people seem to gain from participating in these groups. The value of the group process is not wholly or necessarily about effecting decisions. The multi-disciplinary field of democracy scholarship, understandably has tended to focus on who influences decisional outcomes, but it has not focused enough attention on the group process characteristics that give rise to personal growth and a feeling of connection with

others. These are the needs that motivate members to seek direct participation and ample voice.

Secondly, the cases discussed in this chapter show that if members want their community or organization *to endure*, then they may choose a method of decision-making that is directly democratic and norms of participation that are egalitarian. The experience of the self-help groups discussed by Borkman and the Friends' group discussed by Leach strongly suggests that it is feelings of belonging to a group or community and the desire for that community, and the personal relationships embedded in it, *to endure* that motivates people to deliberate, share experiences and seek to harmonize their views. Thus, to develop a more complete picture of deliberative democracy or participatory democracy, researchers need to examine not only differential (vs. equal) influence in decision-making, but also what are the characteristics of group processes that best support the feelings of belonging and connection that people seek via their participation in such groups. Both Borkman and Leach have described such group characteristics.

Third, there are many sources of conflict and routes to conflict resolution at the organizational level of analysis. Face-to-face democracies can generate conflict or bring conflicting views to the surface, as Mansbridge (1980) showed in her examination of a New England town meeting, and many worry that collectivist-democratic decision-making will be inefficient and conflict-ridden (Dryzek 2002). As Milofsky has discussed (1988), there have been many cases where grassroots groups that began as participatory democracies evolved into more representative forms of decision-making with paid professional staff replacing volunteers and elected Boards of Directors replacing general assemblies (apropos the characteristics listed in Table 8.1 above), and they generally have made this shift in order to render their organizations more efficient or effective. In some cases, just as in Haedicke's food co-op, many members may believe this is the more efficient and effective way to go about making decisions, and they believe representative democracy will engender less conflict. And, in many cases, they may be

right, especially in instances, such as a consumer co-op, where the details of what the organization decides is not of major concern to many of its members. Indeed, as we saw with the women's movement years ago, even amongst organizations that seek fundamental change in the power relations of society, some choose to remain as collectivist-democracies and some choose to evolve toward more formalization and division of labor in their internal structure, and what is "best" very much depends on what they are trying to accomplish (Staggenborg 1989; Iannello 1992; Bordt 1997; Taylor 1989). However, Leach (2016) has shown recently, based upon research in many social movement organizations, that with practice the collectivist-democratic method can be a quick and efficient decisional method, while also building real consensus and broad support for decisional outcomes. Further, where personal growth or inter-personal relations or a sense of belonging to the group are key reasons for membership in the group, then processes that can ensure the voice and empowerment of all members assumes greater import. In the latter sorts of cases, it is too rarely acknowledged in the literature that *open discussion on an equal footing can be the route to resolving differences and bringing people closer*, as Leach shows in her example of the Quaker meeting that over time resolved very different points of view on gay marriage. Deep resolutions plainly lay the groundwork for speedy and smooth implementation, but few groups appear to have the time or patience for this road. Similarly, it is hard to imagine a self-help group such as those discussed by Borkman being sustainable, much less effective, without their a priori commitment to equal and open discussion among all members.

Fourth, many who have studied social capital and/or democratization processes have emphasized the need for trust networks as a pre-condition for participatory/democratic processes to take root (Tilly 2007; Putnam 2000). Obviously, it is easier for participation norms to develop where members already know each other and trust each other, as in the Quaker meeting

that Leach observed. However, in other groups with participatory-democratic practices such as in Lee's deliberation groups and in Borkman's self-help groups, people may have no prior knowledge of each other. It is a common experience and goal that brings them together, and importantly, these examples show that empathy, liking and trust may be the *outcome* of participation and the sharing of experiences, *not* the pre-condition for it. This is an important observation, as it leads one to see that deliberative and participatory processes can be amazingly effective even where people have no previous history with each other. Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) provide ample empirical evidence that it is the condition of inequality that creates low social trust at the national level. I would suggest that it is the hierarchal relations inherent in bureaucracy that undermine trust at the organizational level. In this chapter, I have adduced four examples of organizations that, in different ways, practice democratic decision-making. Taken together, they offer support for my main hypothesis: *where there are equal rights to participate and be heard at the organizational level, inter-personal liking and trust are the likely result, and a sense of belonging to an enduring community and personal transformation are finally possible.*

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Client Authority in Nonprofit Human Service Organizations

9

Lehn M. Benjamin

Abstract

This chapter describes how nonprofit human service organizations use explicit strategies to elevate the authority that clients have in their organizations and the dilemmas this creates for frontline staff. The chapter anchors this discussion in a broader literature on authority and provides examples of how four nonprofits adopted specific strategies, including hiring staff with lived experience, reducing the rules clients had to follow in the organization, putting clients in leadership positions within the organization and reducing the status differential between staff and clients. Each strategy created particular types of dilemmas for staff. The chapter concludes by noting that more often than not, nonprofits employ strategies to give the communities they serve greater authority but that our evaluation and management models do not account for this and consequently do not support nonprofit staff in effectively working in and running these organizations.

Human service nonprofits are organizations “whose principal function is to protect, maintain, or enhance the personal well-being of individuals by defining, shaping, or altering their personal attributes” (Hasenfeld and English 1974, p. 1). Human service nonprofits hire professional staff to deliver services to a defined target population that is facing a problem like homelessness, mental illness, addiction, violence or joblessness. Some human service nonprofits have million dollar budgets, operate in several states and are part of what Venkatesh (1997, p. 2) refers to as an “elite tier” of organizations. These organizations are not typically considered alongside the grassroots community organizations that are the central focus of this Handbook: the self-help groups, cooperatives, grassroots organizations, social movements and other collectives.

Yet this picture of nonprofit human service organizations as professional bureaucracies may be too simplistic. Since the 1960s, grassroots organizing efforts by marginalized communities have pushed back against the authority of professionals and bureaucrats, demanding greater accountability in various service domains (Gartner and Riessman 1974). As a result, clients now sit on the board of directors of many nonprofit human service organizations, are hired as peer providers, and participate alongside staff in making decisions about programs and services. Clients also may have more control in the service

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process: deciding which staff to work with, when and how. Other human service nonprofits, which started out as grassroots organizations, have retained mechanisms to ensure accountability to the community they serve, despite the formalization of the organization.

These nonprofits will be familiar to readers. They include community development corporations and mental health clubhouses. Other nonprofits, like some homeless service providers, AIDS organizations or human trafficking prevention organizations, may be less familiar to readers. But regardless of field or nonprofit type, current trends suggest that client authority in nonprofits will likely increase. For example, watchdog agencies have started to evaluate nonprofits based on whether beneficiaries have a voice in the organization, and more foundations are now supporting initiatives to increase beneficiary feedback in nonprofits (Twersky et al. 2013).

Despite the authority that clients have in many human service nonprofits and the varied roles they play in these organizations, our models could do more to help us understand these nonprofits where action is guided not only by bureaucratic rules and professional norms but also by client knowledge, interests and values. These nonprofits are neither self-help groups nor professionally run bureaucracies. In nonprofit management texts, clients are virtually absent except in chapters on marketing. In social work texts, practitioners committed to empowerment approaches can find suggestions for increasing client authority in their organizations, but with less attention to what it is like to work in these organizations. Research on client participation in a variety of policy fields, including neighborhood development, health, international development, environmental management, and community action, suggests that nonprofit staff do not know how to effectively work in or run organizations that require balancing client authority alongside professional and bureaucratic authority. This research suggests that despite good intentions, client authority often becomes more symbolic than meaningful, and if it is meaningful, the

organization is less likely to survive because the bureaucratic and professionalizing tendencies in organizations are too strong (Arnstein 1969; Hasenfeld 2010).

My examination of the day-to-day work of frontline staff in human service organizations suggests that not only do nonprofits have varied strategies for increasing client authority but that staff encounter regular dilemmas as they try to work in these environments. The purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, I hope to provide a glimpse of what it is like to work in nonprofit organizations where staff must recognize client authority along with bureaucratic and professional authority. Towards this end, I draw on findings from ongoing fieldwork in 12 human service nonprofits that varied in the degree to which clients had authority in the organization. I use examples from this fieldwork as well as research from others to showcase the explicit strategies nonprofits use to increase client authority and the kinds of dilemmas that surface for staff when nonprofits use these strategies.

Second, given that those entering the sector—whether staff, clients or managers—are more likely to encounter these mixed authority environments today, I hope the chapter will be useful in furthering discussions and informing future research on this topic. As it stands much of our understanding of greater client authority in nonprofits has focused on the effectiveness of specific strategies, like client participation on the board of directors or advisory groups. Staff are given attention by researchers to the extent that they resist such efforts. Yet recent research on other types of mixed organizational forms suggests that not only can staff learn to work in these organizations but the tension between different types of authority can be productive (Ashcraft 2001; Bordt 1997; Chen 2009). I hope the chapter will inform future research on these mixed authority nonprofits with the goal of identifying common patterns and dilemmas and illuminating the ways staff and clients creatively and effectively engage with the tensions that surface between these different types of authority.

For the purpose of this chapter, I use the term client as an umbrella term for those intended beneficiaries of nonprofit organizations, whether the nonprofit refers to them as participants, beneficiaries, constituents, members, residents, survivors, families or otherwise. The choice of the term client is intentional here. The term client comes from *cluere*, which means to “hear or obey.” The term originally denoted a person under the protection and patronage of another (Oxford University Press 2000). Here the term serves as useful reminder of the structural inequity between nonprofit organizations, their staff and the people that participate in their strategies, programs and services. Authority on the other hand connotes power: the power or right to direct or control someone or something or the power someone has when they master a subject or knowledge domain, i.e., an expert (*ibid.*). The term client authority, then, signals an ongoing tension between these two positions. For the purpose of this chapter, I consider clients to have authority in organizations when there are mechanisms and practices that give them power to direct action and/or that recognize their unique interests, values and knowledge of problem and solutions.

The chapter starts by discussing the concept of authority. I then move on to consider client authority in human service organizations. This is the heart of the chapter. Here I describe four types of strategies for increasing client authority. Two of these strategies put clients in authority to direct or control action: (1) increasing client authority in the bureaucracy; and (2) decreasing bureaucratic authority by decreasing the rules clients have to follow. The other two strategies recognize clients as having special knowledge: (3) increasing client authority by recognizing the lived experience of clients as an important source of expertise; and (4) decreasing professional authority, by downplaying the professional expertise of staff.

I give an example of an organization that used each strategy, describe the authority environment in the organization and then showcase a core dilemma staff faced. In the final section, I consider the applicability of these findings to other nonprofits that do more than provide human

services, and conclude by pointing to areas for future research and theory development.

9.1 Authority

Overview. The concept of authority has been discussed extensively among political theorists and organizational scholars. Arendt ([1954] 1993), tracing the concept of authority back to Roman times and citing Mommsen, describes authority as neither advice nor a command, but rather advice that is unsafe to ignore.¹ Arendt, along with other writers on authority like Weber (1990) and Raz (1990), distinguishes authority from force and persuasion. Authority involves voluntary consent on the part of the subject, distinguishing it from force. Authority further involves bracketing the subject’s own judgment, distinguishing it from persuasion (Raz 1990). It is worth looking at these distinctions in more depth.

What does it mean to voluntarily consent? A critical issue discussed in the literature on authority is the voluntary nature of consent: how voluntary is voluntary? Does fear of retaliation still leave the possibility for voluntary consent? How much freedom does one have to give up before it is no longer consent? Simmons points to Hobbes’ early discussions of authority. Hobbes believed that consent could be physical, not mental. So one could consent to the directive of another in authority without necessarily believing in or even knowing why such an action is necessary (Simmons 2012, p. 6). This point is echoed in other writings (Barnard 1968; Blau 1963; Friedman 1990). For example, we do not have to be convinced that something is correct in order to

¹Arendt, herself, did not believe a modern concept of authority was possible. For her authority was part of a Roman trinity of authority, religion and tradition, where authority rested on ties to the past. With the falling away of tradition, the breaking of the trinity, authority was no longer possible. Subsequent writers have suggested that modern customs and conventions are equivalent (Zambrano 2000, pp. 12–13).

accept the directive. This brings us to the second distinction between authority and persuasion.

To accept another's authority involves bracketing one's own judgment in deference to the other, distinguishing it from persuasion. This is what Simmons (2012) refers to as a practical irrationality. We use persuasion with peers or with others of a similar status, where one person does not have authority over another. On what basis would we bracket our judgment in deference to another? Bracketing one's judgement requires an institutional arrangement that makes such deference acceptable (Blau 1963, p. 312). Familiar to most is Weber's description of legitimate authority: Individuals may be granted authority by virtue of tradition, rational/legal grounds or because they are charismatic (Weber 1990). But the literature on authority point to two main types of authority: practical and theoretical authority (Simmons 2012, p. 2), or what Friedman (1990, p. 57) describes as someone being "in authority" and someone being "an authority." Practical authority "gives us reasons to act," while theoretical authority "gives us reasons to believe" (Simmons 2012, p. 2). In other words, when someone is *in* authority they have some status or position that allows them to direct how others act, whereas being *an* authority rests on expertise, some superior knowledge or insight that warrants that their statements be believed (Friedman 1990, p. 57). In sum, we voluntarily consent to the authority of another, setting aside our own judgment, when someone is *in* a position of authority, and where we take the institutional arrangement to be legitimate; e.g., we follow our boss's orders because they are in a supervisory position. We also voluntarily consent, setting aside our own judgment when someone is *an* authority. Here again we take the institutional arrangement to be legitimate, e.g., we follow the doctor's advice because she has a medical degree from a recognized institution.

Authority in Organizations. How do these ideas translate into organizations? Those who study organizations start with Weber's discussion of authority. Weber was concerned with coordination of affairs and wanted to understand what supported the probability that certain

commands would be obeyed. As noted above, he identified three types of legitimacy on which authority would be recognized: (1) rational/legal; (2) traditional; and (3) charismatic. Organizational scholars have primarily focused on rational/legal authority which rests on "a belief in the legality of patterns of normative rules and the rights of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands" (Weber 1990, p. 3). Since Weber, several sociologists have distinguished professional authority, as a distinct type of authority where one can be an authority on the basis of one's specialized knowledge and expertise, separate from bureaucratic authority. While Weber had pointed to the hiring of staff based on expertise as a characteristic of bureaucracy, subsequent research found that professional and bureaucratic authority are distinct types of authority that can actually conflict (Blau 1968).

Others have proposed additional types of authority in organizations. For example, Satow (1975) and Willer (1967) explore a missing type of authority based on Weber's classification of four types of action corresponding to the three types of authority: (1) purposive-rational (authority is rational/legal); (2) traditional (authority is traditional); (3) affectual (authority is charismatic); and (4) value rational. They suggest that value rational action also has an authority type where authority does not rest with any one person "but to the ends of the ideology" (Willer 1967, p. 236). Willer also suggests this ideological authority is similar to the rational/legal, but action is legitimated by norms, not rules. Rothschild-Whitt (1979 p. 511) took Weber's value rational form of action and proposed an alternative ideal type to the bureaucratic form: the collectivist organization. In these organizations authority does not rest with the individual, either by office or due to expertise, but with the collective members. Borkman (1999) in her study of self-help and mutual aid also differentiates another type of authority, experiential, where members of self-help groups become *an* authority moving from inaccurate understanding of their problem and various solutions, which are based on their individual experience, to a

knowledgeable view of the problem and solutions. This knowledgeable view, this becoming *an* authority, develops because the individual self-helper is able to critically reflect on and analyze many “cases” of lived experience, sorting out the patterns from the aberrations to discern causal relationships (Borkman 1999).

9.2 Client Authority in Nonprofit Human Service Organizations

If authority is the right to direct action or to be believed because of mastery over a knowledge domain, what is the basis for client authority in nonprofit human service organizations? What kinds of authority do clients have in these organizations and what institutional arrangements support such authority? Client authority in human service organizations is an outgrowth of several societal shifts. First, social movements in the 1960s demanded institutions be more representative and accountable to the people they serve. This was reflected in the War on Poverty’s emphasis on maximum feasible participation. In the 1970s, consumerism and the challenge to professional authority emphasized the importance of client knowledge, interests and values (Gartner 1971; Gartner and Riessman 1974). Professions such as social work, city planning and public administration—whose students populate staff positions in nonprofits—began to emphasize participatory approaches to working with clients (Box 1998; Forester 1988, 1999; Hardina et al. 2007). Funders started to require demonstrable accountability to clients, and program models in specific fields assumed a central role for clients. At the same time, grassroots organizations took on service provision as a part of their work while retaining their emphasis on community accountability. For example, activists in the domestic violence movement started domestic violence shelters, gay rights activists started HIV/AIDS service organizations, and psychiatric survivors started peer-led service organizations as an alternative to mainstream institutions (Andriote 1999; Clay 2005; Lehrner and Allen 2009).

Today, clients have more influence and play more diverse roles in human service nonprofits. For example, LeRoux (2009) found that 49% of the 76 human service nonprofits she surveyed in Michigan reported that clients served on the board of directors, while 41% reported that clients participated on an advisory board and 28% of nonprofits engaged clients in workgroups (e.g., strategic planning, program redesign). Guo and Saxton (2010) found similar results across a broader spectrum of 174 nonprofits that completed their survey in Arizona: 55% of the nonprofits surveyed reported that constituents served on the board and 40% reported that they engaged constituents in strategic decisions. In my own survey of 119 nonprofits in Maryland, 35% reported having members of their target population on their board, while 29% reported that clients participated in discussions about organizational goals and priorities and 8% reported that clients participated in discussions about staff hiring.

This shift in the perception of clients’ roles in organizations over the last 50 years suggests that strategies used to ensure greater client authority in nonprofit human services would be meaningful. After all, legitimate authority requires a supportive institutional arrangement or belief system and this now seems to exist. Yet we know from research on client participation in fields like health, homelessness, and community development that the promise of client authority in nonprofit organizations leaves much to be desired. This research has identified a number of problems, including staff resistance; lack of committed resources to support participation efforts; use of professional jargon by staff, pressure for results; and failure to follow through on client suggestions or on their priorities (Benjamin 2008; Boyce 2001; Checkoway et al. 1984; Crook 2002; Reiss 2011). This research has also identified conditions that support greater participation by clients including commitment by executive directors, staff experience in client engagement, and fewer restrictive rules. Most of the earlier work on client participation looked at a limited number of strategies, i.e., advisory groups or board representation, that were

introduced into the organization by coercive funding requirements, although some research examined nonprofits where client authority was a part of the operational model (Halpern 1995; Stoecker 2003). Yet it is hard to walk away from this literature and not conclude that client authority in nonprofit organizations is severely constrained.

In my study of the day-to-day work of frontline staff in twelve human service organizations, I found that authority is much more fluid and the strategies used to give clients greater authority in the organization much more varied than the literature suggests. In my fieldwork, I found that human service organizations use four types of strategies to give clients greater authority in the organization. They (1) increased client authority in the bureaucracy; (2) decreased bureaucratic authority by decreasing the rules clients have to follow; (3) increased client authority by recognizing the lived experience of clients as an important source of expertise; and (4) decreased the status differential between staff and clients, by downplaying the professional expertise of staff.

The first two types of strategies put clients *in* authority. Some of these strategies will be familiar to readers and include board representation; client advisory groups; formal participation on staff hiring and evaluation committees; formal participation in discussions of programs and services and so on. More indirect and weaker mechanisms include formal complaint systems and feedback surveys. But I find that nonprofits also use strategies to reduce bureaucratic authority, by reducing the rules clients need to follow and letting clients direct and control their own action in the organization. The second two types of strategies recognize clients as having special knowledge. For example, nonprofits may hire staff who have direct experience with the problem or issue, use peer support technologies, or create opportunities for clients to teach staff. In terms of reducing the status differential between staff and clients, organizations may deliberately hire staff that do not have specific professional backgrounds or encourage wider relationships between staff and clients where staff and clients

move beyond their respective roles to relate as individuals.

To illustrate the four types of strategies, I describe examples of organizations from my fieldwork. Each example illustrates one type of strategy for increasing client authority described above. Each example is taken from a different policy field: youth development, domestic violence, human trafficking, and mental health. The purpose of the examples is to illustrate the strategies human service nonprofits use to increase client authority, the larger authority environment in which this client authority strategy is used and the dilemmas these strategies pose for staff and what they had to learn (Table 9.1 below summarizes the examples).

Example 1. Homeless Youth Drop-in Center: Increasing clients' role in the bureaucracy. In 2000, local business leaders were concerned about the growing number of young adults sleeping on the street and the effect this would have on customers. They worked through the local city council to secure funding from the public health department to support a drop-in center where young people 18–24 could go during the day. This Center provides a safe space where these young adults, called members, can sleep, take a shower, have a safe social space and receive more intensive medical and case management services, including services for members that do injection drugs (e.g., needle exchange, HIV/AIDS testing). The Center also provides leadership opportunities for members, encouraging their active participation on a youth advisory board and hiring members as peer leaders. The Center serves about 500 young adults a year.

- Bureaucratic authority. The Center was housed within a large hierarchical organization, but the program itself had fairly flat structure and functioned somewhat independently (e.g., separate location, distinct mission). The Center had six staff, including a project manager, who oversaw the space, and a program manager, who oversaw the entire program and liaised regularly with the

Table 9.1 Client authority: strategies and dilemmas

	Specific strategy	Type of strategy	Kind of authority	Core dilemma
Example 1. Homeless youth drop in center	Create client advisory board to inform governance	Elevate client authority in the bureaucracy	Puts clients <i>in</i> authority	How to support client leadership and apply the rules fairly?
Example 2. Domestic violence shelter	Replace rules clients had to follow with guidelines they could follow	Reduce bureaucratic authority	Puts clients <i>in</i> authority	How to ensure a safe and calm environment without rules?
Example 3. Human trafficking prevention nonprofit	Hire staff with lived experience	Elevate lived experience	Recognizes clients as <i>an</i> authority	How to draw on lived experience without becoming a client?
Example 4. Mental health clubhouse	Require staff to work side by side as colleagues with members	Reduce status differential between staff and clients	Recognizes clients as <i>an</i> authority	How to work with members as colleagues and meet requirements that assume they are not staff?

larger organization. The Center had rules for staff such as not sharing personal information; tracking their own activity; following rules about dispensing emergency provisions; and enforcing rules for shower and computer use and unsafe behavior. The Center had fewer rules for the youth; they had to follow basic behavior rules in the center such as no violence, no throwing food, etc. They also had to follow the rules for shower and computer use, sign in when they came into the center and go through an initial intake, although they didn't have to answer the intake questions.

- Professional authority. Staff in this organization were neither experts nor peers. They were all were fairly young, close in age to the youth they worked with. The staff had diverse educational backgrounds, including sociology, education, law, neuroscience and anthropology. While the staff were knowledgeable about systems and resources, they did not have specific professional expertise. The staff were called case managers but really only assisted youth with case management- type work when the youth called on them; otherwise the staff hung out in the Center with the youth or did programming and administrative tasks.
- Client authority. From the beginning, the Center has involved members in operation and governance of the Center: the center has a youth advisory board, youth sit on hiring committees, they set goals and priorities for the center, and they work as paid peer leaders with other youth. Youth could also choose which staff person they worked with and while the youth had to follow certain rules in the center, noted above, they did not have to be sober to use the space, they did not have to meet certain goals or meet with a staff person if they did not want to.
- Central Dilemma: Not quite owners. Those youth who participated in the leadership activities had a real sense of ownership over the center. With greater ownership came challenges. For example, the youth advisory board wanted to put in place rules that would have been difficult for other members, who faced greater challenges, to follow. They also did not want to follow the rules that were in place, even ones they created, making it difficult for staff to know how to enforce the rules while still encouraging member ownership. The manager explained: “*What I think is different [here] is that there’s kind of push and*

pull between the members and the staff. Part of the goal of program is to improve the lives of young people [by] giving the opportunities in the space. You want them to have a sense of ownership in the space.... That also creates problems or potential for problems because one of those common things that come up to the space is that members who have been there for a while do not want to follow the rules because that's their space."

Example 2. Domestic Violence Shelter: Reducing bureaucratic rules for clients. Like many domestic violence shelters started in the 1970s and 80s, this particular organization was started by a group of activists in 1981 who wanted to raise public awareness about domestic violence. They started a hotline and then eventually started a shelter. Today this organization is a full-fledged social service agency serving 6000 people annually. In addition to running a shelter where they provide legal advocacy and assistance to obtain housing and employment, they have a community-based advocacy program for victims/survivors who are not in the shelter but experiencing domestic violence. Like many nonprofits, over time this domestic violence organization gradually became more professionalized and bureaucratized. However, the leadership had taken a number of steps to return to its grassroots past. The organization started to engage in organizing and advocacy, it reduced the rules staff and survivors had to follow and the staff were trained in non-clinical approaches.

- **Bureaucratic authority.** In most domestic violence shelters victims/survivors are required to sign in and out of the shelter, be in their room with lights off at a certain time, hand over their cell phone and any medication to the staff, participate in support groups, complete chores, complete a day planner, etc. In the early 2000s research started to uncover the effect these rules were having on victims/survivors in shelters across the country: they were creating the same controlling environment of the abuser, and survivors reported they would rather go back to
- **Professional Authority.** In this organization, staff were not experts nor were they peers. Some staff had experienced domestic violence in their own lives, but sharing this with survivors was not part of the model. There was no specific professional background required for staff and they had degrees in law, business, sociology, psychology, nonprofit management, and social work. But the influence of social work models was evident in the professional ethos of the organization. These models were not clinical, though. They emphasized empowerment and mutuality. For example, instead of emphasizing professional boundaries, the organization emphasized “healthy boundaries” and mutual relationships, where the survivor and advocate learned from one another. Staff learned empowerment approaches, where they played a supporting role for survivors’ decisions about what to do. This ethos allowed the staff to go “outside of the box” (to use their wording) in their relationship with survivors, e.g., having coffee with survivors outside of the work setting, talking about shared interests, addressing non-clinical concerns, accepting homemade gifts, etc.
- **Client Authority.** With two rules in the shelter, survivors had the freedom to come and go as they needed, to choose what activities they participated in and when, and to call on staff in a way that made sense to them. While the guidelines were there, some survivors followed them while others did not. This gave survivors more control within the organization. But aside from reducing the rules, the organization had a few other mechanisms in place to put clients *in* authority: there was a formal compliant system and regular feedback mechanisms, and clients participated in

their abuser (The Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence 2011). Consequently, a number of shelters started to experiment with reducing the number of rules. This shelter reduced the number of rules in the shelter to two—confidentiality of the shelter location and no violence in the shelter—and used guidelines instead.

board meetings (but not as formal members) and advocacy activities.

- **Central Dilemma: Operating in the grey.** Staff were hired with the expectation of being able to “operate in the grey,” as one manager explained. Instead, of enforcing rules, staff had to learn how to consider the particularities of the survivor and the situation when taking action and using guidelines. Staff talked about having to unlearn rules they had learned in other shelters, i.e., they had to get used to “not checking” whether survivors were complying with what had become standard domestic violence shelter rules (e.g., curfews, day planners). Yet they still had to be consistent and there were still guidelines. One staff person working in the shelter explained: *In the interview they asked me, “How do you feel about not having a lot of rules in the shelter?” I loved it, I thought it was great. But I didn’t really know what that meant. We would constantly have to...figure out, okay she was [out] a lot of nights in a row. According to the guidelines, that can’t happen, we were like, okay what does that mean, let’s talk about that.* This required a lot more deliberation on the part of staff and managers. While some staff embraced the model, other staff struggled and some staff, who continued to want to enforce rules and have control, were let go.

Example 3. Human Trafficking Prevention Nonprofit: Hiring staff with lived experience. In the early 2000s, a teenage girl was murdered by her pimp. At the time, she had been living in a group home. None of the staff realized that she was being prostituted; they did not see the signs. This galvanized local city officials and social service providers. They quickly learned that this was not an isolated incident but was widespread. The city hired two women to design a prevention program: one woman had been controlled by a pimp from the age of 13 and had managed to get free of her pimp at 40; another was a youth development specialist. Today this organization is housed within a larger legal justice nonprofit, which serves as a fiscal agent. The organization’s

purpose is to prevent young girls and boys from being trafficked. They have a mentoring program for girls and boys under 17 who are either at high risk or already being trafficked. Teens are assigned to a staff mentor. The staff mentors have all been trafficked and gotten “out of the life.” The organization also has a training program to arm young women with the knowledge and attitudes they need to reduce the likelihood that they will be trafficked, and an education program where they train social service providers and law enforcement in how to identify someone who is being trafficked.

- **Bureaucratic Authority.** This was a small organization with 13 staff and while the program model was very well developed, they were just starting to put in place more formalized organizational procedures like a staff training manual, performance reviews and so on. Most of the work happened outside the organization, where the teens were. The teens were referred by social service agencies, schools and so on. However, the teens did not have to participate if they did not want to, but if they did participate they were assigned a mentor. The teen and the mentor would meet for a meal, go shopping or for various other social activities. What they did was usually the result of the preferences of the teen, although mentors might play a stronger role depending on the teen. Through those social activities, the mentor and teen developed a relationship and slowly worked on other issues. However, if the teen did not want to see the mentor, that was up to the teen. The emphasis of the mentors was on being there for the teen if and when he or she wanted to engage.
- **Professional Authority.** The organization was survivor led; all of the staff, except the Executive Director and administration staff, were survivors. However, the organization supported the staff mentors in developing as leaders in the field through additional training, formal education and speaking as experts in professional and public forums. For example, the organization would send staff on

trainings, support them in starting degrees, etc.

- Client authority. In this organization lived experience was highly valued and central to the core technology of the program. Not only was the organization survivor-led, but the staff-mentors used their lived experience “in the life” in their work with teens. They would share their experience in the first or second meeting with the teen, if the teen was interested in hearing it. This created a level of trust and the teens would open up and share their experience. As the staff mentor and teens worked together, the mentor would draw on her experience when strategically appropriate. For example, the mentor might recount her experience if the teen was glorifying her experience in the life: “well my boyfriend bought me this jewelry so he must really love me.”
- Central Dilemma: Zipping up. Elevating lived experience by hiring staff who had been “in the life” was not without its complications. The leadership team thought carefully about how to support the staff’s development, along with the teens’. First, they were careful not to tokenize their staff, i.e., to only see their contribution to the organization in terms of their lived experience. As noted above, they actively worked to build leaders among the staff and among the teens they worked with, by sending them on training, supporting their pursuit of higher education and having them take the lead in speaking in forums, not simply as staff with lived experience but as experts in the field. Second, the leadership team recognized that hearing countless stories from teens, similar to their own, and sharing their own experience could surface past traumas for mentors. So they employed a clinical director, not to provide therapy for staff mentors but to help them, in the words of one interviewee, “zip up,” i.e., to support the staff mentors in reestablishing their professional identity in the work. For example, one staff mentor talked about what she learned at the organization about zipping up when she was on a panel in a room full of probation

officers and one of the main probation officers asked her a really personal question about her time “in the life”: *I answered that question not knowing that I didn’t have to, being naïve. [From that] I learned that it is okay to keep some things to myself, parts of my story to myself. I don’t have to share them. I also learned that I am more than just a survivor.*

Example 4. Mental Health Clubhouse: Decreasing professional authority. In the 1940s, a group of former psychiatric patients from Rockland State Hospital started meeting regularly at the YMCA in New York City to provide each other with ongoing support, calling the group “we are not alone.” They wanted to let others struggling with mental illness know that recovery was possible. This group, along with their supporters, eventually led to the founding of Fountain House in 1947. Then in 1955 John Beard, a social worker, became the Executive Director and put in place the core components of the clubhouse model—(1) the work-ordered day, where persons with severe and persistent mental illness, known as members, work side by side with paid staff to run the house; (2) social activities in the evening; and (3) supportive services—and created more of a hybrid where members have a lot of authority in the day-to-day work of the organization but where the administration of the clubhouse is more bureaucratic (www.fountainhouse.org/about/history; Borkman 2013). Today there are over 300 “clubhouses” around the world. This particular clubhouse was started in 1981.

- Bureaucratic Authority. There are 36 standards that must be followed to be accredited by Clubhouse International. These standards are intended to ensure the integrity of the model and to provide a “bill of rights” for members (www.iccd.org/quality). The standards also ensure a level of equality between staff and members in the day to day running of the organization. However, the administration of the clubhouse is more traditional. For example, clubhouses do not require that members sit on the board, although they

require that open forums to discuss governance issues be held with staff and members. This particular clubhouse had members on the board. Also, while clubhouse staff are supposed to be all generalists working in the clubhouse, in reality clubhouses do have program managers and directors and defined staff positions. This particular clubhouse had an executive director, director of programs, director of operations, jobs coordinator, case management staff and housing specialists.

- Professional Authority. The clubhouse has a number of practices that de-emphasize professional authority. Staff at the clubhouse are deliberately hired without professional credentials. In fact, specific clinical training, e.g., in social work, can be viewed as a potential liability by executive directors making hiring decisions. Staff do not know the diagnosis of the members and that is not the focus of their relationship or work together, unless the member chooses to talk about it; the relationships are collegial, not staff-client. The standards require that there are no formal staff-only meetings or member-only meetings. Finally, clubhouses are deliberately understaffed to make them dependent on engaging members in the organization.
- Client Authority. Members have authority both in how they engage personally in the clubhouse and in how the clubhouse is run. Once members go through an initial orientation, they are free to engage in the clubhouse as they like. This includes showing up when they want, participating in the work-ordered day if they want, or participating in social activities or groups as they want. As their motto goes, “once a member, always a member.” Not only do members have the freedom to participate how they would like, but also the 36 standards help ensure that members are included in discussions about clubhouse governance and day-to-day operations.
- Core Dilemma: Not quite peers. Despite the standards and the commitment to working with members as colleagues, regulations, funding requirements and organizational

requirements did create divisions between staff and members. Staff had to learn how to adapt the requirement in a way that was congruent with the model or accept the incongruence. For example, when one clubhouse accepted Medicaid funding, the staff were required to keep case notes on members but this established a distinction between staff and members, where members were more similar to clients. To address this, the staff and members would write the case notes together or the members would write them. But when the introduction of HIPAA required all health records to be confidential, the member files had to be kept in a locked file cabinet so only the staff had access to them, a change from past practice when members and staff had access to the files. Some staff expressed concerns about these requirements that conflicted with the practice of treating members like colleagues. For example, one staff member explained the challenge with another requirement: *Saturday, when we go out, we have to have two-staff cover or one staff and a volunteer [someone from the outside]. Do I feel comfortable [with the volunteer] compared to some member I can really trust? “So what if something happened?” My bosses tell me. “What if something happened, which is better? Some volunteer who doesn’t have much knowledge about mental health, or some member who has been here for over ten years, and he, she went through peer counseling training?*

Table 9.1 summarizes the four examples. The table shows the specific strategy used by the organization—whether the strategy put clients in authority (by putting them in positions within the bureaucracy or reducing bureaucratic authority over clients) or it made clients an authority (by elevating lived experience or reducing the status differential between staff and clients)—and a core dilemma confronted by frontline staff. The examples presented provide a glimpse into the complicated authority environment in which staff find themselves. All of these strategies were

introduced by the organization and were not required by an outside funder or regulator. Some of these organizations started using these strategies from the start of the organization; others introduced the strategies later in the organizations' life. The brief examples and quotes from the staff provide evidence not of resistance but of learning, of uncertainty about how to balance bureaucratic authority with the authority of clients and of pushing back against requirements that compromise client authority. Other evidence, not presented here, shows similar tensions between professional authority (e.g., norms of social work) and client authority. And while the core dilemmas highlighted here were each represented in one organization, the dilemmas were evident across the organizations. In other words, in organizations that reduced rules clients had to follow, staff faced similar dilemmas. The next section examines the implications of these findings for future research.

9.3 Way Forward

This chapter makes three contributions to the broader discussion of community based organizations. First the chapter describes a wide range of strategies human service nonprofits use to increase the authority of clients in their organization, beyond those most commonly studied (e.g., board representation and advisory groups). In this respect, the chapter helps us explore finer grained distinctions between community organizations and more mainstream nonprofit human service organizations. Second, the chapter highlights the experience of frontline staff working in these nonprofits and how they must reconcile client authority with bureaucratic and professional authority. To date our understanding of client authority in nonprofit organizations has largely focused on the effectiveness of strategies to increase client authority. Here staff either help facilitate such efforts or are a barrier to their effective realization. This chapter, by examining the day-to-day work of frontline staff, points to the real dilemmas and trade-offs staff face as they learn to work in these environments. Looking more closely at the overall authority environment

and how staff resolve dilemmas that surface can help us move beyond the image of staff as simply resisting client authority or not, to better understand exactly how client authority can erode over time or how organizations successfully manage these conflicts and even benefit from the tensions. Finally, by showcasing examples in a diverse set of human service fields, the chapter suggests the utility of a more systematic examination of these mixed authority environments across policy fields, to identify larger patterns associated with particular client authority types (e.g., elevating lived experience, lowering the professional status of paid staff).

But of course additional research would help. First, we do not have comprehensive descriptive data on how widespread these mixed authority environments are, and how they may vary across nonprofit form and field. The data we do have suggests that a greater number of nonprofits have at least some strategies for increasing client authority than we might assume. Second, this chapter focused on a small subset of human service nonprofits and so it would be important to examine the authority environments in other types of organizations and other human service organizations. For example, scholars of community development corporations talk about the dilemmas that surface as these organizations balance being resident-led with other bureaucratic demands (Stoecker 2003). Member-based social movements encounter similar issues in balancing professional and member authority (Kleidman 1994) and bureaucratic and member authority (Chen 2009). Third, while this chapter focused on the staff experiences in these organizations, clearly understanding the clients' experiences is essential to fully understanding the consequences of these mixed forms. Finally, looking at the use of client authority strategies across nonprofit fields and types can help us start to identify institutional arrangements and the character of bureaucratic and professional authority that support meaningful client authority. Perhaps bureaucratic, professional and client authority are not always in opposition to one another, or tensions that do exist can be productive and in service to clients.

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Scott Harding and Louise Simmons

Abstract

Communities are both impacted by and manifest the economic conditions of local community members. Rising wage and wealth inequality that characterize the American workforce, combined with cuts in programs and services that address the needs of low-income communities, have undermined many urban localities. As a result, uneven community functioning and severely stressed social environments characterize a growing number of U.S. cities and neighborhoods. This is particularly the case in areas that never recovered from deindustrialization, job loss, and white flight of the mid to late 20th Century. These patterns disproportionately impact communities of color, even when the overall urban area may be experiencing economic revitalization. In response to these conditions, demands for economic justice have emerged and social movements based on community-labor partnerships have developed in many metropolitan areas. This essay illustrates the nature of these partnerships and

evaluates how they contribute to the wider repertoire of community organizing in the United States.

10.1 Introduction

Despite several years of steady, if slow, economic growth, many U.S. communities have been unable to recover from the “Great Recession” of the late 2000s. Persistent unemployment and a prevalence of low-wage jobs, especially in metropolitan areas, has heightened class and racial disparities and underscored the unequal nature of the 21st Century global economy. While the top 20% of U.S. households (and particularly the top 1%) enjoy increased prosperity, chronic poverty and rising forms of inequality contrast with the growing concentration of wealth and power. For local residents, inadequate educational systems and a resulting lack of skills needed for a hi-tech economy, combined with deindustrialization and corporate job flight, has perpetuated economic stress and underdevelopment. Overall, the United States is experiencing *economic inequality* to a degree that harkens back to the late 19th and early 20th century. The residual impacts on some urban centers underscore the fundamental connection between the health of local communities and their residents, and economic justice. Thus, place matters: the ability to access resources and

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economic opportunities profoundly affects quality of life, and these effects can impact individuals and groups throughout their lifetime.

It was precisely the conditions of an earlier period in U.S. history—entrenched urban poverty, poor housing, racial segregation, and rising class conflict—that gave rise to a wave of social reform. Indeed, in that critical era of economic transformation, the hardships faced in the nation’s growing urban communities, particularly for immigrants, compelled social reformers and the pioneers of U.S. social work to participate in struggles for worker rights, the abolition of child labor, the quest for an eight-hour work day, and other protections from a brutal and exploitive world of work. These same issues reappear today in a variety of forms. We suggest that understanding current economic trends—and their impact on local communities—is vital to building effective community-labor partnerships; and it should inspire those who work in local communities and community organizers to participate in these 21st century economic justice struggles.

Cloward and Piven (2004) and Kennedy and Tilley (2013) identified the notion of workers as community residents, and the need to articulate an organizing vision that combines these two aspects of existence. “Ordinary people,” Piven and Cloward find, “have always been moved to political action in the local settings where they live and work. It is in local settings that ordinary people form solidarities... discover their shared grievances and where they sometimes find sources of institutional leverage” (pp. xi–xii). Kennedy and Tilley elaborate on this relationship: “(l)abor is the working class at work. Community, or at least the low and moderate income communities... is the working class at home. How hard can it be for these two incarnations of the working class to cooperate?” (p. 2).

In this paper we describe the impact of rising inequality in the United States, and identify collaborative, community-based efforts to address economic and social insecurity. For those involved in local organizing, the health and well-being of local communities are directly linked to the economic conditions experienced

by neighborhood residents. In pursuing economic justice, as with all forms of social change, those involved in organizing must forge allies and develop coalitions to achieve desired outcomes. We find that *community-labor coalitions* are a potent means for creating lasting change and building new relationships among diverse organizations. We explore the basis of these economic justice movements and how they necessitate partnerships between community and labor, illustrating how these largely urban movements attempt to both promote economic justice and revitalize communities. We also describe the evolution of these relationships, demonstrating their growing influence on both economic and political issues. Such efforts are not necessarily easy nor produce inevitable results. They require patience, commitment, and a willingness by all parties to engage as true partners. When they succeed, community-labor coalitions can significantly enhance economic opportunity for urban residents; build bridges that overcome historic divisions between work and community; and help shift public debate about economic and social inequality. As important, these coalitions can strengthen a sense of community and solidarity, and thereby challenge the individualistic ethos prevalent in U.S. society.

10.2 Inequality, Poverty and Wealth Concentration

Poverty and inequality have been persistent, long-standing features of U.S. society. Progress in combatting economic and social disparity—especially in addressing poverty and racial segregation—occurred with the expansion of the U.S. welfare state and corporate regulation in the 20th Century. However, as part of the backlash to expanded state intervention in the economic and social sphere, over the past 40 years the United States has experienced unprecedented economic inequality and growing forms of political conflict. These changes have accelerated following the Great Recession, but are also reflected in several trends that developed since the 1970s.

Of note, this phenomenon coincides with the spread of *neoliberalism*: an attack on the welfare state and social spending in Western nations, the primacy of free markets on a global scale, the curtailing of government regulation, and the corporate quest for profits at the expense of labor (Sewpaul and Hölscher 2004). A widely used measure of inequality, the Gini coefficient, shows the United States is one of the most unequal societies among the 35 developed countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In 2012 the U.S. Gini coefficient was third lowest among all OECD countries, with only Turkey and Mexico faring worse, while Denmark had the lowest levels of inequality (OECD 2012).

The issue of rising wealth concentration presents another significant problem for the United States. Collins and Hoxie (2015) note that “America’s 20 wealthiest people—a group that could fit comfortably in one single Gulfstream G650 luxury jet—now own more wealth than the bottom *half* of the American population combined, a total of 152 million people in 57 million households” (p. 4). There are numerous ways to measure inequality (and conversely, social justice) in a society, including wealth and income, education, housing, health, and race and gender status. We identify several key forms of inequality, with an emphasis on economic aspects, and note that the United States ranks less favorably on many of these broader indicators compared to most industrialized countries.

Hispanics). Despite key differences, it is possible to generalize their experience to other non-white groups. Of note, the racial (and gender) hierarchy that has long characterized the United States survived the nation’s social and economic transformation from an agrarian to an industrial society. Thus, despite significant progress, racial stratification is widespread in the U.S. labor market and throughout much of contemporary American society, adversely impacting workers of color.

The enormous income and wealth gap between whites and non-whites is a fundamental source of economic and racial injustice and has adverse impacts on local communities. For example, in 2014, median household income for non-Hispanic white Americans was \$60,258, while Black median household income was \$35,398 and Hispanic median household income was \$42,491 (DeNavas-Walt and Proctor 2015). More profoundly, median *net worth*, which includes assets and housing and other property, was an astounding \$142,000 for non-Hispanic white households yet only \$18,100 for non-white households (Institute for Policy Studies, no date). This “racial wealth gap,” which was declining, has been exacerbated in the wake of the Great Recession. Persistent residential segregation, which directly impacts access to and the quality of education, the availability of living-wage employment and community services, contribute to these durable manifestations of racial inequality.

10.3 Racial Economic Inequality

The United States is a multi-ethnic/multicultural society, which is both an historic and contemporary dynamic. Yet despite its diversity, the nation has an uneven history regarding the social inclusion of all groups into the “American Dream.” In fact, most “minority” groups experienced social exclusion—formal and informal—throughout U.S. history. African Americans traditionally were the largest, most significant racial minority group in the United States (though they were recently surpassed in numbers by

10.4 Poverty

The status of poverty in the United States presents a similarly harsh picture. In 2014, the overall U.S. poverty rate was nearly 15%, or some 46.7 million people (DeNavas-Walt and Proctor 2015). Yet as with income and wealth, significant racial disparities exist in the level of poverty. Among non-Hispanic whites the poverty rate was 10.1%, while for Blacks it was 26.2%, for Hispanics (of any race) it was 23.6%, and for Asians it was 12.0%. Notably, among children under 18, the poverty rate was

21.1%—over one-fifth of U.S. children. Despite stereotypes of a “culture of poverty” among a small group of Americans, Rank and Hirschl (2015) show that larger numbers are impacted by poverty, typically in short-term, episodic fashion. Using a measure of *relative* poverty, they find that between the ages of 25 and 60, “six out of ten Americans will encounter a year in poverty as defined by occupying the bottom 20th percentile of the income distribution” (p. 4); while 42% of the population will experience “extreme poverty” (having income below the 10th percentile of the income distribution).

While poverty has expanded in suburban and rural areas, it remains concentrated in many U.S. cities, reflecting a concentration of less-educated, low-skilled workers and the loss of well-paid jobs from urban areas. Thus, poverty has a disproportionate impact among people of color.

10.5 Inequality and Community

These economic trends have immense implications in local communities, especially for already marginalized and oppressed populations. While a broad debate exists about the extent and nature of poverty and inequality, it is beyond the scope of this paper to summarize this literature. Indeed, there is a distinct lack of agreement about the cause (individual or systemic) and solution (free market versus active social policy approaches) to these problems, a long-standing tension in the United States that remains unresolved. What is notable, however, is the growing (political) consensus about the reality of inequality in U.S. society and its racial dimensions; for example, its prominence as a policy issue within the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Stiglitz (2012) suggests that rising inequality is an indisputable reality in the United States (and indeed, a world-wide trend). Marked by the growing concentration of income and wealth among the top five percent of households, he argues that inequality is bad for all—rich and poor—in that it undermines normal economic and social functions. Any short-term gains (for the wealthy) are likely to be undone by a

stagnating economy for most workers and rising forms of political unrest. Barlett and Steele (2012) find that corporate, fiscal, and tax policies of the past 30 years undermined the American Dream for most U.S. workers. By promoting job flight and inequality as the cost of increasing corporate revenue and reducing business taxes, hundreds of thousands of well-paid, union jobs were lost. This, in turn, promoted downward economic mobility, rising consumer debt, and increased inequality for large segments of the U.S. population, and in some instances led to the “hollowing out” of major metropolitan areas. As economic (and political) power was concentrated, they note, the middle-class in particular was unduly affected by these policies. Hacker and Pierson (2010) also find that political inequality has driven economic and social inequality. Pro-corporate policies starting in the 1970s produced a massive transfer of wealth to the upper class, a dramatic shift from post-WWII efforts that promoted income (and social) equality for many Americans. Thus, public policy deregulated key industry, cut taxes for corporations and the wealthy, and facilitated an assault on organized labor. They link the decline of unions, in particular, to a diminished political attention to the concerns of poor and working-class households; and this made it easier for political attacks on social welfare, civil rights, and policies promoting urban development.

Wilkinson (2005) has written extensively on health and inequality, finding that income and wealth inequality is directly related to poor health. He suggests that inequality is a likely cause of key social problems—like crime and social unrest—that impact all community members. Building from a structural functionalist perspective, Warren (1978) noted five essential functions that define the purpose of a community, including economic functions, social participation, and mutual support. This concept, adapted by scholars over the past 40 years, recognizes that these distinct functions must occur for social systems—communities—to operate efficiently. For example, when inadequate economic functions prevent people from meeting their basic, material needs, the impact is felt on

other key community functions; and social problems arise when (some of) these functions are inadequate for some groups.

Supporting other research Wilkinson (2005) demonstrates that the failure to equitably distribute the benefits of material prosperity promotes stress, sickness, and individual poor health, and produces higher rates of adverse health outcomes for the population at large. Notably, life expectancy and health indicators are worse for racial minorities and low-income groups in unequal societies. On a macro level, Wilkinson suggests that societies with greater levels of inequality have severe hierarchies and less social cohesion—and that less cohesive societies are more willing to tolerate and encourage greater inequalities:

...more unequal societies tend to have higher rates of violent crime and homicide, and that people living in them feel more hostility, are less likely to be involved in community life, and are much less likely to trust each other; in short they have lower levels of social capital. (p. 24)

This undermining of social cohesion and community functioning due to inequality is especially relevant. Combined with policies that have cut the social safety net and ignored the economic conditions of the poor and working class, many urban communities in the United States remain severely stressed. This is particularly the case in areas that never fully recovered from deindustrialization, job loss, and white flight of the mid to late 20th Century. Not surprisingly, these patterns disproportionately impact communities of color, even when the larger metropolitan area is experiencing economic growth.

10.6 Challenging Inequality

A significant part of the neoliberal agenda includes the weakening of labor unions and attacks on workers' rights. Borosage (2014) emphasizes that strengthening the U.S. middle class involves rebuilding strong unions, a sentiment echoed in other research. Labor unions, through collective bargaining agreements with

employers, and the broader labor movement have historically been vehicles for economic security and advancement for working people. This helped create vibrant communities and promoted metropolitan economic growth. However, in the current political context, few workers enjoy these benefits. The percentage of the workforce in unions has fallen precipitously from a high in the mid-1950s of approximately 34–11% (BLS 2016). Not surprisingly, rising inequality over the past 40 years has occurred simultaneously to the decline of union power. However, despite low levels of unionization, union members still enjoy higher wages overall: “(a)mong full-time wage and salary workers, union members had median usual weekly earnings of \$980 in 2015, while those who were not union members had median weekly earnings of \$776” (BLS 2016, p. 2). These wage patterns pertain to almost all racial and ethnic groups, as well as for both men and women, yet with lower levels of unionization these gains are becoming illusory for many working people.

As union membership has declined, the rise in various forms of contingent employment or underemployment—outsourcing, temp work, part-time jobs, irregular hours and more—have taken the place of full-time jobs with benefits and eroded the wages of many workers. Some scholars describe this as the creation of a “precarariat”: insecure workers in precarious employment who go from one short-term job to another, who lack many on-the-job and social protections, and whose availability in the labor market undermines the concept of job security for other workers (Standing 2011, 2014; Frase 2013). Moreover, many U.S. workers receive minimum wage or wages barely above minimum and are vulnerable to “wage theft,” scheduling problems and lack of economic security. These are people who work hard but can’t make ends meet and often live in communities with high levels of poverty and attendant urban problems.

Given these realities, new organizations have emerged to support vulnerable workers—some that collaborate with unions directly and some that address worker issues through different means, such as filing wage claims with

government for back pay or overtime pay that employers withheld illegally and other wage standards. Other organizations, such as immigrant worker centers, help the most exploited workers exercise their rights on the job, despite potential immigration status issues. Growing numbers of tipped workers, particularly in restaurants, are organizing nationwide to abolish the tipped minimum wage, a wage level that is substantially lower than the “regular” minimum wage. In addition, domestic workers are advancing domestic workers’ bills of rights which involve legislation that grants them rights heretofore not available under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) of 1935.¹ Other groups of workers once thought impossible to organize due to the nature of their industries and work sites, including restaurant workers, day laborers and domestic workers, have organized to pursue their rights by invoking workplace standards established under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938. The FLSA established the 40-h work week, the 8-h work day, the minimum wage, the right to overtime pay, the right to be paid for all hours worked, and other employment standards. A proposed national domestic workers’ bills of rights stipulates certain provisions of the FLSA and other employment matters as basic standards that all employers must follow. Importantly, these campaigns draw on community support to achieve success and suggest the possibility for reciprocity in community-labor partnerships.

Several important unions and the largest labor federation in the United States, the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), are embracing these new worker organizations in recognition of

common economic justice goals for all workers—union members and non-union members. The AFL-CIO passed two resolutions in 2013 to this effect, noting that “the labor movement must be broad and inclusive”...so that it becomes “open to all workers who want to join with us” (AFL-CIO 2013a). Notably, the AFL-CIO recognized the adverse impact of economic inequality on local communities, and endorsed the need for labor-community coalitions:

...over the past decade, broad macroeconomic transformations have put communities around the country at risk, threatening the economic security of all and accelerating deep divides and inequalities in our society. These circumstances demonstrate that the struggles of workers are inextricably interwoven with the struggles of communities.

Unions must work hand in hand with community partners and allies to reverse these economic trends and to create opportunities for all while building a robust democratic and participatory society, strong and safe neighborhoods and racial, ethnic and gender equality (AFL-CIO 2013b).

These resolutions and other initiatives indicate that organized labor understands the importance of working with community groups and residents to create a common agenda for social justice. Resolutions by themselves mean little, however, if specific, concrete steps are not taken to realize these goals. Notably, in 2015 the AFL-CIO launched a Labor Commission on Racial and Economic Justice, which has hosted regional gatherings of labor and racial justice activists to address their respective issues and consider how to expand the AFL-CIO’s work in this area into local communities.

10.7 Community Organizing and Community-Labor Coalitions

As noted, successful coalition building necessitates deep commitment and understanding on the part of all parties involved. Faith-based community organizations come to coalitions from a moral standpoint. Neighborhood-based groups engage in coalitions from the standpoint of wanting improvements in their local community.

¹In order to secure support from Southern members of Congress, several groups of workers were deliberately excluded from coverage under the NLRA, specifically agricultural workers and domestic workers. Domestic work and agricultural work was performed largely by African Americans at the time, and thus empowering them with worker rights would have upset the racial hierarchy in the Southern United States from which these elected officials benefitted. The legacy of this exclusion has in part given rise to the formation of these new forms of worker organization.

Immigrant rights organizations participate in coalitions to address vulnerability and the hyper-exploitation of immigrant workers, along with other issues. Racial justice organizations seek out coalitions from the standpoint of social reform, and to address unjust power relationships (e.g. policing practices) and inequalities. Organized labor joins these coalitions from the economic standpoint of needing to build the requisite power to shift dynamics of the workplace and the larger economy, and the political standpoint of building the political power of working people for needed reforms. Given these various interests, an important aspect of success in building community-labor coalitions is agreement on an agenda that respects different interests around the metaphoric and actual table.

Actually building these coalitions is challenging. Community forces often view organized labor and unions as monolithic and may not be aware of the differences among labor organizations, both organizationally and ideologically. It is often confusing to distill the difference between a local union, an international, a federation and the various levels of these organizations. The terminology, as well, can be difficult to decipher. It is also important to understand the legal framework that circumscribes labor's ability to function and the ways in which labor organizations confront and challenge these strictures—issues which most other types of organizations do not face.

On the part of labor, there is often impatience with the internal functioning of community groups, and concern that many local organizations hold a negative perception of labor. The history of exclusion of people of color by various labor unions lingers in the social memory of Black and Latino communities. Given the more recent emphasis on embracing racial justice struggles by organized labor, as well as the contributions by progressive unions historically, the contemporary connections between labor's struggles and community well-being must be emphasized and strengthened. For its part, organized labor has been challenged to demonstrate its commitment to local communities while at the same time avoid being taken advantage of by

opportunist elements and politicians. Equally important is the need to build racial unity in community-labor endeavors. Given the low rates of unionization in the private sector, there are millions of workers and individuals who have never experienced the benefits of unionization. However, the new forms of organizing, along with more traditional organizing methods, and the industries that are being targeted reveal paths to greater economic security, particularly for marginalized and oppressed communities.

When they work effectively, community-labor coalitions can provide a venue for establishing trust and developing enduring relationships among participants. In some instances, this leads to political collaboration that results in the election of progressive slates and individual candidates. In turn, these elected officials advance meaningful reforms over issues such as establishing living wage ordinances, raising the minimum wage, passing domestic workers' bills of rights, health care reform and more. These coalitions bring pressure on reticent politicians to support such legislation, which serves to enhance economic opportunity and quality of life in local communities. Sometimes this work leads to the formation of local or regional alternative political parties, at other times insurgent slates within the Democratic Party. In recent years, the Working Families Party, which operates in over a dozen states, embarked on fusion politics in which it established its own party line on state and local ballots and cross-endorsed progressive candidates. Reynolds (2007, 2004, 2002), Dean and Reynolds (2009) analyze the evolution and potential of these political and legislative initiatives in numerous communities and within metropolitan regions. They emphasize that a pre-condition in this political activity is the establishment of deep coalitions, engendering community trust and reciprocity among various actors and constituents.

Elsewhere we have discussed how unions employ community organizing models and tactics to achieve their goals, and how struggles in the arena of both work and community can benefit from the alliance of these two social forces (Harding and Simmons 2009; Simmons

and Harding 2009). The nature of labor-community alliances has evolved over the past several decades. This evolution began with early examples in which unions would seek community support during strikes or organizing drives—an instrumental need or relationship on the part of labor—to more recent alliances in which common agendas are formed to support such activities as living wage campaigns or demands for community benefits from urban development, a more mutually beneficial agenda. The recent organizing efforts of “big box” store employees and fast food workers have gained support precisely because these workers are community residents who are participating in and leading these struggles. Thus, organizers have made clear that by raising wages and improving labor conditions, these workers’ well-being and that of their communities can be strengthened. In the context of unprecedented inequality, economic justice issues are stark and easily grasped by local residents, especially in communities hard hit by economic *disinvestment*.

In terms of how community-labor coalitions function, there is no single format or “recipe for success.” A critical issue is that in the beginning stages of formation, all parties should feel that their viewpoints are heard and respected. Paying attention to the diversity of the community and having that diversity represented in a coalition is also important. It may take several meetings for participants to feel comfortable during the initial formation of such partnerships. Some coalitions have more formal meetings on a regular basis, while others may meet as dictated by the issue(s) they are addressing. Therefore, all participants need to understand how the group will function, identify group dynamics, and articulate various roles and responsibilities.

Often, a particular coalition is composed of groups that agree on some issues, but not on others. Thus, understanding the specific goals of the coalition is key—it is on those issues that an agenda will be built. Following that, groups can “agree to disagree” on other issues not on the agenda. For example, in the realm of immigrant rights, there may be some religious groups involved in a coalition with labor and other

community organizations, but on issues such as reproductive rights, these same groups may disagree. The same can be true in terms of providing support to striking workers. During a strike by UAW members at Colt Firearms in Connecticut (discussed below), union members reached out to the peace movement for support and presented a compelling argument that the union represented the workers, not the product (guns used by the military). Thus, some traditional peace activists were convinced to support the strike.

The specific strategies and tactics employed are topics best developed together by coalition partners. Not all members may feel comfortable participating in more visible and disruptive actions or demonstrations, but they may nonetheless not object to such tactics. Likewise, some members may not want to be involved in meetings with public officials where difficult discussions and negotiations occur, but nonetheless recognize that these meetings are necessary for the coalition’s goals. What is important for a coalition, then, is consensus that these various measures are necessary.

Finally, as in any organization, communication and keeping participants informed of relevant developments is vital. Given the extent of social media, this is now much easier than during the pre-internet age. However, person-to-person contact is still necessary to insure that relationships are nurtured and maintained, thus strengthening the impact and sustainability of a community-labor coalition.

Communities and Economic Justice: In the realm of community organizing, the issues of employment, often expressed as the need or demand for “good jobs” and economic security, are recognized as critical to strengthening local communities, along with improved education, health care, childcare, criminal justice reform and more. Several campaigns, i.e., movements for Living Wage ordinances, increasing the minimum wage in localities and states, and community benefits agreements, have emerged as key vehicles for economic advancement and are precisely the economic justice issues that form the basis for community-labor coalitions. Most recently, efforts such as “The Fight for 15” by

fast food and other low-wage workers, which involve demands of \$15 per hour wages and the right to unionize, or the struggle of immigrant workers, domestic workers, and restaurant workers, all necessitate community support to succeed. This emerging agenda for economic justice is where labor and community issues converge. As several examples demonstrate, such collaborations have been instrumental to the success of these campaigns.

We find it is critical for community organizing efforts to embrace the struggles of low-wage workers as cornerstone issues of economic justice that include the participation of local groups (Simmons 2016). For example, in the “Fight for 15” campaign, there are meaningful implications for low-income communities and thus relevance for community organizing. A 2015 report by the National Employment Law Project found that:

- Forty-two percent of U.S. workers make less than \$15 an hour.
- Women and people of color are overrepresented in jobs paying less than \$15 an hour.
- More than half of African-American workers and close to 60% of Latino workers make less than \$15 an hour.
- Nearly half (46.4%) of workers making less than \$15 an hour are ages 35 and older (Tung et al. 2015, p. 6).

As one example of the effect of low wages, the current federal minimum wage of \$7.25 h (in 2016) is insufficient to provide adequate, safe, and affordable housing. The National Low Income Housing Coalition’s (2016) finds that “...in no state, metropolitan area, or county can a full-time worker earning the prevailing minimum wage afford a modest two-bedroom apartment” (Yentel et al. 2016, p. 1). Even at \$15 per hour, the cost of housing still consumes a huge percentage of household income, especially for low- and moderate-income households.

Consider the impact on a low-income neighborhood in establishing a \$15 per hour minimum wage: a worker earning \$15 per hour, working 40 h a week for 52 weeks, could earn \$31,200.

This is 2.5 times the poverty level of \$12,071 for a single individual and twice the poverty level for two individuals of \$15,379. It is also significantly above the federal minimum wage rate of \$7.25 per hour, which at full time work yields a salary \$15,080 a year. While the income from a \$15 minimum wage is still modest, it could nonetheless enable an individual or household to stabilize their housing situation, reduce dependence on food assistance, and recirculate more income into the local economy. On a broader community scale where *many* individuals’ wages would increase, the impact of higher salary would spread more economic activity across a geographic area and prove beneficial for the entire community.

In other arenas, local activists are seeking to develop reciprocity between labor and community, with the hope that community-labor coalitions or alliances can become effective mechanisms to address inequality and community needs. Thus, organizers involved in the “Fight for \$15” effort have engaged with Black Lives Matter and the immigrant rights movements to consciously link the struggles for racial and economic justice. A 2016 convention took place to specifically address this mission (Tankersley 2016).

Successful Examples in Specific Communities and Realms of Organizing: There are many examples from the last several decades that illustrate the potential of community-labor coalitions in bringing real economic and social progress to marginalized communities. A note on terminology: when we use the terms coalition or alliance, we describe a group of organizations coming together for medium- or long-term work together. When we use the term campaign, we reference work on a specific measure such as raising the minimum wage in a city or state, or developing a community benefit agreement for a specific development project.

In addition to organizing efforts already mentioned, several other campaigns undertaken by community-coalitions in recent decades, as well as some of the networks that exist among community-labor coalitions, are notable.

- *LAANE*: The Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE) is one of the most successful organizations in the United States in addressing issues of economic and racial justice. Formed in 1993, several of its campaigns, achieved through coalition building across southern California, have stabilized communities and provided local residents new economic opportunities. These include:
 - A successful 2015 effort to raise the minimum wage in Los Angeles to \$15 per hour by 2020. In 2016 several nearby localities also adopted this wage standard;
 - A Clean and Safe Ports campaign to address environmental concerns in the community and those of workers in the trucking industry;
 - A Construction Career Job project to bring local residents into training programs and gain access to construction jobs;
 - The Responsible Hotels campaign to raise wages and employment standards for local hotel workers;
 - Comprehensive Community Benefits Agreements campaigns (in coalitions) over the expansion of the Staples Center, LAX Airport and other developments.²
- *The Partnership for Working Families network*: Affiliates of this network, including LAANE, exist in 17 cities across the United States and promote local economic justice efforts by building coalitions to address growth issues, local hiring, wages, the creation of union jobs, responsible development and other issues. Viewing themselves as “think-and-do” organizations, these local groups utilize research to undergird campaigns as well as social action strategies to mobilize constituencies.³ The campaigns and issues vary by locality, but a central theme of these efforts is the need to foster community and labor cooperation on social justice issues.
- *Wage theft issues*: Wage theft is an issue prevalent in many contemporary community-labor initiatives. Organizers and advocacy organizations, including faith-based constituencies, have filed wage claims with state and local government agencies and in many instances have won settlements for workers for back pay, violations of minimum wage, overtime pay, and other wage issues. This issue is central to the concerns faced by immigrant workers and in non-unionized workplaces.
- *Immigrant worker centers*: There are more than 200 immigrant worker centers in the United States (Fine 2011) that fulfill several functions which address the vulnerability of immigrant workers. These centers use a hybrid approach of workplace organizing and community organizing. Overall, they engage in activities which build on the solidarity within immigrant communities and develop leadership among immigrant workers, facilitate immigrant worker awareness of their rights (despite legal status), provide services and education such as ESL classes, and promote collective action and policy advocacy to address employment-related issues (Fine 2011; 2006). One important set of activities of these centers is advocating for victims of wage theft and enforcement of workplace standards. Using the concept of “regulation from below” (of labor markets and other economic issues), Lesniewski and Canon (2016) argue that a focus on wage theft “has the potential to stabilize and improve income streams for low-wage workers (and thereby reduce poverty), as well as improve economic development and local government revenue streams through the recapture of lost wages by low-wage workers” (p. 115).
- *Restaurant Opportunity Center United (ROC United)*: formed after the death of restaurant workers in the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, ROC United is an example of a new type of economic justice organizing. The group has branched out to more than a dozen cities and engages in campaigns to raise the “tipped” minimum wage to be set at

²For readers to see details of these campaigns and number of other issues addressed by LAANE, visit the organization’s website, www.laane.org.

³Readers are encouraged to explore their website, www.forworkingfamilies.org, and find links to the 17 affiliates.

the same level as the minimum wage for all other workers. ROC United also creates training and career opportunities for workers in the restaurant industry, develops safety standards for the restaurant industry, and advocates for paid sick leave and other worker protections.

From the state in which the authors live, Connecticut, we also offer first-hand accounts of the issues involved in building community-labor coalitions. A number of successful community-labor coalitions have operated over the past several decades in Connecticut. We summarize several of these efforts, noting some of the obstacles faced by these groups and lessons learned.

- *The Community-Labor Alliance for Strike Support*: Formed in 1986 to support the strike of Colt Firearms workers from 1986 to the early 1990s, this four-year strike by UAW Local 376 members provides several lessons for building alliances. First, the President of the Greater Hartford Labor Council (the local arm of the AFL-CIO, comprised of many local unions) worked with the President of the union local to reach out to community groups for support. Several active neighborhood groups existed in Hartford at the time and tended to focus on their own, neighborhood-based issues. Where the groups found common ground with unions was over the use of Hartford police that were redeployed from local neighborhoods to the strike picket line—both sets of interests wanted that practice changed. Additionally, Colt attempted to recruit replacement workers from Hartford neighborhoods that it had previously ignored in terms of hiring priorities. The neighborhood groups were alerted to this and urged local residents not to take these jobs. In mid-1986, a sit-in of 45 people took place at the Colt plant by non-strikers comprised of clergy, elected officials, including three sitting state representatives (one of whom later became Mayor of Hartford), community residents, and leaders from other unions who
- became known as the “Colt 45.” The union learned from community organizers about tactics to take the strike from the picket line into the broader community by having demonstrations at the corporate officers’ suburban homes and elsewhere. Political support for a boycott of Colt products was obtained from local, state and national levels of government and this required community support, as well. Through these efforts and the leadership of the community-labor coalition, labor, community and elected officials developed relationships that endured over many years on other issues such as healthcare reform and labor law issues (see Simmons 1994 for an analysis of these activities, and Lendler 1997 for an analysis of the strikers’ political views during the strike).
- The Legislative Electoral Action Program (LEAP): This coalition formed in the 1980s during the Reagan era as conservative political action groups targeted progressive state legislators. Labor, citizen action, environmental, various civil rights, women’s issue organizations and others came together to support progressive candidates for state office, defend reformist officer holders, and support progressive legislation. The organizations screened candidates on key issues agreed to by LEAP members, decided which candidates needed the most support, and helped find volunteers for political campaigns. Those elected were expected to work on the LEAP agenda and a progressive caucus of legislators formed to help carry out this work. This agenda setting was important in passing or preventing legislation from being enacted. For example, LEAP-backed legislators helped defeat an English Only proposal that would have prevented bi-lingual education in Connecticut, worked to defend reproductive rights, established the basis for enacting a state income tax, and created measures to achieve corporate accountability. This coalition lasted for over 20 years. Among the main lessons from their work was to understand what issues local groups could agree to work on as LEAP. When policy

disagreements arose, organizations opted to work independently, but still remain part of the coalition (see Simmons 2004 for a more detailed account).

- In New Haven, Connecticut, the presence and power of Yale University and Yale-New Haven Hospital spawned several community-labor efforts and an evolution in the nature of these coalitions. Yale University workers are represented by two union locals of UNITE-HERE, Local 35 for the physical plant workers and Local 34 for technical, administrative and clerical workers. Most recently UNITE-HERE chartered Local 33 to represent graduate student employees at the university. Yale and its unions have had rocky relationships over various contract negotiations and a history of strikes by Locals 34 and 35. The unions would reach out to community leaders and residents for support of their striking members, which often resulted in significant and varying levels of local backing. However, in the early 2000s, leadership from both the union and community decided it was time to develop a more mutual relationship in which union members would embrace community issues. The Connecticut Center for A New Economy (CCNE) was formed and included representatives from labor, faith and community organizations in New Haven, Hartford, and Stamford, Connecticut. CCNE sought to develop agendas in the three cities that addressed local issues of social, racial and economic justice of importance in each community. In doing so, the coalition built on and strengthened existing community-labor relationships. Over time, CCNE devoted a great amount of its work to issues at Yale which involved an intense, intricate campaign over contracts with UNITE-HERE Locals 34 and 35; an organizing effort by District 1199 New England of SEIU at the hospital; and the demand by the unions and community forces for a community benefits agreement which community groups and unions put forward. CCNE played a critical role in the community organizing aspect of the efforts. It issued reports on some

of Yale-New Haven Hospital's practices regarding medical debt and the garnishing of low-income people's wages over such debt, and other issues. The chronology and details are beyond the scope of this chapter, but one result was a community benefits agreement with Yale and community organizations, which included a commitment to hire local residents, provide funds for youth activities in New Haven, and several other features in exchange for CCNE's agreement not to oppose the expansion of Yale-New Haven Hospital. Additionally, Yale settled contracts with Locals 34 and 35, and Yale-New Haven Hospital signed an agreement not to interfere with District 1199's organizing. While the university carried out some of its commitments to the community, enforcement regimes were not sufficient to ensure that all of the measures came to fruition. However, the hospital's behavior and violation of its agreement not to interfere with unionizing prevented the goal of organizing the hospital workers. In a lawsuit, Yale-New Haven Hospital was ruled to have violated its agreement with District 1199NE and eventually had to pay damages to the union. Yet, most of the workers remain without a union in the hospital (see Rhomberg and Simmons 2005; Simmons and Luce 2009 for more detailed accounts). CCNE has worked on other issues, as well, over its history, including health care reform, voter engagement and other campaigns. Various campaigns have involved different sets of partner organizations, and thus it has been important to adjust organizing strategies to these distinct contexts.

- In the mid-2010s, with development taking place in New Haven while the city's residents were experiencing high unemployment, some of the same forces involved in the earlier efforts of CCNE created a political organization, New Haven Rising (NHR). The group formed to organize around local elections and neighborhood issues in New Haven. New Haven has a Board of Alders with 30 geographic districts and NHR ran a slate of

candidates in 2011, winning a majority of the Board's seats and again in 2013, gaining additional seats. It also helped to elect Mayor Toni Harp, a long-time State Senator whose agenda aligned with NHR. In brief, one of the main issues that the Board of Alders and New Haven Rising community members have worked on is the creation of targeted training of unemployed and underemployed New Haven residents for jobs with employers who have agreed to hire the trainees. This program, New Haven Works, formed in 2012. NHR has the challenge of creating favorable outcomes for New Haven residents, and thus has had to adjust to the demands of governing while maintaining its political base in the neighborhoods. As a result, New Haven Works became a vehicle to achieve some of NHR's goals.

From the above examples in Connecticut, what emerges is that relationship building over time can bring together progressive forces from local communities, issue organizations, organized labor, faith institutions and others to achieve a variety of outcomes. UAW members credit the support from the extra-union sources, as well as their own steadfast devotion to their cause, for the success of their strike. LEAP accomplished a variety of legislative victories and currently new, similar formations are occurring on important issues. The ability to do this type of work and bring in new constituencies in the recent political climate takes on more urgency. However, some lessons from Connecticut experiences are borne out in other locales, most importantly the problems for community organizations in obtaining stable funding.

10.8 Implications

From these examples, we contend that issues of economic justice are critically important to both the fate of communities, particularly marginalized and low-income localities, and local

residents. We also suggest that community-labor coalitions in their numerous forms are vital to achieving economic justice, particularly in light of the neoliberal contours of the U.S. and global economy. The issues presented here are not fringe concerns—they impact large segments of the U.S. population (and exist on a global scale). The task of community organizing is to break down what may seem impenetrable economic and political processes to community residents and inspire them to action on behalf of their own self-interest and that of the larger community. It is not just that the successful campaigns of LAANE or ROC United, for example, need community involvement and support to succeed; it is that they represent and have concrete impacts on the people in the neighborhoods of Los Angeles or the restaurant workers in cities across the United States.

We also contend that community-labor coalitions need not exist only at the formal level of establishing non-profit organizations or political action committees. While these may be necessary and useful for seeking funding, pursuing electoral strategies and establishing credibility, *informal* relationships can be just as important. The motivation and spirit of social justice activism crosses many boundaries and creates a sense of community and solidarity that can be called upon on short notice to support different local struggles. In mid-sized communities, the participation of Black Lives Matter activists at low wage worker rallies and vice versa is testament to how local social actors embody this reciprocity first hand.

In the contemporary period of economic uncertainty and an uneven recovery from the Great Recession, local communities confront the realities of economic and social inequality and insecurity. For community practitioners, particularly those involved in organizing and policy advocacy, the health and well-being of local neighborhoods are clearly tied to the economic conditions experienced by community members. In working for economic justice, as with all forms of social change, organizing must incorporate building allies and developing coalitions

to achieve desired outcomes. Community-labor coalitions are a potent means to create movements for social change.

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A Field Guide to Organizations “In the Wild:” Moving Beyond Restrictive Organization Theory for Associations

Jordi Comas

Abstract

Too often, organization theory is used to restrict what counts, or doesn't, as an organization. Scholarship over focuses on contrasting them to formalized bureaucracies. Our approach differs. We begin by noting that we now have a much deeper and richer set of studies of all manner of associations. We use the rich portfolio of studies of community, organizations, and associations to first observe and categorize what associations are doing to

organize. With this data in hand, we revisit organization theory for associations. First, we find several important categories including task-oriented, embedded, vertically-linked, democratic, and network forms of associational organization. Second, we use these categories to enhance organizational theory to include the roles of technology, of normative commitments, of institutional pressures, and finally of local history to create enduring contexts for organizational forms.

Although Jordi Comas is entirely responsible for the contents of this chapter, it represents a three-year working partnership between Comas, Carl Milofsky, Margaret Harris, and Brandn Green. Milofsky, Chap. 7 in this volume is also a product of this partnership. One version of the present chapter was presented with the title, “Towards an Organizational Theory of Associations Using Embedding and Mechanisms”, at meetings of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), Denver, CO, November, 2014. Another version of this paper authored by Comas was presented at meetings of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), Washington, DC, November 2016, as well as at the authors' conference for *The Handbook of Community Movements and Local Organizations, Second Edition*, Seattle, WA, August 17–19, 2016.

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We are accustomed to what we may call domesticated organizations. As an archetype, domesticated organizations are characterized by the following. They have experienced structural evolution. They have clear purposes and objectives; they are populated with energetic supporters and committed staff members; they build up piles of resources; they conform to the administrative expectations of government agencies, foundations, and professional groups. Academics who specialize in management study them and talk in detail about how things ought to be done. The ideal is for them to be clear, predictable, and transparent. We contend that the domesticated organization, what is also the fully formed and rationalized bureaucracy nestled in strong institutional contexts, while certainly encountered among community and volunteer associations, is not and should not be the sole

focus of organizational theory for the range of associations and community organizations in modern society nor in this volume.

We are interested in organizations “in the wild.” We do not know much about them because their “species” have not been identified. They live in ecologies, environments, and niches that may not be visible or salient because our theories of organization have imposed a myopia that illuminates only some kinds of organizations pre-determined to “count” as real organizations. However, if we think of ourselves more like natural historians than lab scientists, we can rely on the deep reservoir, reaching back decades, of qualitative, ethnographic, and field studies in sociology, social work, and other fields (McKelvey 1997). In this reservoir we find many sightings and anecdotal accounts of strange, wild organizations that prosper and yet have unusual shapes and do things “real” organizations are not supposed to do. We can profit from a better “field guide” for organizations in the wild that tells us how to see and find these organizations and classify them in a useful way.

We have chosen a familiar name for the group of organizations “in the wild”—associations. As we develop the theory here, we ask the reader to keep in mind the benefit of weak names and strong concepts. In other words, how we define associations behaviorally and sociologically matters more than commonly-held definitions of the term. Associations are a category that has been used in myriad ways referring to diverse types of organizations.

11.1 Associations

Associations are a distinct set of organizations that exhibit variety in how they organize. A comprehensive theory to account for this variation is needed. Too often, organization theory is used to restrict what counts, or doesn't, as an organization. Three trends in scholarship about associations tend to use associations as an

element or cog for a larger theory or goal. These contribute to the myopia we wish to correct.

First, scholarship over focuses on contrasting associations to formalized bureaucracies. This approach often assumes that associations will evolve towards formalized bureaucracy. One impulse for this assumption is inherited from social theory. In short, the bureaucratic teleology assumes all organizations are some form of bureaucracy on the determined path (hence the teleology) from less to more formalized bureaucracy. While this approach often claims Weber as it's source, even going so far as to combine Weber with the early approaches to scientific management, this is a naïve reading of Weber. As Clegg and Lounsbury (2008) point out, the efforts of Merton and colleagues (1952) and his students such as Gouldner (1954), Blau (1955) and other seminal works in mid-twentieth century organizational sociology, to discover the bureaucratic ideal type mistook Weber's ideal type for a precise guide to empirical work. Weber understood bureaucracy in the context of the rise of modernity (Weber 1978). He imagined that as modernity advanced all forms of organized life will bend towards becoming a formally rationalized bureaucracy, an idea most memorably expressed in the *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* as the saint's cloak becoming “an iron cage” [although that was Talcott Parsons' translation (Clegg and Lounsbury 2008, 120)]. The Weberian assumption, when deployed to explain associations, cannot permit persistent forms of organization that are non-bureaucratic. However, many scholars analyzed patterns of organization that were explicitly or intentionally non-bureaucratic, that is, that opposed a march towards domination and Weber's “iron cage” (Milofsky 1988; Rothschild-Whitt 1979).

A second trend can be called “neo-Tocquevilleian.” It seeks to use associations as an element in a larger theory of democracy rooted in Tocqueville's work linking local community to a larger democratic culture (see Milofsky, Chap. 7). This trend often blurs empirical accounts of associations with a normative theory of how healthy democracy depends on community and association.

For example, Putnam’s work on social capital (1997, 2000) and other variants on communitarian theory (like Etzioni 1994) exemplify this. Wilkinson (2010) describes how personal friendships when embedded in voluntary organizations can be a form of personalized civil society; it is an example of research that links volunteering to the decline or shift in social capital towards individualism—this shift being the object of concern of neo-Tocquevilleian approaches.

A third trend is the normative professional pressure of career nonprofit managers (Tschirhart and Bielefeld 2012). This often takes the form of research exclusively focused on board composition for formalized non-profits, a weakness that Cornforth (2011) also identifies. Success for this cohort is measured by formalizing and bureaucratizing the presumably parochial, inchoate, or incoherent forms of organizing widely encountered “in the wild” among associations. Associations as they actually exist are hence “problems” to be conquered or tamed.

11.2 Theoretical Context: Not All Organizations Are Bureaucracies but All Associations Are Productive

We begin this chapter by linking to two key ideas from more recent scholarship; first, that associations are not uniformly like classic formalized bureaucracies and second associations should be understood first as productive entities, albeit, of a variety of outcomes beyond economic goods and services. First, research on associations has found that they tend to relax or even reject formalization and bureaucratization (Harris 1998, 2014; Pearce 1993; Rothschild and Whitt 1986; Sills 1968). While this is an essential point, it does not necessitate that there is “no” organization nor any organizational forms among associations. Rather, it suggests that association scholars should adopt a view of organizations and organizing that allows for the fluidity of organizations (Comas et al. 2015). Other scholars, in view of such developments, have suggested that the notion of

organization should be broadened to include also looser, networked, and “boundaryless” social arrangements (e.g., Ashkenas et al. 2002) and that organizations should be conceived not as static entities but as ongoing processes of “becoming” (e.g., Tsoukas and Chia 2002). A good example of this trend is Dornbusch and Schoen’s (2015) analysis of the hacker collective *Anonymous* as an example of “organizationality.” They use organizationality to dissolve a dichotomy between organization and non-organization, which enables the analysis of collective efforts that are like organizations even as they exhibit high degrees of fluidity.

There is an important tradition of studying community organizations and other associations from the standpoint of organizational theory. In addition, scholars analyzing community have at times described or theorized novel forms of organization that are relevant but unfortunately disjointed from the broader current of organization theory (see Milofsky, Chap. 7, and Rothschild, Chap. 8; see also Chen 2009; Rothschild and Whitt 1986; Ryan 2015; Taylor 1979). It is challenging to do this because attributes that are central to the nature of formal organizations generally are relaxed where associations are concerned. Associations are loosely bounded, they lack formal roles and rules of procedure, their governing structures are ambiguous and they may not be hierarchical, and it may not be clear either what their central task is or how to carry out their work (Milofsky 1988). The consequence of this lack of formalization, as Harris (2014) explains, is that certain characteristic tensions arise. These not only help to explain why predictable conflicts occur. They also foster events that lead organizations to create formal structures and to move them down an evolutionary path towards oligarchic leadership and formal organization (Michels 1949; Piven and Cloward 1979; Rothschild-Whitt 1979; Stinchcombe and Smith 1975; Wood 1989).

At times there is a tendency to overlook the importance of associations by viewing them as not-yet-formed “real” organizations. That is, that they are bureaucracies in the early stages of

becoming—proto bureaucracies. Harris's (2014) point is that the fluid, processual quality we see in community organizations is intrinsically valuable. We can use tools of organizational analysis to throw certain tensions into sharp relief, understanding that as organizations become more formal and institutionalized they usually create structures that minimize these tensions. But the qualities that produce the tensions are important to recognize as necessary and positive aspects of community life—friendships and loyalties; idiosyncratic adaptations and systems of exchange that get necessary work done; networks built up out of family ties and long-standing friendships; and so on. If we look at community projects using the lens of organizational theory, we can anticipate where and why tensions may arise and in this way allow community projects and issues to be managed in a less disruptive fashion.

The second major trend is the documentation that associational organizations do “produce,” even if it is not a production of goods and services for monetary transactions. Associations can produce identity, community, or solutions among other outcomes. This production is what marks the beginning of what we can recognize as an organization. Before some urge or plan to be productive, an association is more like a common affinity or sense of community. This is a social entity, but we think of it as the “proto-organization.” When a proto-organization begins to deal with tasks and processes for producing, generally speaking, to take concerted action, this moment is the triggering of the division of labor. This triggered division of labor is the boundary of our units of analysis (Milofsky 2008c). Associations as organizations do not have to evolve into formal organizations to be the focus of our study. It is enough that they are producing.

One of the reasons associations are important in theory is that as people participate we believe their involvement in the community becomes more intense and meaningful and feelings of trust among members grows—this is basic to the theory of social capital (Putnam 1997, 2000). But social scientists like Putnam have long expressed doubt that involvement in associations actually

fosters greater involvement and increased trust. As society has become more mobile, as job opportunities become more corporate, and with the introduction and growth of television and social media there is the sense that people become more focused on cultivating private interests and resisting obligations to serve their community (Wirth 1938).

We find a counter trend, however, in local organizations that depend on nearby residents feeling symbolically connected and identified with the local community. These organizations represent an engine of social and community development. To foster their own growth and survival, leaders create community events, popularize issues of concern, and seek to create settings in which people may experience community. The hope is that people who live nearby will both enjoy local community life and come to believe that supporting local organizations is important in order to build cohesion among residents. They also may self-consciously choose to buy local and to participate in local events to make it feasible for local businesses to continue existing, to continue service residents, and to make the locality an interesting and diverse place.

This idea comes from a study of the community press by Janowitz (1967) in which he asked why neighborhood newspapers could exist in a metropolitan area like Chicago where it was well covered by large market news sources. Janowitz recognized that local community sentiments were valuable to residents and that community newspapers were important for building these sentiments. But his theoretical orientation was one where he expected residents to only participate in local events if they saw a self-interest in their participation. He called the community that results “the community of limited liability” because he expected that residents would not want to make generalized gifts to the local community in the sense of Titmuss's (1972) “gift relationship” if they did not receive something in return.

Janowitz's (1967) discovery that residents would give to the community if they felt symbolically identified with it led younger scholars at

the University of Chicago, Suttles (1968, 1972) and Hunter (1974; Hunter and Suttles 1972) to develop the symbolic construction of community perspective in urban sociology. Rooted in symbolic interactionist theory, they argued that community exists and becomes powerful if it is symbolically constructed. Physical structure, inter-group competition, historical traditions, and local interactions and events that build meaning and attachment to place were things that created the natural community areas in Chicago that were a mainstay of urban sociology in that city (see Hunter, Chap. 1).

We may combine Janowitz’s theory about how local businesses and institutions could work to build community out of their own self-interest with the idea that residents become powerfully identified with a place through processes of social construction. This points us in the direction of a way organizations may strategically plan and capitalize on their embedded status to grow their own enterprise while they simultaneously help to grow the community.

Another literature that gives great importance to associations is the political science literature on what are called “mediating structures” (Berger and Neuhaus 1996; Calhoun 1992; Couto 1999). Much of this interest grows out of Tocqueville’s (2004) observation that America is a society of joiners and from the pluralism theory of democracy developed in political science (LeRoux and Feeney 2015). Important as associations are in serving as mediating structures, we still do not learn from the political science tradition how these associations work as organizations except by extrapolating ideas we find in the case-study literature.

In the formulation of Warner and Lunt (1941) primary organizations include the family, churches, larger businesses, political institutions, and larger, incorporated social services institutions. Warren (1967) describes one institutional area where this kind of linkage is needed. He describes organizations in social services work as “community decision organizations” (CDO) and together they are a network of institutions that provide services that address basic needs, resolve community problems, engage in socialization

and community maintenance, and carry out economic production. The primary institutions operate in relative isolation from each other—today we talk about “silos”—and in our research professionals within them have strikingly little connection to professionals in other CDOs and very little knowledge of professional philosophies or policy issues in institutions other than their own. In some cases these institutions share a functional need but lacking cross-cutting ties are unable to work together. A “network hole” results that may be filled by a linking organization (Milofsky 2008d).

Warner and Lunt (1941) use the term “secondary organizations” to describe small voluntary organizations like a Catholic church men’s group that are linked to primary organizations but may have overlapping memberships with other primary organizations. They suggest that these organizations are small and fluid so that they are hard to describe. They also do not strike observers as intrinsically important so researchers would not think to do specific studies of such organizations.

Our approach to explaining the variation among associations is to examine the organizational features of associations. Current scholarship offers several reasons to examine organizational features. First, there is accumulating evidence that associations can experience challenges of practice; challenges that are no less intractable than those faced by larger, more formal nonprofits. Thus, those who participate in associations or lead them could benefit from scholarly support to enable them to understand the causes of the challenges they face and to help them to move to practical solutions. Such support might come in the form of empirical studies. It also might involve development of tailor-made theories or sensitive adaptations of theories originally developed as explanations of organizational challenges in other kinds of organizations. Earlier research has shown that in the absence of tailor-made responses to the practical challenges faced by an association there can be a tendency for smaller, informal organizations to adopt theories—or to be pressurized to adopt theories—developed for very different kinds of

organizations. These theories often have a poor fit with the internal and external demands faced by associations, which often is the case with business models of management or bureaucratic accountability structures.

11.3 The Division of Labor and Its Many Variations in Associations

To conceive of associations as organizations means to not only pay attention to characteristics such as internal roles and tasks; systems of work; accountability systems; goals and goal-setting; internal governance; decision-making processes; emergence and founding of associations; associations' growth and change; the place of volunteers and paid staff; and the interaction between associations and their environments (Harris 1998). A fuller theory will also talk about why it matters that these functions are being carried out in an associational context. We have numerous theories of "organizational behavior" developed for the analysis of for-profit firms and larger, legally constituted, autonomous, formal non-profits (Anheier 2005; Lewis 2007; Tschirhart and Bielefeld 2012). We have little theory that tells us how to understand small entities with few formally defined roles, where technologies are underdeveloped, boundaries are highly permeable, governance systems are participatory with little hierarchy, no clear ownership has been established, and where external organizations or communities play a strong role in determining internal organizational processes and activities.

The quality of the division of labor establishes the kind of organizing the association does. Associations exist to carry out tasks and hence they will find a division of labor, albeit haphazardly and with a near-infinite number of variations in communities around the world, for completing those tasks. More generally, the division of labor is the bright line between our unit of analysis, an association, compared to other units of analysis such as community, city, network, and so on. Using this threshold, as prior scholars like Pearce

(1993) have done, results in the wide variation in forms of organizing among associations.

Rothschild and Whitt (1986) comment "if, following Marx's lead, we take the division of labor as the key to the social relations of production, [formally rational] organizations... maintain a sharp division between managers and workers, whereas [substantively rational] organizations are integrative; *those who work also manage*." For this paper, associations are primarily groups that seek to do things and in doing things the division of labor is key. As we will discuss below, not all associations are substantively rational because not all are integrative. The division of labor between volunteer work, paid workers, and managing is more variegated. Managing—the formulation of goals, their implementation, and the use of accountability systems—may be done by some combination of volunteers, paid staff, formal directors, outside actors, and some combination of these.

Once we freeze the Weberian, Neo-Tocquevilleian, and managerialist assumptions, new theoretical possibilities emerge to explain the variation we find in the wild. We organize this theoretical space around two dimensions: focus of activity and source of the division of labor (DoL). First, we find associations whose division of labor is either more task-oriented or process-oriented. This division parallels the formal versus substantive rationality division rooted in Weber and from which Rothschild builds her critique of organizations. Of course all organizations have tasks and processes. We are not making them mutually exclusive. Instead, we argue that in terms of the division of labor, task or process has more to do with how to organize.

By drawing on institutional theory (Scott 1995), we know that there are many sources for how to organize, for the templates or schema that are available and deployed by associations (and their members) in their productivity. For associations, we propose that the sources for how to organize have three types determined by their relationship to the association's broader context. Some organizing templates come from the

Table 11.1 Focus of association and source of division of labor

	Source or Templates for Division of Labor	
Focus of Organization ↓	Endogenous to Association	Exogenous to Association
Tasks	<u>NON or ANTI-BUREAUCRATIC</u>	<u>EXPOSED TO BUREAUCRACY AS INSTITUTIONAL FORCE</u>
Process		

association itself. Others are embedded in the local context which can include local preferences, ideological commitments, and so on. Finally, some templates for organizing can come from more distant outsiders or other parties. Bureaucracy is a dominant institutional force for associations. Seeing it as an institutional factor is more helpful than as the opposite or antagonist to associations. When associations are insulated from or consciously reject the institutional force-field of bureaucracy, they are in the first column of Table 11.1. Those associations that do seek templates or sources for their division of labor are much more likely to consciously or unconsciously adopt bureaucratic elements, but there is still important variation in how this affects the association’s division of labor. They are column 2 of Table 11.1.

Our awareness of this variety is due to the rich portfolio of studies of community, organizations, and associations our field has accumulated over the decades and which is represented in this volume. The rich portfolio suggests that there are many categories of division of labor; more precisely, there are many structures that maintain and recreate the division of labor so as to continue to be productive in the ways that are valued for the constituencies or stakeholders of the association. Of course, what is produced, how it is valued (or if it is), and how normative assumptions about the division of labor are formed can all affect

organizations. But before we account for developmental patterns, we want to examine the variation “in the wild.” Table 11.2 presents a theoretically-grounded taxonomy of types of organizations to guide further research and theory.

11.4 Fluid Organizations (Task-Oriented, DoL Endogenous)

These are associations born of some immediate or urgent task. Larger considerations of organizational permanence or process are subordinated to needing to get something done. Many reactions against proposed development, the NIMBY type of responses, are this type of organization. Some of them morph over time into the other types, or, once their immediate tasks are accomplished, they fade or disband. Hence, we describe them as fluid. Many associations likely start or pass through this stage, but may bypass it if they are formed as a chapter or as a self-conscious organization.

While colloquially we may refer to communities as “acting,” it is more accurate to understand a process in which individuals within a community become activated, organize, and begin what we would recognize as an informal organization. A few members take on the responsibility of defining and attacking the

Table 11.2 Typology of associations in the wild

		Source or Templates for Division of Labor	
		Endogenous to Association	Exogenous to Association
Focus of Organization ↓		EMBEDDED Embedded in local path dependence or vertical hierarchies.	INTERMEDIARIES Intermediaries-organizing template comes from outsiders/intermediaries.
Tasks-	<p><u>Fluid Organizations</u></p> <p>These emerge, often spontaneously or out of the “ooze” of networks and associations, to address novel or emergent problems. They may even fade into and out of existence.</p> <p>Exemplar: Association to fight an incinerator (Milofsky 2008c)</p> <p>This volume: Deadhead community</p>	<p><u>Needs-defined Organizations.</u></p> <p>These are dominated by getting work done. Formalization can vary greatly, while bureaucracy is subordinated to clear needs.</p> <p>Exemplar: Associations to coordinate health or medical care across multiple providers (Gould and Fernandez 1989)</p> <p>This volume: Hometown Associations in New York</p> <p>Food justice programs</p>	<p><u>Coached-Organizations</u></p> <p>Also dominated by tasks, these rely on intermediaries, often consultants or others with high legitimacy, who provide unambiguous organizational templates.</p> <p>Exemplar: Greater Hartford Process (American City Corporation 1972)- an urban renewal plan led by business elites (McKee and Bacon 2015)</p> <p>This volume: New Orleans Commission and its use of the Urban Land Institute</p>

(continued)

problem, involving other community members when certain skills are needed or at particular points of mobilization. Transitory organizations are perhaps a bit like the metaphorical “primordial ooze” drawn from imagery that describes the

origins of life because these associations are highly emergent and task-oriented and they may dissolve when the task is complete. If associations cease to exist when a task is completed, the members who were leaders remain in the

Table 11.2 (continued)

Process-	<u>Self-Conscious Organizations</u>	<u>Chapters, Franchises, and Alliances</u>	<u>Shepherded Organizations</u>
	<p>These have an explicit commitment to organizing process, be it religious, philosophical, or some other form of substantive rationality.</p> <p>Exemplar: Quaker Meetings (Jeavons 1994)</p> <p>This Volume: Community practice</p>	<p>These are often chapters or franchises of larger organizations that proscribe much about process even as task selection is left to the local level.</p> <p>Exemplar: Red Cross chapters (Neal and Phillips 1995)</p> <p>This volume: Not covered.</p>	<p>These are not directly coached or mandated, but rather, shepherded or guided as to process by an intermediary or outsider.</p> <p>Exemplar: Episcopal diocese, a regional association, as it copes with the process of priest replacement (Milofsky 2008b).</p> <p>This volume: Self-help through professions</p> <p>IAF in its quest to promulgate Alinsky-based community organizing</p>

community’s memory. When similar but new problems arise later in history those individuals tend to be called upon to lead again. In some cases the tasks are ones that require ongoing attention and for which resources can be mobilized. In these cases the association may live on, gain permanence, and become more like a formal organization.

As Milofsky (2008b) relates in his case of an anti-incinerator community movement, new associations may take shape in response to or as a reaction to shocks or threats to a given community or context. They may then grow quickly because they are based on preexisting networks and nascent but established leaders. Those leaders, in turn, have available a ready network of contacts who can be mobilized. In addition, the community has a memory of the last iterations of activity. Having learned from past experience, they may move quickly to a more innovative

form of action than they used the last time around. This might help them to avoid pitfalls and barriers they encountered when earlier they faced a similar challenge.

Wheeldon (1969) gives us the example of a small community center project in an isolated “coloured” community in Rhodesia where a series of tasks had to be completed in an effort to build a new building. We have seen this pattern in other situations where a locality or racial group desperately needed a community center as a place to gather and to provide activities for children, senior citizens, or others but where the organization itself lacked funding, coherent administrative structure, or stable leadership that could build the organization. Being careful and strategic about recruiting volunteers who have specific talents and soliciting donations of in-kind resources that are needed for particular building tasks can allow projects to move along when

material assets seem unavailable (Kretzman and McKnight 1993; McKnight and Block 2010).

As Shea (Chap. 23, 2016) tells us, the disaster response literature has recognized the importance of preexisting networks to facilitate community resilience. Often the formal organizations responsible for disaster work do not have deep ties in a local area and they do not have the local knowledge the need to respond effectively. Local communities assemble helping networks, identify needed services, and repurpose community assets if there exists a dense social networks and social capital as well as effective, informal local associations. Formal organizations can link to these local actors both to provide immediate aid and assistance and also to launch an effective recovery and rebuilding process (Barton 1969; Sundeen 1990). They are similar to transitory organizations in that they are anchored in intense, extended, strong tie community networks (see Shea, Chap. 23).

11.5 Self-conscious (Process-Oriented, DoL Endogenous)

These organizations are keenly aware of how the very process of organizing is itself a commitment or action. They are self-conscious because their very process of organizing may be as critical as the outcomes. All manner of ideological associations are found here including feminist, anarchist, democratic, and decentralized religions. These associations will be among the most durably critical of bureaucracy or anti-bureaucratic.

Religiously based associations are the most familiar example of associations organized in this way. Denominations often have distinctive ways of organizing themselves and other organizations that they sponsor and control as has been observed with Catholic organizations. This partly has to do with the way denominations have evolved historically and with the dynamics of their federated organizational structure (Feeney 1998)—we might see similar organizational dynamics in secular multi-national corporations.

Denominations also shape organizational processes and forms in terms of their theology.

Thus Catholics use the principle of subsidiarity—the lowest level of the organization can make decisions for itself that must be accepted by higher levels of the organization (Deng n.d.; Walsh n.d.) Quakers emphasize consensus so their organizations tend to have long meetings and they devote more resources than we would expect to administrative expenses (Schneider and Milofsky 2012; Schneider 2013).

Democratic organizations are ones where core values of the association are to promote equality in terms of organizational statuses, organizational processes, and action goals of the association. In a variety of traditions there is a belief that bureaucratic styles of organization are inherently suspect. Bureaucracies are expected to be hierarchical and to be guided by explicit written rules and procedures. These qualities are thought to flow out of the desire for the technology or organizations to be as efficient as possible and this puts a premium on expertise, rationality, and special privileges for people who have high levels of technical knowledge (Rothschild and Whitt 1986; Taylor 1979). This gives rise among many members to a deep-seated suspicion of bureaucracy as the very manifestation of most, or all, that is wrong with modernity (see Rothschild, Chap. 8).

A variety of methods have been developed to create alternatives to bureaucratic styles and to block its evolution. Some have challenged the idea that for organizations to be efficient and productive there must be specialization and centralized planning. Some cooperative and feminist organizations practice role switching, where each person in the organization is taught the knowledge and techniques needed to carry out specific productive activities. This prevents people from excluding others from decision-making because they claim to have special expertise (Green and Woodrow 1994; Rothschild and Whitt 1986). Groups also practice collective decision-making, democratic voting, and perhaps consensus decision making (Rothschild 2016). Alcoholics Anonymous teaches each participant the correct philosophy, practices, and procedures. Along with having a rule that leaders may not take charge of meetings too many times in succession, members simply

stop coming and switch groups if a leader is too controlling of the group (Bloomfield 1994; Messer 1994). Bureaucracy blocking strategies and techniques are an important part of the organizational knowledge base when studying associations.

A different reason values-based organizations are built around participatory processes comes when organizations are social movements and the goals of participants focus on advancing their political goals. Following Keck and Sikkink (1998) organizations are likely to change their mode of organizing as leaders change and as the historical context of the issue they are struggling around shifts. During times of high tension and public visibility, charismatic leaders may be drawn in and take leadership positions. When issues quiet down the organization is likely to shrink and an organization may need maintenance leaders who are more likely to pay attention to the details of good organizational practice. The opportunities and demands that arise as new partnership become possible may make past organizational styles and practices irrelevant. The organization may be influential and produce important changes but its distinctive features as an organization may be continually shifting.

11.6 Needs-Defined Organizations (Task-Oriented, DoL Embedded)

Here we find organizations where task needs define much of the division of labor but those needs are filtered through or shaped by the local context which may include historical, sociological, economic, or even geographic factors. For example, a healthcare network may be focused on providing services but the tasks are shaped by the professional abilities or affiliations of participating organizations. The degree of formalization will usually be constrained or challenged either by the shifting needs of the community or by particular commitments. For example, an association creating more community recreation may eschew formalization in favor of keeping various government or formalized non-profits

engaged and disposed to help. Efforts to do stakeholder managing, or other forms of including multiple constituencies (see Rothschild, Chap. 8, Benjamin, Chap. 9, Harding and Simmons, Chap. 10, Gnies and Vermeulen, Chap. 12, Stoecker, Chap. 13, Stoeffler, Chap. 16, Fisher, Chap. 17, and Post, Chap. 18) are likely to create many of these kinds of organizations which will often choose or shape its division of labor because of needs and local commitments. While in theory, a “good” bureaucracy, that is, one that is perfectly attuned to its environment, is a form of a needs-based organization, a pure bureaucracy tends to become insular.

A generalized awareness of this tendency, especially among human services professionals who tend to be sensitive to, and versed in, the dynamics of domination, along with collective folk wisdom about “red tape” as an unintended consequence of bureaucracy, tends to limit the division of labor in these associations. Though they lack the ideological clarity that self-conscious organizations have, various and reciprocating commitments to needs and communities means that the division of labor tends to be subordinated to those broader needs. In short, these associations let effectiveness trump efficiency.

One pattern we find may be thought of as lateral or network organizations. A network organization is a system that completes complex tasks in an orderly, coordinated, and effective way using a well-developed division of labor but that lacks any formal, central organization (Powell 1990). The system gets work done because the tasks that must be completed are so clearly defined and the requirements for coordination between workers are so fully understood and mutually advantageous to each participant, that a high level of coordination happens without centralized control. While the division of labor is at the core, network organizations usually also have an established system of status and power within which the participants can be located. The power system may be peripheral to the day-to-day coordination that makes the system efficient and real. However, it influences

whether individual practitioners will gain access to the system and it affects decisions of formal organizations.

We have not seen many examples of network organizations in the nonprofits literature, perhaps because the important examples, like that of Powell (1990) who first articulated the concept, have to do with linkages between for-profit businesses. The example Milofsky (2008a) uses is the medical community where patients are referred through a division of labor that is made up of nonprofit and for profit entities. We also can think of Warren's (1967) notion of the inter-organizational field where each institution and professional grouping forms an interconnected system of services and subcultural beliefs [as articulated by DiMaggio and Powell (1988)].

11.7 Chapters, Franchises, and Alliances (Process-Oriented, DoL Embedded in Context)

Here we are more likely to find local chapters of various vertically-linked larger organizations. Local outposts or "franchises" will have some discretion about what task and objectives to pursue, but the process of how they organize is controlled directly by the larger organization or indirectly through normative institutional pressures. A third possibility are more lateral alliances or federations in which governance is distributed. While all of these are means to affect the process of organizing, there is still discretion about which tasks to undertake. A local Red Cross chapter is a typical example. While some Neo-Tocquevilleians such as Skocpol (2003) rightfully worry that this type is overly professionalized at the national level, we are simply being descriptive. Further research into the degree of professionalization and why it may vary among these types of associations is needed.

Chapters can also be found where the source of the division of labor is local culture. One of the best studies of the way organizational form is shaped by and interacts with local community culture comes from Sanchez-Jankowski (1991)

study of more than thirty gangs in three cities. While the gangs were deviant youth organizations that built up as autonomous organizational units, they all evolved in close relationship to the cultural style and gang history of their communities. Italian gangs in New York tended to have a hierarchical, bureaucratic structure in part because of their relationship to adult illegal networks. Mexican gangs in Los Angeles related to a legacy of juvenile gangs going back to the 1940s whose members since had become adults with a strong orientation to gang culture. The Mexican gangs tended to be relatively small, flat in hierarchical structure, and democratic in process. All of the gangs maintained an informal service relationship to the communities in which young people lived as Venkatesh (2008) shows us graphically.

These are structures by which local communities are linked to other communities or by which they are linked upward through different levels of aggregation from local to regional to state to national government levels. Some of the important examples are fraternal or special interest organizations where different organizational styles are required for organizations to operate successfully with different levels of government or different levels of organization (Hunter 1993). The unique organizational demands that occur at different aggregation levels may create a mismatch between a highly participatory style at the local level and a more bureaucratic and professionalized style at the national level (Piven and Cloward 1979). On the other hand, when local representatives are sent to regional and national level meetings and perhaps assume office at the national level they learn important political and leadership skills, forge important network connections, and bring national political information and news back home (Skocpol 2003).

A different dynamic operates when associations perform a technical support function for organizations lower down in the hierarchy of an organization. This can create complex and problematic organizational dynamics in federated organizations as we learn from Ganz's (2005) study of the Sierra Club and Zald's study of the

YMCA (1970). In these organizations we find a tension between the national level, where strategic planning is emphasized, the intermediate level, where there is an effort to achieve organizational consistency and to build organizational skills, and the local level, where most resources are mobilized. Local interests often are somewhat at odds with the national organization and strong patterns of participation are key to an organization being successful. The strategy of managing inter-level relationships leads to certain repeated patterns of success and failure.

In other organizational systems, one often finds that regional technical assistance organizations struggle to secure resource support and to define a strong mission for themselves as autonomous organizations even though their local branches may not be able to survive if the regional organization is not strong and effective (New World Foundation 1980).

11.8 Coached Organizations (Task-Oriented, DoL Exogenous)

The next two types of organizations allow this typology to capture the role of intermediaries—these individuals may also be recognizable as change agents or social entrepreneurs; the label is less critical than the recognition that key individuals can have strong effects on associations. The coached organization is focused on a particular outcome or task. It differs from the needs-based organization because the intermediary provides a ready-to-use or turn-key organizational structure and division of labor. The outside consultant brought into an economic development process is a prime example. For example, a local association has decided that improving economic conditions is a need and hires a consultant to implement “off the shelf” a process for creating local buy-in.

A well-studied example was the “Greater Hartford Process.” (Neubeck and Ratcliff 1988). In the early 1970s, community members and elites in Hartford, CT, developed and proposed a plan for urban renewal (City Planning

Corporation 1972). The almost comical title of the volume’s author “City Planning Corporation” is perhaps a high water mark of a blind assumption in the power of elites. The rejection of the Process’ conclusion—to essentially relocate residents to a new, rural location—may seem to have been doomed to failure and ridicule seen through the lens of the anti-elite and distrust of the social ferment of the Vietnam-war era (McKee and Bacon 2015). Lee’s (2015) volume on New Orleans and the role of an outside think tank to remove “undesirables” post-Katrina is a similar division of labor. While left-leaning academics may draw a bright line between the division of labor used and the nakedly elitist outcome, we do not think that coached organizations are inherently unjust or extensions of domination. For example, Alinsky’s IAF seemed in practice to rely on outsiders to shape tasks (and process) even as it espoused the need to develop “native leadership” (see Post, Chap. 18).

Even if association members and the scholars who study them are skeptical of “outside” expertise, we suggest that this form of organizing may be quite common. Given the complexity of many tasks that associations set for themselves, from food justice, fighting environmental racism, urban development, providing needed medicine to creating various affinities or identities, we should not be surprised that a “market” of consultants and experts has arisen to offer solutions not to the problems themselves, but to the process of finding a solution. This may be fruitful line of research.

11.9 Shepherded Organizations (Process-Oriented and Exogenous DoL)

Lastly, we discuss those associations that are more process-oriented and, like the coached organizations, rely on intermediaries or outsiders for the division of labor. This may be more common in associations with either a regional mission or one focused on a particular affinity wherein producing an identity is more important than instrumental tasks. For example, a regional organization primarily gives administrative and

technical support to the local level and also may provide symbolic leadership that is locally important. A way to visualize symbolic leadership is in the role of the Bishop and the diocesan organization studied by Milofsky (2008c). There are a large number of discrete organizational entities at the local level (the congregations) and the local organizations have most of the members and the strongest feelings of loyalty. This gives the diocesan organization an ambiguous and somewhat aimless role. At the same time, the Bishop is the legitimating functionary that connects the local to the national church. The diocese also provides essential leadership succession and conflict resolution functions for the local church. In this volume, the discussion of client authority (Benjamin, Chap. 9) in human services organizations may also be an example of this. While the author provides a rich account of how the idea of client authority affects professionalized human services, we don't see a particular association enacting the ideal of more client authority. But, for discussion's sake, let us say there is one. In this case, the association is not focused on the specifics of human services, but rather the process of client involvement. Such an association, focused on how human services is organized, and possibly rooted in professional bodies, would be an example of a shepherding organization.

11.10 Conclusion

We have been motivated by the concern that scholars and practitioners are losing a profound and robust theoretical toolkit for associations. Such a toolkit includes the subtle dynamics of how associations work, what tensions pull at their organizers, and how they serve to solve community problems. Knowledge about the organizational processes and conflicts that are likely to emerge in different community situations represent critical arrows in the quiver of a community organizer or consultant. We hope to reverse the loss of collective knowledge and theory. We aim to inspire or re-inspire us to keep our theoretical toolkits at hand.

The typology we offer for associations “in the wild” is built from the documented variety of associations we have observed directly and encountered in the empirical record. Ultimately, as befits Lewin's admonishment to develop practical theory, this typology enables scholars and practitioners to understand and explain more robustly how associations organize. Such improved theory and research can then lead to wisdom about how to organize within and between these types of organizations. People involved in association work can simultaneously build a broader sense of community while they pursue instrumental ends. This kind of strategic community building is one of the places where it would be helpful for us to build up a stock of case studies and to document strategies organizations have used to capitalize upon their embedded situation to foster organizational success (Mead 1991; Milofsky 1997; Milofsky and Green 2015). We do not present a teleological model in which there is a final, sanctioned, and superior type of organization.

This chapter is a first attempt at providing a field guide for organizations in the wild. Until we recognize the species and have basic descriptions of their habitat, behavior, and needs there will be little to say about what associations are and how they work. We cannot pick out specific research targets that we could describe and understand in detail. We cannot identify types of associations that really could be examined and understood in management terms. We cannot understand what value they contribute to society and what could and should be done to make them stronger. We may be concerned about the decline of community but until we have a better understanding of associations we cannot use associations to build and shore up communities.

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Legitimacy as the Basis for Organizational Development of Voluntary Organizations

12

Davide Gnes and Floris Vermeulen

Abstract

In the analysis of voluntary organizations, legitimacy and legitimation are useful concepts because they bring to light the process through which organizational entities justify their right to exist and their actions within a particular normative context (Maurer 1971; Meyer and Scott 1983; Beetham 2013). Theories of legitimacy underscore the moral basis of organizational power as grounded in the relationship between organizations and different kinds of audiences. In this chapter, we look at how those concepts and theories relate to the study of voluntary organizations. Those theories not only help us understand how voluntary organizations establish themselves, strengthen their position and survive over time despite very limited material resources of their own, but also how different organizational claims can directly impact communities, either by publicly projecting particular conceptions of community or by articulating specific interests and needs on behalf of its members. In our review of the literature on organiza-

tional legitimacy, we focus on three main aspects of legitimacy: conceptualization of the term in organizational sociology, political sociology and studies of non-profit organizations; the constraining role of institutionalized normative contexts and competing audiences in the legitimation processes; the agentic role of organizations within both institutional and strategic contexts.

12.1 Voluntary Organizations and Legitimacy

An *environmental organization* accuses a business corporation of reprehensible pollution and urges industry-wide reform in order to preserve the environment for future generations. A *community-based organization* claiming to represent the interests of disgruntled citizens convenes a town hall meeting to discuss an urban redevelopment project in a city neighborhood. A *501(c)(3) non-profit organization* advocates that state legislators create a fairer immigration system, thereby encouraging volunteers and activists to donate to the organization and help uphold human rights standards. A *social movement group* protests police brutality, calling on concerned citizens to join a demonstration urging greater police accountability. An *ethnic organization* applies for a grant from a philanthropic

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foundation to conduct a series of legal trainings for exploited domestic workers.

Each has its own unique circumstances, yet all these situations are examples of voluntary organizations formulating specific claims on the basis of normative assumptions. One engages to uphold the rights of minority groups, another to represent the interests of concerned citizens. One engages to serve the needs of underprivileged communities, another to fight for advancing social justice. But why should the business corporation feel accountable to a community-based organization or activists donate money to an immigrant rights campaign? Why should citizens decide to join a protest or a foundation grant money to a group conducting training in social justice? More fundamentally, on what grounds do organizations themselves make their claims and on what grounds do audiences evaluate them?

Much—though not all—of what is described above has to do with legitimation. That is, the process of how social entities morally justify their right to exist and their actions to others within a particular arrangement of societal power (Maurer 1971; Beetham 2013). Organizations must constantly offer ‘an acceptable theory of themselves’ (Meyer and Scott 1983) that rationalizes their existence though still also sanctions the power relations to which they subscribe (Beetham 2013). To themselves and others, organizations continually try to make their goals desirable, their procedures appropriate and their structure comprehensible (Suchman 1995). But who should decide whether a particular organization has the right to exist or engage in particular actions? On which grounds should this right be assessed and by whom? Moreover, why should this justification process matter at all for voluntary organizations and how does this affect communities?

While keeping with the general theme of community that runs through this book, this chapter explicitly adopts an organizational perspective on the issues of legitimacy and legitimation. We focus specifically on voluntary organizations for two reasons. The first is theoretical; organizations play a crucial intermediary

role between ‘system-level institutions’ (including the state and the market) and local communities by both contributing to the allocation and distribution of resources *across* communities and structuring social relations *within* single communities (McQuarrie and Marwell 2009, p. 256; Levine 2016a; Marwell 2004; Small 2006; Milofsky, Chap. 7, this volume). The second reason is empirical; in contemporary urban contexts—where the task of governing has shifted more towards ‘governance’ and includes a wide range of stakeholders in decision-making—we must pay more attention to the growing role of voluntary organizations in producing (or constraining) social change, particularly in poor areas (McQuarrie and Marwell 2009; Smith and Lipsky 1993; Small 2006). Now more than ever, voluntary organizations are tasked with representing a ‘community’. They are supposed to communicate the community’s ‘real’ needs to external audiences and promote its empowerment to an extent sometimes even greater than what is expected of local elected officials (Levine 2016a; Stone and Stoker 2015). Regardless of whether organizations accurately reflect those interests and needs (Levine 2016a), their claims and their potential acceptance by third parties do have a real impact on the ‘community capacity’ of disadvantaged areas (Chaskin 2001).

In this chapter, we adopt a wide definition of voluntary organizations as being relatively formally organized groups ‘that receive substantial contributions of time (volunteering), below-cost goods or services, or money’ (Steinberg and Powell 2006, p. 3). We see voluntary organizations as part of a so-called third sector, a domain of organized human action that extends past family, but remains distinct from state and market and in which *most* participants (both individuals and organizations) are not remunerated for their participation (Knoke and Prensky 1984; Knoke 1986; Viterma et al. 2015). We believe this definition adequately encompasses a range of organizational forms, including community-based organizations (CBOs), ethnic and immigrant associations, social movement organizations (SMOs), advocacy groups, recreational and

neighborhood organizations, and more.¹ We also find the definition suitably inclusive of organizations pursuing various goals, from explicit social and political change to more traditional service provision.²

So conceptualized, voluntary organizations may provide a variety of services, such as employment opportunities, trainings (vocational, language), welfare provisions (such as supportive direct services), as well as recreational outlets (Small 2006; Chaskin 2001; Marwell 2004; Fine 2006). However, depending on the limitations posed by their formal legal status, they may also engage in more or less explicit political activities, such as grassroots organizing and advocacy (Fine 2006; Chung 2005). They may do so through the backdoor of institutional politics, influencing electoral politics by virtue of their intermediary role between government institutions and different kinds of communities (Marwell 2004; de Graauw 2016; Levine 2016a), or by explicitly engaging in contentious political activities to spur social change from the outside (Milkman et al. 2010). Regardless, in all those situations, a voluntary organization must consciously construct and negotiate a relationship with particular communities, for example, by establishing claims of democratic representation (representative-represented), interest group representation (representative-stakeholder), or effective need fulfillment (provider-beneficiary) (Knoke and Prensky 1984; Small 2006; Levine 2016a).

Organizational sociologists have long found that organizations generally rely on a combination of three factors to survive and thrive: power

(as the capacity to coerce), resources (wealth especially, but also labor) and legitimacy (moral justifiability) (Stinchcombe 1968; McCarthy and Zald 1977). Here we argue that legitimacy is a key factor accounting for ability to operate, notably for voluntary organizations, which often lack the ability to coerce and sufficient resources to mobilize external audiences. As both resource mobilization theorists and scholars of voluntary organizations have regularly underscored, participation in and support of voluntary organizations has a strong normative component (Jenkins 1983; McCarthy and Zald 1977; Knoke and Prensky 1984; Knoke 1986; see also Boyd and Nowell, Chap. 2). If we put it in the terms of rational choice theorists, individuals may join organizations and movements not only for possible ‘selective incentives’ (Olson 1971)—better wages, services, training, etc.—but also because they may be heeding appeals for solidarity, fairness or social justice (Knoke 1986; Gamson 1992). We can therefore say that much of the power enjoyed by voluntary organizations, in a general sense, has a *moral* basis. As Beetham (2013, p. 275) observed:

whatever powers they exercise – of internal hierarchy, influence at the national and international levels, power over clients and the distribution of resources – are dependent on their level of voluntary and wider public support, and [particularly on] continually proving themselves to be worthy of support.

In the last few decades, the literature on organizational legitimacy has grown (see Suchman 1995; Deephouse and Suchman 2008; Scott 2014 for reviews in the field of organizational sociology; Collingwood 2005 for a review within international development and NGO studies; Beetham 2013; Netelenbos 2016 for discussions of the concept in political science and political philosophy; Johnson et al. 2006 for its usage in social psychology). In our review, we rely mainly on literature developed within organizational and political sociology. However, when appropriate, we draw on other disciplines’ insights to help grasp the concept of legitimacy as specifically applied to organizations. We focus on three main aspects of legitimacy, each

¹We believe this definition could also encompass national organizational forms, such as non-profit organizations in the US, as well as non-governmental organizations as they are conceptualized in European domestic spheres and international development (Beetham 2013; Collingwood 2005).

²Many definitions of ‘voluntary organization’ exist in academic literature, with debates ensuing as to whether one should be evaluated according to its goals, structures, legal status, or some combination thereof (Steinberg and Powell 2006). Consistent with our findings in this chapter, scholars have emphasized the radical transformation of these organizations throughout history (Robbins 2006).

explicated under its own heading: conceptualization of the term; definition of the legitimation process; and organizational agency within this context. Two sub-sections come under the second and third headings. The second heading's sub-sections address the institutionalization process of normative expectations about organizational form and action and the identification of relevant audiences for organizations. The third heading's sub-sections describe two approaches we can use to analyze organizational action: one broadly based on long-term managerial responses towards institutional constraints and one focused on everyday strategic interaction.

On the one hand, we note that organizational legitimacy theory has been appropriated by researchers of management and for-profit organizations, with studies in the non-profit area developing more as a by-product of this theory (Walker and McCarthy 2010; Vermeulen and Brünger 2014; Vermeulen et al. 2016b; Levine 2016b). On the other hand, we see how social movement researchers have often found the concept of legitimacy unsatisfactory because of its tendency to emphasize conformity and social reproduction rather than disruption and change (Clemens 2005). Nevertheless, we argue that the theory has much to offer scholars of voluntary organizations and communities. Accordingly, we emphasize three pillars of the theory: the existence of institutionalized expectations that are intrinsically heterogeneous, which problematizes the assumption of broad societal consensus; the existence of different and competing audiences, who may be as interested in social reproduction as in social disruption; the possibility of organizations to purposefully manipulate the environment to legitimate new forms and claims. We argue that, so formulated, legitimacy theory provides a powerful analytical framework to understand how voluntary organizations relate to the contexts in which they operate. Not only does this touch upon the issue of organizations' relationships with their constituencies, but also with vital third parties such as funders, organizational allies, the media, and state institutions. Alongside its theoretical implications, this chapter may provide important insights for community

activists and organizers by exposing the complexities and dilemmas organizations face as they come to depend for their survival on a variety of social actors with unique expectations.

12.2 Defining Legitimacy

In its broad usage, legitimacy³ entails study of the normative dimension of power relations in society (Beetham 2013; Netelenbos 2016; Stinchcombe 1968). Since at least Weber (1978), social scientists have been sensitized to legitimacy's role in justifying a particular institutional hierarchy or power arrangement vis-à-vis a higher order of meaning (Berger and Luckmann 1967; Beetham 2013; Scott 2014; Deephouse and Suchman 2008). Weber (1978) famously elaborated a typology of legitimate authority. He argued that both the existence of a system of power as a 'social fact' and the belief in power holders' legitimacy by subordinates was crucial to understanding why they would accept being under a position of domination, especially when it explicitly countered their self-interest (Netelenbos 2016). Legitimacy is a key feature of any system of power because it 'concerns those ideas and practices that give those in power their moral authority and credibility' (Beetham 2013, p. x). It therefore ensures subordinates' obedience of institutionalized rules without any need for power holders to resort to actual coercion (Stryker 1994).

³Unlike moral and political philosophers, social scientists are mainly interested in legitimacy as an empirical and socially constructed process, grounded in specific temporal and geographical contexts as well as embedded in social relations and their associated sets of meanings (Beetham 2013; Netelenbos 2016; Suchman 1995; Berger and Luckmann 1967). Beetham (2013) usefully distinguishes between usages of legitimacy in moral and political philosophy, in one realm, and social science in the other. Unlike social scientists, philosophers are mainly concerned with their own prescriptions of how power relations *ought* to be arranged and according to which justifications.

Parsons was among the first to introduce the concept of *organizational legitimacy*, conceptualizing it as a force shaping organizations in accordance with the expectations and specific needs of a society (Parsons 1956; Pfeffer and Salancik 1978; Suchman 1995). Drawing on Weber's insights,⁴ Parsons (1956, p. 84) defined legitimacy in terms of organizational conformity to 'the norms of "good conduct" as recognized and institutionalized in the society'. Following this influential reasoning, theorists defined organizational legitimacy as the degree of conformity or congruence of organizational goals, structures and activities to laws, norms, and values embedded in a specific context (Dowling and Pfeffer 1975; Meyer and Rowan 1977; DiMaggio and Powell 1983). Dowling and Pfeffer (1975, p. 123) were among the first to distinguish between *legitimacy* and *legitimation* in the case of organizations. Legitimacy, they found, should be seen as the potential outcome of a legitimation strategy, which they referred to as the actual dynamic process through which an organization justified its right to exist to a third party within a broader context of changing social norms and values. Coming from a definition of legitimacy that stresses congruence between organizational actions and environment values, Richardson and Dowling (1986, p. 91) defined legitimation as 'those social processes by which this quality of congruence is established or defended'.

Meyer and Scott (1983, p. 201) proposed an alternative though nevertheless compatible definition, which understood legitimacy in relation to the degree of 'cultural support' for an organization—that is, 'the extent to which the array of established cultural accounts provide explanations for its existence, functioning, and jurisdiction, and lack or deny alternatives'. This conceptual development has found its 'closure' in Suchman's (1995, p. 574) highly influential

definition, which treats legitimacy as 'a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions'. That definition has provided the theoretical anchor for countless studies of organizational legitimacy, including of voluntary organizations, and it is still widely used today (Walker and McCarthy 2010; Deephouse and Suchman 2008; Scott 2014; Vermeulen and Brünger 2014; Levine 2016b).

These definitions and approaches provide a point of departure to understand organizational legitimacy and legitimation as they are commonly treated within the discipline. We can single out a number of properties that characterize those conceptualizations. First, legitimacy is seen as an inherent *relational* process; it is produced in interaction between an organization and an audience (Suchman 1995; Deephouse and Suchman 2008)—i.e. the legitimation process. Second, organizational legitimation processes are to an extent grounded in established normative expectations that transcend the judgment of single individuals, both inside and outside organizations (Meyer and Scott 1983; Meyer and Rowan 1977). Those expectations are rooted in the historical process of *institutionalization* of social and political orders within specific contexts, and social actors often take them for granted without realizing it (Jepperson 1991). Third, organizations may well reflect the expectations of the surrounding environment in their structures and operations, but they also bear their own strategic capacity to adapt, reformulate, and potentially challenge those external expectations (Dowling and Pfeffer 1975; Ashforth and Gibbs 1990; Oliver 1991). Fourth, through this lens, legitimacy is seen as a strategic *mediated resource* for organizations since it will likely provide access to other resources—i.e. encouraging audiences and stakeholders who accept organizational claims to provide access to their own resources, be they time and labor, funds, or logistical support (Suchman 1995; Pfeffer and Salancik 1978; Hannan and Freeman 1989; McCarthy and Zald 1977).

⁴Weber (1978) was the first to suggest that respect of norms and procedures, both formal and informal, contributed to legitimating power holders' authority in the eyes of the rest of society (see also Scott 2014; Beetham 2013; Deephouse and Suchman 2008).

12.3 The Context of Legitimacy: Institutionalization of Normative Expectations and Grounds for Legitimacy

Since at least Parsons (1956, 1960), organizational theorists have grappled with defining where legitimation processes take place and how common normative expectations develop within this very context. We thus ask how actors come to accept certain normative assumptions as valid for some organizations but not for others. How do voluntary organizations come to adopt certain organizational forms, pursue particular goals and activities and formulate some claims but not others? In this section we take a closer look at the production of those normative expectations as a result of different processes of institutionalization.

Parsons (1956) saw organizations as organic to larger societal systems, wherein organizational goals not only aligned with the values embraced by the broader society, but also fulfill some of its needs. Subsequent scholars have shifted away from this functionalist view of legitimacy, though have expanded on the idea that institutions play a key role in shaping the meanings, values, and norms that influence human behavior and, by extension, organizational action (Jepperson 1991; Meyer and Rowan 1977; Zucker 1991; Sewell 2005; Clemens and Cook 1999; Scott 2014). In their seminal text on the social construction of reality, Berger and Luckmann (1967) argued that at the most basic level, individuals create institutions by defining an ever-expanding sphere of routines and regularities in their lives. This activity creates a basic background knowledge that can be taken for granted by all those who share it and allows social actors to focus on new tasks. As the stock of meanings, rules, and norms accumulates, the institutional sphere expands. Successive social actors who are born and socialized into specific contexts tend to internalize and reproduce this institutionalized knowledge, which over time is no longer seen as the product of subjective, concrete routines, but rather has become the ‘natural’ way in which things are done (Zucker 1991).

Institutions, therefore, may be defined as those social patterns that, after being ‘chronically reproduced, owe their survival to relatively self-activating social processes’ (Jepperson 1991, p. 145). Institutions are important for organizations because they provide ‘cultural definitions [that] determine how [an] organization is built, how it is run, and, simultaneously, how it is understood and evaluated’ by different audiences (Suchman 1995, p. 576). These cultural definitions generate requirements and social expectations that individuals incorporate into their organizations and ultimately legitimate the organization within a specific context (Galaskiewicz 1985). Certain requirements may generally apply to a vast array of organizations, such as having an organizational mission, hiring and paying employees, satisfying tax agency, health, and labor regulations. Others may instead apply to specific organizational domains—consider, for example, the membership structure and democratic decision-making of labor unions or the money-making logic embedded in for-profit organizations.

Broadly speaking, neo-institutionalists have traditionally considered state and market as two major forces shaping organizational life (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Jepperson 1991; Scott 2014). In particular, they encourage establishment of separate spheres of social activity and organizational domains (e.g. health care, education, business)—or *organizational fields*—which are consequently governed by specific understandings and rules of the game. Large or pioneer organizations, regardless of rationale, have a major part in establishing a field and compelling subsequent organizations to comply with their set expectations. DiMaggio and Powell showed that corporation subsidiaries often adopt the accounting, performance indicator and budgetary practices of their parent company, and these practices easily spread through the actions of just a few established consulting firms. As fields develop, organizations also tend to *professionalize* while struggling to ‘define the conditions and methods of their work... and establish a legitimation for their occupational autonomy’ (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, p. 152).

As DiMaggio and Powell (1983) argued in their influential theory of the ‘institutional cage’, organizations may come to resemble each other not so much out of concern for efficiency, but rather because they develop a shared understanding of how things ‘should be done’. Meyer and Rowan (1977, pp. 351–352), for example, found how American public school districts in the 1970s held near monopolies on education as long as they ‘conform[ed] to wider rules about proper classifications and credentials of teachers and students, and of topics of study’. While other types of organizations, such as private charter schools, could enter the educational domain, the need to conform to state-enforced standards ultimately deterred the emergence of alternative organizational forms. Organizational ecologists have posited a similar idea in the concept of *organizational population*, noting that organizations come to resemble each other through similar selection processes of externally legitimated properties, which ultimately enhances their survival (Hannan 1986; Hannan and Freeman 1989).

We may trace similar developments in the field of voluntary organizations in the United States by analyzing the move towards standardizing grant reporting procedures across state institutions and private funders. Along these lines, we should note how figures such as ‘community organizer’ and ‘advocate’ have come, after decades of institutionalization of the field, to denote specific professional figures regulated by their own technical and normative criteria of evaluation (Chauvin 2007; Walker and McCarthy 2010). Nevertheless, we must recognize that institutionalization of voluntary organizations differs in many respects from other types of organizations, and it is probably much less pronounced than in other sectors. Voluntary organizations tend to have broader, vaguer goals and objectives than, for example, for-profit organizations, and can also assume very different organizational forms (DiMaggio 2006; Alexander 1998). This lack of homogeneity becomes evident when we consider the differences between an advocacy group, a community-based organization, a social

movement organization, a worker center, and an informal intermittent group. In these cases, legitimacy of specific organizations may come to rest less on the respect of particular organizational templates than on the charisma of its funders or staff, and their ability to cultivate relations of trust and emotional affinity with different organizational audiences (Weber 1978; Netelenbos 2016; Larsson and Rönmark 1996).

Unlike for-profit organizations—whose existence is justified by the broad acceptability within capitalist societies of the logic of profit-maximization—voluntary organizations rely on a combination of normative expectations that go beyond simply adopting formal denominations and procedures. For example, a strong *civil society* (or third sector) as a key condition for a healthy democracy is a generally accepted view in many national contexts, especially in the public sphere (Netelenbos 2016; Viterna et al. 2015). For this reason, when organizations claim to cater to or represent disadvantaged and stigmatized groups, such as undocumented immigrants, the homeless or drug addicts, they also carry ‘moral weight’. This is mainly because ‘the representation of ignored viewpoints appeals to a democratic conception of a pluralist public arena in a context where there is a strong bias towards the voices and interests of the powerful’ (Beetham 2013, p. 277). In similar fashion, the idea of community has gained a generally positive connotation in US society, particularly in relation to associational life (see Hunter, Chap. 1, and Milofsky, Chap. 7). For this reason, voluntary organizations often mobilize this concept to justify their goals and activities (not without problems, as Danley, Chap. 5, notes). At the same time, notably as market logics have gained considerable influence over a number of domains of social life (Friedland and Alford 1991), voluntary organizations—especially those that have become government-contracted service providers—are evaluated according to managerial and efficiency standards, as well as in terms of substantive output (Smith and Lipsky 1993). As Alexander (1998, p. 273) stated, voluntary organizations ‘are often located in the intersection of competing institutional spheres, as

nonprofits, traditionally steeped in the rhetoric of charity, religion, or democracy, are increasingly governed by the rhetoric of business’.

Even within a normative context that seems to recognize conflict and incorporates particular conceptions of social change, we must acknowledge that for explicitly political organizations, structural constraints remain. Organizational ecologists, notably those studying contentious organizations and social movements, have directed their attention to how environmental constraints affect voluntary organizations that actively promote radical social change. Analyzing the disbanding of national women’s and minority membership organizations between 1955 and 1985, Minkoff (1993) found that those organizations’ life chances highly depended on the acceptance or rejection of their political ‘blueprints for action’ by external audiences, especially supporters and volunteers. The more organizations were perceived to ‘follow an accepted course of institutional challenge based on moderate objectives and targeted at nonpolitical arenas’, the more their legitimacy increased in the eyes of their constituencies and the overall public opinion (Minkoff 1993, pp. 903–904). Taking this perspective, other researchers have hinted at the strong role that the state still retains in shaping not only the forms of organizations, but also the appropriateness of organizational goals and discursive claims (Koopmans 2004; Koopmans and Statham 2003). In their study of organizations of Turkish immigrants in the Netherlands, Vermeulen and Berger (2008, p. 166), for example, found that Dutch national and local policies helped drive immigrants towards *ethnic* forms of organizations, as they encouraged ‘immigrants to integrate in Dutch society and yet retain their cultural identity’.

One of the major contributions of neo-institutional theory has been to conceptualize contexts in terms of fields or population environments. This conceptualization stresses the importance of the nation-state, the institutionalization of professions and templates, as well as of cognitive frameworks in structuring norms and values expressed in organizations and their

claims (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Meyer and Rowan 1977). However, when it comes to voluntary organizations, we argue that these abstract dimensions also necessitate being grounded in actual communities.⁵ As McQuarrie and Marwell (2009, pp. 259–260) have convincingly argued, communities, particularly spatial ones, are a crucial place where those values and norms originate. Communities are the context where organizations operate, where they pursue many of their objectives, conduct their activities and mobilize a significant share of their resources. For these reasons, organizations can hardly be evaluated exclusively in terms of externally validated properties; they must also relate to the norms and values of the community in which they are embedded and connect (at least in some way) with the everyday experience of community members (Chaskin 2001; Alinsky 1941).

Marquis et al. (2007) showed how the basis of legitimacy for organizations may change across cities and bounded communities, and therefore that organizational legitimacy also has a spatial dimension. Local understandings, norms, and rules can serve as touchstones for organizational activity in a community. In their research, they argue that organizational templates vary from community to community, making some types of organizations more legitimate in one community than in another. Such variation, at least in the US context, stems from a number of historical, demographical, and geographical factors—for instance, the historical migratory and settlement patterns of different ethnic and religious groups, each of whom brings unique frames for what constitutes a legitimate organizational form. Vermeulen et al. (2016b) showed how neighborhood characteristics affect the spatial dimension of organizational legitimacy among voluntary organizations in Amsterdam’s neighborhoods. Their article begins by noting that neighborhoods are concrete spaces wherein urban residents can interact, produce social norms and articulate a distinctive social order (McQuarrie and Marwell 2009). The empirical

⁵For an extensive discussion of the different conceptions of community, see Hunter (Chap. 1, this volume).

analysis, however, leads to the suggestion that for certain immigrant organizations, citywide networks may be more salient than those of neighborhoods. The authors thus underscored the importance of noting how specific organizations, such as recreation or service providers, may be tied to specific neighborhoods (and their specific social configuration) more than general ones that engage in broad advocacy and support. In fact, Vermeulen et al. (2016a) found that the neighborhood is a vital basis of organizational legitimacy for recreational voluntary associations having a relatively strong connection with the neighborhood in which they are located, for instance, football clubs, billiards associations, drama clubs, children's circus groups, and gardening associations. For these types of recreational organizations, certain demographics, such as percentages of immigrants or children in the neighborhood, has an effect on organizational survival rates. The authors accounted for this by referring to the neighborhoods' deeper set of shared frameworks; these concern legitimate organizational forms and behaviors, which accumulate through everyday interactions with other neighborhood residents.

12.4 The Context of Legitimacy: Audiences and Power Inequality

Having examined the construction of normative expectations within specific contexts, we now turn to the audiences of voluntary organizations. We question whose beliefs and norms are relevant when assessing such an organization's legitimacy. Who are the relevant audiences for organizations, and how do organizations decide whom to target? Who has the power to confer legitimacy on an organization by virtue of their position?

As we have so far shown, defining the appropriate normative context of organizational analysis is no easy task. Its complexity lies in the accountability organizations often have to

multiple stakeholders; legitimacy, moreover, must be evaluated in relation to the normative expectations of each audience, who may not always be compatible with each other or internally consistent (Elsbach and Sutton 1992; Suchman 1995; Thornton and Ocasio 2008). According to Scott (2014), an organization is less likely to be seen as an overall legitimate actor when it is confronted by competing sovereign authorities, which embed conflicting normative requirements. To assess an organization's legitimacy, Pfeffer and Salancik, as early as 1978, asked not only whose normative expectations should be taken into account, but also which organizational aspects should count in the evaluation. They found that this question could not be answered in general terms. The suggestion was that an organization need not be legitimate for all segments of society, but rather at least for those third parties that contribute to the organizational resources critical to its survival (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978; Vermeulen and Brünger 2014). In the case of community-based voluntary organizations, those parties may comprise a variety of actors, including members, volunteers, individual donors, community supporters, as well as governmental agencies, private foundations, and federated organizations, such as United Way (a nationwide coalition of community groups chiefly focused on fundraising).

While we broadly agree with those propositions, we raise some additional points. First, we argue that the range of audiences should be expanded and more clearly defined. The interaction between organizations and audiences should be conceptualized more dynamically to include opponents rather than be reduced to strict support. Second, and relatedly, we argue that audience relevance will most likely be based on considerations of both material and symbolic power. Third, we argue that the discussion about an organization's overall legitimacy is largely misplaced. More often than not, an organization's legitimacy, or illegitimacy, is a question of the grounds on which an organization is evaluated by itself and others and if those grounds are

relevant to people who are invested in the organization.⁶ We draw on social movement theory to propose a definition of audiences that we deem suitable for voluntary organizations.

As some of those who study institutions have already conveyed, even small-scale settings are usually governed by competing ‘institutional logics’. They are produced by the actions of overlapping institutional domains such as market, state, community, and family, and define what is appropriate, desirable and comprehensible within specific contexts (Friedland and Alford 1991; Thornton and Ocasio 2008). As a result, there will necessarily be different audiences, each with its own normative expectations as well as resources and power endowments, which may or may not be relevant for voluntary organizations (Clemens and Cook 1999; Beeham 2013; McCarthy and Zald 1977).

To reiterate, audiences matter because they provide resources and support. However, their role is often more complex than that. For example, government institutions or grant foundations may also provide recognition to voluntary organizations, particularly when engaged in influencing policy or achieving some strategic objective. As we argued in the introduction, this is particularly important if we consider the role of many community-based organizations in contemporary societies. We observe that urban politics (and politics more in general) can hardly be reduced to the analysis of how state institutions establish legitimate domination, rather should be extended to how a plurality of actors (including a variety of voluntary organizations) develop legitimate governance infrastructures, or to how

both state and non-state actors manage strategic conflict within a pluralist society (Smith and Lipsky 1993; Netelenbos 2016; McQuarrie 2013; Jasper 2015; Fliegstein and McAdam 2011). This has also led more resource-rich actors, such as state institutions and private funders, to adopt legitimation strategies similar to those of voluntary organizations. For example, Levine (2016a, b), in his ethnography of urban neighborhood redevelopment found that even city officials, as well as funders, felt compelled to legitimize their role vis-à-vis a community-based organization. And they did so by appealing to an established macro-logic of non-divisive ‘partnership’, which has replaced the notion of partisan conflict in the governance of contemporary US cities (Stone and Stoker 2015; McQuarrie 2013).

Neo-institutional theorists have traditionally privileged the value of fields and large institutions, emphasizing peer and government recognition in the legitimation process (Galaskiewicz 1985). They also argued that particular actors, such as state institutions,⁷ carry greater weight than others in the legitimation process for any type of organization. As Scott (2014, p. 73) stated, those ‘whose values define legitimacy is [ultimately] a matter of concerted power’ (see also Stinchcombe 1968). The importance of the state cannot be discredited, but we must not neglect the role of other audiences, such as private funders and community-related audiences. This dimension is especially important for voluntary organizations, whose interaction with members, militants, volunteers, or constituents constitutes one of the major axes of

⁶The study by Elsbach and Sutton (1992) showed how certain radical political organizations may be able to gain legitimacy with constituencies through ‘illegitimate’ actions. However, in equating illegitimacy with noncompliance with the formal state law, the authors focus on a particular type of rule conformity; though generally deemed important, this type may not be relevant for some audiences as a ground for establishing legitimacy. As presented by Scott (2014)—who shows how the mafia is an illegitimate institution according to the normative standards of most citizens in Western liberal democracies while still being legitimate for its members—legitimacy is always a function of a specific point of view.

⁷The state, through its regulatory and certification agencies, and professional orders have become crucial gatekeepers in many domains of organizational life—consider, for example, the accreditation processes required of a hospital and its medical personnel, or how new business ventures may need the local chamber of commerce’s approval before engaging in any transactions. Many community-based organizations would hardly even be considered for funding without first providing the legal incorporation documentation (official name, type of corporate structure, organizational purposes, etc.) mandated by federal legislation.

organizational activity.⁸ Communities themselves, however, are stratified along a number of cleavages, including class (Chung et al. 2013). As a result, the endorsement of specific ‘community elites’ tends to have more far-reaching consequences than that of other members (see Danley, Chap. 5).

Social movement scholars and political sociologists have devoted considerable effort to fleshing out the characteristics and roles of audiences (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Jasper 2015; Fliegstein and McAdam 2011). McCarthy and Zald’s analytical schema proved pertinent for integrating voluntary organizations’ many functions (in terms of goals and objectives) and forms. Drawing on their framework, we distinguish four types of audiences: *adherents*, who espouse the goals of an organization; *constituents*, who provide material resources to the organization; *bystander publics*, who neither support nor actively fight an organization and its goals; *opponents*, who oppose the organization and its goals. As McCarthy and Zald (1977, p. 1222) determined, one of the primary tasks of an organization is ‘converting adherents into constituents and maintaining constituents involvement’. We can further classify those categories according to whether particular actors (adherents, constituents, or bystanders) would directly benefit⁹ from the achievement of a

particular goal (or provision of a particular service)—i.e. the *potential beneficiaries*—and those who would not—i.e. *conscience adherents* and conscience constituents. We must keep those analytical distinctions in mind when thinking about legitimacy. In empirical terms, those definitions may apply to a wide range of groups as they are identified by organizations in their everyday operations: members, volunteers, activists, militants, communities, allies, donors, private funders, government agencies, inter alia. The saliency of each category and group depends on the specific organization and its characteristics (structure, goals, etc.), but analytically it becomes more useful to assess whether, in a given context, each of these groups does one of two things: (1) provides important resources; (2) becomes directly affected by organizational action.

Depending on the specific context, organizations may direct their claims towards each one of these specific audiences, including opponents.¹⁰ For example, if a voluntary organization is interested in being recognized by a local company—to be seen as an acceptable bargainer on behalf of its workers—it must consider the normative expectations of company staff and the organization as a whole. Similarly, if an organization is interested in developing a representative relationship with the residents of a specific neighborhood, it will have to devote considerable effort to targeting those communities. At the same time, we must recognize that some organizations may refuse to seek recognition (from opponents) or support (from constituents) because of their specific ideological preferences. For example, many social movement organizations do not wish to be associated in any way with government institutions and refuse to apply

⁸A possible explanation for the deficiency may be that early legitimacy scholars developed their theories in the context of service provision organizations (e.g. hospitals, museums, schools) and for-profit organizations, particularly corporations (Meyer and Rowan 1977; Powell and DiMaggio 1991; Meyer and Scott 1983; Suchman 1995). Up until now, organizational legitimacy theory has been applied primarily to those types of organizations, and examples of such research are mostly found in journals of management and administrative research. Those theories were applied to the field of voluntary organizations as a sub-category of these types of organizations, generating inconsistencies stemming from the dramatically diverging goals and logics among voluntary organizations (notably the most political ones) and other groups.

⁹While the notion of benefit is problematic—especially if we argue that benefits may come in the form of preference (i.e. value-based) satisfaction—we still find it useful to distinguish between a direct tangible benefit and a more abstract preference-based one. This is consistent with our view that the interaction between organizations and

audiences is always grounded in normative expectations. However, organizations do not only engage in legitimation, but also provide concrete, tangible offerings.

¹⁰The literature on non-profit organizations, rooted in a model of politics as consensual, tends to downplay the role of opponents within a perspective of strategic political conflict (Walker and McCarthy 2010). Rather, studies emphasize more opponents as being potential competitors for funds and resources in the same organizational field (Vermeulen et al. 2016b).

for or receive any government funding for their activities. State legitimation may in fact have a delegitimizing effect on the organization for some of its other audiences, such as activists and militants. Many constituents may therefore provide resources to organizations, but may not be directly affected by their goals. Consider, for example, the role of foundations or government agencies in supporting many voluntary organizations by providing services or organizing under-resourced communities. In certain cases, constituents may be directly affected by organizational goals and goods, and be able to contribute;¹¹ for instance, community members and volunteers may give donations, organize fundraising, contribute equipment or knowhow, and help plan and run organizational activities (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Walker and McCarthy 2010). However, in other cases, those affected by organizational activities—such as marginalized and vulnerable groups like poor people, undocumented immigrants, and ethnic and racial minorities—may lack any substantial resources to contribute to the organization (Fine 2006; Milkman et al. 2010). In fact, their lack of resources and means of power may justify their organizational involvement in the first place (Beetham 2013).

It is therefore important to distinguish between material resources such as money and time and the symbolic resource of audiences. Apart from instances where human numbers can be successfully mobilized as a resource—for example, during public actions such as pickets, demonstrations, rallies and strikes—potential beneficiaries who cannot contribute to resources tend to have a strong symbolic role rather than any substantial one (Jenkins 2002). If we go back to a normative conception of civil society and communities, as described in the previous section, we see that this symbolic role takes on meaning when organizations try to legitimate themselves to funders or local institutions.

¹¹Certain organizations may also decide to seek no external funding in order to avoid professionalisation and potential bureaucratization. See Kelley (Chap. 29, this volume) for an example of how different organizations debate those issues.

Whether an organization's primary mission is service provision or political representation, its legitimacy for external audiences then comes to rest, at least in part,¹² on the perceived legitimacy of its relationship with its beneficiaries (Beetham 2013; Walker and McCarthy 2010).

12.5 Organizational Agency in Legitimation Strategies: An Institutional Perspective

In this section, we analyze the legitimation process from the organizations' point of view. We suggest two ways to address the issue of organizational agency in legitimacy. The first draws on an institutional approach examining legitimation and legitimacy crises over long period of times. The second draws on a notion of legitimation as an inherently contested process, negotiated in everyday activity. Both views are consistent with a perspective on organizations as relatively autonomous agents with the capacity to both reproduce and contest existing structures.¹³

The institutional approach generally splits the legitimation process into three phases: (1) the securing of legitimacy; (2) its maintenance; (3) its reparation in case of loss (Suchman 1995; Ashforth and Gibbs 1990; Elsbach 1994). Along these lines, organizational legitimacy is strongly conceptualized in institutional terms, particularly vis-à-vis forms and organizational templates. Through a strict neo-institutional lens, organizations are generally seen as having a relatively limited degree of agency. The only exception is the initial stage of a development of a field, when pioneer organizations led by skilled *institutional*

¹²Researchers have found that voluntary organizations in Western societies broadly base their legitimacy on a mix of democratic and technocratic ideals (Beetham 2013; Walker and McCarthy 2010). The second level relates to the organizational staff's claim to knowledge and experience concerning a specific domain of action.

¹³This perspective is grounded in theories that emphasize the 'duality of structure' (Giddens 1984; Sewell 2005; Clemens and Cook 1999). Inasmuch as 'structure shapes people's practices... it is also people's practices that constitute (and reproduce) structures' (Sewell 2005, p. 127).

entrepreneurs (DiMaggio 1988) are first and foremost engaged in developing a sense that a new sector ‘objectively exists independently of specific organizations’ (Suchman 1995, p. 586). During this period they also must engage in sustained outreach to publicize their activities, thereby creating a constituency or target audience and persuading legitimate entities to provide support to enhance their overall legitimacy (Suchman 1995). Unlike large political institutions, organizations have to compete for their legitimacy with similar organizations in other domains (e.g. advocacy organizations vs. community-based organizations in the broader non-profit sector), and therefore need to actively *promote* their organizational type as valuable and worthy of support (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978). New organizations may also fail to gain recognition because they lack reputational indicators, such as organizational or individual track records, which can often effectively back particular claims with the reasonable promise of appropriate performance. Since some organizational forms may be too different from existing ones within specific contexts, these organizations may initially suffer what organizational ecologists have called the ‘liability of newness’ (Freeman et al. 1983; Stinchcombe 1965). However, once an organizational field is established, social actors come to recognize certain organizational forms or templates, along with their associated features, as being natural within a given order of arrangements (Suchman 1995). As long as an institutionalized organizational field already exists and it has produced a recognized organizational template, new organizations may achieve a first level of legitimacy by simply adopting this template (Meyer and Rowan 1977).

As Suchman (1995, p. 587) stated, all these strategies ‘involve complex mixtures of concrete organizational change and persuasive organizational communication’. Within a more managerial view of legitimacy, organizations are seen as strategic agents purposefully manipulating the surrounding environment (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978; Dowling and Pfeffer 1975). Organizations retain a certain degree of autonomy within certain dimensions: first, in relation to the level of

conformity they may be able to exercise vis-à-vis the environment—be it foundational, superficial, symbolic; second, in relation to their choice of relevant audiences for strategic targeting; third, in relation to potential capacity of organizations to manipulate the very values and beliefs of the environment in which they operate (Ashforth and Gibbs 1990; Richardson 1985). As Meyer and Rowan memorably argued (1977), organizational requirements need not always be substantial and fundamental, as organizations may simply be required to ‘adopt certain highly visible and salient practices that are consistent with social expectations, while leaving the essential machinery of the organization intact’ (Ashforth and Gibbs 1990, p. 181). Meyer and Rowan’s (1977) theory of rational institutional *myths*,¹⁴ which posited a ‘loose coupling’ between formal structure and actual organizational activities, suggested exactly this type of dynamic. Consider, for example, the widespread diffusion of ethics and corporate social responsibility departments in corporations or the adoption of standards and certifications provided by gatekeepers and labeling institutions in highly formalized and institutionalized environments.

According to this understanding of legitimacy, once legitimation has been successful, it requires relatively less effort to maintain it. Thus, the existence of particular organizations comes to be taken for granted. Legitimation work is therefore mainly directed towards maintaining the appearance that ‘business is running as usual’ (Suchman 1995), as well as monitoring possible changes in the normative expectations of the different audiences targeted by organizations.

¹⁴Meyer and Rowan suggested that contemporary organizations develop in societies that are already highly institutionalized. As new types of organization emerge, they tend to incorporate procedures and practices that are already accepted in a specific context. Those procedures and practices are ‘defined by prevailing rationalized concepts of organizational work and institutionalized in society’ (Meyer and Rowan 1977, p. 340) and adopted by organizations specifically for their legitimating function. Rather than being adopted out of concerns of organizational effectiveness, those organizational features are adopted ceremonially, and function ‘as powerful myths’ (Meyer and Rowan 1977, p. 340).

Loss of legitimacy is therefore viewed with a long-term perspective, being tied to an ‘unforeseen crisis of meaning’ in light of changed values and beliefs of targeted audiences, and *not* in relation to specific issues of performance or decisions (Suchman 1995; Ashforth and Gibbs 1990). For organizational staff, it is therefore crucial to anticipate challenges and be alert to environmental changes, providing reassurances to audiences while simultaneously preparing the terrain for possible changes in strategy. ‘Risk assessment’ and ‘crisis management’ are hence new buzzwords in the voluntary sector, mirroring the language of for-profit organizations.

We can see those processes at work in various situations. As already stated, legitimacy is dependent on a relationship with one or multiple audiences, whose values and beliefs may also change over time as a result of a number of structural processes that escape the reach of any single organization (Beetham 2013; Sewell 2005; Clemens and Cook 1999). For example, a community-based organization rooted in a specific neighborhood may witness major demographic changes in the area as an effect of economic downturns or gentrification. The arrival of people of different ethnic or racial backgrounds, age cohorts or income brackets can also significantly affect the viability of specific organizations as they influence the area’s prevailing normative expectations.

Responding to these circumstances, organizations thus often employ a mix of substantive changes and strong symbolic management. This may include directly denying the misrepresentation of organizational activities, but also emphasize re-explanations of past organizational activities that retroactively present them in light of the changed system of values (Ashforth and Gibbs 1990; Pfeffer and Salancik 1978). Typical actions of symbolic management of legitimation include providing *accounts*, which ‘are explanations designed to remove one from a situation that may reflect unfavorably on one’s image or claims to legitimacy’ (Ashforth and Gibbs 1990, p. 181). Those accounts often include excuses, such as the attribution of unfavorable outcomes to unexpected or external events, but also

justifications that minimize the negative outcome (Ashforth and Gibbs 1990). Other actions include offering *apologies*, an action that acknowledges the organization’s own responsibility while still attempting to maintain some credibility towards target audiences (Ashforth and Gibbs 1990).

As Scott (2014) pointed out, legitimacy is most evident when absent. Open criticism and questioning often signal that an organization has lost—or may be in the process of losing—its legitimacy for some audiences. Lack of legitimacy occurs when an organization has failed to recognize the lost cultural support for its activities (Meyer and Scott 1983). Threatened legitimacy may be hard to overcome, especially if previous legitimation strategies have already been discredited. It may also trigger a cascade reaction, which pushes former organizational allies and supporters to self-distance so as to avoid their own delegitimation. Suchman (1995) finds that organizations may still be able to protect their legitimacy so long as they enjoy even a bit of credibility and support among relevant audiences.

In fact, adaptability to the changing normative contexts is probably the most important quality of resilient organizations. Zald and Denton’s (Zald 1970; Zald and Denton 1963) fascinating study of the Young Men’s Christian Association in the US showed just that. The authors describe the transformation of the YMCA, from its start in the mid-1800s as an evangelical Protestant organization to its state in the mid-1960s, at which point it had become a more secular- and market-oriented organization largely dependent on membership sales.¹⁵ The study revealed how shifting values and beliefs in society—and particularly in the subgroup of members and related audiences who constituted the bulk of the organization’s support—point to patterns of

¹⁵The organization is still active and has continued to change over the last few decades. In their latest efforts to distance themselves from their initial faith-based character, they have come to embrace issues such as sustainable development, gender equality or racism. As of 2010, the US branch of YMCA has also adopted a new logo and it is now simply known as ‘The Y’.

organizational survival through change and adaptation. As Minkoff and Powell (2006) noted, however, organizations may be limited in their substantial and adaptive efforts to the changing environment by their own historical trajectory, particularly by the original articulation of the organizational mission. This may happen, for example, when organizations refuse to seek legitimacy from certain actors. Consider, for example, a social movement organization that refuses to deal with state institutions for ideological reasons and therefore will not comply with any of their normative expectations. Or, in the same scenario, it could be that adaptation would require complete goal displacement, and that goal is still seen as the only justification for the organization's existence.

12.6 Organizational Agency in Legitimation Strategies: A Strategic Perspective

Without always explicitly incorporating legitimacy, some researchers have grappled with organizational agency being normatively framed from a strategic perspective (Jasper 2015; Fliegstein and McAdam 2011; Netelenbos 2016; Levine 2016b). Their approach emphasizes 'arenas' (Jasper 2015) or 'strategic fields' (Fliegstein and McAdam 2011) as sites of contention, where actors employ strategic repertoires to get others to do what they want them to (Jasper 2015, p. 19). Despite recognizing the existence of specific rules of the game (what might be called the established normative expectations that ground legitimacy), those actors make strategic moves that may reproduce, ignore, or subvert those rules for the sake of accomplishing their goals. Indeed, while form and procedures are important, they are inherently tied to issues of performance—the achievement (or at least its promise) of organizational goals (Netelenbos 2016). Through this lens, actors can be conceptualized collectively, for example, as organizations or fields. However, their own normative consistency should also be seen as the product of internal negotiation and strategic

action among smaller units in smaller arenas (the different organizations and the different audiences or the different individuals involved in the same organizations). While the institutionalization of particular organizational dimensions provides insights into what types of organizations will survive or change over time, this view emphasizes the practices of negotiation that take place in everyday political interaction.

Chung (2007), Kwon (2010), and Gnes (2016) described the complex process through which the Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance (KIWA) established its legitimacy for multiple audiences with very different normative expectations. Founded by a South Korean-born activist with a strong Marxist background, the multi-ethnic immigrant advocacy organization in Los Angeles' Koreatown, had to develop alternative rationales for its existence. Which rationale was elicited depended on whether the organization was trying to obtain the support of local US labor unions, immigrant rights organizations or private funders, to recruit members among newly arrived immigrants from South Korea or Latin America or to gain neighborhood recognition and acceptance from the Korean business community. Each strategy required toning down or emphasizing specific aspects of the organization, from its compliance with non-profit regulations to championing the immigrant working class, from its commitment to the Korean community's wellbeing to its rejection of 'Communism'. It also required KIWA to strategically seek different kinds of endorsements to enhance its legitimacy, from the local Korean 'ethnic' media to longstanding activists respected in the local activist scene, from LA politicians to Korean religious ministers working in the neighborhood.

It is important to remember that 'organizations become infused with the norms and values of the people who make them up, rather than simply being the expressions of actors' goals' (McQuarrie and Marwell 2009, p. 260). Organizations are not simply social facts that abstractly conform to external expectations, but rather are sites of everyday normative negotiation and discussion among individuals. Organizations are

constantly concerned about legitimacy and continually engage in legitimation management in relation to specific audiences. They wonder how changes in goals or activities will be perceived, whether they will affect organizational support and their credibility. However, they also weigh those considerations in relation to the organizational values and those who make up the organization. We see this clearly in Del Valle's (2016) article exploring discussions within the non-governmental organization Doctors Without Borders (MSF) concerning engagement in a search and rescue operation in the Mediterranean Sea. Confronted by a dilemma of whether or not to intervene to help immigrants attempting to enter Europe by boat, some MSF staff argued against launching such action; they felt the operation would make the organization 'too political' and that MSF would be overstepping the bounds of its general mission to provide medical assistance. Those who favored the operation stressed the organization's commitment to humanitarianism, arguing that migrant deaths at sea was a catastrophe demanding a more political intervention. Notably among those who opposed the operation, there was concern about how donors and subscribers, which constitute the bulk of the organization's support,¹⁶ would evaluate its new potential role. The organization eventually decided to launch the operation, despite the prospect of losing members and donors as a result. While MSF lost the support of some members, its new role gave the organization the chance to recruit new supporters who were emboldened by its more politicized commitment.

Lastly, we should not forget that another level in which voluntary organizations become active agents is in the construction of their relationship with a community. In making particular claims, organizations chiefly rely on their relationship with a community—members, volunteers, resi-

dents, *inter alia*—to justify the right to exist (Beetham 2013). However, organizations do not make claims based on their neutral *de facto* representation of community interests. In doing so, they also contribute to the symbolic construction of this very group and its interests, highlighting some dimensions while downplaying others (Stokke and Selboe 2009). In formulating different claims of community representation—for example by emphasizing class and multi-ethnic solidarities, or rather by encouraging ethnic loyalties—organizations articulate 'political projects' (Chung et al. 2013) that underscore the saliency of certain audiences and their concerns within a particular community (Gnes 2016). This symbolic construction is not unique to organizations. Organizational criteria are rarely formulated from organizational templates or broader institutional categorizations available within specific contexts. They cannot be entirely disconnected from the experiential reality of their constituents. However, organizations have a relative autonomy in selecting and defining their internal audience, emphasizing and over time even changing different criteria among them: ethnicity and race, geographical location, religious affiliation, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, identity, or a combination of these dimensions, and many more (Vermeulen et al. 2016b; Walker and McCarthy 2010).

Considering the LA case study, we observe how Kwon (2010) found that KIWA redefined its constituency as the 'residents and workers' of Koreatown, thus grounding its legitimacy in the neighborhood rather than a specific ethnic community. While this process was not disconnected from wider socioeconomic dynamics of the neighborhood—the increasing heterogeneity of the residents, the rising saliency of issues such as gentrification or affordable housing—it was largely directed by the organization's conscious decision to abandon more confrontational unionization campaigns and focus on urban redevelopment advocacy. Within this process, it also strategically reframed its message to attract support from new audiences, such as leaders of the local Korean business community (Chung 2007).

¹⁶MSF receives no funds from national governments or supranational institutions.

12.7 Conclusion

In this final section we recapitulate the relevance and usefulness of the concept of organizational legitimacy for the study of voluntary organizations.

In our introduction, we stated that voluntary organizations play an important mediating role between larger institutions such as state and market, on one side, and communities, on the other. Voluntary organizations are vital for communities because they provide services, engage in political activities and produce social change. In many cases, they are the only means to amplify the political voice of marginalized communities. For all these reasons, how organizations legitimate their claims towards their different audiences, community members included, matters.

Throughout this chapter, we underscored critical points to consider when analyzing organizational legitimacy. We began by reviewing its basic definition, which organizational scholars have broadly defined as the level of cultural congruence of organizations with the environment in which they operate. Organizational legitimacy fulfills its most vital function for organizations as a *mediated resource*, providing access to other resources such as funds or labor. We suggested, however, that the link between legitimacy and access to resources is not always straightforward. Legitimacy may succeed in backing particular claims, but scale of preferences and level of resources—i.e. of audiences—will also matter for determining the level of support that organizations can successfully claim. Moreover, particular organizational claims, for example a claim of representation, are not only directed at securing support, but also at building organizational ‘moral’ power (such as the power to influence political decisions).

We then examined the importance of the context in which the legitimation process takes place. Borrowing heavily from neo-institutional theory, we argued that organizational claims are largely evaluated according to institutionalized normative expectations. Those expectations dictate appropriate organizational structures and

procedures in a given environment and suggest desirable organizational forms to achieve specific purposes. For what specifically concerns voluntary organizations in Western societies, we also suggested that democratic and market logics may both play a role in determining acceptable organizational forms, goals, and activities. We continued our analysis by analyzing the role of audiences and addressed the question of which audiences matter the most for legitimation and why. We drew on the conceptualization of McCarthy and Zald (1977) to identify critical differences among audiences of voluntary organizations. The direction of organizational goals, ideological considerations and resource inequalities all have a major part in directing organizations towards specific audiences.

In the final two sections, we analyzed the process of legitimation from the agentic perspective of the organization. The first section emphasized organizational agency within an institutional perspective. We argued that organizations’ managerial autonomy, from a strict institutional view, is limited to the point at which pioneer organizations construct a new organizational field. However, drawing on a more nuanced vision of organizational agency, we argued that organizations have relative leverage in manipulating the environment and reconfiguring the network of audiences with whom they interact. Moreover, through strategic communication—involving appeals to emotions and rational argumentation—organizations are able to construct alternative accounts that are accepted as legitimate. The second section drew on theories of organizations that emphasize strategic action and coordination in everyday political interaction. While those theories are not insensitive to the importance of long-standing rules and norms, they also suggest that legitimacy is constantly appraised in micro-processes of negotiation and conflict. Organizations are constantly doing ‘legitimation work’ for strategic purposes, not only to legitimate their existence but to achieve concrete political objectives and counter power and resource inequalities.

These dynamics are highly complex, but we can begin to better understand them when we pay

more attention to how voluntary organizations are affected by their environment, as well as to how they contribute to shaping it. That is, how the quest for resources and legitimacy affects their organizational trajectory and their relationship with their primary constituents, but also how organizations themselves contribute to producing audiences and communities and articulating their interests and needs. As we approach the issue of legitimacy, we must remind ourselves that analyzing legitimacy is not about the evaluation of particular normative expectations that we, as researchers or individuals, may hold or privilege. Instead, it is about how the normative assumptions of specific organizations are justified—or not—within a particular normative context and in relation to the expectations of particular audiences. Much work must be done to better understand how considerations of legitimacy at different levels affect the behavior of voluntary organizations, and we hope this chapter will stimulate more empirical research in this direction.

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About the Localized Social Movement

13

Randy Stoecker

Abstract

Social movements research has neglected small scale, localized social change efforts. This chapter addresses the questions of whether such small scale localized social change efforts can even be considered social movements and the extent to which theories and concepts developed from studies of large-scale social movements are applicable at the small scale, local level. A definition of a social movement can be developed from the existing literature that applies to the “localized social movement.” Likewise, the general social movement theories—namely resource mobilization theory and new social movement theory, are applicable to the localized social movement, but specific concepts of those theories need to be modified. Concepts such as social movement organization, social movement community, social movement structure, social movement identity and frames, and political opportunity structure take on changed levels of importance and

different empirical characteristics in the localized social movement. The chapter also looks at the relationship between localized social movements and large scale social movements, showing how they may intersect, influence, or combine with each other.

Is there such a thing as a localized social movement, or what we might call a community-based movement? Social movements have historically been thought of as large-scale epoch-making events that shape entire societies. From Skocpol’s (1979) *States and Social Revolutions* to Tilly’s (1984) *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*, social movements are not considered to be local and small. This is at least partly because the wave of research that produced the major theoretical foundations for studying social movements occurred in the wake of the global disruption of the 1960s and 70s large-scale social movements. Perhaps, as a consequence, overall the research has been quite neglectful of small-scale social movements (Courey 2014).

At the local or community level, we have been much more likely to talk about community organizing, which another chapter in this collection addresses. Community organizing has not historically focused so much on the kinds of social change that we have come to expect from social movements, though there are exceptions

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and overlaps such as Communities Organized for Public Service in San Antonio (Vazquez 2005) and the fight for the Community Reinvestment Act (Squires 2003). Some of these exceptions suggest another question—is there a synergy between local organizing and large-scale social movements? Can one cause the other, or transform into the other, or intersect with the other in capacity-building and change-making ways?

Even more importantly, are there fully local social movements, existing independently in their own right? And, if so, how local can local get? When is local too small, too limited in its scope, and too limited in its impact?

Aside from the ontological question of whether there is such a thing as a local social movement, there is also an epistemological question of whether the concepts we use to understand large-scale social movements apply to local manifestations of forms of organized social change. Do the major theories of resource mobilization, new social movement theory, frame analysis, and the others adequately capture the dynamics of what happens at the local? Do the social movement organization analyses fit the same way? Or do we need new theories, new models?

This chapter will address these questions, trying to take what we know about social movements and what we know about localized community mobilizations that may fit general definitions of social movements and synthesize them. It will draw on much of the classical literature since, as the so-called “wave” of social protest of the 1960s waned, so did innovations in the social sciences trying to understand them. Of course, there have still been social movements since then, and in fact many forms of social protest that may or may not have reached the definitional status of social movement have probably been ignored because they have been local, adding even more purpose to this chapter.

I will begin by defining the terms *local* and *community* as they relate to understanding local social change mobilizations. This is a task which is much more difficult than it might appear, especially the word *community* which has been used to refer to so many things that it usefully

refers to almost nothing. I will then move on to a review of the major definitions, theories, and concepts of social movements and trace their historical sources, looking at the empirical cases they derive from. In doing so, I will explore the extent to which the local or community has been embedded, assumed, or ignored by past researchers. These sections then provide the foundation for briefly reviewing examples of movements that might be considered fully local, where the local grows into a large-scale movement, where a large-scale movement manifests locally, and where there is a transformative synergy between the local and the large-scale movement. These cases will allow us to consider the applicability and the gaps in our current concepts and theories.

13.1 What Is Local? What Is Community?

In this Chap. 1 will use the words *local* and *community* differently. *Local* will refer to geographic scale. It is of course difficult to say just how big local can get, but we may say that local is the average area traversed by the average person on the average day. If you want to think in terms of the average commute, that’s about 25 min. If you want to think about it in terms of local food, Smith and MacKinnon (2007) set the limit at 100 miles. Yet another way to think about it is in terms of geographic places, which is normally a city, village, or identified rural area—sometimes a township or a county.

Understanding what is local, of course, is important in terms of understanding what a “local” social movement might be. The local social movement is likely to be one whose issues and participants come primarily from that local area.

Now if defining local weren’t hard enough, when we start talking about *community* it gets really hard. The word *community*, these days, can mean almost anything from a tight-knit primary group to the entire world, if you’ve ever heard the phrase “the global community” or “the community of nations.” It can mean a racial

group—the “Black community”—a sexual identity group “the LGBTQ community”—a professional group—“the physician community”—and on and on. It can even mean “local”. None of these definitions, of course, are helpful. If we are going to talk about community social movements, it needs to mean something different from any other social movement.

Various definitions of community out there can be used to compile a list of components that can give us a more useful definition. One component is a kind of interdependency—in a community people are dependent on each other for the functioning of the community. Another is identity—a community is composed of people who share some common belief system that allows them to think of themselves as distinct from the people who are not in the community. And, even in this age of the Internet when any group of people who only ever interact online can call themselves a community, many definitions of community still maintain a spatial component. “Local” is, in fact a common definitional component for “community” (Goe and Noonan 2006). It is also important for me (Stoecker 2016) to add the characteristic of a multiplicity of interconnecting and overlapping roles. In other words, community members interact with each other as neighbors, consumers and workers, givers and getters, sports competitors or cooperators, and many other things.

Now, the interesting question arises whether a social movement can occur in such a community, as it would imply some breakage of both the interdependency and identity components—that is, a social movement would organize in a local place because of an experience of exclusion. In such a case, what would the phrase “community social movement” refer to? On the other hand, can we take the opposite tack and consider whether a social movement itself can be a community? In this case we would be talking about an interdependent group of people with a collective identity in a local space struggling together for change. Before we draw any hard

conclusions on these questions, let’s spend some time thinking about the definition of social movement.

13.2 Definitions, Theories, and Concepts of Social Movements

13.2.1 Definitions

We need to start our consideration of whether there is such a thing as a local or community social movement with a look at definitions of social movements. Because it’s not as easy to identify a social movement as one would think. Part of the problem is that, as defined in the field of sociology, social movements and “collective behavior” were originally combined into a single subfield. So crowd panics and carefully choreographed demonstrations, way back before the 1960s, were addressed in overlapping literatures. But once the 1960s hit, all those activists who were also collecting college degrees were uncomfortable having their activism explained with the same ideas that explained crowd panics. So they started working in earnest to develop a subfield of their own.

Of course it is also true that attempts to define a social movement have an indeterminate history, dating at least back to *The Communist Manifesto* (Marx and Engels 1848) and probably before, but for our purposes we will focus on those attempting to understand the modern manifestations of the concept. Many others, such as Diani (1992) have also compared definitions among a number of theoretical dimensions, and I make no attempt to duplicate any of their work. Rather, I am looking for evidence that the definition addresses the question of scale.

Perhaps one of the earliest attempts to define the concept of social movement was Turner and Killian’s (1957) definition of a social movement as “a collectivity acting with some continuity to promote or resist a change in the society or group

of which it is part.” What is interesting about this definition is that the scale seems to extend from a “group” to a “society.” But the question of scale does not feature prominently in their work and the overall analysis sounds much more like society is the operative scale. In 1977 McCarthy and Zald offered a definition of a social movement as “a set of opinions and beliefs which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society.” Discounting the lack of emphasis on action in this definition, the scale here is very much at the society level. One of the more sophisticated definitions, in some ways, comes from Tilly (1984) who defines a social movement as a “sustained series of interactions between power holders and persons successfully claiming to speak on behalf of a constituency lacking formal representation, in the course of which those persons make publicly visible demands for changes in the distribution or exercise of power, and back those demands with public demonstrations of support.” This definition does not refer to any scale, but placed in the context of Tilly’s other work it also seems to emphasize the societal and not the local. Likewise Diani, whose 1992 article delves into the issue of defining a social movement more than perhaps any other, does not specify the level to which the definition applies: “A social movement is a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity.”

There have been a few authors who refer to the local context. Touraine, in 1981, defined a social movement as “the organized collective behavior of a class actor struggling against his class adversary for the social control of historicity in a concrete community.” This creates a local spatial context for a social movement, but the important theoretical context remains the societal class structure. I tried to coin the term “localized social movement” (Stoecker 1993) but my work doesn’t so much attempt to coin a definition as provide some theoretical framing for

why movements might act differently at the local level than they do at the societal level.

As we then move into the Internet age the definitions begin to vary so much that they almost take us back into the old collective behavior territory. So I will adopt a strict definition of social movement that allows us to distinguish it as a specific social form. For my purposes in this chapter *a social movement is an organized constituency with a social structure that remains relatively stable over time and engages in various forms of conflict in order to change the relations of power between itself and individuals or groups that hold more formal power than the constituency.* To briefly unpack this, a constituency is a group of people in similar structural circumstances—people living in a neighborhood, people in a similar class and/or race and/or gender and/or other experience, people with a shared identity, etc. They are organized when they have conscious regularized connections to each other through engagement in the social movement. A social structure that remains relatively stable over time is normally some kind of organization or networked multi-organization structure that can adapt in ways that doesn’t disrupt the overall structure as conditions change. To engage in conflict means to recognize that those who hold more formal power will not give it up willingly and thus the constituency needs to engage in strategies that make it more costly for the power holder to resist change. Such strategies can range from gentle lobbying to bloody and violent tactics. To change the relations of power means that, if the social movement succeeds, the constituency will have more power to influence the course of events relative to the targeted power holder.

Now, of course, this definition also does not refer to scale. Instead, like the others, it allows for a social movement to occur at various scales. But that does not mean that a social movement operates the same at the local level as it does at larger societal scales. To make those distinctions, we need to explore the existing theories and concepts to see the extent to which differences in scale matter.

13.2.2 Theories

Many of the major concepts in social movement scholarship reflect the prominent theories in the field. We won't cover the old collective behavior theories, as they really apply only to disorganized crowd behavior, and not to organized social action. Instead, the two theories that are most relevant are the resource mobilization and new social movement theories. There are many disputes within these theoretical perspectives and many critiques from outside of them that we will not delve into. I am not concerned so much with the general debates but with the potential applicability of the theories to social movements that occur locally in a community context. In my discussion of each theory I will also include scholarship that is consistent with that tradition even though the scholars may not explicitly identify themselves in one camp or the other.

13.2.2.1 Resource Mobilization Theory

The emphasis in resource mobilization theory is on the structure of resources. Resources, in this theory, can be people, organizations, money and material stuff, political opportunities, and even knowledge. The main point of resource mobilization theory is that, for a social movement to have a chance of success, it needs to mobilize, or put into service, those resources. There is not total clarity in the theory concerning how much the amount of resources matters compared to the type of resources, but the research done in this tradition can give us some ideas. This is also a social structural theory. From the perspective of resource mobilization theory, the distribution of resources is a social structural feature. Sometimes the distribution offers more advantages to social movements and sometimes it does not.

When we look at people as a resource, we see wide-ranging scholarship trying to understand how people get involved in social movement action. One vein of research looks at grievances, positing that people who feel aggrieved by an injustice are more likely to get involved with a social movement addressing that injustice. One prominent theory in this vein is called relative

deprivation, which argues that people feel a grievance when they compare themselves to others—they may feel like other people are experiencing improving life circumstances relative to them, or are not suffering from as many problems as them (Gurney and Tierney 1982). And while this seems to be a social psychological theory on its face, it becomes relevant to resource mobilization when it's about large numbers of people experiencing relative deprivation who then become a movement resource. Another way to think about members, or adherents, is in terms of incentives. Social movement scholars have generally focused on individual incentives, social incentives, and purposive or ideological incentives. Individual incentives involve offering people some benefit that they can't obtain without participating to some extent in social movement activity. Social incentives are relationships that people have with others, and become relevant when people build relationships through social movement activity. And purposive or ideological incentives are the most characteristic of committed activists who are involved because of a personal ideology that their movement involvement serves. From a resource mobilization perspective, movements can structure themselves to provide such incentives to potential recruits (Oliver 2016).

A slightly different way of thinking about social movement adherents is in terms of their degree of involvement with the movement. Those who are most ideologically committed will often play central leadership roles, with concentric rings of involvement after that. The furthest ring of adherents are the conscience constituents who often donate money or other tangible support but don't become directly involved in the social movement action (McCarthy and Zald 1977). Then, perhaps the most structural of all the perspectives, is biographical availability. Biographical availability refers to life stages that potential movement recruits might occupy (Beyerlein and Hipp 2006). For example, people with children and mortgages may find movement involvement much less convenient than a single and childless young adult renter.

We will discuss in detail the concepts of the social movement organization and the social movement organization field below. Here it is important to note that people resources and organizational resources are intertwined. Organizations need people in order to function and people need to be organized into some kind of organizational structure in order to engage in social action. Consequently, issues such as democratic process (Polletta 2002), factioning (Balsler 1997), and membership growth and loss (Zald and Ash 1966) become central concerns for social movements, and social movement scholars, at the organizational level. At the level of the social movement, issues of militancy and moderation, and the relationships between more militant and more moderate organizations are important (Haines 1984; Dreiling and Wolf 2001).

Money and material stuff are pretty obvious examples of resources. It is the rare organization that can run on volunteers alone, especially if it is a large-scale social movement organization. But all this fundraising brings its own kind of issues, such as the internal divisions that developed within Greenpeace when their staff, who included a large number of people who were simply employed as fundraising canvassers, organized themselves as workers within Greenpeace (Bellin 2015). In addition, money-heavy social movement organizations also invite questions about issues like who is calling the shots. On the other hand, of course, movement organizations who stand by their principles, such as Occupy, have the opposite problem of sustaining themselves for more than a short period, raising the question whether they are a social movement at all or just a temporary mobilization (Halvorsena 2012; Pickerill and Krinsky 2012).

Political goals in the form of changed policies are the goals of most social movements. And regardless of how well a social movement structures its organizations, recruits members, and raises money, it can still fail if there are not political opportunities available to it. The political opportunity structure is another concept we will explore below. Here it is important to understand that, from the standpoint of resource

mobilization theory, a social movement needs to either take advantage of political opportunities that present themselves—such as a disorganized opposition or a politically powerful supporter—or it needs to use tactics that have a chance of creating such opportunities.

Knowledge is the resource that is least studied in an integrated way in relation to resource mobilization. But the practice of what is variously called participatory action research, community-based participatory research, and a variety of other things (Stoecker 2013) has shown just what an important resource it can be in social movement campaigns. ACORN's predatory lending campaign made intense use of research for example, to identify predatory lenders, document and measure their lending practices, and file lawsuits (Hertz 2002).

The question we must ask is how well suited resource mobilization is to understand social movements at the local level. Could it be missing something, or misunderstanding something, about social movements at the local level because all of its theoretical data have come from large-scale social movements? We will explore below some of the ways its concepts may need to be adapted to better capture action at the local level, but the main theory, I believe, will apply at any scale. Any social movement at any scale will need to get members, an organization structure, money, political support, and knowledge. But we probably shouldn't leap to the conclusion that any social movement at any scale will need the same type or quantity of any of these things, as we will see.

13.2.2.2 New Social Movement Theory

There are some who argue that new social movement theory is not so much a theory as a different way of thinking about social movements (Flacks 2004). But enough research has been done in the name of the label that has generated new theoretical understandings of social movements to consider it a distinct theoretical perspective. The main way that new social movement theory differs from resource mobilization theory is this: while resource mobilization theory focuses on structural concepts to

explain what happens in social movements, new social movement theory focuses on cultural concepts. For new social movement theory, beliefs, values, and identities are the important explanatory variables. Some argue that this analytic shift coincided with a shift in the dominant type of social movement to a more middle-class form that emphasized the environment, health, and lifestyle issues related to sexuality and other forms of identity. These “new social movements” were held together less by structure, according to analysts, and more by culture—values, beliefs, and identities (Laraña et al. 1995). Clearly, movements around sexual identity, environmental protection, and other issues that involve deep values and lifestyle practices seem different on their face from worker mobilizations. But when we get to the 1960s antiwar, women’s movement, and even civil rights legislation, there was debate whether those movements were more explainable from a new social movements perspective than the resource mobilization theory that had been used.

What ideas come to the fore during the expansion of new social movement theory? We will cover them further below, but they focus on questions of unity and strategy. From a new social movements perspective, it’s not enough to say that a movement needs members, the question is how it decides which members it wants. For example, there are significant value differences between the militant environmental groups such as Earth First and the Sea Shepherds and the moderate groups such as the Sierra Club and the World Wildlife Fund (Dunlap and Mertig 1992). Those value differences matter in important ways that can determine the outcomes of movement campaigns.

New social movement theorists try to develop their theory with ideas such as culture, identity, and frames. Culture is, of course, the biggie and there are uncountable attempts to define what culture is. Whether it is the totality of values, beliefs, and norms of a group, or its collected practices and symbols or something else, the idea is almost too big to use. And, consequently, its explanatory value is questionable. So new social

movement theorists more often use narrower theoretical ideas like identity and frames.

The concept of identity has had tremendous staying power both within and outside of social movement theory. In new social movement theory itself, identity can refer to both the group and its adherents. Having a queer identity, or a vegan identity, or a Christian identity, and then seeking out an organization that promotes that identity expresses both the individual and the organization. ACT-UP, the famous and most militant of the gay-led AIDS organizations, was known as much for its identity as for its actions. The recognition of the importance of identity also led to the elaboration of the idea of the social movement community (Buechler 1990) that we will explore below. And today we can add the idea of intersectionality—not used as much in social movement research but which will probably soon problematize it, since intersectionality refers to how multiple identities intersect for an individual—making for a new form of hybrid activist (Chun et al. 2013).

The most specific of the concepts coming out of the new social movement theory, which we will also explore below, is frame analysis (Benford and Snow 2000). The contribution of frame analysis was that it allowed analysts to break up the problematic idea of culture, and even the still somewhat broad term of identity, and parse out specific instances where identity or culture was expressed in movement communications.

Like with resource mobilization theory we need to ask whether there is anything about the theory itself that makes it problematic for understanding social movements at the local level. Interestingly enough, one of the early influencers of the new social movement perspective was Manuel Castells (1983), whose book *The City and the Grassroots* was one of the few to look at localized social movements. So again, like with resource mobilization theory, the general theory applies generally. Even localized movements have culture, identity, and use framing practices. The question is whether the theory’s specific ideas apply the same way for

large-scale and local social movements. By looking at some of the main operationalized concepts of these two theories, we can get a better sense of what may make a local social movement distinct.

13.2.3 Concepts

13.2.3.1 Social Movement Organization

The social movement organization, often called an “SMO,” has historically been the foundational building block of the social movement. The SMO features prominently in the writings of the early social movement theorists (Zald and Ash 1966; McCarthy and Zald 1977). The social movement organization is the place where strategic decisions get made, policy positions get developed, and participants get recruited. Perhaps one of the reasons that the SMO becomes such a popular concept is that those adept at general organizational analysis could also apply their scholarly talents to activist organizations. But there were some unique characteristics of SMOs that required a different kind of attention. One of the main concerns was the issue of decision-making. In contrast to corporate and government organizations, SMOs do not have ready-to-wear decision-making structures, and thus they need to make up their own. Of course, for SMOs challenging power inequities, creating a decision-making structure that reproduced such inequities would not be acceptable, so there was always concern about the problem of democracy and its antithesis, oligarchy, in SMOs (Polletta 2002; Osterman 2006).

Scale probably does matter here. Managing a formal national SMO like the National Organization for Women, for example, requires a level of bureaucracy not needed for a neighborhood organization, though that reality does not preclude even local organizations from becoming pretty formal and even bureaucratized, especially given the pressures of the nonprofit industrial complex (Incite! Women of Color Against Violence 2007) that attempts to tame and declaw

social change organizations. But does scale make any other kind of difference? Truthfully, we can't say. We also might wonder if local SMOs are more likely to be multi-issue, simply because there are fewer people to spread out across separate organizations. Certainly that is the case for community organizing groups, which exist to continuously generate and tackle new issues as a way of bringing in new members and sustaining the organization (Minieri and Getsos 2007). Heaney and Rojas (2014) refer to “hybrid organizations” that take on multiple issues but they don't distinguish between local and national networks. One might suspect that face to face relationships could be more important at the local level, but local groups also rely on social media to manage intra-organizational relationships. It is also possible that social movement mobilization might more likely be managed by a single SMO at the local level, in contrast to the multiple SMO structures used by large-scale social movements. But, as we will see, even that is not an absolute.

13.2.3.2 Social Movement Community

One of the most intriguing concepts in the study of social movements for our purposes is the concept of the social movement community, which develops along with the ascendance of new social movement theory. Steve Buechler coined the phrase in 1990, arguing that, in addition to SMOs, social movements could also be composed of social movement communities that he defined as much looser and less formal groups whose participants engaged in social movement work. Verta Taylor and her colleagues (Taylor 1989; Taylor and Rupp 1993; Taylor and Whittier 1992) then took this idea and developed the “community” part of the phrase, looking at how lesbian feminist activists literally formed local communities that could support movement work, or support activists during periods when a social movement was not active or “in abeyance.” My work (Stoecker 1995), a bit differently, developed the idea to refer to a local group of people providing a local source of support for local activists in more of a behind-the-scenes fashion. In this

formulation, the social movement community doesn't make up the social movement but may be a broader group supporting it.

The importance of this idea is in its ability to elucidate just how important the ideas of local and community can be to social movements. Activism is hard work, and those engaged in such work need to be cared for, nurtured, fed, housed, given medical care when things get really rough, and given emotional support. That work can only happen in face to face relationships, and it can happen most effectively when activists and their family and friends are organized into a social movement community that can meet these needs through collective labor. The social movement community, then, is the one concept in social movement scholarship that depends on the local.

13.2.3.3 Social Movement Structure

Theorists have also had to invent some of their own concepts to understand social movements, and most of the conceptual innovation has been at the level of the social movement itself. Especially for national level social movements, many independent organizations often come together to sustain the action over time. Johnston (2014), in fact, defines a social movement in terms of a set of networked organizations. In some cases, such as the Civil Rights Movement, the social movement organizations and their relationships are quite clear (Morris 1984). But, in other cases, organizations may shift in and out of the movement itself. One of the more innovative models of social movement structure was created by Gerlach and Hine back in 1970. They described social movement structure using the concepts of segmented, polycephalous, and reticulate. By segmented they meant that there are multiple and separate organizations involved in a single social movement. By polycephalous, they meant that there are multiple leaders in a movement, and those leaders are often associated with different SMOs. By reticulate, they meant that the SMOs are networked together by individuals who may be involved in multiple organizations, or have social ties across them.

When we look at scale, the obvious question is whether such a structure is practical at the local

level because of the number of people required to sustain all those organizations. In one of the few examples looking at a local-level social movement, my work (Stoecker 1993) found what I labeled a "federated front-stage" structure in a neighborhood movement. This structure consisted of multiple organizations front-stage—the public face of the movement. But "back-stage" behind the public arena a single mostly unified group of activists maintained the multiple organizations. They just wore different organizational hats when they were engaged in different movement activities. In a less unified context, Courey (2014), in looking at neighborhood development movements, developed a model that did not depend on a single unified constituency but saw the neighborhood as a contested space with both social movement organizations and "contributing organizations" that could and would take positions on neighborhood development issues.

13.2.3.4 Social Movement Culture: Identity and Frames

As more recent social movement analysts began shifting their attention to the cultural aspects of social movements in what became the new social movement tradition, a variety of new concepts developed to support this analysis. And perhaps the vein of research that gained the most traction in studying this form of social movement was frame analysis. The focus of frame analysis was to understand how activists used ways of "framing" their issues and beliefs to recruit members and supporters, and maintain unity. Drawing on Irving Goffman's work, social movement frame analysis has been most associated with the work of Benford and Snow (2000). From their original groundbreaking work, other analysts developed frame typologies to show how movements tried to link their messages to core beliefs of the public, or transform the meanings held by the public.

This conceptual development may or may not be scale-dependent. Framing processes ideally happen, to a very large extent, on a face to face basis. And while that certainly must happen in a local space, it can happen in a local space as

much for a local organization as a national one. But in the Internet age it is also possible for social movement activists to attempt to shift people's frames via every possible form of social media. Regardless of the process, the content of such frames might vary by scale in important ways. Frames in local movements might be much more locally specific, employing the names of local groups, places, events, and even individuals. Movement identity, or at least SMO identity, might be more elaborate and detailed at the local level.

13.2.3.5 Political Opportunity Structure

Perhaps the only social movement concept that has its origins in a study of local mobilizations is the concept of the *political opportunity structure*. In 1973 Peter Eisinger coined the term in attempting to understand variations in urban riots. In Eisinger's early formulation, attempting to understand what influenced the outcomes of urban rebellions, he focused on variables like whether the city had a strong or weak mayor, whether city council representatives were elected by district or at large, and on a partisan or non-partisan ballot, and resource distribution. Eisinger basically distinguished between an "open" political opportunity structure that tended to be characterized by a strong mayor and district-based partisan elections that responded more to protests, and a "closed" structure characterized by a city manager and at-large non-partisan elections that responded less.

Interestingly enough, however, those who followed Eisinger, especially Tarrow (1998), and Kitschelt (1986), applied the concept to large-scale national-level social movements. I (stoecker 2013) was one of the few to suggest that the idea remained useful at the local level. I combined the concepts of all the previous analysts to suggest that the political opportunity structure should be considered not in the abstract but in a concrete instance of an insurgent group making a demand on an official power holder target. This is because the structure is likely to vary four ways based on the demand and the target. First, it can vary in terms of how open the

target is to considering the group's demands. Second, it can vary in terms of implementation power—a demand that requires significant funds to accommodate, for example, may receive support from the target but still be thwarted. Third, it can vary in terms of the structure of alliances around the target who may be variously supportive of or opposed to the group's demands. Fourth, it can vary in terms of the stability of the entire structure. An upcoming election, for example, could destabilize the entire structure.

The question is whether scale matters in applying this concept. There are important ways in which it might. A community-based social movement, for example, may only have a mayor and a handful of council members who must be convinced to support the group's demands. And the movement may even be able to influence city elections enough to gain such support. Communities Organized for Public Service in San Antonio, for example, organized to change the city's council structure from at-large to districts so it could be more representative of the city's diverse population (Vazquez 2005). That is a lot different than convincing the U.S. Congress, which connects us back to the concept of social movement structure. The size and complexity of a social movement structure required to influence national legislation is vastly different from that required for a changed city policy.

13.3 Distinguishing Localized Social Movements

Drawing from the discussion so far, I will stick to the term *localized social movement*. This continues the definition of local as a geo-structural term. A social movement, recall, is an organized constituency with a social structure that remains relatively stable over time and engages in various forms of conflict in order to change the relations of power between itself and individuals or groups that hold more formal power than the constituency. A social movement is localized when it is in a limited and defined geographic space that allows for regular face to face social relationships. My work (Stoecker 1995) distinguished

the movement from the local “community” on the one hand and the social movement organization on the other hand. But community was ill-defined in my work, and it was probably more accurate to talk about a geo-spatial constituency, such as a neighborhood, where people likely have common interests but may not have strong face to face relationships. Using the definition of community we established above, a localized social movement may actually have a stronger sense of community than the geo-spatial constituency it is attempting to organize.

It is important here to distinguish local social movements from local social movement organizations. McCarthy and Wolfson (1996) focused their analysis on local social movement organizations but those organizations are really chapters of national organizations engaged in state and national level social movements. Likewise Blee and Currier (2006) look at what they call social movement groups—less formal groups that maybe weren’t engaged in social movement activity at any level.

The question arises in this analysis whether a localized social movement is thus any different from community organizing. Some (Stall and Stoecker 1998; DeFilippis et al. 2010) argue that community organizing is more localized and pre-political while social movements are more explicitly political and multi-local. Others seem to lean more toward describing community organizing as building self-sustaining organizations while social movements are more characterized by fleeting mobilizations (Chambers and Cowan 2003). A provocative article by Engler and Engler (2014) paints the picture of community organizing being primarily concerned with building sustaining organizations while social movements are more concerned with fleeting mobilizations. Delgado (2009) is one of the few who looks at the potential intersection of community organizing and social movement in his analysis of ACORN—one of the most famous national community organizing networks that was ultimately destroyed by a full-blown right-wing assault. His analysis seems to distinguish community organizing as more of a local phenomenon, only becoming a social movement

at the point where the action becomes multi-local and takes on broader state and national level policy issues.

In the end, an analytical distinction between community organizing and social movement may be more difficult to maintain than we would wish. Remember that the definitions of social movement emphasize sustainability, and most of the analyses emphasize the role of organizations within them. It is only recently, with fleeting mobilizations such as Occupy, that the role of organizations was diminished, leading to a perhaps inaccurate redefining of the concept of social movement to fit Occupy rather than seeing it as simply a fleeting mobilization—something better fitting the old collective behavior theory than social movement models. My work on neighborhood movements shows them to be multi-issue, self-sustaining and organization-based, fitting the definitions of both community organizing and social movements (Stoecker 1993, 1995).

13.4 Pulling the Concepts Together Toward the Localized Social Movement

So considering all these concepts in relation to the geo-spatial construct of a local social movement, what can we say? First, it is possible that the SMO is a much more important concept for larger scale movements. The needs for coordinating actions, managing members, drafting and lobbying policy positions, are all much more intense for large-scale social movements. At the local level it may be more possible for Buechler’s (1990) classic depiction of a social movement community to be in operation. Indeed, as we will discuss, the lack of classic SMO structure in examples such as Occupy and Black Lives Matter show how little a carefully organized SMO matters to many local groups. Of course, it is also possible that the avoidance of such an SMO may be a liability. Piven and Cloward (1979) argued that even highly organized social movements were much better at creating a space where change could occur than they were at directing that

change. A less organized social movement is in an even weaker position to negotiate as power holders won't know who to negotiate with. Of course, Piven and Cloward were also focusing on large-scale social movements. In local places, personal relationships may provide more of a basis for negotiating power shifts, though the risk is that power shifts from one individual to another in the absence of a strong organization.

Second, identity can be much more specific at the local level. The ability for social movement activists to draw on time-honored definitions of a specific cultural community, be it ethnic, age-based, or even as narrow or seemingly unlikely as bicyclists in mobilizations such as Critical Mass, is much easier at the local level than at the level of large-scale social movements where broad coalitions much be engaged and massaged.

Third, the reduced resource base at the local level requires a variety of innovations for activists to both manage all the demands of a social movement on a much smaller and less flexible membership base. So, for example, the federated front-stage structure described earlier is such an innovation. In terms of social movement structures, it is one of the defining differences between large-scale and local social movements because it shows how much difference scale makes. At the local level, there simply are not enough members and organizational resources to support the multiple SMOs needed for a sophisticated movement strategy. So activists can only accomplish the multiple and sometimes incompatible social movement tasks through "front" organizations. But for large-scale movements, such a structure would actually reduce efficiency, as it would require people from all over the place to come together multiple times to manage multiple organizations. For large-scale movements, it is much more efficient to use the kind of polycephalous, reticulate, and segmented structure that Gerlach and Hine (1970) proposed.

Finally, looking carefully at the political opportunity structure allows us to see just how differently it operates at the local level compared to the national level. At the local level, the "target" of the social movement can often be personalized and isolated in the classic

community organizing model (Alinsky 1971), whether it is a local government neglecting a neighborhood, a destructive developer, an exploitive slum landlord, an unresponsive school system, a concentrated animal feeding operation, a nuclear power plant, an upstream polluter or some other bad guy. Though, in some cases, the targets may not themselves be local but instead just a local manifestation of far-away corporations. But at the national level the target often must be wide and broad and the issues thus also wide and broad—affecting different constituencies in different ways. And though the concept of the political opportunity structure has been developed more at the national level, it may actually be less useful at that level.

But is the localized movement fully distinct from the large-scale national movement, or might they actually be bound together?

13.4.1 The Relationship Between Localized and Large-Scale Social Movements

It is probably nonsensical to argue that there can be such a thing as a localized social movement that is completely independent from the broader social-cultural milieu in which it finds itself. If one adopts a resource mobilization perspective, then the resources that a localized social movement draws on are to a large extent influenced by the broader social context. If one adopts a new social movement approach, then the meanings and identities a localized social movement draws on will be influenced either positively or negatively by the broader meanings and identities in the society. And in today's tech-networked society, issues and messages race around the globe so quickly that the newest issue replaces the next newest issue almost before people can organize around it. But there are also concrete linkages between localized and large-scale social movements. Heaney and Rojas (2014), for example, focus on what they call hybrid organizations that can participate in multiple seemingly disconnected issues. They also note the role of

what they label as crossover activists who maintain the connection between different issues. But they don't concentrate on the possible unique dynamics that can occur when the hybrid organizations or the crossover activists are involved in local and national issues.

So we are still left with a gap in our understanding of the ways in which localized social movements are linked with and engage in an inter-influence process with broad-scale social movements. And it seems that there are four possible models described in the next sections.

13.4.2 Movements Whose Issues, Leadership, Culture, and Resources All Derive from the Local

This is the quintessential neighborhood movement. Whether it is a reactive movement attempting to defend the neighborhood from some real or perceived threat (NIMBY—not in my backyard—movements can be not only reactive but reactionary) or a proactive development movement, neighborhood movements are often home-grown. Their leadership comes from the neighborhood, their issues come from neighborhood conditions, and to a large extent even their resources are local. The best example I have seen of such a movement is the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood movement. This Minneapolis neighborhood organized to not simply thwart a public-private partnership that would have wiped it off the map, but then to change the conditions of how development decisions were made and the power relations between the neighborhood and city hall. Neighborhood residents took control and ownership of their housing, rehabilitating and transforming them into lease-hold co-ops (Stoecker 1994), and still maintain a neighborhood-based governance system for the housing. This, of course, is not the only story of such movements, which are also documented in Los Angeles (Heskin 1991), San Francisco (Beitel 2013), and other places.

The question currently is whether those groups operating under the broad banner of

Black Lives Matter can be counted among the examples of localized social movements. And it is not an easy question to answer. In some locales, Black Lives Matter is mostly about mobilizations without a clear organizational structure or even a clear list of demands. But in other cases, such as Young, Gifted, and Black in Madison, activists have a highly elaborated demand list, and even engage in negotiations with local government on policy issues.

And while we have normally thought of such mobilizations as characteristic of an urban milieu, we can find examples in rural areas as well. In North Carolina's rural Duplin County, residents have been suffering from the environmental and health effects of concentrated animal feeding operations, or CAFOs, that confine massive numbers of pigs in small torturous cages and generate huge amounts of animal waste, polluting air, land, and water (Wing and Wolf 2000; Wing et al. 2000). Residents, mostly Black, have been organizing for years to influence the regulations for such operations through the Rural Empowerment Association for Community Help (REACH), with some successes (Jenkins 2015). The people of Yellow Creek Kentucky, another remote rural community, also won regulation of an upstream tannery (Couto 1987). And the Dakota Access Pipeline protest, happening as I write, is a real-time example of localized social movement concepts such as the social movement community. The core of the protest, attempting to prevent a dangerous fossil fuel pipeline from being routed in a way threatening sacred lands and drinking water, is led and peopled by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. At the same time, they are gathering adherents from far and wide, with an organized contingent of 2000 U.S. military veterans being the latest addition (Reuters 2016).

13.4.3 Localized Movements that Become Large-Scale Movements

Another way to understand the relationship between localized and large-scale social

movements is through those examples where localized social movements link up to become a large-scale movement. The most important historical example of this phenomena is the Civil Rights Movement. What most people don't know is that the Civil Rights Movement was first about local places—desegregating the local bus service in Montgomery; desegregating the lunch counters in Greensboro. It was out of these localized social movements that the national civil rights movement organized around national-level policy such as the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act (Morris 1984). A bit different trajectory comes from the struggle against the practice of bank redlining—the refusal of banks to loan money to people in certain neighborhoods. As neighborhood residents in different cities realized that this practice was going on they also began to realize that local organizing wasn't going to be enough and they linked their separate neighborhood organizing efforts into the powerful coalition that got the Community Reinvestment Act passed (Squires 2003).

In rural areas, separate localized social movements connected themselves into the U.S. Rural Coalition in the United States, the Countryside Alliance in Britain, and the confédération paysanne in France (Woods 2003). Save Our Cumberland Mountains—SOCM (pronounced “sock ‘em”)—is a particularly interesting example. Organized initially by residents in the Cumberland Mountains region of east Tennessee to fight big coal, SOCM (2015) gradually expanded its influence so much that it changed the words behind its acronym to Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment with chapters spread out across the state of Tennessee.

13.4.4 Localized Movements Whose Resources Come from Large-Scale Movements

It is probably a bit of a misnomer to talk about localized movements getting resources from large-scale movements. It's more accurate to say they get resources from large-scale social

movement organizations. And probably the clearest example of this is the national community organizing networks. The first of those networks was the Industrial Areas Foundation or IAF built by Saul Alinsky and others (see Post, Chap. 18). Since then the main national networks have included the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now—ACORN—before it succumbed to unrelenting right-wing attacks in 2010 (Atlas 2011), People Improving Communities Through Organizing or PICO, the Direct Action Research and Training Center or DART, and National People's Action now in coalition with US Action and Alliance for a Just Society (People's Action 2016). Whether we should refer to these organizations as social movement organizations is debatable. To a large extent they exist to build the capacity of the local groups to build local social movements in both urban and rural areas. But ACORN and PICO in particular have taken on large national issue campaigns, and National People's Action was built out of the campaign for the Community Reinvestment Act discussed earlier.

This formation is consequently rather unique—most large-scale social movements are looking mostly for local groups to support the national effort, not the other way around. There are also some mid-level examples, such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving, which have local chapters that do some work on local issues, such as education programs, and then work on state policy issues along with national campaigns (McCarthy and Wolfson 1996).

13.4.5 Localized Movements that are Chapters of Large-Scale Movements

Finally, we have the strong national social movement organizations that may focus on building localized social movements. Here again, the Civil Rights Movement provides a prime example. Particularly, organizers from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee worked tirelessly in urban and rural locales in the south to challenge local and state voting rights

restrictions, segregation practices, and unjust policing (Carson 1981). Environmental movement organizations have also engaged in trying to create localized movements. Greenpeace (2006) has attempted to organize localized movements around the globe in its nuclear disarmament campaign.

But this model is probably the most difficult of all to implement. Coming into a community and trying to convince a locale of people to engage in localized movement building around an issue not of their own choosing can be a hard sell. And it is this difference that leads some of us to distinguish community organizing from social activism. In community organizing the “community” (more accurately, usually, the constituency) chooses the issue. In social activism, an outsider chooses the issue to work on.

13.5 Conclusion

The chapter has attempted to explore the extent to which our knowledge of social movements, derived mostly from data about large-scale social movements, is applicable to localized social movements. It has shown some of the qualities of localized social movements that makes them distinct from large-scale movements, and that connects them to those large-scale movements.

It does appear that our social movement concepts are robust enough that they can apply to localized social movements. Some concepts, such as political opportunity structure, frame analysis, and social movement community, may have even more applicability to localized social movements. Other concepts, such as social movement structure, require adaptations, such as the federated front-stage structure, to show accurately how localized social movements operate.

What we are still lacking, however, is a well-developed literature that draws its lessons from the study of localized social movements. Such a focus might give us even more new concepts, or adaptations of old concepts. But until then, we must rely on skeptically using the concepts we have.

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Volunteers in Community Organizations

14

Christopher J. Einolf

Abstract

This chapter first defines volunteering and discusses the prevalence of volunteering in the United States. It then defines three types of community organizations in which people may volunteer: functional, moral, and interactive. It reviews the research on who volunteers and why, dividing causal factors into demographic characteristics, resources, motivations, social networks, and life course development. The third section discusses best practices in the management of volunteers. The final section looks at volunteering in moral and interactive organizations, episodic volunteers, and the nature of leadership within community organizations.

social movements and carry out political advocacy. Volunteers form an important part of community organizations, and many community organizations are primarily or entirely made up of volunteers. In addition to being a means to these ends, volunteering is an end in itself, as it brings people together in relationships of solidarity and gives people a sense of purpose, meaning, and belonging.

This article first defines volunteering and discusses the prevalence of volunteering in the United States. It then defines three types of community organizations in which people may volunteer: functional, moral, and interactive. It reviews the research on who volunteers and why, dividing causal factors into demographic characteristics, resources, motivations, social networks, and life course development. The third section discusses best practices in the management of volunteers. The final section looks at volunteering in moral and interactional organizations, episodic volunteers, and the nature of leadership within community organizations.

This article examines community volunteering from the perspective of psychology, sociology, and management. Most of the articles written from this perspective consider volunteering as a type of charitable donation of time. The chapter therefore does not cover in depth some other important perspectives on volunteering, particularly the roles of volunteers in community organizing, solidarity, and political

14.1 Introduction

Volunteering is an important phenomenon worldwide. Volunteers provide essential social services, create and promote arts and culture, and contribute to associational life. Volunteering is an important form of social capital, volunteers contribute to civil society, and volunteers form

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activism. However, these topics are covered in other chapters in this volume, particularly those on decision-making (Rothschild, Chap. 8), control of community organizations (Benjamin, Chap. 9), social movement organizations (Stoecker Chap. 13), community organizing (Fisher, Chap. 17 and Post, Chap. 18), and self-help organizations (Segal, Chap. 19).

14.2 Definition

Scholars use a number of definitions of volunteering. While most agree that volunteering is an activity undertaken primarily for the benefit of others, is non-compulsory, and not paid market wages, scholarly definitions conflict with one another in regards to four issues: free choice, material rewards, institutional setting, and non-material rewards (Cnaan et al. 1996). Some definitions allow only freely chosen work to count as volunteering, while others include compulsory service work such as that required as a graduation requirement by some schools. Some definitions allow only completely unpaid work to count as volunteering, while others include labor that is compensated through a stipend. Some definitions include only “formal” volunteering that takes place through an institution, ignoring “informal” volunteering where one individual helps another directly. Some only count helping behavior as volunteering if one helps a stranger, while others count help given to friends and family members or work that benefits a group to which the volunteer belongs.

There are two commonly used definitions of volunteering followed by scholars and practitioners worldwide, that of the International Labor Organization and that of the United Nations Volunteers. The International Labor Organization defines volunteering as “unpaid non-compulsory work: that is, time individuals give without pay to activities performed either through an organization or directly for others outside their own household or related family members.” The United Nations Volunteers (2011) defines volunteering in this way:

There are three key defining characteristics of volunteering. First, the activity should not be undertaken primarily for financial reward, although the reimbursement of expenses and some token payment may be allowed. Second, the activity should be undertaken voluntarily, according to the individual’s own free will, although there are grey areas here too, such as school community service schemes which encourage and sometime require, students to get involved in voluntary work and Food for Work programmes, where there is an explicit exchange between community involvement and assistance. Third, the activity should be of benefit to someone other than the volunteer, or to society at large, although it is recognized that volunteering brings significant benefit to the volunteer as well.

The two definitions are similar, differing mainly in that the ILO defines volunteering as “work” and the UNV defines volunteering as an “activity.” Much community volunteering is an enjoyable form of leisure, so defining volunteering as an “activity” fits community volunteering better. The UNV also explicitly allows for volunteering to benefit the volunteer as well as others, which is also common in community organizations.

Volunteering overlaps in definition and practice with other social activities, including civil society, social movements, and social capital. Volunteering forms an important part of civil society, defined as a public sphere separate from government and formal politics in which citizens can debate issues and values (Edwards 2014). Volunteering overlaps with civil society but is not identical to it, as much volunteering is not political and much political work is paid. Volunteering overlaps with social movement participation, but again much volunteering does not involve an attempt to create systemic social change, and some social movement activity is paid. Much research on volunteering emphasizes volunteering as a type of work to help individuals, putting less emphasis on political activity and social movement activism, as well as self-help and solidarity work. The focus of this chapter reflects the focus of the field, and other chapters discuss voluntary action for social movements (Stoecker, Chap. 13) and political advocacy (Rothschild Chap. 8, Harding and

Simmons, Chap. 10, Hillier, Chap. 20, and Kelley and Dombrowski Chap. 25).

14.3 Prevalence of Volunteering

Estimates of volunteering vary widely according to the methods that surveys use to measure volunteering. People do not always think of their volunteering activities as “volunteering,” and people do not always remember them when asked by a survey researcher. For this reason, surveys with more prompts, examples, and questions about volunteering tend to get higher estimates of volunteer rates than surveys that ask only one or two questions (Rooney et al. 2004). One of the most accurate estimates of volunteering is the U.S. Current Population Survey, which calculated that 24.9% of Americans volunteered in 2015 (United States Department of Labor 2016), for a median time commitment of 52 h per year. Participation in volunteering has remained stable over the last decade, both in terms of the percentage of people who volunteer and the time spent volunteering (Clolery 2014), but has declined slightly in recent years from a high point of 26.8% of the population in 2011 (U.S. Department of Labor 2016).

14.4 Types of Volunteer Organizations

Voluntary organizations can be divided into three types: functional ones that provide services to clients, moral ones that advocate for the betterment of the community, and interactive ones that bring people together to pursue leisure activities and support each other psychologically. Functional organizations include traditional charities that provide clients with food, health research and health care, shelter, and organizations that provide cultural services such as museums and performing arts nonprofits. Functional organizations also include membership organizations and associations. Most of the literature on volunteer management addresses functional organizations

that have a small number of volunteers and a large number of paid staff.

Moral and interactive organizations probably make up the majority of volunteer organizations (Smith 2000) and are particularly common as a form of community organization. However, they are little studied, and there is almost no research on the best practices of management within them. Moral organizations advocate for the betterment of the community, and these include political groups, issue advocacy groups, and neighborhood citizens’ groups. Interactive organizations foster social interaction, most commonly for leisure purposes, as in arts, culture, sport, and hobby groups. Interactive organizations also include self-help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous and other twelve step groups.

While the literature on volunteering is extensive, most of it discusses volunteering with large functional nonprofit organizations, not community organizations. This chapter will first cover this general literature, then discuss in more depth the small number of articles that deal specifically with volunteering in community organizations.

14.5 Who Volunteers and Why

There is an extensive literature on who volunteers and why (Einolf and Chambré 2011; Musick and Wilson 2008), and the correlates of volunteering can be divided into four broad categories: demographic factors, resources, motivations, and the social environment. A fifth line of research looks at participation in volunteering changes and develops through the life course.

Certain demographic characteristics are associated with volunteering. In the United States, women are more likely to volunteer and volunteer more hours, but men are more likely to volunteer in many other countries (Wiepking and Einolf 2012). In the United States, volunteer participation tends to increase with age, decreasing only in late old age as health issues force people to cut back on volunteering. In the United States, whites are the most likely to volunteer, followed by Native Americans,

African-Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans, but among those who do volunteer African-Americans volunteer the most hours (Musick and Wilson 2008).

Resources include the health and free time that make volunteering possible, and the education and skills that make someone a more effective volunteer. People in poor mental or physical health are less likely to volunteer. Retirees and people who work part-time are more likely to volunteer than those who work full-time because they have more time during the work day to volunteer. People who are paid a salary instead of an hourly wage are also more likely to volunteer because they can take off work to volunteer without losing wages for the lost time, and because salaried employees generally have more control over their work schedule. Skills are also important resources in volunteering, and the strong correlation between education and volunteer participation can be explained in part by the contribution education makes to work skills (Einolf and Chambré 2011; Musick and Wilson 2008).

Motivations include a range of personality traits, values, and needs. An influential study of volunteer motivations divides them into six types: self-enhancement, career development, the desire to understand the world, the desire for social relationships, moral values that lead one to help others, and the use of volunteer work to protect oneself against negative feelings or deal with personal problems (Clary et al. 1998). Psychological studies have explored the different types of moral traits and values that encourage volunteering, which include empathic concern, prosocial role identity, moral obligation, generative concern, and an extensive moral orientation (Einolf and Chambré 2011). Religious people tend to volunteer more, although scholars disagree on whether this is due to the altruistic values that are preached by religions or the social networks that come with religious participation (Einolf 2011). In addition to moral values, other personality traits correlate with volunteering, including resilience, extraversion, self-efficacy, and low levels of neuroticism (Einolf and Chambré 2011).

One important personality trait that encourages volunteering is volunteer role identity. People may begin volunteering for any number of reasons, but as people continue to volunteer they begin to think of themselves as volunteers and seek out new volunteer opportunities after their original volunteer commitment ends. Volunteer role identity helps explain why the best single predictor of future volunteering is past volunteering (Lee et al. 1999).

The fourth type of causal factor that affects volunteering is the social environment, which includes social context, social roles, and social networks. Social context theories focus on macro level factors that affect volunteering such as the cultural, social, and political environment of a state or a nation. At the level of the nation state, such factors as culture, religion, the history of volunteering, government policies, the economy, the role of the welfare state, and the size of the non-profit sector all affect participation in volunteering (Butcher and Einolf 2016; Ruiter and De Graaf 2006). Within the United States, social context effects affect volunteering at the level of states, cities, counties, and neighborhoods (Einolf and Chambré 2011). Social context can also include the effect of major events. For example, volunteering with local government agencies in the United States increased after the attacks of September 11, 2001 (Gazley and Brudney 2005). Similarly, the AIDS epidemic of the 1980's inspired a movement of volunteers who stepped forward to meet the crisis, but then stepped back from volunteering as more funding became available and AIDS treatment became professionalized (Chambré 2006).

A social role is a set of norms and behaviors that go with a particular social status, and these norms and behaviors can sometimes encourage volunteering. For example, the role of parent carries with it the expectation that the parent will volunteer at the child's school, religious congregation, and leisure activities. Other social roles, such as member of a religious congregation, community group, or professional association, can include expectations of volunteering (Einolf and Chambré 2011). Participation in volunteering can compensate for the loss of other

roles, and role replacement is one reason for people to volunteer in retirement (Mutchler et al. 2003).

Social networks hold a strong influence over people's volunteering. Most people volunteer because someone asked them to, and people with broad social networks are more likely to be asked. Social networks can build trust, and people who have a strong sense of trust feel more solidarity with other people and feel more inclined to help them. Trusting people are also less inhibited by concerns about others taking advantage of their generosity (Brown and Ferris 2007). Some social networks, such as those that exist in religious institutions and service clubs, create external norms that favor volunteering. These external norms motivate people to volunteer even when they are not intrinsically motivated to do so, because other people in their group expect it of them (Lee et al. 1999).

Finally, an important line of research looks at how participation in volunteering develops over the life course: its roots in childhood experiences, its development during school and college years, its further development through life stage changes and the effect of marriage and having children, and the pursuit of volunteering during retirement. One line of research finds the childhood roots of generosity, which involve parental teaching of prosocial values, parental modeling of volunteer work, and learning service work through religious congregations, community organizations, and school. In the last few decades many universities have developed volunteer and service learning programs which further encourage volunteer work. Young people who volunteer in high school and college are more likely to volunteer later in life (Musick and Wilson 2008).

In adult life, married people (Einolf and Philbrick 2014) and people with school aged children (Nesbit 2012) tend to volunteer more. Part of this increase is due to the change in social networks that come with marriage and children and the expectation that parents will volunteer to support their children's activities. In midlife people also enter the "generativity" phase of life, during which people focus less on their own identity and achievements and become

concerned with teaching and nurturing the next generation (McAdams and de St. Aubin 1998). Upon retirement, some people make up for the roles lost when they leave full time employment by taking on volunteer work. Relatively few people volunteer for the first time upon retirement; more commonly, people who already volunteered while working for pay increase their volunteer commitment (Mutchler et al. 2003).

14.6 Managing Volunteers

The literature on effective volunteer management is smaller than the literature on who volunteers and why but is still significant (Brudney and Meijs 2014). Much of this literature is written by practitioners and consultants, but there are some scholarly articles that use scientific methods to test the effectiveness of volunteer management practices (for a comprehensive review, see Studer and Von Schnurbein 2013). Much of the best practices literature for managing volunteers follows a human resources management (HRM) model, treating volunteers as a special category of staff and assuming that nonprofits should manage volunteers in a similar way to how they manage paid staff. This limits the utility of this literature because many community organizations have few or no paid staff, and their volunteers have different needs and motivations than paid workers. The first half of this section defines the HRM model and discusses the literature that tests it, and the second half discusses alternatives to the HRM model that may be more applicable to community volunteering.

The Human Resources Management (HRM) model: The majority of the literature on volunteer management takes a human resources management (HRM) approach, assuming that volunteers are similar to paid labor and should be managed in similar ways. Much of this literature takes a "universalistic" approach, recommending that nonprofits follow a single set of best practices regardless of size, number of volunteers, tasks, or mission (Brudney and Meijs 2014). Many versions of the HRM model have been proposed over the years (Safrit and Schmieging

2012), with some variation in the best practices recommended, but a recent review of the different models “shows that they are quite similar, grounded in a set of core functions that volunteer programs typically perform, including selection, orientation, job design, training, placement, and evaluation” (Brudney and Meijs 2009, p. 567).

A practical guide based on the HRM model makes these recommendations for managing volunteers (Brudney 2012):

- (1) Plan the volunteer program carefully by considering the costs and benefits of participation, setting reasonable expectations, establishing a rationale and goals, and involving paid staff in the program’s design.
- (2) Write policies for volunteer management.
- (3) Purchase liability insurance for volunteers.
- (4) Designate who will manage volunteers.
- (5) Create written job descriptions.
- (6) Recruit volunteers.
- (7) Interview potential volunteers to screen out undesirable volunteers and to match volunteers with suitable assignments.
- (8) Hold an initial orientation and training session.
- (9) Give follow-up training and professional development opportunities.
- (10) Keep records of volunteer hours and activities.
- (11) Supervise volunteers closely and communicate with them frequently.
- (12) Evaluate volunteers’ individual performance and evaluate the volunteer program as a whole.
- (13) Recognize volunteers’ contributions.

Dozens of studies have tested the validity of different features of the HRM model, and support for its features has been mixed but mostly positive. Studies have found no relationship between volunteer recruitment and retention and having written policies (step 2), job descriptions (step 5), and record keeping (step 10), and the effectiveness of different models of volunteer management structures (step 4) has never been tested. Limited support was found for the value of planning (step 1), liability insurance (step 2),

screening and matching (step 7), and evaluation (step 12). Strong support has been found for the role of effective job design (step 5), recruitment (step 6), orientation and training (steps 8 and 9), supervision, communication, and support (step 11), and recognition (step 13). The HRM model seems to apply best to large functional nonprofits that have a large paid staff and a supplemental volunteer program; no studies have tested its effectiveness with small grassroots associations that are run entirely by volunteers.

One of the best supported features of the HRM model is the importance of effective job design. While the mere existence of job descriptions (step 5) does not relate to positive volunteer outcomes (Hager and Brudney 2004; Stirling et al. 2011; Studer 2015), creating good volunteer jobs does have a positive effect. Understanding one’s role in the organization and the organization’s goals positively predicts intent to continue volunteering (Hidalgo and Moreno 2009). A volunteer job is most appealing if “(1) the job involves several nonrepetitive tasks; (2) the job involves a complete process; (3) tasks are chosen by oneself; (4) jobs have clearly defined objectives; (5) the ultimate purpose of the job is known; (6) the job is useful for others; (7) the job can be done with great autonomy; [and] (8) the job requires cooperation with others” (Hidalgo and Moreno 2009, p. 598). Volunteers who felt that their jobs had these characteristics were more likely to intend to continue volunteering.

There is also a good literature on recruitment. A laboratory experiment found that matching recruitment messages to potential volunteers’ motives made them more likely to volunteer (Clary et al. 1998). Another laboratory experiment found that subjects were more open to being recruited when they anticipated feeling pride in the organization, anticipated being treated with respect, and sensed that the organization was open to newcomers (Boezeman and Ellemers 2014). Recruiting a diverse workforce of volunteers is more effective when organizations acknowledge and point out the value of diversity. In a third experiment, male college students were asked if they would be interested in volunteering

for a child care organization in which the majority of volunteers were elderly women. When the recruitment materials emphasized the need for young male volunteers to act as role models for the children, young men were significantly more interested in volunteering (Boezeman and Ellemers 2014).

A field experiment with parent volunteers in children's soccer leagues found interesting results. Parents were told either that there was a great or a small need for volunteers, and were either promised a t-shirt to recognize their contribution or were promised no recognition. Neither a great need for volunteers nor the recognition gift by themselves were enough to increase volunteering, but potential volunteers who were both told there was a great need and were promised recognition volunteered at significantly higher rates and for significantly more hours (Fisher and Ackerman 1998).

Another promising strategy for recruitment used social marketing principles to increase volunteering in an Israeli town. The marketing firm that implemented the strategy held focus group interviews; selected a market segmentation strategy; promoted volunteering through a simple, consistent message sent through multiple channels, including paid advertising; and addressed potential volunteers' concerns about cost, safety, and accessibility. The social marketing campaign was expensive and time-consuming but paid off through a 61% increase in the number of volunteers in the town's nonprofit organizations (Boehm 2009).

Finally, a large survey found that most HRM practices had little relationship with success in recruiting volunteers, but organizations that budgeted adequate funds for supporting volunteers, had staff who believed in the importance of working with volunteers, and whose staff had adequate time to train and supervise volunteers had better outcomes with recruitment. Using only a few recruitment methods was more effective than using many, and the most effective method was using current volunteers to recruit new ones (Hager and Brudney 2011).

Numerous studies have linked orientation and training with higher retention (Hager and

Brudney 2004; Hidalgo and Moreno 2009), more hours volunteered (Farmer and Fedor 1999), and better quality volunteer work (Tang et al. 2010). Similarly, organizations that recognize volunteers for their contributions have better outcomes with recruitment and retention (Cuskelly et al. 2006; Hager and Brudney 2004; Fisher and Ackerman 1998; Studer 2015). Scholars have not yet studied what aspects of orientation, training, and recognition are most effective, but have only found that organizations that do these things have better outcomes than organizations that do not.

Volunteers who have positive perceptions of the supervision, communication, and support they receive from the organization volunteer more hours and are more likely to continue volunteering (Hidalgo and Moreno 2009; Farmer and Fedor 1999; Studer 2015). However, volunteer managers' estimates of the frequency of supervision and communication had a negative relationship with having adequate numbers of volunteers (Hager and Brudney 2004). This apparent contradiction can perhaps be explained by the difference between volunteers' and volunteer managers' perceptions of the nature of supervision; volunteers may prefer a light touch in management and communication that offers them autonomy, while volunteer managers may inadvertently overdo it out of a felt need to stay informed and in control.

Most of the literature testing the HRM model used samples taken from larger nonprofits with paid staff, but a few involved volunteers with community organizations. A study of volunteers in community sports organizations found that planning a volunteer program and recognizing volunteers correlated with volunteer retention, but screening volunteers and matching them with positions had no effect (Cuskelly et al. 2006). A study of parent volunteers with youth soccer leagues found that expressing a great need for volunteers and promising recognition helped with retention (Fisher and Ackerman 1998). Another study of youth soccer league volunteers found that finding the correct fit between a volunteer and the task, organization, and management technique improved retention (Kim et al. 2007). While these are only three studies, they

show that good HRM practices in planning, recruitment, matching, and recognition can work in community sports organizations.

It is plausible that other HRM practices can also work in community organizations, although these practices have not yet been tested. While written policies, liability insurance, keeping detailed records of volunteer hours, and formal evaluations are beyond the scope of most small volunteer-run community organizations, these are the aspects of the HRM model that have had the least impact on volunteer commitment and retention. The other aspects of the HRM model would not be difficult for community organizations to implement. Even small volunteer-run organizations have the time and resources to plan their volunteer program, appoint a volunteer manager, create brief job descriptions, recruit volunteers, interview and match them, orient and train them, communicate with them, and recognize their contributions.

Alternatives to the HRM model: The HRM model is not so much wrong or irrelevant to community organizations as it is incomplete. It makes some sense to view community volunteers as a type of unpaid employee of a community organization and to concentrate on making their jobs rewarding through good human resources management practices. However, there is much more to the story. Community volunteers participate due to a number of different motives and will continue to participate if those motives are satisfied. Community volunteers also form a psychological contract with the organizations that they work for, an unwritten contract that has implicit assumptions about what the volunteers expect to get out of their work. Social bonds are important in many community organizations, particularly interactive organizations such as self-help, arts, sports, and leisure groups. For this reason, satisfaction with one's peer group interactions may be particularly important in maintaining commitment and retention among community volunteers.

The strength and nature of volunteer motivations and the ability of organizations to satisfy those motivations correlates with volunteer satisfaction, commitment, and retention. Many

studies use the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) (Clary et al. 1998), which measures six motivations for volunteering: building career skills, enhancing self-esteem, protecting oneself from negative emotions, social motivations, understanding others, and prosocial values. Some studies found that recruitment efforts were more effective if they included messages that accurately targeted volunteer motives. Support for the importance of motivations in retention and hours volunteered has been mixed, but a recent article found a positive correlation between motive fulfillment and retention (Stukas et al. 2009).

Community volunteers also make a psychological contract with the organizations where they participate (Stirling et al. 2011). Volunteers do not expect to be treated just like paid employees, but expect that their volunteer experience will meet their emotional and relational needs. While never stated in writing, this expectation is part of the psychological contract that volunteers make with the agencies where they work. Volunteers want "appreciation and a caring management approach" that is "limited in autocratic and bureaucratic interactions" (Stirling et al. 2011, p. 324).

Many nonprofits are becoming more professionalized in their volunteer management practices, focusing on issues of internal controls, training, and accountability rather than emotions and relationships. As nonprofits become more professional and bureaucratic volunteers may feel that their psychological contract to receive caring, connection, and support is being violated, which may cause them to feel dissatisfied with their experience and quit volunteering. Stirling and colleagues' (2011) own study found only limited support for their model, but other studies have found that the quality of the relationship with and the level of social support from fellow volunteers positively predicts intent to remain (Hidalgo and Moreno 2009). Concerns about caring, connection, and support, as well as enjoyment and learning, are particularly important in community organizations centered around social interaction and leisure. To date, no study has tested the effectiveness of psychological contract theory in predicting participation in

community organizations, but the nature of community organization volunteering suggests that psychological contract theory may be particularly relevant.

The most promising alternative model of research looks at the role of peer group influences. This model argues that the vertical relationship between management and volunteers is not the only relationship of importance in motivating volunteers; the horizontal relationships among volunteers may be as important or more important in motivating recruitment, satisfaction, and retention. Volunteers who report strong support from and a good relationship with other volunteers donate more time and are more likely to continue volunteering (Hidalgo and Moreno 2009). In addition to the social support and friendly interactions that may make volunteers happier, close relationships with peers can lead to the development of external norms or shared values that make one feel obligated to continue volunteering (Lee et al. 1999).

14.7 Studies of Community Organizations

Only a few articles study volunteering within community organizations that are primarily or entirely staffed by volunteers. Several of the articles mentioned above tested the human resource model on community organization volunteers in sports groups (Cuskelly et al. 2006; Fisher and Ackerman 1998; Kim et al. 2007). A study of volunteers for Australian rugby clubs found that altruistic values was a weak but significant predictor of intent to continue volunteering (Hoye et al. 2008). Another study of volunteer sport clubs focused on the competencies that members considered important to effective performance as volunteers on the board of directors (Balduck et al. 2010). A qualitative study traced how recruiting members of disadvantaged communities into volunteering for a food cooperative encouraged them to feel more confident and engage in other community activities (Hibbert et al. 2003). A survey of volunteer community activists found that self-esteem,

mastery, coherence, organizational commitment and leadership competence predicted having a feeling of community cohesion.

A study of the Appalachian Trail Conference, a leisure group of hikers that also organized volunteer efforts to maintain the trail, found that members of the conference who also volunteered had been members for a longer time, scored higher on measures of self-efficacy, had larger social networks within the organization, and had fewer competing commitments (Martinez and McMullin 2004).

A second study of faith-based organizations and congregations found that role ambiguity was not as serious a problem in some community organizations as the HRM literature would suggest. They found that most participants for these faith-based nonprofits experienced “role diffusion” and “wore multiple hats,” but did not find this to be a problem. The organization provided volunteers with cross-training, and the volunteers felt that “boundaries created by roles appear to be less important than pragmatically responding to human needs” (Netting et al. 2005, p. 179).

Another qualitative study examined how a community search and rescue group in a mountain resort town acculturated new members into identifying with the group and its norms. With many volunteers eager to join and play the part of rescuing hero, the group put new members through a long initiation period and required them to demonstrate humility, obedience, skill, and commitment over time before being allowed to take on important work. The study’s findings are specific to the nature of a search and rescue group, but values and acculturation are themes important to all community organizations (Lois 1999).

A particularly insightful case study (Barnes and Sharpe 2009) described a volunteer organization that organized leisure activities in a public park, thus constituting an interactional organization under public supervision. The organization did not comply with the HRM model at all, but instead integrated its programs with volunteers’ values, passions, and interests, and adopted an informal structure that allowed for maximum volunteer autonomy. The success of this model

and its divergence from the dominant best practices literature indicates that more qualitative research is needed on successful organizations that do not follow HRM practices, particularly moral and interactional organizations.

14.8 Episodic Volunteers

Recent years have seen an increase in both the number of episodic volunteers and the research attention devoted to them. Episodic volunteers are defined as those who volunteer for short durations, only one or two times, and on a specific project (Hyde et al. 2014). Episodic volunteers may make up a significant proportion of volunteers in community organizations, but no study to date has examined this topic. Existing studies of episodic volunteers tend to focus on fundraising volunteers, volunteers in human services charities (Hyde et al. 2014; Hustinx et al. 2008), and volunteers at leisure and sporting events, particularly charity fundraising sports events (Hyde et al. 2014, 2016). Existing studies focus mostly on the motivations and characteristics of the volunteers themselves, rather than management practices (Hyde et al. 2014, 2016). However, one study of episodic and regular volunteers at the same human services charity found that the episodic volunteers were less satisfied with training and the flexibility of assignments and placed less importance on recognition and rewards (Hustinx et al. 2008). Episodic volunteers are an important new area for study in community organizations and an area that has not been much researched.

14.9 Volunteer Leadership

While the field of leadership research is very large and includes much research on the leadership of nonprofit organizations, there is little research specifically on volunteer leadership within community organizations. Boehm and Staples (2006, p. 78) define the volunteer leaders of community organizations as “grassroots leaders,” who are “unpaid volunteers who

emerge from within the community to provide direction and guidance in specific or varied areas of its life.” They may or may not have a formal position, but have been “identified by peers to lead a change effort.” The authors’ interviews with twenty-three leaders of social action and community development organizations showed that there were many different paths to leadership. However, all started out with project-based work as members of committees, task forces, or boards and worked their way up to leadership positions. All had in common the experience of persevering in their struggle through adverse experiences. They learned leadership skills informally and by doing, but valued what they learned from formal trainings. Their leadership style involved articulating a vision, valuing both task and process, and working through participatory and reciprocal group processes.

Greenberg (2000) gave surveys with demographic and psychological questions to a convenience sample of both community leaders and ordinary residents. Compared to ordinary residents, community leaders were more optimistic, had a stronger sense of efficacy, were more committed to working with others, and accessed a larger number of sources of information. Leaders were more aware of neighborhood problems than ordinary residents but rated the quality of life in the neighborhood about the same. There were few demographic differences between leaders and residents, but leaders were more likely to be homeowners and had been neighborhood residents for a longer time.

Zachary (2000) argues that the best style of leadership for community organizations is shared or group-centered, but the environment of community organizations can tempt grassroots leaders to become authoritarian. “When someone who has never had any recognition in her life is suddenly being chased after by television and newspaper reporters” and “finds himself on the board of directors of an organization,” “it sometimes goes to her head” (Zachary 2000, p. 74). Grassroots leaders also adopt an authoritarian style because it is the “dominant approach to leadership in our society” (p. 73). The results

of this leadership style will be familiar to anyone who has worked with community groups (p. 74):

Within this leader-member dynamic, the leaders will often complain that the other residents won't get involved and don't really care about the neighborhood, blame and resent them, and feel sorry for themselves. The rank-and-file members will, of course, pick up on these feelings and stay away even more—a formula for organizational stagnation and dissolution, not the building of greater connection and community.

To break out of this vicious cycle, Zachary argues, community leaders must adopt a shared or group-centered approach that views leadership as “more as a set of skills and functions that enable the group to operate well than as a personal privilege,” and which locates the power in the group, not the leader. Leadership means “using one's skills, knowledge, and values to help the group decide what it wants to do, help the group carry it out, and keep it cohesive...The purpose of the group centered leader is to motivate people to get involved and to then facilitate their participation in, and ownership of, the organization” (p. 75).

14.10 Effects of Volunteering on the Volunteer and the Community

Volunteer work has a transformative effect on volunteers. Numerous studies have found that volunteers enjoy better mental and physical health, are happier, and tend to live longer. While healthy and happy people are more likely to volunteer, longitudinal studies have found a real causal effect by which volunteering improves mental and physical health (Musick and Wilson 2008).

Volunteering also contributes social capital, defined here as norms, networks, and trust. Volunteers join networks with others which reinforce norms of cooperation and helping and develop trust. Many forms of volunteering create bridging social capital, bringing people from different walks of life together in a common group. Bridging social capital is thought to be particularly important in supporting a healthy democracy (Putnam 2000).

Volunteers are also more politically active than non-volunteers, but it is not certain whether the relationship is causal. Many of the factors that cause people to volunteer, such as education, income, and membership in groups, also cause them to be more involved in politics. Therefore, the correlation between volunteering and political activity could just be an effect of the fact that similar factors cause both behaviors. By concentrating on helping one person at a time, volunteer work can divert people from working for systemic change through political activism (Eliasoph 2013). It seems likely that some forms of volunteering lead to political involvement, others discourage it, and many types of volunteering have no effect. Future research that distinguishes among different types of volunteer work and uses longitudinal data will help clarify the relationship between volunteering and political action.

14.11 Conclusion

Given the dearth of studies about volunteers in community organizations, this chapter has presented what we know about volunteers generally. About a quarter of the U.S. population volunteers, with a median time commitment of only an hour a week. Prosocial values and motivations, resources of skills and free time, and involvement in groups and social networks all predict who is more likely to volunteer.

Most studies of volunteer management practices use samples taken from large nonprofits with many paid staff, making their findings only partially applicable to community organizations. These studies also use a human resources model (HRM) of volunteer management, which assumes that nonprofits should treat volunteers similarly to paid staff. Studies have supported the validity of many aspects of the HRM model and a few studies have found that the model is also applicable to community organizations. However, other models exist. Satisfying volunteers' motivations, abiding by implicit psychological contracts in which volunteers expect

caring, community, and enjoyment, and facilitating good peer relations among volunteers may do more to encourage participation and retention than following good HRM practices. Of the small number of articles that focus specifically on volunteers in community organizations, the best (Barnes and Sharpe 2009) describes a leisure organization that ignores HRM practices entirely and uses instead an informal structure that gives its volunteers autonomy and allows them to fulfill their values, passions, and interests.

Similar to the literature on volunteer management, the literature on leadership within community organizations is limited: there is much written about leadership generally, but little that applies specifically to community organizations. The current literature analyzes the paths that community leaders follow in their development, and identifies the tendency towards authoritarian leadership as the biggest potential problem in this process.

Much future research is needed on volunteers and volunteer management within community organizations. Two decades ago, Smith (1997) labeled grassroots organizations the “dark matter” of the nonprofit universe, pointing out that the most common type of organization is also the least studied. This observation remains true today, and we know relatively little about volunteers within small community organizations. Future studies should test results taken from studies of staff-focused nonprofits and see whether they apply also to community organizations. Future studies should also begin with community organizations and derive unique observations and theories not connected with the study of other types of nonprofits.

Given the limited research on community organizations, should readers of this chapter take away any conclusions for practice? The answer here is a qualified yes. Where current theories have been tested on community organizations, they tend to apply equally well as they do in larger nonprofits. This implies that other findings that are valid in nonprofits generally are at least plausibly likely to apply to community organizations. Using good human resource management practices is a good idea in both community

organizations and larger nonprofits, but the HRM framework is not the only or even the most important one for community leaders to pay attention to. Taking care of volunteers’ desires for connection, positive emotions, social contact, learning, and meaning may be more important than giving volunteers well-written job descriptions or sending them thank-you notes. Community organizations form around an informal web of social interaction, activism, and connection, not a business model of top down control and service delivery. People who work with community organizations should recognize the difference between these organizations and more traditional nonprofits, and adjust their leadership style to accommodate volunteers’ needs.

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Part III

Social and Community Practice

Community Practice and Community Organization: A Conceptual Understanding

15

Haya Itzhaky and Edna Bustin

Abstract

The chapter presents values, principles and goals that create the conceptual and professional basis of Community practice. The chapter describes the intervening method of the Community practice, challenges facing the profession, and the implications of the changes occurring in communities and societies on the role of the community workers. The Chapter also outlines the community method as a mean of collective empowerment and of mediation between individuals and society, and as a mean to strengthen the power and abilities of individuals and groups to successfully cope with common interests and challenges.

according to their values, to prevent their distress, and to empower them. Thus the objectives of community practice are to increase the ability of people to solve problems and face challenges; to connect to the systems designed to provide them with resources, services, and opportunities; and to improve and develop these systems (Itzhaky and York 2002). Community practice channels the collective power and mediates between the individual and society (Checkoway 1997), reinforcing the power and ability of individuals and groups to cope successfully with their common needs and problems. It helps people in a community to identify their needs, find their common interests, develop their self-confidence and desires to promote their interests, obtain the necessary resources, and work together to make a difference in their lives and the lives of those around them, thereby empowering them to engage in community life (Zanbar and Itzhaky 2013; Boehm and Cnaan 2012). Community practice got its upgrade when one of the practitioners became the President of the United States.

15.1 Introduction

Community practice deals with the relationship between people and their social environment. It aims to enhance their ability to obtain goals and objectives, to fulfill their aspirations to live

This chapter, which focuses on community practice, presents the guiding principles and main goals of this intervention. We begin with a review of community practice in the western world, principles of community, main intervention strategies employed in the practice, and its main functions. This is followed by a discussion of the challenges facing the profession,

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especially in light of the changes taking place in western society.

15.2 Guiding Principles

Community practice is founded on values of the caring professions, such as social work, political science and psychology: acceptance, belief in the possibility of change, empathy, human dignity, the right of the individual to assistance from the group, refrain from judgment, respect for basic rights and equality, social responsibility, commitment to personal freedoms and to raising awareness of them, universalism (Varley 1963), and self-determination of residents (Bernstein 1960). The semantics may vary; for instance, a community practitioner may use the term “resident participation” instead of “self-determination”, but they represent the same value: clients have the right to make decisions about their own lives.

In today’s technologically advanced western society, the personal and liberal values, such as social advancement, personal freedom, and equal opportunities (Bellah et al. 1985), are more widespread than the social and community ones (Itzhaky et al. 2004; Koeske and Crouse 1981) that serve as the foundation of community practice, which aims to cultivate personal ability, strengths, and potential by means of empowerment processes.

15.2.1 The Targets of Community Practice

The central targets of community practice are:

To develop appropriate solutions to the common needs of population groups.

Workers employ methods of community practice when working with a group of people who share a similar problem, for which they require assistance. For instance, a group of people with

disabilities may lack physical access to a certain service in the community, or there may be the need of a playground for young children. These are examples of needs that are not met, for which the intervention of community practitioners is required.

To enhance the ability of people to solve problems and act independently.

The role of the community practitioner is help the residents to find their strengths, resources and abilities to solve the common problems in the community, according to the fundamental approach of community practice which is strengths-based, and believes that people can resolve their common challenges (Saleebey 1996).

To connect people to the systems that supplies them with resources, services, and opportunities.

The role of community practitioners is to promote and guide the effort to create a bridge between clients and service providers, so that they attain optimal fulfillment of their needs (Sharkey 2000).

To strengthen the participation of residents in organizations and activities as a means to their empowerment and involvement and to reducing their sense of alienation.

This is one of the central principles of community practice; it is discussed more extensively later in the chapter.

To ensure effective and respectful functioning of the organizations that supply resources, services, and opportunities.

In many cases, target populations refrain from taking advantage of the social services offered them, because the programs are not accessible, because they are culturally inappropriate, or for other reasons. One of the functions of community practice is to work with providers to improve the access, availability, respectfulness of the services they offer and ensure that they are better matched to the needs and character of the clients (Boehm and Litwin 1999).

To promote the development and improvement of social policies.

Community practice focuses on problems within social structures and processes. Social issues are seen as the outcome of interactions within and between systems, so that the residents are not solely responsible for their problems. This explanation is based on the systems approach, which views social problems as the outcome of disorders and failures of the system, and not necessarily dependent on any given individual. Guided by the systems approach, community practitioners view the social systems as the target for their intervention, with the aim of promoting the development of social policies that enable more effective alleviation of social problems (Chetkov-Yanoov 1997).

In order to realize these goals, community practice combines processes, methods, and skills of organization, planning, development, and change (MacNair 1996; Rothman 1996, 2007; Weil 1996). These are implemented on different levels: the neighborhood, the community, the region, and the state.

15.2.2 Community

Researchers generally distinguish between geographical and functional communities. A geographic community is defined by physical space as well as by landmarks and demarcations that socially shape the community. Functional communities are based on patterns of interaction as well as by certain activities like family life, economic activity, governance and a symbolic life that are products of interaction in a place (see Hunter, Chap. 1 and Hillier, Chap. 20).

In contemporary research there is frequent emphasis on “community” in terms of common interests, and not only based on shared geographic territory as a basis of group identification and sense of belonging (Etzioni 1993; Handler 1990; Itzhaky and Bustin 2002). There seems to be a shift from focusing on consolidated geographic communities to greater concentration on groups founded on common interests. Such

interests may be associated with an ongoing professional issue, a social problem, or even a hobby. Nowadays, scholars refer to the geographic dimension more as a space of use than a living space. The geographic community is significant in specific cases of distress within an area that has suffered damage or disadvantaged neighborhoods, where residents organize to address a problem (Itzhaky et al., in press). Thus, the community no longer encompasses all aspects of existence, but rather responds to the needs in people’s lives for which it was created.

15.2.3 The Core Principles of Community Practice

The definition of community practice in both communities incorporates the central values and principles of community practice, including commitment to social change, client participation, and empowerment.

Commitment to social change is based on the values, equality, democracy, belief in individual rights and equal opportunities. In a democratic society, it is necessary to protect the rights of citizens, particularly the weak among them (Itzhaky and Bustin 2002). This requires belief in the possibility of change and commitment to such change, at both the personal and the social level. The importance of upholding social justice applies not only to the weak, but to society as a whole.

A community practitioner cannot accept social offenses and injustice on the level of the individual, a group, or a community. Community practitioner must take action to increase the access of the weaker populations to financial, psychological, and political resources (Maton 2000; Rubin and Rubin 1992).

Citizen participation. The participation of citizens is a central value in community practice (Braye 2000; Itzhaky and Bustin 2002), and is intended to increase the involvement of citizens in planning their life in the community, implementing community programs, planning and carrying out government policies at all levels

(Itzhaky and Bustin 2005; Lukes 2005). According to Arenstein (1969), client participation is a multidimensional value. She described it as a continuum that enables involvement from the basic levels of delivery of knowledge by the institution to the client population to assumption of responsibility for processes and decision making. Other researchers later developed this continuum and included additions (Hart 1997; Itzhaky and York 1991; Levy and Itzhaky 2011, Mizrahi 2005). The basic concept reminds us of the Chinese phrase “give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach him to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”

In many cases, public officials refrain from implementing the principle of citizen participation, for fear of encumbering or slowing down the implementation of programs or due to lack of belief in the ability of their clients (Itzhaky and Bustin 2005). Other reasons for lack of client participation are related to the clients themselves. These include, for instance, fear of stigmatization as a group that receives a service, priorities based on consideration of program costs, distrust in the possibility of generating change, lack of previous experience in participation, uncertainty regarding the issue at hand, and reservations about other participants. There are also reasons related to the nature of the project, such as matters of accessibility or social issues, such as social norms exclusion processes, and others (Levy et al. 2012).

Empowerment is a process by which clients attain personal, organizational, and community power that enables them to take control of their environment and fulfill their aspirations (see Stoeffler, Chap. 16). The clients learn how to exercise their rights and make decisions regarding their future and their environment. Solomon (1976) defined empowerment as a process in which a worker works together with clients to reduce the helplessness they sense. Accordingly, it is customary to consider empowerment as a resource that lies within every person or community, and important for people and communities to recognize the potential for their empowerment (Checkoway 1991; Cnaan 1999; Itzhaky and Gerber 1999).

The most effective way for a person or a group to promote change is by means of empowerment, which is by developing genuine ability to cope constructively with social forces and achieve control over their own fate (Gutierrez 1990; Pinderhughes 1983). Indeed, research has shown a correlation between processes of client participation and empowerment (Itzhaky and Schwartz 2000; Bustin 2002), between empowerment and leadership ability, skills of decision making in the community, and the ability to influence different systems in order to promote processes of change; and between empowerment and the development of personal resources (Itzhaky and York 2002). Citizens involved in development of their community have stressed both the benefit to the community and the good feeling about them derived from this activity. They indicated improvement in their personal resources—self-esteem, sense of coherence, and sense of control—and in their appreciation by members of their family (Itzhaky and Bustin 2005). The achievement of empowerment is expressed in civil participation or the involvement of individuals in organized activity in order to achieve common goals (Itzhaky and Levy 2011).

The professional principles of community practice shape its goals and highlight its mission of empowering the local community and cultivating its ability, in order to improve the quality of life, by both developing the ability of the community to address problems independently and promoting changes in the environment (Itzhaky 1998).

15.2.4 Models of Interventions in Community Practice

Over the last few decades, different models of community intervention have been developed with the aim of improving the quality of life of the residents. These models incorporate strategies and paths for community intervention that are meant to generate processes of change. Each model is based on vast knowledge that has been accumulated over the years in practical

experience and research, providing community practitioners with a framework for their work in the field (Weil 1996). Each model is adapted according to analysis of the community's specific problems and circumstances. In the following, we present the most well-known models of community intervention. In our view, they are all based on the principles of community practice, and can be divided into four main groups: organization, development, planning, and change.

Organization. Organization refers to bringing together members of a community in order to improve their social, physical, financial conditions and promote social justice. Examples might be the establishment of a committee of active residents dedicated to promoting the quality of life in the neighborhood, reducing violence in the streets, fighting vandalism, or removing hazards from public parks and roads. According to Checkoway (1997), the moment of organization is the key point in the process of community change, because this is the means for individuals to work together, thus achieving more than each one could individually. The process of organization empowers and promotes psychological quality of life, thereby enabling individuals to increase their personal ability to cope, self-confidence, and sense of control.

Development. Local economic and social development is intended to improve living conditions and environmental quality, particularly in sensitive and impoverished communities. Examples might include attracting an organic food market or farmers market to the neighborhood in which citizens are involved in changing the face of the community.

Planning. Planning may take place on different levels, from neighborhood services (a traffic light at a particularly dangerous intersection) and inter-organizational planning to combine services and conduct joint fundraising (establishment of a treatment center for preschool children) to planning and implementing social policy at the local, municipal, or national level (development of nation-wide programs for adolescents). Community practitioners usually carry out planning together with representatives of the relevant target community.

Change. A model of social and political change is defined as an effort to develop organizations that have the power to change the direction of policy, influence the public agenda, and provide new opportunities for oppressed and excluded populations (Weil and Gamble 2005). For the purpose of generating social and political change, community practitioners may use processes of social activism (see Post, Chap. 18, who writes on S. Alinsky). This might include, for example, an education campaign focused on changing attitudes in a specific or broader population, an inter-organizational coalition focused on increasing services and/or changing policy, a social justice movement (a social advocacy association, establishment of hostels for people with disabilities according to their needs, and the like), or organization of demonstrations and strikes.

These four concepts are combined in Rothman's (1968, 1996) three models of community practice. Organization and development constitute the foundation for community development, which is the first of the three models. Planning is the basis for the second model described by Rothman, namely, social planning. Change is the basis of Rothman's third model, social action. The following is a discussion of the three models.

15.2.5 Rothman's Three Models of Community Practice

Rothman (1968, 1996) was the first to present an intervention comprised of three basic models for intervention: community development, social planning, and social action. At first, he saw each of these as an independent and separate model; later he concluded that they could not be totally separated and are often combined into a comprehensive system of intervention (Rothman 2007).

Community development model is intended to promote local projects based on strengths within the community and joint action of the entire population. The related community practice

includes recruitment of groups of activists within the community to represent it, take action to promote its interests, and participate in processes of thinking, planning, and execution. The community practitioners serve as architects, helping to build the community so that it will be able to deal more effectively with its needs in the future. This strategy is process-oriented, not task-oriented. In other words, the goal is not to provide solutions for the community, but rather to develop a process in which the community acquires tools and gets organized in order to help itself. By nature, these are processes of building and acquiring tools; therefore, this strategy is used over long periods of time (Cnaan and Rothman 2008; Rothman 1968, 1996; Weil, 1996) and usually with the consensus of all those involved.

Social planning is intended to plan and supply services to the community. It focuses on defined, concrete tasks. This strategy emphasizes the expertise of practitioners in collecting information, processing it, planning, and problem solving, establishing services, recruiting resources, and working with experts, institutions, and organizations (Rothman 1968, 1996, 2007; Weil 1996). It is task-oriented, not process-oriented; accordingly, it operates in the short term. This strategy is suitable both in cases of consensus and in situations of conflict and conflicts of interests among different groups in the community or between them and the service providers. **Social action** is aimed at realizing equality and/or social justice by exerting pressure on people or institutions that are associated with the problem or an obstacle to its resolution. Community practitioners using this strategy demonstrate intensive activism, advocate on behalf of their clients, fight for the oppressed, or go with them to demonstrations (or encourage them to do so and act behind the scenes). Their activity is aimed at bringing about a shift in the power relations and changing the existing resources. This strategy is directed at process or task goals (Rothman 1968, 1996; Weil 1996). This strategy is implemented in situations of disagreement among different groups in the community or between them and other groups of decision makers.

Both of the paths taken by community practitioners—problem solving and creating processes—include the strategies that Rothman (1968, 1996) described. The problem-solving track includes two strategies, social planning and social action, especially when the players expect and want to achieve immediate results in an intervention focused on a specific problem. The track of creating a process includes the strategy of community development, in which the community acquires tools for coping with problems on its own. Community practice addresses many different aspects; therefore community practitioners sometimes need to act on both tracks simultaneously (Rothman 1996).

15.2.5.1 Jeffries's Model

Jeffries (1996) added another strategy to Rothman's three models—social reform. Thus she created a four-strategy model with two intersecting axes (change and empowerment) and four basic strategies for intervention: community development, social planning, social action, and social reform (see Fig. 15.1).

Three of the strategies are similar to those presented by Rothman (1996): Strategy A is parallel to the strategy of community development; Strategy B is parallel to social planning; and Strategy C is parallel to social action. Strategy D—social reform—is partly incorporated in Rothman's model (1968) in the social planning strategy. The reform model in comparison to social planning model emphasizes better processes of breakthrough, as opposed to scalable change in design" This strategy is focused on cooperation between leaders and professionals of social organizations in order to change legislation and policies through campaigns and lobbying.

15.2.5.2 Rothman's Second Model

For many years, Rothman used the three- models as the main tool for guiding the work of community practitioners. In light of the criticism of his article, which argued that three strategies could not reflect the wide variety of different community conditions (e.g. Jeffries 1996; Boehm and Cnaan 2012), and that community practitioners sometimes need to use two strategies

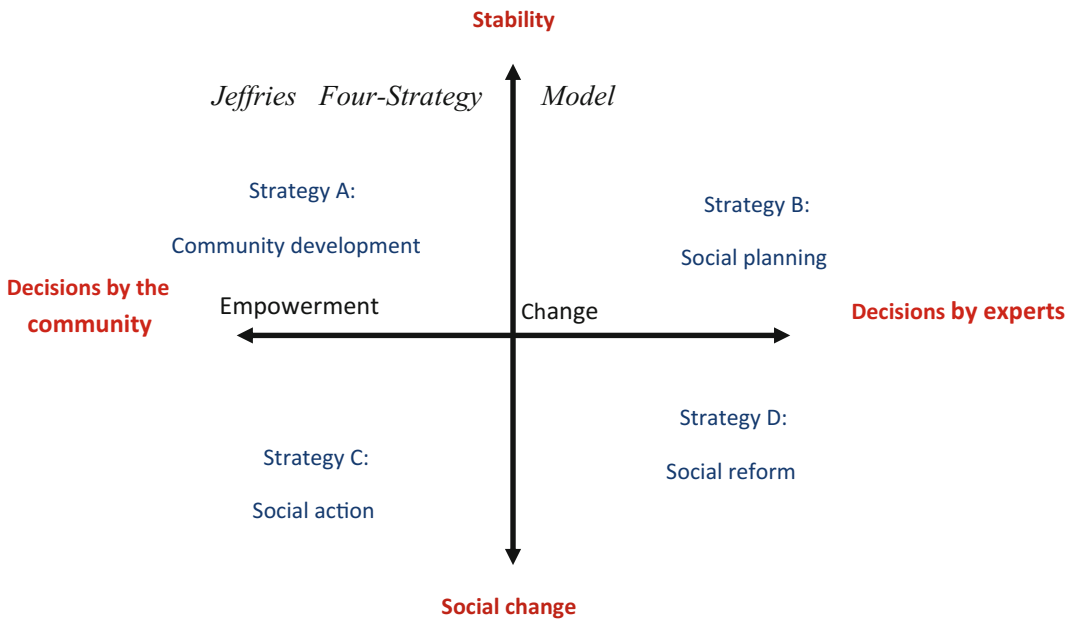


Fig. 15.1 Jeffries’s model

Table 15.1 Matrix of basic strategies for community intervention

	1 Planning/policy	2 Development of community capacity	3 Social advocacy
1 Planning/policy	1.1 Focus on policy planning/practice <i>Rational planning</i>	2.1 Development of capacity for policy planning/practice <i>Planned development of competence</i>	3.1 Social advocacy with policy planning/practice <i>Social reform</i>
2 Community capacity development	1.2 Policy practice/planning with development of capacity <i>Participatory planning</i>	2.2 Focus on development of capacity <i>Capacity development in center</i>	3.2 Social advocacy with development of capacity <i>Solidarity organizing</i>
3 Social advocacy	1.3 Policy practice/planning with advocacy <i>Advocacy in shaping policy</i>	2.3 Development of capacity for social advocacy <i>Activism based on identity</i>	3.3 Focus on social advocacy <i>Social action</i>

concurrently, Rothman revised his three-strategy model (Rothman 2007). The new version of the model based on a continuum and includes nine intervention strategies (see Table 15.1). Three of these strategies represent focused interventions (the diagonal of three cells: 1.1., 2.2., 3.3), and the other six represent integrated interventions.

In the first focused strategy, Rothman combined social planning strategy with policy practice. This strategy focuses on problem solving; it includes the planning steps of problem definition, goal setting, implementation, and evaluation. The related **policy practice** involves different areas and levels of policy (local as well as national).

The **planning** is focused on structuring programs and development service systems.

The second model is development of community capacity or community development. In his definition of this strategy, Rothman associated it with change resulting from the empowerment of people and communities in problematic situations that undertake logical action in order to achieve goals. The empowerment process includes development of community capacity, including the assimilation of knowledge and development of skills of the residents. Community cohesion refers to social solidarity and community competence; these describe an organized community that is capable of taking action to achieve its goals.

The third model, advocacy, is appropriate for situations of confrontation and disagreement among groups. It is based on the exertion of pressure on those who resist change, in order to improve the situation of those suffering poverty and lack of rights to promote equality and social justice.

Table 15.2 shows the combination of the strategies. It describes the most suitable approach for each of the strategies and we added examples of activities corresponding to them. Similar to the empowerment axis presented by Jeffries (1996), Rothman used a combination of strategies to describe the degree of client participation on a continuum from “some resident participation in decision making” to “decisions taken by experts.” For example, cell 1.2 represents a strategy of participatory planning, which combines planning and capacity development by means of citizen participation; cell 1.1 represents a strategy of rational planning focused on problem solving, without referring to client or citizen participation; and cell 1.3 represents a strategy of advocacy within a policy practice that does not involve residents.

All the cells associated with development of community capacity include client participation, as well as training to develop local leadership and the capacity for community action. The cells related to social advocacy also represent a continuum from client participation to direction by the community practitioner or other experts. The social reform strategy mainly uses data for

the purpose of intervention and does not involve or train clients to achieve the goals. In the other two strategies the residents are involved as pressure groups.

In addition, the strategies vary in emphasis. Most community practice models combine several related strategies: when they are separated, the model they comprise is impaired.

It is important to note that community intervention must be based on analysis of the problem at hand. Some communities combine different models, because the analysis indicates a need for more than one. Take, for example, a community at the stage of development in which the appropriate orientation is process-centered and not problem-solving. If an urgent need for problem solving arises in this community, an additional social planning or social action strategy will be integrated into the community development intervention. In this specific case, however, the community leadership may not yet be developed and the residents are likely to be less involved and more suspicious of intervention; therefore, the intervention will rely more on professionals than usual when applying the strategy. If, on the other hand, the community is further along in the process of community development, more residents will be involved in implementing the problem-solving strategy. In this respect, we view the models that Rothman and others presented on a continuum, from community development to social activism.

With this in mind, Boehm and Cnaan (2012) proposed a flexible model. To implement a process of change, each community and movement would build its own unique and different model, matching its particular needs and conditions. Such a model provides increased flexibility in creating different combinations for intervention; thus the end-models may vary according to the conditions required in each community. The process itself is flexible, because in developing the model, the choices associated with one issue are not predetermined. Instead, the source and rationale for each choice is associated with the community’s specific situation. In addition, in the course of the intervention, discrete changes to the model can be customized to the specific

Table 15.2 Methods of intervention

	Number	Strategy	Approach	Examples of implementation
Planning and policy				
Focus on planning policy practice	1.1	<i>Rational planning</i>	Preference for using data as a means for intervention	Comprehensive municipal planning, such as planning of central renewal neighborhood
Policy planning/practice with a significant component of capacity development	1.2	<i>Participatory planning</i>	Involvement of citizens and clients in designing and implementing interventions	Neighborhood committees, development of community leadership
Policy planning/practice with a significant component of advocacy	1.3	<i>Advocacy as part of policy practice</i>	Development and promotion of intervention by an internal agent of change	Advocacy in local or national government departments, such as health, housing, or social services
Development of community capacity				
Focus on developing capacity	2.2	<i>Development of capacity – in center</i>	Development of problem-solving skills based on self-help	Development of local leadership, building committees, neighborhood committees, parent committees, single parent committees
Capacity development with a significant component of policy planning/practice	2.1	<i>Planned development of capacity</i>	Development of skills using predeveloped programs.	Economic development as part of local government programs
Capacity development with social advocacy	2.3	<i>Activism based on identity</i>	Development of skills using community/public pressure	Organization based on ethnic origin, self-help groups
Social advocacy				
Focus on social advocacy	3.3	<i>Social action</i>	Use of aggressive acts of pressure	Environmentalist action, center for prevention of violence, activities related to women's rights
Social advocacy with policy planning/shaping				
	3.1	<i>Social reform</i>	Use of data as a tool for change	The Council for the Child
Social advocacy with capacity development	3.2	<i>Organization of mutual responsibility</i>	Use of mutual responsibility as a springboard for change	Headquarters of the struggle for people with disabilities

issues that require change, without necessitating comprehensive change that would affect other stable issues. Thus, the model's overall integrity is not undermined, whatever the conditions in the community at the various phases of its development (Boehm and Cnaan 2012).

The different methods of intervention described in Table 15.2 call for different functions of the community practitioner. These functions are diverse, complex, and vary by strategy. The community practitioner may serve as a supervisor, an organizer, a facilitator, an educator, a

coach, an advocate, an author or communicator, a negotiator, a promotor, a planner, a director, a researcher, a proposal writer, a mediator, an arbitrator, or a spokesperson. The question of which role fits a given strategy is not straightforward. According to different researchers (Bustin, 2002), the roles of the community practitioner associated with community development are: supervision, organization, education, promotion, coaching representation to the media, functions related to community building, leadership development, reinforcement, development of residents, and empowerment. The other roles cited above are associated with strategies of problem solving, planning, social activism, negotiations, advocacy, and mediation among groups. Just as the intervention strategies are often combined, so too are the functions they involve. Community practitioners often find themselves fulfilling many different functions and employing a wide range of skills. The fuller and more varied the “toolbox” they acquire during their studies and in the course of their work, the more effective their work will be.

Thus the choice of an appropriate model depends upon a map of the needs of the community, the conditions and diagnosis, and the different challenges facing the community practitioner in modern society. Each and every professional will decide, upon intervening in the community, what will be the intervention goals and the appropriate method of intervention.

In the next section, we will present the challenges facing community practice in the years to come. We will analyze one of those challenges according to our suggestion to use a variety of models of interventions in the community presented earlier. Other challenges will be presented along with the tasks of practitioners in the community.

15.3 Challenges Facing Community Practice in the New Era

As mentioned before, for many years community practitioners were primarily aiming to help people within local communities to identify social

needs and to consider the most effective ways of meeting those needs in so far as their available resources permit. They worked with the poor, the weak, the new immigrants to bridge gaps and promote marginalized populations.

Following are forthcoming challenges in light of changes and trends expected in the new era.

Change of composition and population of local communities is due to massive immigration and refugees coming from countries in deteriorating security and economic situations. This change of population creates a threat to the local population (Corcoran 2002). Local communities, especially deprived ones, face the challenge to share public services with new community members. They see the neighborhood changes while they can do nothing about it. Every once in a while, new people are coming and going, changing the neighborhood while they fall behind. They are powerless to help themselves, too busy dealing with the hardships of their lives, making a living for the family, taking care of the kids, surviving, fighting drug, violence, etc. (Grinberg and Grinberg 1985).

The challenge of the community practitioner is to try to build a community out of those segments that broadly differ in culture, background, history, attitudes, basic values, habits and way of life, but share the same geographic space. A review of the different intervention approaches and models (Naparstek and Dooley 1997; Weil 1996) shows that the combination of some models is required in working toward such an end. The community development intervention model along with social action, advocacy and above all—letting the people of the neighborhood taking the lead—seems appropriate for such neighborhoods (Boehm and Cnaan 2012). As Table 15.2 (Rothman 2007) suggests working with a combination of models: the development of local leadership which will enable the local residents to work in coordination and in real and full partnership with the local authorities, including services and organizations responsible for the various spheres of daily life. The method requires working throughout the organizational system and simultaneously working in three circles: service providers, residence and decision makers (Maton 2000).

15.3.1 The First Circle: Service Providers

All services working in deprived neighborhoods concentrate on finding solutions to people's needs, as the providers themselves define them, with little negotiations on a personal or community level among service providers and residents. As a consequence there is no real exchange between the parties. A profound change is required in the way services operate in the neighborhood.

First and foremost there is a need to adopt the idea that there should be a holistic approach to the community. As Schorr (1998) mentioned, when working in a deprived community, intervention need to address a wide spectrum of problems at the same time, otherwise there will never be a significant change in the lives of the people. Dealing with one problem at a time cannot create the needed change. In order to be able to challenge a variety of problems at the same time, service providers need to collaborate and work together on behalf of the community. Because collaborating is essential, it should be the starting point of any intervention in such a neighborhood. Service-providers have to learn to collaborate, to trust each other, to understand the task as far beyond the reach of a single service to accomplish, work and move together in the same direction as a team.

Second is the emphasis on collaborating with the community. A shift in the perception of the residents has to be made. Service providers must see, deal and work with the people as valued partners not as clients, because they are partners in a long journey to better the wellbeing of the community) Hampton 1999). In order to cope with the hardship of the journey they have to join hands, to respect each other, to trust one another. Sometimes it requires a significant change in their perspectives—the way they see each other, the way they see the community, the way they see the world—but it is a significant change that must be done.

Third, service providers have to become culturally sensitive, acquire cultural skills, and strengthen intercultural know-how in order to

become effective and trustworthy with immigrants from faraway origins (Berry 2001; Vandenbroeck 1999).

Fourth, service providers need to become empowered if they have to empower. They should acquire personal, professional and political skills so that they can be part of the community development if they are expected to understand the capabilities of the residents, to encourage their participation and involvement, and to empower them (Dodd and Gutierrez 1990; Pinderhughes 1983).

15.3.2 The Second Circle: The Residents

Broad involvement on the part of the residents has to be developed while providing a wide range of responses to the diverse needs. A massive amount of people has to be recruited and strengthened in order to take an active and leading part of the process. This means working with many groups of residents, providing many programs and activities with the purpose of personal and political empowerment, and providing them with skills and tools to actively sit around the decision-making table and to contribute to the process. Too often citizens are only a decoration to the process but have no voice or saying on the different committees. A community practitioner needs to be there to create a different paradigm: residents that are capable and empowered. The professional literature on community and the experience accrued by the authors of this paper show that success in building an autonomous community is achieved only when groups of neighborhood residents are trained and acquire a high level of leadership capability (Hendricks and Rudich 2000; Hirota et al. 1996; Naparstek and Dooley 1997; Weil 1996).

Residents have to take an active part in building the overall program of the neighborhood. They are not a marginal player on the field. They should become and be recognized for what they really are—the main stakeholders in the community and in the partnership to be built by all the partners. If we share this view there are

two directions to take: one, to communicate our view to all service providers, the other, perhaps more challenging, to communicate it to the people. It is a real change in the reality they face and it is not a simple task for people who live in a deprived neighborhood, people who are passive recipients of services, and people who are dependent on others to fulfill their needs. However, inner trust has to be built as trust in the system is a step forward in the long journey.

Building community or community development in a multicultural neighborhood means finding ways in which people of different cultures and values are brought together. This process includes finding ways to overcome barriers, envisioning what kind of life they want to live, and working on a comprehensive program to meet their challenges and needs.

Building community in a marginal neighborhood means finding the right people in and around the neighborhood, the right combination of residents, service providers and decision makers, to develop them as leaders and thus to create a team which will work together to answer the community needs.

Residents need to take part in building and implementing programs. Programs relating to education, youth, elderly etc. will not succeed without the participation of the residents in decision-making forums. In order for the residents to be partners, and both knowledgeable and skilled in planning and decision-making, they must receive training. This is especially important in respect to focused professional work, such as work with detached youth or in fields clearly requiring professional skills.

It is an arduous, long and complex process, but offers the only chance to create a real change in complex and deteriorating neighborhoods.

15.3.3 The Third Circle: Policy-Makers

In order to deal with deprived neighborhoods there is always a need to pinpoint treatment that combines physical improvements with the educational and social spheres. Activating such a process requires intervention at the highest level since

therein rests the authority to engage the relevant ministerial offices (Austin 2005; Kirk and Shutte 2004; Goldsworthy 2002). The challenge of professional intervention in the community has two folds: one facing decision-makers in the national level—and the other facing decision-makers at a local level. Professionals need to identify opportunities to influence decision-making and to spot lights on niches where they can go and take action. The main challenge is to empower community practitioners to take an active role and participate in the local political arena. They need to acquire the right attitudes, tools and competencies to work with the local politicians (Angelique et al. 2002). In order to make a difference on a national level they will need to recruit outside help.

A shift from a collective based society to an Individualism based society. New immigrants moving to western societies often change their cultures, together with the mainstream society they live in. There is a shift from a collective based society to an individualism based society all over the globe that could influence a big part of the immigrants. Individualistic cultures emphasize personal action and personal responsibility. The members see themselves as autonomous individuals; individual needs and desires are superior of those of the group. Collectivist cultures emphasize interpersonal dependencies; group superiority and social nets are densely woven. There is a real difference between the interior and exterior, and the individual needs are sacrificed to ensure the needs of the group (Ford et al. 2005). On the other hand, the individual would expect that the group will protect him and take care of all his needs (Savicki 2002).

In an Individualism based society, individuals are centered in self-realization rather than mutual help: care for the weak and issues related to society and community at large. This characterizes all strata of society and is strongly present in traditional groups that are culturally collective. An Individualism based society represents an enormous challenge to community practitioners because their job is somehow “swimming against the stream.” They must empower the individual and encourage his self-realization, while the

professional challenge is to create local safety nets and mutual responsibility among residents, and strengthen the sense of community. Rising up in a collective based culture and moving to live in an individual based one is a profound change to the individual and the family. People are losing their safety nets, the anchors of lives, and need to find another source to hold to.

The challenge for the professional intervention will be to work together with other service providers and micro social workers to rebuild safety nets for those individuals and families that lost track in modern life and need help in order to gain control over their lives.

The impact of globalization on the community.

Technological and electronic media development enable people from all over the world to become part of the global village. During the summer of 2011, hundreds of thousands of people all around the world were protesting against social inequalities with the shared idea that people can affect policies (Bennett and Segerberg 2011), an idea that still exists. On the other hand, globalization could widen gaps between groups within the local community: between those who are part of the global community by work, trade relations and friendships and other who are not. The challenge is to bridge this gap, by utilizing ties established between communities' like students' groups and exchange programs, singing and dance bands, etc.

Young people experience reduction in trust in government

and as a result less solidarity and involvement in the national political systems. This manifests in declining voting rates in national elections. It might be easier to encourage the inclination for involvement in the community level through a process of building community. This is a process that is not quick, easy, or certain, a process that requires time. The relationships that are established and nurtured during the process are as important as the completion of tasks or the implementation of programs. It is on these relationships that trust in the professionals is formed. Trust is the essence of the relationships that lead individuals to take part in the game: to take part in discovering their strengths

and developing skills to meet their needs (Gohnson and Benitez 2003).

Community building is based upon community potential and social capital (Breton 2001; Rubin and Rubin 2008). The literature on the development of social capital and collective efficacy suggests that success will depend on creative linking of local strategies, engaging residents of the neighborhood and local institutions from the bottom up in partnership with broader organizations and systemic policies that foster collaboration from the top down (Morenoff et al. 2001). The development of this linkage is a primary objective of the collaborative partnerships promoted by the current program to develop the social capital and sense of collective efficacy in the community (Bolda et al. 2005).

Shifting from social oriented policies to privatization orientation of decision making.

The privatizations of social, health, and education services, and a rash of countless charities, NGO's and 3rd sector organizations, are the testimony of the inability of the state to provide the necessary services to the weak segments of society. We witness the shift or transfer of services from the state to local government and civil society organizations and the 3rd sector, and also to a large extent the responsibility of the individual. In the absence of a formal community system that takes responsibility for meeting and satisfying the needs of the weak population, the alienation between those segments and mainstream society is increasing. The longer and deeper the gap, the more the needy will refuse and avoid asking for help and assistance due to distrust and alienation.

The challenge to the practitioner is to try to minimize damages and to produce cooperation and coalition of institutions, organizations and residents to make an impact on the local decision-making process and produce appropriate services in the community.

Insecurity and vulnerability. The community becomes more and more exposed to terrorist attacks: wars, local crime watch, as well as nature

disasters like earthquakes and floods. This fragile security situation is physically, mentally and economically taxing and threatens governments West to East. It raises the quest for resolution and puts on the global agenda the issue of community resilience (Itzhaky and York 2005). Community resilience reflects the community's capacity to overcome changes and crises. The development and enhancement of community resilience during the pre-emergency period can serve as a core capability of communities in emergency situations (Cohen et al. 2016).

The role of the professional intervention starts long before the event occurs. According to the research (above), professionals have to prepare scenarios, plan their consequences, map different community characteristics, identify hazards that need to be treated to prevent terrorist incidents, identify populations at risk, identify community resources including services that can help if necessary, and coordinate cooperation among the different services and community professionals.

The challenge of community practitioners is to combine micro and macro practice, to plan mixed interventions both in short term and long term, and to set up clear work patterns to determine policies and clear division of labor between service providers. They should develop leadership among qualified residents and provide them with the tools and skills to act on behalf of the community. They should encourage the community to rebuild itself, to strengthen and maintain itself, to empower its human and social capital and sense of belonging to the community, and to broaden and deepen relationships with others. Each of these steps increases confidence in the social system in which one lives, and helps individuals and communities to deal with crises and disasters (Paton and Johnston 2001).

Sometimes during a natural disaster, groups of individuals are getting together in order to survive. They are working to protect themselves, to get food, to get shelter, to help each other, and to contact the outside world for immediate help. Upon completing the task and overcoming the crisis they are moving forward, like after the

earthquake in Nepal (2015) where the first writer of this chapter was helping young people to overcome the trauma and organize themselves. Unlike those crises that create a "temporary community," the basic work of the professional intervention is for the long run, toward the end of encouraging the resilience of the community (Itzhaky & Kissil, in press).

In summary of this chapter, following the in-depth discussion of the various models of community interventions, and the role of the worker in coping with the forthcoming challenges, we now present the regular, or routine expectations from professional community practitioners, or as we rephrase it: "Business as usual".

15.4 Business as Usual

The challenges mentioned above emerge as a result of events happening through the last 20 or 30 years. However, the regular tasks of community practice are much more challenging and wider in scope. These challenges, related to community development and community building, shape the role and direction of the intervention in the community. In light of this, what are the routine expectations from professionals intervening in a community with the vision of improving the neighborhood and the lives of its members?

There are three main expectations from professional intervening. The first expectation relates to intervening for strengthening community residents and the second to nurturing and supporting local organizations. The third expectation includes the values guiding the community's institutional intervention and evaluation. Here is the description of the three:

15.4.1 Strengthening Community Residents

Strengthening the sense of community: create a psychological and social accessibility to the

concept of community among its members, and to emphasize the importance of community life and mutual confidence. One way to help strengthen the sense of community is by developing activities that produce social bonds or “glue” that symbolize relationships and ties between individuals and groups (Saleebey 1996). *Citizen participation*: to understand, internalize, and implement the principles of citizen participation. You don’t dictate, nor make the decisions for the community, but make sure the community members define independently their needs, their goals and priorities and are capable to work toward achieving their goals. The principle is to create active involvement of community groups as a prerequisite for building community. The groups will vary depending on the community, but identifying local organizations and working with them will be the basis for expanding the effective community based services (Villagram 2001).

Confidence in the citizens’ ability to develop independent community: To recognize the powers and skills of the citizens and examine with them the priorities, goals and ways of achieving them. The need for partnership is significant to find ways in which each and every person in the community can be accountable practical, and creative and empowered.

Hope and dream: to join the hopes and dreams of community members, most of whom are working hard and dealing with difficulties to fulfill simple dreams such as to be able to support their families. They want the kids to finish high school, they want to go to work and they want to hold on to a decent job, and to buy an apartment. They need to connect between internal and external resources in order to realize those dreams, to develop a work plan to promote achieving the dreams, and to identify the obstacles and the ways to overcome them.

Fostering commitment and responsibility in the community and its residents: see community members as people who have responsibility for the community, without reducing the responsibility of leaders and professionals. Seeing the citizens as responsible and committed to

community daily life and service sends a message of respect and independence to the community and the local organizations, not a message of dependency.

15.4.2 Sharing, Caring, and Support for Local Organizations

Working together with local organizations promoting education and culture: Local community organizations, such as synagogues, community centers, youth organizations, schools, local clinics and local businesses (cafes, gyms) who have legitimacy in the community. Combine cultural organizations, like a library, a museum, or a heritage preservation, because it is important to show that culture has influence. Through participation in cultural activities social ties are evolving and tightening, quality of life improving and common values are being built (de la McCook and Jones 2002).

Cultivating and supporting local organizations engaged in Community aid: The idea is to cultivate local organizations engaged in self-help, advocacy, counseling, and community development. Local organizations serve as an employment resource for community residents; enable community members to take part in the decision-making process; and preserve traditional values, social ties and links. These organizations offer to the customers support and understanding, and therefore it is important to cooperate, to strengthen and see them as partners rather than competitors. It is important to maintain linkage between the broader society and the local organizations to create a continuum of service and sense of security, and to prevent isolation, alienation and detachment of the organization and the community it serves. In addition, it is recommended to support the organizations that rise out of adversity, alienation and shortage of services in the community. These organizations need the partnership of community members in changing the status quo of poverty and social exclusion. Participation in these organizations has an impact

on the viewpoint of the citizens; it changes from passivity and fatalism to productivity and participatory. Also the personal identity of the participants transforms: the individual is no longer part of a marginal disconnected group, but becomes a member with more capacity and self confidence in the community.

Building community capabilities: Strengthen community capacity to solve problems through development of groups and organizations, leadership development, creating social networks, both formal and informal, that initiate opportunities for involvement in community life (Rothman 2007). In programs and projects include economic development and development of human capital in the Community (Weah et al. 2000) to help people improve their financial situation, to join the centers for entrepreneurship, to promote loans to small businesses and to acquire administrative and economic capabilities.

15.4.3 Intervention and Assessment

Diagnosis and evaluation through customer perception: Learn the background and causes of the problem from the perspective of the customer and avoid explaining the phenomenon from professional or academic eyes only. Examples can be viewed in the traditional learning cultures in Israel. For example, the system defines a group of parents who are not involved in a school as people who have no interest in their children's education, unaware of the possibility that the lack of parental involvement is because they themselves never went to school in their country of origin, don't know how to read and write, or the concept of parental involvement is unfamiliar to them. These parents are afraid of involvement, fearing that it might negatively impact their children.. The challenge here is to develop a cultural sensitivity, understanding the community sensitivity and ability to recognize the clients, and to develop appropriate interventions that encourage parental involvement (Cox and Ephross 1998).

Community norms and values: Learn values important to the individual and group and connect with them since they can be either a lever or an obstacle to the process of change. Information about the values that influence the life of the individual and their transformation objectives can provide a framework in which relationships can be built. For example, you may face resistance while working on domestic violence in certain ethnic groups, but you can work on the roles and needs of women as a starting point for intervention in family or group level (Cox and Ephross 1998). It is important to understand the way in which community norms, values, and behavior patterns stem from the tradition of the group and the individual. Whenever there are inappropriate behavior patterns the professional should reflect this to the clients and help them change them slowly, by presenting those with the right pattern to help them strengthen their resources and improve their adaptation to mainstream society. It is important to examine the patterns of community behavior for taking care of the elderly, for instance, and it is important that no elderly person will be left out without help. To work effectively with all community needs it is important to contact and partner with as many as possible community leaders, community institutions, community media, assisted by public figures all who can provide legitimacy to the community effort.

Systemic approaches: Systemic work sees the need to make transformation not only among residents but also among service providers and policy makers and the professional needs to see them as the ones who rotate the wheel of the manufacturing facilities. He must strive to generate strategic partnerships between the parts of the social systems in order to improve the quality of life for its clients. The System Theory, which is a basic element in community building, shows that clients of social services face complex problems, and accordingly responses to these problems reflect this complexity. Accordingly, it has many levels: the disempowerment of the client, the lack of service because of social policy

issues, economic systems and conditions of oppression and discrimination that contribute to development problems, etc. (Mullender 1999). *Community intervention evaluation*: Examine the community outcomes and effectiveness. Namely, to take responsibility for the long-term consequences of the intervention (Weah et al. 2000).

15.5 Summary

In the chapter we presented community practice through its core principals, main goals, founding values, basic models of operation and the main intervention strategies employed by practitioners and the roles they employ. Later, we presented challenges for community interventions: challenges that require interventions tailored to changing community needs, due to a global variable (rapid and dynamic changes in global aspects), as well as local, or inner challenges like promoting citizen's empowerment, building community and the like. In each and every strategy, in each and every model of intervention, from the very routine ones ("business as usual") to the very complicated roles, we learn that the role of the practitioner is multidimensional.

Dealing with the goals, the strategies, the expectations, and the challenges, the question of what is expected of the professional's intervention in the community has no single answer. He or she must work with all parts of the community and its organizational set. In addition, conflicts of interest between residents themselves or between formal and informal organizations, populations and cultures, security, social and economic situation all over, all these and more indicate that the role of professional intervention in the community is central, varied, complex and fascinating.

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Abstract

Inequality exists in the ownership of valued resources and decision making within communities. This imbalance can lead to alienation. Community empowerment is a process that is concentrated in the local community and is grounded in critical reflection and democratic participation of relatively marginalized members enabling them to play an active role in decisions concerning conditions and resources. Organizations are an essential component of community empowerment, especially concerning goal achievement. This chapter will discuss the conditions that precipitate a need for community empowerment, theoretical perspectives, and models of empowerment in both communities and local organizations.

Powerlessness in disenfranchised communities is “a consequence of the abuse of power by the dominant group... and the withdrawal of power in the form of resources” (Lee 2001, p. 178).

Inequality exists in the ownership of valued resources and decision making within communities. This imbalance can lead to alienation. Lichter et al. (2012) have demonstrated in that since 2000 there has been increased spatial and social isolation of the poor in the United States leading to higher levels of class and racial segregation. In fact, when analyzing the top 100 metropolitan areas by concentration of poverty and opportunity structure, Osypuk et al. (2009) discovered that the poorest White neighborhood had more opportunity than the any of the poor Black neighborhoods studied. Social institutions and communities are inclined to favor powerful groups that channel resources to co-members (Young 2001). The power over the marginalized communities by dominant groups creates the circumstance of powerlessness. To put it another way, Royce (2009) states, “Poor people lack money, but they also lack political power, and one reason they lack money is precisely because they lack political power” (p. 124). Money helps to purchase political access and in turn shapes the policy agenda, which undermines political equality and in turn “It empowers the rich way beyond their numbers, and it precludes the neediest citizens from gaining a fair hearing in the political process” (Royce 2009, p. 137).

One definition of empowerment is the process and outcome of “helping individuals, groups, and communities increase their personal, interpersonal, socioeconomic and political strength and

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develop influence toward improving their circumstances” (Barker 2003, p. 101). Theoretical and practical views of empowerment are informed by a variety of disciplines, most notably, adult education, community psychology, and social work. This has led to the term being commonly misused and misunderstood (Jacobs 1992; Rothman 2001). Often the meaning depends upon the setting and level of practice. At the individual level, empowerment refers to personal feelings and thoughts of increased power or control, self-efficacy, and competence (Gutierrez 2001; Kasmel 2011). Personal empowerment often becomes a link to the greater community and social change. To generate change in organizations and communities, empowered people join together to solve the social problems affecting them (Kasmel 2011). Kasmel (2011) defines organizational empowerment as “the potential ability of an organization to develop an empowering and democratic partnership with a community, through which the community’s capacity to identify and address its priority [social] concerns is identified” (p. 4). Maton (2008) defines community empowerment as “a group-based, participatory, developmental process through which marginalized or oppressed individuals and groups gain greater control over their lives and environment, acquire valued resources and basic rights, and achieve important life goals and reduced societal marginalization” (p. 5). Conceptualizing empowerment along a continuum is helpful. Jackson et al. (1989) and Labonte (1989) developed continuum models that showed empowerment as part of five developmental stages that consist of personal action, mutual support groups, community organizations, partnerships of those organizations, and social and political action (see Fig. 16.1). While most of the literature has empowerment beginning with the individual, it is important to note with stages or continuums the starting point can be at any level. For example, community organizations promote personal action and empowerment of individuals within a community.

The main focus of this chapter is community empowerment. It begins by providing a few examples of major community issues in the

United States. Then the concepts of power and empowerment at the personal, relational, and collective levels are reviewed. Building upon these foundational concepts, community empowerment at the organizational, coalition and social movement stages are analyzed. Additionally, models of community empowerment are highlighted as frameworks regarding the realization of empowerment. This subject matter is of great importance towards the fulfillment of the democratic promise of a free society.

16.1 Conditions that Precipitate a Need for Community Empowerment

Communities today face social and economic problems that are demoralizing and devastating. While there are any numbers of issues and communities (See Chap. 1) that could be given as an example, this section will build upon some of the consequences of the geographic and social isolation discussed previously, which includes mass incarceration, racialized political discourse, and wealth inequality.

16.1.1 Mass Incarceration

Goldsmith and Blakely (2010) state that the United States, “incarcerates the world’s largest portion of any national population” (p. 5). The racial group that is most disproportionately represented in the prison system is African-Americans (Alexander 2010; Goldsmith and Blakely 2010; Dill and Zambrana 2009). This has a direct effect on the real and potential earnings of African-Americans (Royce 2009).

Alexander (2010) argues that after the abolition of Jim Crow laws and the enactment of Civil Rights legislation, White racism and control of African-Americans looked for a place to set up shop. The criminal justice and prison systems have become “a stunningly comprehensive and

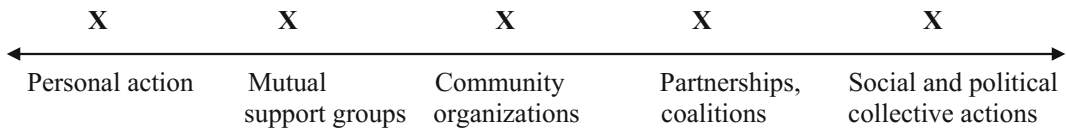


Fig. 16.1 Stages of community empowerment (Jackson et al. 1989; Labonte 1989)

well-disguised system of racialized social control” (Alexander 2010, p. 4). Those with criminal records and especially ones who have been incarcerated are “often denied the right to vote, excluded from juries, and relegated to a racially segregated and subordinated existence,” which includes being “legally denied the ability to obtain employment, housing and public benefits” (Alexander 2010, p. 4). The “War on Drugs” has led to drug-related convictions being the number one avenue into the prison industrial complex (Alexander 2010). Unfortunately, the complexities of the inmates are decidedly darker hues. Alexander (2010, p. 96) reports,

In seven states, African Americans constitute 80 to 90 percent of all drug offenders sent to prison. In at least fifteen states, Blacks are admitted to prison on drug charges at a rate from twenty to fifty-seven times greater than that of White men. In fact, nationwide, the rate of incarceration of African American drug offenders dwarfs the rate of Whites.

The criminal justice system is unequal in regard to the application of the law, and it magnifies the oppressive conditions experienced by minorities, especially African Americans in the inner city.

16.1.2 Racial Political Discourse

Just as crime has been connected to race, Dill and Zambrana (2009) show that, “Welfare reform has consistently been tied to racial politics and has significantly impacted the life chances of racial/ethnic minorities across the country” (p. 55). Fully 80–90% of Whites do not believe that they hold racist beliefs or act in racist ways (Pease 2010). Yet large contingencies of White voters support policies that have a

disproportionately negative effect on minorities, as recently evidenced in the election of Donald J. Trump to the office of President of the United States of America (O’Leary 2016). Poverty and criminality are portrayed as inhabiting the Black community only. This is particularly interesting as the majority of welfare recipients are White. Noll (2008) shows that in an atmosphere of political polarization and conservatism, very few Blacks vote republican, and Whites that are evangelical Christian primarily vote republican. The result is further oppression and segregation along racial lines and the continued devolution of the welfare state.

16.1.3 Current Wealth Considerations

In his book *Being Black, Living in the Red* (2009), Conley makes the claim that income is fluid and does not move a person ahead. Rather, accumulating wealth is the key to social mobility, something most Blacks do not have. According to Ali et al. (2011), “Blacks hold 10 cents... of net wealth for every dollar of net wealth Whites hold,” and “Blacks are 2.7 times as likely as Whites to have zero or negative net worth” (p. 15). This wealth gap has direct effects on where people live and the opportunity structures available to them based on geographic location. Osypuk et al. (2009), studied the 100 largest metropolitan areas in the United States and found that, “In fully one third of metro areas, over half the Black populations live in neighborhoods with poverty rates exceeding recognized thresholds for adverse social outcomes... only one metropolitan area displayed a White median of neighborhood poverty above this threshold”

(p. 57). The historic and current realities speak of the power of cumulative advantage and cumulative disadvantage.

Cultural factors and structural factors do not function in isolation from one another. There is a dynamic relationship that exists between them that helps to explain the current state of racial inequality in the United States. The denial or minimization of either can make for an appealing fictional account to spur polarizing ideology. But if one seeks solution, both have to be at the table. Wilson (2009) does a great job of providing a balanced argument while advocating that the existing evidence strongly suggests that structural factors play a larger role in shaping life outcomes. This is hopeful as structures can change. Policies can be enacted, views can be altered, and with information and passion, steps can be taken to roll back the shameful injustice that has occupied the inner city for so long. These are conditions that require a more thorough understanding of power and necessitate community empowerment.

16.2 Theoretical Perspectives and Concepts

16.2.1 Power

Empowerment theory operates under the assumption that separate groups in society possess unequal levels of power and control (Gutierrez 2001). Working out of an empowerment framework entails addressing stigmatization, marginalization, and disenfranchisement of communities and thus requires an understanding of power and powerlessness (Cohen and Hyde 2014; Gutierrez and Lewis 1999; Lauffer 2011). Weber (1968) defined power as “the capacity of an individual to realize his will, even against the opposition of others” (p. 1,111). This classic definition presupposes equality of opportunity, which in reality, does not exist, and thus provides only partial insight into power. The realization of will is the key take away from Weber. Parsons (1960) moved beyond the individual level and

showed that power resides in systems and their ability “to get things done in the interest of collective goals” (p. 181). Again, the definition has faults but recognizes that larger systems working in concert realize goals. A structural view of power is more critical by suggesting that privileged groups have access to more resources, which enables them to hold power over other groups. Tew (2006, p. 36) expands this concept in writing,

Such structural understandings see power, not as an entity to be possessed (and perhaps redistributed), but as an antagonistic social relation of oppression, in which dominant groups are able to derive systematic benefit from their subordination of others through a variety of means, including economic exploitation, cultural imperialism and actual or threatened violence.

An interesting dynamic results from this oppressive use of power. Those wielding and benefiting from the power often become oblivious to the benefits they are accruing (ex. White privilege), and those marginalized often internalize the narrative that their individual and community problems are their fault.

To better understand how power is expended, Rowlands’ (1997) categorization of power emphasizes the relational differences between power over (ability to influence and coerce) and power to (organize and change existing structures), power with (power from collective action) and power within (power from individual consciousness). “Power over” is the traditional view of power where there is a dominant person or group that does what it needs to do to keep control and authority over another person or group. It is seen as an all-or-nothing perspective based in conflict. “Power to,” “power with,” and “power within” are more focused on processes and not domination. In developmental order, “power within” and “power to” lead to “power with,” and are the most compatible with a community empowerment framework. In the matrix of power relations (Table 16.1), Tew (2006) dichotomizes power into two categories, “power over (traditional)” and “power together (process based)” and labels them according to the productive and limiting qualities they possess. This

Table 16.1 Matrix of power relations

	Power over	Power together
Productive modes of power	<i>Protective power</i> Deploying power in order to safeguard vulnerable people and their possibilities for advancement	<i>Co-operative power</i> Collective action, sharing, mutual support and challenge—through valuing commonality <i>and</i> difference
Limiting modes of power	<i>Oppressive power</i> Exploiting differences to enhance own position and resources at the expense of others	<i>Collusive power</i> Banding together to exclude or suppress ‘otherness,’ whether internal or external

Tew (2006, p. 39)

makes the concept of power much more operational in understanding the types of power and how they can be used in empowering processes. More on empowering processes can be found in Chap. 19.

16.2.2 Empowerment

The concept of empowerment, like power, has often been misconstrued, taking on the form of a buzzword with everyone claiming that they are working in concert with a marginalized person or community system to achieve some goal. Part of the confusion has to do with the widespread use of the concept paired with limited understanding. While there is no “one angle” on empowerment, the following definitions seek to frame the larger conversation and provide direction. Here are three of the most cited definitions from the literature: Empowerment refers to

- (1) a process whereby persons who belong to a stigmatized social category throughout their lives can be assisted to develop and increase skills in the exercise of interpersonal influence and the performance of valued social roles (Solomon 1976, p. 29).
- (2) The ability of individuals to gain control socially, politically, economically, and psychologically through access to information, knowledge and skills, decision making, individual self-efficacy, community participation, and perceived control (Zimmerman and Rappaport 1988, p. 725).
- (3) A process of increasing personal, interpersonal, or political power so that individuals take action to improve their life situations (Gutierrez and Lewis 1999, p. 10).

The definitions hold in common the focus on process and an increase in power or influence of an individual.

This still only goes so far, as the unit of analysis should be inclusive of individuals to communities. Perkins and Zimmerman (1995) merge a few definitions together to form one of the most complete depictions of empowerment in the literature,

An intentional ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring, and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources (Cornell Empowerment Group 1989) or simply a process by which people gain control over their lives, democratic participation in the life of their community (Rappaport 1987), and a critical understanding of their environment (Zimmerman et al. 1992, p. 570)

This definition features a number of key features of empowerment. It is an ongoing activity. Empowerment of people with long histories of powerlessness is not an easy or quick process (Kauffman 2005). It is centered in the local community. “Power together” (Tew 2006) is not a top down approach. Rather, it is horizontal. Empowerment involves mutual respect; it is not one sided. It involves critical reflection on current circumstances and their historical roots (see Freire 1970, to be discussed later).

Empowerment has at its core caring and group participation. It requires acting together. It is for those who are marginalized, stigmatized, and oppressed (Gutierrez and Lewis 1999). Empowerment allows people to have control over decisions and circumstances that affect their lives.

Personal and Relational Empowerment.

Being an object of oppression can prevent the marginalized from self-determined action or reflection upon their actions (Freire 1970). In this regard, the individual suffers jointly from alienation and lack of awareness, which leads to social exclusion (Dominelli 2016). The personal level of empowerment is concerned with “developing a sense of self and individual confidence and capacity, and undoing the effects of internalized oppression” (Rowlands 1997, p. 15). “People’s discovery that they have the right and the ability to control their destiny, their lives and their environment is the basis for political change” and is the first step in the empowerment process (Sadan 2004, p. 101). Critical consciousness, often credited to Freire (1970), is a mechanism by which people become aware of various forms of oppression that impact them and move into action. This awareness is facilitated through deep questioning and dialogue with others in similar circumstances where they identify, study, and act on the core causes of their oppression (Carroll and Minkler 2000). While this process is personal, it is always intended for collective transformation. Critical consciousness exists as an ongoing practice at all levels of empowerment, but may be most salient at the personal level as it offers a spark that illuminates the empowerment process.

Personal and relational dimensions of empowerment are often interconnected. Personal empowerment frequently occurs through “... affirmation of oneself, which is closely tied to being a member of a group, an interpersonal dimension” (Russell et al. 2009, p. 12). Relational empowerment is a group process. A distinction within this level is that there is more emphasis placed on functional competence or knowledge acquisition of resources and strategies to attain personal or collective goals (Lee 2001).

The personal and relational levels of empowerment touch mainly on the first two stages of community empowerment (Fig. 16.1). Within the stages there are feedback loops, and prior stages are revisited. However, there is the tendency towards progression from personal action to social action.

Collective Empowerment. Personal and relational dimensions are not the sole elements of the concept of empowerment because “powerlessness is not only an individual problem, but also a social and structural condition” (Sadan 2004, p. 84). The remaining three stages of community empowerment (Fig. 16.1) operate at the collective. The collective dimension of empowerment is,

where individuals work together to achieve a more extensive impact than each could have had alone. This includes involvement in political structures, but might also cover collective action based on cooperation rather than competition – for example, groups acting at village or neighborhood level – or be more institutionalized, such as the activities of national networks or the formal procedures of the United Nations. (Rowlands 1997, p. 15).

To bring about progressive and enduring change, people need to be organized (Kahn 1991). Community organizations (see chapter on community organizations) are the center of collective empowerment. It is within organizations that members “feel powerful, attain influence, and achieve a degree of power” (Mondros and Wilson 1994, p. 228). Community organizations vary in size and scope, from support and task groups to volunteer agencies and social protest movements (Sadan 2004). When organizations collaborate with one another around a particular set of issues, they can form partnerships or coalitions, and the synergy creates more power. Social and political collective actions are the last stage of community empowerment and refer to larger scale demonstrations of power, whether through unionization, legislative advocacy, or social movements. The next section will build off of this foundational information and will expand the concepts of community empowerment and the role organizations, coalitions, and social action play in achieving it.

16.3 Community Empowerment

What must life be like for individuals from marginalized communities? Imagine the yoke of oppression that comes with your membership in a community confronting mass incarceration, being the target of racialized political discourse, and encountering great economic inequality that is tied to structural barriers that you did not create. Communities that have faced years of social and economic poverty frequently feel disenfranchised. Recognition of the root causes of oppression and the process of critical consciousness are necessary steps in the empowerment process. Itzhaky and York (2000) point out however, “Although much of the empowerment research and literature deals with the individual in his immediate environment, there is clearly a branch that focuses more on the wider community and sociopolitical empowerment” (p. 407). Maton (2008) defines community empowerment as “a group-based, participatory, developmental process through which marginalized or oppressed individuals and groups gain greater control over their lives and environment, acquire valued resources and basic rights, and achieve important life goals and reduced societal marginalization” (p. 5). The exchange of knowledge and resources that leads to community empowerment is assisted by partnerships between institutions and organizations.

It is important to establish empowering processes in community work when the goal is empowerment. Otherwise, there is the risk replicating a top down approach that does not value community members. Traditional models disempower under the premises that: “(a) only experts possess relevant knowledge, (b) only a single, typically empirical basis for knowledge exists, (c) this knowledge is best transferred from the “top” down to the target audience, and (d) learning is simply a matter of instruction by establishing pipelines for communication” (Broner et al. 2001, p. 82). Problems that arise in implementing or acting upon such knowledge are thought to stem from an implicit assumption that end-user groups lack understanding (or worse, lack the capacity for understanding), thereby

reinforcing the importance of “experts” and the need for continued oversight and enforcement. This linear way of knowing reinforces dominance of the few and disenfranchises community members by not having their voices heard, thus having decisions rest in the hands of the few.

16.3.1 Organizations

By and large, people experiencing marginalization feel circumvented within the larger community. Mondros and Wilson (1994) state “Their opinions aren’t heard, their needs aren’t recognized, they are made to feel small and insignificant in all their dealings with government and corporate bureaucracies” (p. 244). They desire to have a voice, to counteract the smallness forced upon them, and the community organization is the medium they can use to help them achieve their yearnings. Community organizations provide acceptance that allows members to “feel competent, capable, in charge, and they can act on those feelings” (Mondros and Wilson 1994, p. 244). They teach empowerment and also how to be with power. Community organizations are able to work towards empowerment through collective actions that coordinate resources to meet a stated purpose or objective. As it is a social construction, empowerment is achieved in relationship with others at the personal, relational, and collective levels. The local organization that is run democratically is a dual vehicle of empowerment (Sadan 2004). As Mondros and Wilson (1994) explain, “power building, in order to influence targets to conform to the organization’s preferences, constitutes the work of the organization in its external environment. Empowering members constitutes the work of the organization in its internal environment” (p. 228).

Community empowerment offers the promise of creating “alternative settings” (Rappaport 1986) or organizations where community members can challenge existing power structures. They can take many forms including a religious fellowship, mutual aid organization, educational program, neighborhood voluntary association, or

health care setting (Maton and Salem 1995; Perkins 1995). These organizations develop new structures, values and forms of interaction (Kroeker 1995). Members become a part of the organization through the democratic processes of shared control and decision making (Kroeker 1995). Through the promotion of collective action supported by the organization, communities can begin to address their social problems. Participation is the conduit for achieving their goals, and this can take the form of “carrying out communal projects, pursuing resources, and overcoming dependence on handouts” (Kroeker 1995, p. 752). A reciprocal process is achieved in that as the members work together and become empowered, the organization also increases in status within society, and that allows for it to have a greater influence in making changes in the community.

16.3.2 Coalitions

Empowerment is relational in nature, and the next stages of community empowerment, partnerships and coalitions, are a vital component of the achievement of goals for organizations and communities (Neal 2014). A coalition functions as “an organization of organizations working together for a common purpose” (Himmelman 2001, p. 277). In this way, coalitions or networks of community organizations empower each other to perform beyond their capability if they were to act alone. When working in coalitions, Himmelman (2002) specifies that organizations use four primary strategies: networking, coordinating, cooperating, and collaborating (Table 16.2). No one strategy is greater than another; rather, they are driven based upon the context of the organizations and their needs. The strategies are based upon the variables of time, trust, and turf, with each one progressively being more resource intensive. The strategies within Himmelman’s (2001, pp. 277–278) framework are as follows,

- (1) *Networking* is defined as exchanging information for mutual benefit; it does not require much time or trust nor the sharing of turf. It is a very useful strategy for organizations that are in the initial stages of working relationships.
- (2) *Coordinating* is defined as exchanging information for mutual benefit and altering activities for a common purpose; it requires more time and trust but does not include the sharing of turf. Coordinating is often used to create more user-friendly access to programs, services, and systems.
- (3) *Cooperating* is defined as exchanging information, altering activities, and sharing resources for mutual benefit and a common purpose; it requires significant amounts of time, high levels of trust, and a significant sharing of turf. Cooperating may require complex organizational processes and agreements in order to achieve the expanded benefits of mutual action.
- (4) *Collaborating* is defined as exchanging information, altering activities, sharing resources, and a willingness to enhance the capacity of another for mutual benefit and a common purpose; it requires the highest levels of trust, considerable amounts of time, and an extensive sharing of turf. Collaboration also involves sharing risks, resources, rewards, and when fully achieved, can produce the greatest benefits of mutual action.

Community coalitions promote a community empowerment process that builds confidence, competencies, and social connections among individual and organizational members (McMillan et al. 1995). As with the other stages, the empowerment affect is not isolated to the coalitions. McMillan et al. (1995), explain coalitions “can engage broad participation, which increase local ownership, thereby expanding resources and increasing commitment to sustaining activities long term,” and they move “beyond

Table 16.2 Matrix of strategies for working together

Definition	Networking <i>Exchanging information for mutual benefit</i>	Coordinating <i>Exchanging information for mutual benefit, and altering activities to achieve a common purpose</i>	Cooperating <i>Exchanging information for mutual benefit, altering activities and sharing resources to achieve a common purpose</i>	Collaborating <i>Exchanging information for mutual benefit, altering activities, sharing resources, and enhancing the capacity of another to achieve a common purpose</i>
Relationship	Informal	Formal	Formal	Formal
Characteristics	Minimal time commitments, limited levels of trust, and no necessity to share turf; information exchange is the primary focus	Moderate time commitments, moderate levels of trust, and no necessity to share turf; making access to services or resources more user-friendly is the primary focus	Substantial time commitments, high levels of trust, and significant access to each other's turf; sharing of resources to achieve a common purpose is the primary focus	Extensive time commitments, very high levels of trust and extensive areas of common turf; enhancing each other's capacity to achieve a common purpose is the primary focus
Resources	No mutual sharing of resources necessary	No or minimal mutual sharing of resources necessary	Moderate to extensive mutual sharing of resources and some sharing of risks, responsibilities, and rewards	Full sharing of resources, and full sharing of risks, responsibilities and rewards

Himmelman (2002, p. 4)

individual lifestyle change by collectively influencing key decision makers and social policy within the community” (McMillan et al. 1995, p. 700).

16.3.3 Social Action Movements

Social movements (see chap. 13) can be viewed as, “periods of change characterized by the uprising of the people in resistance to social and economic problems” (Smith 2014, p. 61). Community organizations and coalitions with a social action focus are part of the movement but not the movement itself. In order to become a movement, Tilly (1978) believed that the necessary components include groups and organizations focused on collective action, events and practices, and ideas that unite the organizations and coalitions in addition to guiding their protests. Johnston (2014) writes, “Social

movements are network structures, given the ideological, tactical, and organizational interconnects this complexity, binding the components together, and imparting an overall cohesion” (p. 7). The purposes of social action movements are for communities to actively change power structures and prevailing social arrangements (Tilly and Castenada 2007). Social action and social movements are the largest scale form of community empowerment and build upon all of the previous stages outlined in this chapter.

16.4 Models of Community Empowerment

Models of community empowerment help us understand the process of gaining influence over conditions that matter to people who share neighborhoods, workplaces, experiences, or

concerns (Fawcett et al. 1995, p. 677). Rothman's (1968) three models of community intervention, Weil and Gamble's (1995) eight models of community practice, and Boehm and Cnaan's (2012) practice-based model for community practice will be explored for their utility for community empowerment. The first model was an attempt to structure community practice, as up to that point the discipline lacked an articulated conceptual framework. The second was an expansion with added concepts and details. The third represents a paradigmatic change in pursuit of empowerment in communities.

16.4.1 Rothman (1968)

Rothman's (1968) three models of community intervention are perhaps the most cited models of community empowerment in the literature. The types of community practice include locality development, social planning and social action. Full narrative of the three approaches is beyond the scope of this chapter. Table 16.3 summarizes the main points of the models along twelve practice variables to aid in understanding. The focus of this section will be the relevance of the twelfth variable, use of empowerment, to the models. Locality development "presupposes that community change should be pursued through broad participation by a wide spectrum of people at the local community level in determining goals and taking civic action" (Rothman 2001, p. 29). Within locality development, empowerment is understood as the attainment of community competence, which is a combination of the skills to make decisions and sense of mastery among community members (Rothman 2001). Social planning "emphasizes a technical process of problem solving regarding substantial social problems" and is a rational data-driven process (Rothman 2001, p. 31). As social planning is based on information, so to is the empowerment focus. Information that will go into the planning of services and interventions is obtained from the community members (Rothman 2001). Social action "aims at making fundamental changes in the community, including the redistribution of

power and resources and gaining access to decision making for marginal groups" and includes "seeking to change legislative mandates... and policies and practices of institutions" (Rothman 2001, p. 33). Within social action, "empowerment means to acquire objective, material power—for residents to be an equal party in decision-making bodies such as agency boards or municipal commissions, or to have the political clout to directly affect decisions made by these bodies" (Rothman 2001, p. 43). The models, while being distinct, can overlap as needed. The main value of the framework was to provide direction to the activities of community work.

16.4.2 Weil and Gamble (1995)

Weil and Gamble (1995) divided Rothman's (1968) three models into eight more detailed models that include: (1) neighborhood and community organizing; (2) organizing functional communities; (3) community social and economic development; (4) social planning; (5) program development and community liaison; (6) political and social action; (7) coalitions; and (8) social movements. Table 16.4 explicates the models based on five comparative characteristics. The models are not mutually exclusive and, like Rothman's (1968) models, can overlap (Weil 2013). The empowerment of communities is touched upon with the eight models as a whole, though when looking at the comparative characteristic of primary constituency, the local community is not always the focus, making empowerment of members indirect at times.

16.4.3 Boehm and Cnaan (2012)

Boehm and Cnaan (2012) exhaustively explored community practice models and frameworks to include the two already discussed and dozens more. While it is noted that all of the models examined have value and serve some purpose, the authors found them to be restrictive in their ability to adapt to all communities. Moreover, it

Table 16.3 Three community intervention approaches according to selected practice variables

		Mode A (Locality development)	Mode B (Social planning/policy)	Mode C (Social action)
1.	Goal categories of community action	Community capacity and integration; self-help (process goals)	Problem solving with regard to substantive community problems (task goals)	Shifting of power relationships and resources; basic institutional change (task or process goals)
2.	Assumptions concerning community structure and problem conditions	Community eclipsed, anomie; lack of relationships and democratic problem-solving capacities; static traditional community	Substantive social problems, mental and physical health, housing, recreation, etc.	Aggrieved population, social justice, deprivation, inequality
3.	Basic change strategy	Involving a broad cross section of people in determining and solving their own problems	Gathering data about problems and making decisions on the most logical course of action	Crystallizing issues and mobilizing people to take action against enemy targets
4.	Characteristic change tactics and techniques	Consensus: communication among community groups and interests; group discussion	Consensus or conflict	Conflict confrontation, direct action, negotiation
5.	Salient practitioner roles	Enabler-catalyst, coordinator; teacher of problem-solving skills and ethical values	Fact gatherer and analyst, program implementer, expeditor	Activist advocate: agitator, broker, negotiator, partisan
6.	Medium of changes	Guiding small, task-oriented groups	Guiding formal organizations and treating data	Guiding mass organizations and political processes
7.	Orientation toward power structure(s)	Members of power structure as collaborators in a common venture	Power structure as employers and sponsors	Power structure as external target of action: oppressors to be coerced and overturned
8.	Boundary definition of the beneficiary system	Total geographic community	Total community or community segment	Community segment
9.	Assumptions regarding interests of community subparts	Common interests or reconcilable differences	Interests reconcilable or in conflict	Conflicting interests which are not easily reconcilable, scarce resources
10.	Conception of beneficiaries	Citizens	Consumers	Victims
11.	Conception of beneficiary role	Participants in an interactional problem-solving process	Consumers or recipients	Employers, constituents, members
12.	Use of empowerment	Building the capacity of a community to make collaborative and informed decisions; promoting feeling of personal mastery by residents	Finding out from consumers about their needs for service; informing consumers of their service choices	Achieving objective power for beneficiary system—the right and means to impact community decisions; promoting a feeling of mastery by participants

Rothman (2001, pp. 45–46)

Table 16.4 Current models of community practice for social work

Comparative characteristics	Neighborhood and community organizing	Organizing functional communities	Community social and economic development	Social planning	Program development	Political and social action	Coalitions	Social movements
Desired outcome	Develop capacity of members to organize; change the impact of citywide planning and external development	Action for social justice focused on advocacy and on changing behaviors and attitudes; may also provide service	Initiate development plans from a grassroots perspective; prepare citizens to make use of social and economic investments	Citywide or regional proposals for action by elected body or human services planning councils	Expansion or redirection of agency program to improve community service effectiveness; organize new service	Action for social justice focused on changing policy or policy makers	Build a multi-organizational power base large enough to influence program direction or draw down resources	Action for social justice that provides a new paradigm for a particular population group or issue
System targeted for change	Municipal government; external developers; community members	General public; governmental institutions	Banks; foundations; external developers; community citizens	Perspectives of community leaders; perspectives of human service leaders	Funders of agency programs; beneficiaries of agency services	Voting public; elected officials; inactive/potential participants	Elected officials; foundations; government institutions	General public; political systems
Primary constituency	Residents of neighborhood, parish, or rural county	Like-minded people in a community, region, nation, or across the globe	Low-income marginalized, or oppressed population groups in a city or region	Elected officials; social agencies and interagency organizations	Agency board or administrators; community representatives	Citizens in a particular political jurisdiction	Organizations that have a stake in the particular issue	Leaders and organizations able to create new visions and images
Scope of concern	Quality of life in the geographic area	Advocacy for particular issue or population	Income, resource, and social support development; improved basic education and leadership skills	Integration of social needs into geographic planning in public arena; human services network consideration	Service development for a specific population	Building political power; institutional change	Specified issue related to social need or concern	Social justice within society

(continued)

Table 16.4 (continued)

Comparative characteristics	Neighborhood and community organizing	Organizing functional communities	Community social and economic development	Social planning	Program development	Political and social action	Coalitions	Social movements
Social work roles	Organizer Teacher Coach Facilitator	Organizer Advocate Writer Communicator Facilitator	Negotiator Promoter Teacher Planner Manager	Researcher Proposal writer Communicator Manager	Spokesperson Planner Manager Proposal writer	Advocate Organizer Researcher Candidate	Mediator Negotiator Spokesperson	Advocate Facilitator

Weil and Gamble (1995)

is found that “many of these models fail to accomplish the central theme that they strongly advocate for; they are not locally-based and they are not grassroots-determined” (Boehm and Cnaan 2012, p. 146). In most models, empowerment is undermined because the community members are to employ frameworks that they did not help create (Boehm and Cnaan 2012).

The paradigm shift in the model the authors proposed is that there is no pre-determined set of strategies that the community members must submit to without input. Boehm and Cnaan (2012, p. 154) explain,

The essence of our proposal is a community model that develops through each community’s discussion regarding central community issues and conditions. Each issue in the model (Table 16.5) is represented by two opposing positions. That is, each issue is a paradox and the stakeholders must choose the position they wish to take. Instead of importation of pre-assembled directives, it presents sets of polarities that the community chooses from. All combined, these local choices become the practice model for that community.

Through the use of the model (Table 16.5), communities obtain “an integrative and unique model that includes a ‘road map’ of policy and action directions, tailored to the particular conditions and desires of that community” (Boehm and Cnaan 2012, p. 154). Of all the models, this may have the most promise for actualizing empowerment within communities, as the creation of a truly localized process was paramount in its construction.

16.5 Conclusion

Communities experiencing major social problems like mass incarceration and poverty are in need of community empowerment. Decisions reveal the will of those who have power (Homan 2004). The democratic promise of our society “involves as many minorities as possible getting together in such a way that the power of the majority is used to protect the rights of the minorities that together compose it” (Kahn 1991, p. 244). The stages of community empowerment begin with the individual and move through to

Table 16.5 Model for community practice: key issues for real life practice

Polarities/opposing positions		
<i>Geographic community</i> : Defined by interests and identities of people based on their geographic location. Developing responsibility and spirit of a local community	↔	<i>Community of Interest</i> : Defined by interests and identities of groups and populations that cross geographic boundaries. Developing inter-local networks
<i>Enhancing community integration</i> : Focus on mixing groups that are distinct in terms of culture, identity, and interests	↔	<i>Maintaining group identity</i> : Preserving and fostering the unique identity and character of each group
<i>Focusing primarily on activists</i> : Informing and explaining tactics	↔	<i>Appealing to indifferent community members</i> : Persuasion tactics
<i>Integral/comprehensive change</i> : Attempting to tackle a host of problems at the same time as a means to eradicate the root problem	↔	<i>Targeted focused intervention</i> : Attempting to tackle one, often most pressing, problem
<i>Intra-community-focused change</i> : Focusing on change within the community. Cultivating self-help, building strengths and assets within	↔	<i>External change</i> : Focusing on change outside the community, such as legislation, and importing outside resources
<i>Collaboration with government</i> : Change and programs are based on government support	↔	<i>Collaboration with non-profit organizations</i> : Including informal, non-profit, and private organizations
<i>Technical-rational approach</i> : Change managed by means of systematic planning and activities. Each phase is based on the previous phase	↔	<i>Organizational-political approach</i> : Change is managed by negotiation with interest groups. Activities conducted to support social justice.
<i>Incremental process</i> : Change involves a constant, continuous process. The process of change occurs in phases over a long period of time	↔	<i>Breakpoint change</i> : Process of change dramatic and immediate. Shift is fundamental in nature
<i>Mass mobilization</i> : Change achieved through mobilization of a mass of people who advocate a specific change, assuming that the mass creates power	↔	<i>Small action system</i> : Change achieved through coordinated/joint activity of a relatively small, defined group, of professionals as well as community leaders
<i>Collaborative strategy</i> : Concern for all groups that may be of relevance. Change achieved through mutuality, understanding, and agreements	↔	<i>Confrontational strategy</i> : Concern only for the interests of the client and/or action system; aspires to win
<i>Directive approach of professionals</i> : Professionals are the focus of the action and decision-making process	↔	<i>Non-directive approach of professionals</i> : The clients are the focus of the action and decision-making process
<i>Routine Activity</i> : Focus on central services; linear planning; solutions for varied needs; long-term processes and treatments	↔	<i>Activity in crisis</i> : Focus on “reaching out”; immediacy; short-term thought and action; spontaneous and intuitive action; activity directed at meeting human basic needs; authoritative activity

Boehm and Cnaan (2012, p. 155)

social movements. Organizations play vital roles in accomplishing community empowerment. These organizations may be small and localized or may be joined into coalitions that contribute to social movements. The presence of organizations in a community is an indication of the health of its members, as the organization is an extension of their empowerment.

Community practice models provide insight into how to practically bring about empowerment. While not exhaustive, the models presented in this chapter attempt to operationalize empowering change processes. In doing so, it is important to distinguish practices that are top-down from those that are bottom-up or horizontal. Empowerment cannot be achieved if the

methods used in its pursuits are not also empowering. Boehm and Cnaan (2012), in particular, offer great insight in their examination of practice models and offer a model that addresses inconsistencies in others. Ultimately, community empowerment is hard work, but liberation from oppression and social exclusion has never been easy.

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Contested Community: A Selected and Critical History of Community Organizing

17

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Abstract

This chapter discusses the diverse ways community has been utilized and understood, mobilized and invoked over time, with lessons for current theory and practice. In a nutshell, the history of community initiatives in the United States reveals a complex past, one which if the lens is wide angle instantly expands understanding of the varied origins, goals, politics, and shapes community efforts take. The complex history and diverse forms result from a number of factors, chief among them the historical context. Community initiatives are shaped by and constrained by the

broader political-economy and at times challenge this context. This chapter proposes that this history is a contested one because community efforts are fundamentally political and part of the central social struggles and movements of their time. By offering central lessons from the history of community organizing and doing so with an eye to periodization and contextualization, this chapter contributes to a broader and eclectic understanding of community and community organizing.

This chapter discusses the diverse ways community has been utilized and understood, mobilized and invoked over time, with lessons for current theory and practice. The history of community initiatives in the United States reveals a complex past, one which if the lens is wide angle instantly expands understanding of the varied goals, politics, and shapes community efforts take. The complex history and diverse forms results from a number of factors, chief among them the historical context which shapes and helps produce a dominant form of community-based effort in each era. This dominant type not only mirrors broader contemporary phenomenon but responds to and affects them as well. This chapter also proposes that this history is a contested one (DeFilippis et al. 2010). It is contested because community efforts are fundamentally political and, whether groups like it or not, implicitly or explicitly, they are part of the social struggles of their historical context. Eras characterized by more liberal reform foster

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and allow opportunities for the proliferation of more Left-oriented community initiatives. These are the epochs which are usually seen as providing key lessons from the past for contemporary progressive efforts, and which serve as the “canon” of community organizing. More conservative or reactionary eras produce not so much a decline of community efforts, as the literature seems to suggest, but rather a decline of progressive-oriented community efforts and a rise of both highly moderated and reactionary forms of local organizing, what we see as the “anti-canon”.

We find ourselves in a conservative/reactionary context for a generation now, with a broad proliferation globally of community efforts as well as an equally widespread rise of reactionary and conservative uses of community, without much renewed understanding of the complex and contested nature of community action and the transformation which occurs to community practice in reactionary and conservative contexts. It should be obvious that conservative and reactionary forms of community-based efforts flourish and proliferate in conservative eras and that they need to be included in not only the overall historical “canon” of community organizing but, as the volume seeks, in contemporary discourse and strategizing about the nature, potential, and limits of community action.

Of course such dualisms as eras of reaction and reform, conservative and liberal, are too simplistic to capture the depth of complexity revealed through the study of community efforts over time. And of course every historical era includes not only efforts that reflect the dominant form of the time and the politics of the moment but also include oppositional forms which challenge contemporary community practice and the broader status quo. But for our purposes in this chapter the dualisms actually reveal a great deal about the diverse motives and goals of not only initiatives in the past but about contemporary community theory and practice in our current era of conservatism and reaction.

Even in eras hostile to oppositional efforts or Left activism, there is always a dialectical process in which community initiatives develop and respond to the tensions and contradictions of the

time. For example, civil rights dissent developed at the community level in the South in the 1950s to address the obvious contradictions and tensions of apartheid racism (Morris 1986). Accordingly, even in our current context there are critical community initiatives doing essential work to challenge the neo-liberal hegemony that dominates the era. These efforts, as with civil rights efforts in the 1950s, win victories, raise consciousness, engage people in struggle, plant seeds for social change, and provide models for future radical practice. They do so usually as oppositional efforts. The flip side is true for more progressive eras such as the 1960s, which while often seen as a glory day for Left initiatives at both the local and national level served also as the seedbed of conservative and reactionary efforts which arose 10–20 years later as a powerful rightwing movement. Not only are “minority” forms of community organizing ignored, marginalized by a “dominant form” in each era, but that conservative and reactionary efforts are a clear and ongoing presence throughout the contested history of community organizing and community-based social change. This chapter illuminates the diverse and contested nature of community efforts by grounding them in a contextualized historical analysis. While we argue that the political-economic context of every era heavily influences the dominant tendencies of community organizing in that era, we emphasize with equal weight that there is a dialectical interaction, a contested not reductionist relationship, between the broader political economic context and grassroots efforts. Context is always relevant and critical to understanding local efforts, but it is never determinative.

One caveat. We should not give the impression that the dominant form of social change since the late-19th century has been local-based initiatives. The dominant pressure in industrial societies has been towards centralization. This is expressed in both the growth of capitalist enterprises and their concentration and the centrality of the state in the shaping the areas of health, income and labor. From the late-19th century onward in the United States “bigger is better” was a truism for all sectors, e.g. business,

government, labor, and what has come to be known as “civil society.” No sphere of life has been immune to the pressures for increasing size and power in order to compete more effectively under industrial capitalism. Nevertheless, despite this pressure to centralize and to expand size and scale in order to be large enough to compete at national levels, industrial society increasingly segregated and disaggregated residence and work by class, race, and ethnicity. The first neighborhoods under industrial capitalism served as geographic communities which not only pushed people into interdependent specializations but which encouraged those who were largely left to their own devices to develop association and power at the community level. Accordingly, while the major story since the late-19th century has been one of centralization of power and organizational form, there has always been a significant parallel phenomenon emphasizing decentralized, community-based, local responses. While activists and regular working people might have preferred a more centralized and powerful response, such as state provision of programs to address basic needs, they worked at the community level because that was the site where problems manifested, people experienced them, and organizers could mobilize a response. This is especially true in the United States where weak political parties, a modest national government, and relatively unchallenged support for highly individualistic forms of capitalism provided vast space for voluntary activism.

17.1 Lessons from the Past

As mentioned above, we start with selected key points from this history of community-based efforts in the United States. These “lessons” emphasize the common ingredients in community work, but also its contested qualities. The lessons include actual examples of major efforts in the history of community action, ones which

flesh out the historical lessons as well as provide us an opportunity to emphasize key contributions as well as limits to these efforts. These lessons are based on some of the most well-known examples in the “canon” of Left/progressive community organizing. But later in the discussion we also derive lessons from the “anti-canon” of Right/conservative community-based organizations, efforts often much less known but significant nevertheless.

1. *Community organizing has a long, rich history*

The history of community action dates back at least to the late nineteenth century and extends throughout the twentieth century. The popular imagination might believe it began in the 1960s, as a product of the oppositional efforts of that generation, but intentional community organizing started with the decentralized, communitarian responses of the late-19th and early 20th century, most notably the social settlement house movement. To be sure there are earlier efforts. Prior to the industrial revolution, de Tocqueville noted the importance and proliferation of local voluntary associations—what is now called “civil society.” But it is the twentieth century in which community-based activity, in contrast to the more centralized thrust of the broader society, takes on a more intentional and significant role.

The more or less accepted “canon” of the field of community organizing, as edifying and limiting as any canonical device, emphasizes three major heydays in the history of progressive community work in the United States: approximately 1900–1920, 1930–1946, and 1960–1975. It highlights, among other examples, the social settlement, community center, and other communitarian initiatives of the years 1900–1920; the more radical efforts of Saul Alinsky, Left political party work at the local level, and the community-labor work of the nascent CIO in the 1930s and 1940s; and the community-based initiatives of the civil rights, New Left, and nascent women’s movement in the 1960s and early 1970s. Rich with lessons from the past for

community action efforts in the present and future, these noted community efforts form an accepted “canon” of dominant examples in the history of progressive community work. As with most canons these days, there is disagreement on which examples to include. The above list is selective, and there are a large number of efforts excluded, especially when it comes to efforts led by women and people of color. Social work scholarship has possibly the richest and deepest canon, emphasizing its own roots in the settlement house movement and tracing its interest and role in local-based organizing through leading roles in New Deal programs in the 1930s, War on Poverty programs in the 1960s, and the women’s movement. Those associated closely with the Alinsky tradition of community organizing ignore at best, often disdain, these social work examples. They instead might begin with Alinsky’s efforts in the 1930s, implicitly anointing him as the father of community organizing in the United States, and emphasizing his work, that of the Industrial Areas Foundation in the 1960s, and similar efforts associated with the “backyard revolution” of the 1970s. Similarly activists of color will include Alinsky but not exalt his contribution, arguing ironically that “Alinsky founded community organizing like Columbus discovered America,” focusing their attention instead on the deep resistance of African-Americans before the 20th century, but certainly including not only efforts of luminaries such as W. E. B. Dubois, but also community building and service delivery work in the early twentieth century; the efforts of Marcus Garvey and Father Divine in the 1920s and 1930s; and especially black community, labor, and electoral efforts tied to civil rights and Black Power movements of the 1960s and 1970s. They would also point to the segregationist outcomes in Alinsky’s initial “Back of the Yards” organizing in Chicago, which turned conservative upon Alinsky’s departure and regarding which Alinsky said while he regretted the outcome he would do the same if he could it over again. The dominant examples and texts noted above compose our general understanding of the origins, history, and

models of progressive community-based social change. While the examples in this multiple stranded canon of community organizing vary, they all share a common ingredient. During the twentieth century they draw on the heritages of struggle and resistance in the three eras of Left struggles and Liberal politics: 1900–20, 1930–46, and 1960–75. Of course there are exceptions. All “historical eras” have porous, not fixed, boundaries. Garvey did his work in the 1920s. The Montgomery Improvement Association staged its bus boycott in the mid-1950s. Still despite minor discrepancies in the canons, there is agreement on the importance and richness of this history. There is also almost complete agreement on the types of historical contexts which help produce such efforts. The progressive canon emphasizes that community efforts have a long history throughout the century, but largely in specific eras and historical contexts which they helped create and which provided more opportunities and supports for progressive social change.

2. Context helps create a dominant form of community action in each historical era

As we have already argued, the broader political-economic context is vitally important in shaping the nature, form, choices, and success of community-based efforts. Because organizing efforts and writings about organizing are always specific to a particular time and place, the history of community organizing must situate practice in the context of the varied sites which generated it, including both the national as well as local context.

The dominant example of community-based initiative in the last decade of the nineteenth century and especially the first decades of the twentieth century was the social settlement house, a form of community organization which began in England and spread to Canada as well. It is both a strong reflection of the political economy of the Progressive Era—its virtues and limits—as well as catalyst for the critical progressive changes of that time. As noted above, the canon begins for social workers and

sociologists with the social settlement house movement, the dominant model of community work of the 1890s and early 20th century.

Settlement leader Vida Scudder saw the turn-of-the-century city as a “cleavage of classes, cleavage of races, cleavage of faiths: an inextricable confusion” (cited in Shapiro 1978, p. 215). Society seemed to be coming apart at its class and ethnic seams (Husock 1990; Kogut 1972). In response, reformers developed a counter-ideology and social movement which argued that society, not simply the individual, was responsible for social conditions, and that the environment, not simply one’s personal characteristics, heavily shaped life experience (Quandt 1970). Many reformers in the national progressive movement believed in bigness and centralized initiative, but another strand of progressivism, a variant of communitarian reform, best epitomized by the social settlement movement, advocated for community-based initiatives and interventions.

Begun in England in the late 19th century and flourishing in the United States and Canada in the early 20th century, settlements attracted social reformers to engage with the problems of the new urban-industrial order at the local level by living in settlement houses based in slum neighborhoods, especially those with a high percentage of recent immigrants. Settlers in the most progressive houses in New York City and Chicago developed a community practice which included four essential elements, ones that reflected well the thrust of the broader Progressive Era context: (1) a rejection of the individual causes of poverty common to charitable work and an emphasis on the social and economic conditions which misused, constrained, and impoverished workers and immigrants; (2) an integrated approach which provided desperately needed services, engaged with residents at the individual and community level, and focused on developing cross-class solidarity between neighborhood residents and settlement workers, (3) a communitarian perspective on the essential importance of building community and community connection as a means of increasing participation of primarily poor, recent immigrants and

developing solidarity networks at the local level, and (4) a willingness to organize and advocate for social, political, and economic justice at the local, state, and even national level, including participation in the electoral process and policy advocacy (Fisher 2005).

To be sure, the settlements achieved a great deal, even continuing into the 21st century to serve as a model for an integrated community practice. And yet the middle and upper class nature of most early twentieth century reform efforts also heavily influenced settlement initiatives, providing a pragmatic and optimistic reform fervor and faith in public life and public service while delimiting efforts to non-radical and non-statist initiatives and solutions. But the critical lessons of the settlement house for this volume are clear. The political economy of the “progressive era” and the social struggles its contradictions produced heavily shaped the opportunities, choices, and support for a dominant form of communitarian, reform-oriented community organizing, the social settlements. And the example of the settlements reveals the early development in community organizing of an integrated practice which intentionally combined both politics and service and community building and organizing with local and national activism. But for the most part they did not pursue a more radical course or develop a more effective organizational structure beyond the local communities with which they were involved.

3. ***Community efforts should include conflict in their tactical repertoire and elevate local activity through intellectual and organizational frameworks which broaden engagement and impact***

The Great Depression of the 1930s presented a very different context for organizers, occasioning a very different type of dominant form. In a nutshell, it was clear that the collapse of world capitalism created an urgency for both leaders and ordinary people and demanded more radical politics. In response community efforts organized to harness the energy and anger that spilled over

on a daily basis, in individual acts of defiance, social disorder, and even organized resistance. The interaction of depression era conditions, radical local organizing, a vibrant and radical union movement, and New Deal federal policies, all combined to create a dynamic and critical era in the history of community organizing.

While community efforts of the Communist Party, the Catholic Workers Movement, or Saul Alinsky, to name but a few, differed widely, these dominant models of the era were all characterized by militant strategies and tactics, a radical intellectual analysis of community problems and solutions, and expanded frameworks designed to mobilize more people and communities in resistance to depression era conditions and in support of democratic and just solutions. While they organized at the local level because that was where people experienced problems on a day to day basis and where they could engage people to participate in social change efforts, given the national and worldwide nature of problems in the 1930s—not only the failure of capitalism but the emergence of fascist regimes to solve it—the dominant forms of this era included a broad critique of problems that sought to take local residents beyond their own communities to see problems in a broader light and to focus on developing organizational frameworks at the national level in order to build more power and go beyond the inherent limits in individual local efforts. This was certainly the case in Community Party USA organizing, which used a radical analysis to catalyze community people and saw local work as a means to building a national political party in the United States and furthering the international working class struggle. But it was also true for the efforts of Saul Alinsky who while suspicious of “ideological organizing” and while more committed to community work for its own sake, also understood that his community efforts in the late 1930s were part of a broader ideological struggle against the fascist menace and that they needed “people’s organizations” nationwide in order to have more impact on a larger scale than the local community (Fisher 1994).

The local efforts of the Communist Party, certainly still highly controversial because of its being connected to the Soviet Union, were best expressed in the Unemployed Councils which formed to address community problems such as housing evictions, unemployment, hunger, and racism. In addition to the radical militancy of the Unemployed Councils and the courage and ferocity of the organizers and activists who faced great personal danger, community efforts operated on multiple levels of practice. By connecting the multiple levels the Party hoped not only to organize new members and address local issues, but tie local activity and more particularized organizing to broader struggles at the national and international level. On one level was the basic principles—such as a critique of capitalism, the nature of class conflict, and the need for working-class democracy—which undergirded all efforts and tied local efforts intellectually to the world beyond the community. The next level was the national campaigns and organizational forms which transcended community efforts—whether in Chicago, New York or Birmingham, Alabama—and tied them to broader struggles and campaigns, such as campaigns for national social insurance and anti-lynching legislation and support for the Scottsboro boys trial and the imprisonment of Angelo Herndon, two major national causes of the Party opposing racist attacks on African-Americans. The third level—the community level—was the site of the day-to-day activism of members to address local issues, whether an eviction of a neighbor, a local family’s need for help from the relief bureau, or a protest at City Hall. All three levels of organizing theory and practice were deeply interconnected, designed to get people involved in local public life and use community organizing as a staging ground to address deeper systemic problems and broader struggles which could catalyze people’s engagement (Fisher and Kling 1987; Nelson et al. 1981; Naison 2004). The destructive and crippling flaws in Communist organizing in the 1930s rested in the anti-democratic manipulation of local efforts to support ideological and national/international campaigns developed in or

with the consent of operatives in the USSR. Despite a good deal of autonomous activism on the part of U.S. organizers at the local levels, their achievements were ultimately distorted and undermined by attachment to directives from Comintern. That said, these efforts provide a vivid and provocative historical example which valued community as an organizing site, recognized its limits, and offered an organizational theory and practice to go beyond the limits of local efforts, especially the limits of local work in the face of national and international crises.

The efforts of Saul Alinsky began in Chicago in the 1930s amidst the same conditions and radical fervor that legitimized and created opportunities for organizing efforts of the Community Party and the militant, democratic labor movement of the time. Since Alinsky's efforts in the Back of the Yards neighborhood are generally well known, we will discuss his efforts and model briefly in terms of how they contributed to the critical lessons of organizing in this period: (1) the emphasis on militant, conflict tactics and (2) the development of ideological and organizational frameworks which expanded the impact of community organizing. The former underscores how a context such as the Great Depression produced and even legitimized conflict tactics.

As noted above, the Alinsky method of community organizing learned its militant tactics and conflict approach to community organizing from the radical politics of the Communist Party and the nascent C.I.O., especially that of the United Mine Worker's and its leader John L. Lewis. The Alinsky method encouraged organizers to get community people in touch with their anger, to "rub raw people's resentments," to use any and all non-violent tactics in order to publicize the issue and enable community people to win victories and thereby see the power of collective direct action. Alinsky was a strong believer in the ends justifying the means, that is, that almost any and all tactics were justifiable to protect democracy, advance the interests of working people who were disregarded by the overall system. The more a tactic disturbed those in power, he proposed, the better. Alinsky liked

to say that "life is conflict and in conflict you are alive." He understood that power concedes nothing without struggle, and the more creative and unpredictable a community's strategies and tactics the more effective their efforts. Of course Alinsky's theory and practice of organizing did not use conflict tactics solely. His efforts used a wide variety of tactics to achieve their goals, from negotiation and compromise to economic development initiatives and community building efforts. But it was Alinsky's use of militant tactics, or at the least the threat of them, for which he is best known. In the late-1930s, with so much at stake due to the dual threats of both economic depression and the rise of fascist alternatives, with the future of democracy uncertain, militant protest efforts fit well with the overall turmoil and conflict of society.

In the late 1930s Alinsky saw himself as a "professional antifascist," fighting the forces of reaction at the community level and beyond. But Alinsky rejected explicit ideological organizing. In fact later on he emphasized in response to the New Left that organizing must be "non-ideological." Alinsky incorporated militant conflict tactics from the radical activists of the early 1930s in Chicago, but not the value of a clear analysis to galvanize constituents and help them make connections between their local circumstance and those beyond their community. He saw ideological organizing as fundamentally undemocratic, as contrary to community organizing. "Let the people decide" was central to his model, even if an effort like Back of the Yards was so skill-focused that when Alinsky left the organization turned to focusing on keep African-Americans out of the neighborhood.

Alinsky sought to counteract the limits of community by developing more, loosely connected "people's organizations." To that end he secured help from Marshall Field, the owner of Chicago's largest department store, to found the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) and through the IAF sought to promote and spread his approach to community action. Alinsky efforts since then have proliferated, curtailed by the rise of the Right in the 1950s; starting slowly in the early 1960s and then, on the heels of the southern

civil rights movement, revived in organizing efforts in industrial cities in the north; and then continued in the 1970s and thereafter in the southwest, where it found greatest success, and elsewhere. But while his organizing theory recognized the importance of building an organizational structure beyond the local community and his personal views recognized the value of a critical political analysis, his militant, confrontational mode of organizing always emphasized the primacy of local work, the commitment to local people and the local community. Undoubtedly he did so in part because there were so many other social movement efforts at the time focusing on the bigger issues and working on a national scale. But he also did so because he was uncertain how to resolve the tension inherent in building a national organizational structure and broad intellectual framework while focusing on the specific needs and people involved in each local community with which he and his staff got involved.

4. *Community organizing and social movement share a critical dialectical relationship*

The radical ferment of the Sixties grew out of the civil rights movement. All efforts stood on the shoulders and used the models of the black struggle for equality after World War II. Civil rights efforts such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1957 and other similar anti-segregationist community-based struggles before and after it helped lay the groundwork for Mobilization for Youth in 1958, the founding of SNCC (Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee) in 1960 and SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) and its community-based ERAP (Economic Research and Action Project) projects shortly thereafter. The Ford Foundation, NIMH and Kennedy administration followed in the early 60s with well-funded community-based experiments in community organizing committed to local control and citizen participation in service delivery and advocacy efforts. The Community Action Program (CAP) began its support of Community Action Agencies (CAAs) in 1965. ACORN was founded in 1970, as were many

other community efforts. The period was a heyday for the experiments and initiatives in community action and local democratic participation. As Frost puts it, "During the 1960s a wide range of political, social welfare, church, labor, and government entities shifted their focus to the local and communal level.... The massive shift of organizing sites to the community contributed to what came to be called the "backyard revolution" of the mid-1960s and 1970s" (Frost 2001, 23–24). It also impacted gendered conceptions of the sites and agents of resistance and social change. "This understanding of the community as an important site for organizing more fully incorporated women's activism, challenged male-defined notions of "workplace," and revealed the community as a place of work for women" (2001, 24).

Admittedly not all of the efforts were like-minded. Some were more interested in incorporating dissent and rebellion rather than fomenting it. One common ingredient was the renewed focus on community. Whereas community-based efforts such as those of the Unemployed Councils and Alinsky were in the minority in the 1930s because the more obvious primary locus of change was the factory not the community, by the 1960s community efforts, whether in local poor communities or college campuses, began the trend, captured in what is now called new social movement theory, of replacing factories as the primary sites of social change and the working class as the primary agents.

But what was truly distinctive for this period was the extensive role played by social movements in framing the type of organizing that occurred throughout the period. There was certainly broad interest in the local community, in an of itself, not only as the site of radical change and opportunities for democratic participation but also a theoretical framework of community as inherently alternative and oppositional to mainstream society. Tom Hayden, SDS leader, called for "a politics of responsible insurgence rooted in community after community" reflecting "the felt needs of their locales" (Fisher 1994, 104). More like Alinsky style organizing than that of the Old

Left, the emphasis in SDS and SNCC was on “letting the people decide” and “immediate action” rather than developing “a full-scale program” (Payne 1966, 87). But Sixties organizing was not about narrow conceptions of community. The central role of community was defined broadly to expand activism beyond the local and to offer a critique of mainstream society’s anti-community features. Community was used as both a site and as an alternative. Efforts focused on building actual community institutions as well as an overall sense of community. Movements politicized the struggle to defend community, as well as the search for it. “The desire for connectedness, meaningful personal relationships and direct participation and control over economic, political and social institutions on the basis of the needs of the individual and community, takes on radical meaning in a period such as ours” (Breines 1982, 7). From Martin Luther King, Jr. and the civil rights movement use of the vision of “beloved community” onward, community was both a strategic structural site as well as a critical oppositional conceptualization and vision.

But there was also concern about the limited scale of communities, the structural limits of community organizations, and the relation of community organizing to social movement building. What one can see throughout most community organizing efforts is “the anti-organizational impulse, stressing the movement before the organization...” (Breines 1982, 50) Community leaders and members saw themselves more as movement activists than organizers and their overall work as more tied to movement building such as the civil rights, student, antiwar, or women’s movement than to community per se. This tension was downplayed, however. Sixties organizing was almost always about blending community organizing with movement building, with an emphasis on the latter but with a deeply internalized conviction that community work was central to and inseparable from movement building.

Social movements have always been central to effective community efforts. The early work of

Alinsky in Chicago would not have succeeded if it had not been for the militancy of the industrial labor movement. Similarly, in the 1960s, Alinsky organizing built on the strength of the civil rights movement. Social movements provide opportunities, direction, and support for such local efforts. Even more than community organization, they have the power to force claims, politics, strategies, and tactics onto not only the local but also the state and national political stage, thereby legitimizing and catapulting them beyond traditional barriers. Community initiatives are usually the product of or tied to broader social movements. In a society, which relies so heavily on and is dominated by its economic system, social movements develop and can earn legitimacy to serve as vehicles for change and alternatives to the status quo. Rather than being aberrant “supra-political” phenomenon, social movements regularly address domestic problems, voice claimant’s issues, promote opposition, and force the state and/or private sector to respond.

Clearly there are tensions. Community organizing is premised on the assumption that building a relatively permanent structure with clear processes of delegation of power and roles facilitates longevity and democracy. Social movements tend to be by definition much looser. Groups mobilize for specific campaigns or actions and then disband. It is impossible to impose a single structure on a movement. Social movements are short lived and cannot be reproduced or channeled into traditional organizations. And yet, at all levels of social movement building, organizing, even local organizing, provides the activists, relationships, resources, and organization without which it is difficult for movements to emerge, be sustained, and develop. Just as community efforts need movements, movements do not develop out of or exist in a vacuum (Fisher and Shragge 2007).

In conclusion, the progressive canon of efforts in the three historical periods discussed underscores that some of the most noted community efforts in the century from the late 19th to the late 20th in the United States have been ones that understood and practiced key lessons. They

understood community efforts were political, remained connected to and sought to build on their movement roots, benefited from a critique of the limits of the dominant political economy and culture, understood that local problems were almost always caused by forces and decisions that rested outside of the community and therefore they sought to organize at both the local and national level, used a broad range of strategies and tactics, including conflict tactics, which both reflected their times and sought to change them, focused on issues of political economy or at least linked work around cultural or social issues to those of class and economic democracy, and understood the contested nature of community as well as political life and fought hard to advance their agenda, their organizations, and their movement.

5. *Understanding the anti-canon: Lessons from the other side of community-based organizing*

Research in the past and present of community organizing reveals an “anti-canon” which must be included in the broader history. The inclusion of the anti-canon are critical, not only because they are part of the history, but because their inclusion (1) acknowledges the existence of conservative and reactionary eras which help produce and support conservative and reactionaries initiatives; (2) challenges the liberal and uncritical blinders which conceal these underlying forces of reaction and conservatism, and (3) serves as “negative reference points” for future efforts to distance themselves (Primus 1998, p. 248). We argue in this chapter that the past, present, or future of community efforts can not be effectively understood without examining the anti-canon, without understanding the place and persistence of reactionary forms of community and community intervention, and without understanding the role that reactionary contexts play in producing comparable forms of community action.

17.2 **Community Efforts Are Not Inherently Progressive**

The fifth lesson from the history of community organizing is that efforts take varied political forms. Despite the impression one would get from reading most of the literature on community initiatives, they are not inherently Left or liberal; they are not intrinsically progressive in nature. They can be used for reactionary purposes such as keeping black or gay people out of a neighborhood, or for conservative purposes such as protecting property values and therefore limiting who lives in the community and how land is used. They can be formerly liberal or even Left efforts that are moderated or incorporated by the pressures of a different context. The politics of a community effort depend on a wide variety of factors including the reason(s) for organizing the group, the ideology and politics of the leaders as well as the members, the dominant social movements at the time, and, especially, the political economy of the era. There are certainly as many conservative and reactionary uses of community in U.S. history as there are democratic and oppositional ones, and we strongly doubt that the U.S. is an exception in this regard.

One reason for the narrowed view of the history of community efforts, for the myopia of the existing canon, which excludes reactionary efforts and eras dominated by a reactionary politics, is the failure to understand that all community initiatives are political whether they see themselves as such or not. Most do not. Many of the social settlements did not; they were there to provide a service; they were there to address immigrant needs and promote social harmony, that is, to counter the disorder resultant from the unregulated capitalism of the prior Gilded Age. Most community-based service providers since the early twentieth century do not see their work as political, because political in the American context means “electoral politics,” that is tied to elections and political parties. Nevertheless, all

of these groups are political in that they form to address a problem, or meet a neglected need, or help a specific group, all of which requires power. They are usually “extra-political,” that is outside of the political mainstream and formal structures, but they still are very much involved with influencing public and private decisions of who gets what, how, and why, especially why some groups and classes benefit at the expense of others. The failure to see them as political, that is engaged in both local and broader struggles for power, induces a myopia which narrows community efforts to a romantic view of local work that they are inherently on the side of expanding social, economic, and political justice. In fact conservative and reactionary forms occur more often than their liberal or radical counterparts. They take a more virulent and dominant form in eras supportive of conservative and reactionary initiatives, but persist and develop under all conditions.

As noted earlier, the nature of the dominant forms of community action is connected to the broader political-economic context of any historical period. What is clear in studying community efforts in eras such as the 1920s, 1950s, and since 1975 is how the examples from the canon and those in the anti-canon are yoked in a historical continuum of conflict and change. Periods of conservatism and reaction are often just that, reactions against, “backlashes,” which seek to undermine prior progressive gains, to moderate former progressive efforts, and to support conservative and reactionary ones. But these eras are not simply backlashes. They also represent deep currents and on-going elements in American political life. Even a brief, highly selective study of community efforts in these periods, demonstrates both the existence and nature of anti-canonical efforts in community organizing, ones that are all too important and prominent to be considered anything less than central to understanding community and community efforts.

17.3 1920s

The history of community organizations in the 1920s offers a stark contrast to the efforts in periods which came just before and just after it. The 1920s are an archetypal conservative political economy. With the close of World War I, Right-wing repression against social activism and labor organizing, exemplified by the Red Scare of 1918, delegitimized prior reform projects and victories. The Red Scare was followed by a so-called “return to normalcy,” in which the business ethic of the 1920s replaced the social reform impulse of the Progressive Era. Heightened individualism replaced concerns about social cohesion. A resurfacing of laissez-faire ideology replaced analyses of structural causation. Society receded from concern with social issues into more individualist and materialist pursuits. Right-wing community efforts and social movements resurfaced as well, such as religious fundamentalism, the Ku Klux Klan, and other nativist organizations. But, critical to our overall argument, the conservative context not only supported Right-wing efforts, it moderated and reconfigured progressive ones.

Whereas social settlement workers and other nascent social work forms of community organization were characterized by an integrated and pluralistic community organization practice prior to the 1920s—one committed to aiding individuals, building community, and changing society—after World War I most community organization and social work leaders rejected having anything to do with social causes (Berry 1999).

In place of the core settlement elements of collaborative practice, community building, and social action, the 1920s institutionalized a much more restrictive and confined practice. Jane Addams said that social work reflected the “symptoms of this panic and with a kind of protective instinct, carefully avoided any identification with the phraseology of social reform” (quoted in Lundblad 1995, p. 667). The atmosphere of social

work changed in the 1920s. There was a new emphasis on being disengaged, that is, being objective experts rather than social reformers and of focusing on the individual and recreational activities rather than collective needs and more politicized issues. Social work students in the 1920s were even said to scoff at the very idea of community service (Lubove 1975).

Not everyone dropped the idea of community. Many who were previously interested in community activism, now under pressure to change their ways, redefined community organization to be more professional and less activist, that is about interorganizational coordination and administration—building and managing federations of social service agencies that sought to bring greater order, efficiency, effectiveness, and power to voluntary sector welfare efforts (Trolander 1975; see also Brilliant 1990)—rather than working with the poor in immigrant slum neighborhoods. By linking charitable efforts, by developing a centralized mechanism for collecting and distributing charitable giving, by being more attentive to issues of funding and record keeping, this new emphasis in community organization, which resulted in the formation of precursors to the current United Way, fit closely with the business-minded, efficiency-seeking, and professional temper of the time (Fabricant and Fisher 2002). Earlier community-based and activist efforts were now rejected as romantic and naïve, unsystematic and unprofessional (Schwartz 1965).

Another direct impact of the change in political economy on community organization efforts was the loss of control over funding and, with it, a shift in organizational mission and practice. Similar to the privatization and corporatization of community efforts in our own conservative context since 1980, in the 1920s many community efforts became increasingly dependent on formalized, business-supported sources of charitable funding, in this case local Community Chests. Chests reduced dependence on religious institutions by offering a potentially steady stream of stable, alternate funding. Chest support, however, also required standardized operations. For example, the early style of settlement voluntary

work—autonomous, innovative, informal, passionate, and committed to the cause of social, economic, and political justice—gradually became more administrative, businesslike, bureaucratic, and heavily constricted in terms of its strategy, tactics, and programming (Trolander 1975; Walkowitz 1999). For organizations interested in social reform and social action, the whole decade was “a long hard struggle... uphill all the way” (Chambers 1992, 452). The broader political economic context had a powerful conservative impact on community-based efforts in the 1920s, fostering reactionary efforts and incorporating and moderating liberal and left organizations.

17.4 1950s

The most prominent form of community organizing in the 1950s was the neighborhood homeowners' associations that proliferated in outer cities and new suburbs. Whether called civic clubs, homeowners or property associations, or neighborhood protective organizations, they all shared a two-fold goal of protecting property values and building and maintaining community. We argue that these homeowner associations are rarely considered part of the history of community-based efforts, as they have little in common with the goals and practices of other efforts such as the social settlements, Alinsky, or Sixties activism which sought to create a more inclusive, diverse, and egalitarian society. They are part of the anti-canon, in that they sought an exclusive homogeneous conception of community designed primarily to maintain community and protect the value of their house investment. To that end community improvement associations did more than keep out “undesirables.” They pressured elected officials or community leaders for service provision in the form of street cleaning and garbage removal. They helped enforce deed restrictions which regulated a wide variety of community planning and housing issues, including materials used in construction, setbacks, minimum sales prices and uses of the house, even who could

own or reside there (Plotkin 2005). In these organizations community protection always went hand in hand with community maintenance. In the 1920s and especially the 1950s homeowner's associations sought protection against their chief threat: racial integration.

Americans have formed community associations and used community in many different ways. The proliferation and use of neighborhood improvement associations in outer-city neighborhoods or suburban communities in small towns is not restricted to the 1920s or 1950s, the two historical periods we are arguing helped foment, perpetuate, and foster reactionary uses of community. Centrifugal urban growth has been a long term phenomenon rather than being limited to specific historical periods. Restrictive covenants speak to the core values and objectives of suburban community formation. As Fogelson (2007, 123) argues for affluent suburbs, "What was it about them that required the imposition of "protective restrictions"? To answer these questions, it is necessary to look beyond the restrictions to the deep-seated fears that were embodied in them—fear of others..., fear of change, and fear of the market. A look at these fears reveals much not only about suburbia but also about American society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries." These enclaves and their associations, not only in suburbs but in outer-city neighborhoods, also speak to the conservative uses of community in a mobile, often rootless society (Garb 2005). Inherent in these communities, built by developers and defended by community associations, is the constant search for and re-creation of community so common to the generally rootless American experience. "The result of this endemic restlessness was not only that Americans were constantly on the move and routinely settling in communities to which they had no "local attachments," but also that they invariably lived among strangers.... To put it another way, most suburbanites would have to create a community before they could join it (Fogelson 2007, 148). And given that most were fleeing diverse and messy cities, communities they created emphasized order, stability, and homogeneity (see Sennett 2007).

The impact of these neighborhood improvement associations and deed restrictions on the conceptualization and formation of community in the United States has been profound. They are critical to understanding how "constructions of race and manifestations of racism" (Gotham 2000, p. 629) are tied to community formation. But in racially tense urban environments, especially Northern cities in the 1920s and 1950s after the great migrations of African-Americans from the rural south to the urban north and south, homeowner's associations were focused mostly on racial exclusion rather than community formation (Plotkin 2001).

As Loewen (2005, pp. 128–29) notes, "of 350,000 new homes built in northern California between 1946 and 1960 with FHA [Federal Housing Administration] support, *fewer than 100 went to blacks*. That same pattern holds for the whole state, and for the nation as well" (Loewen's emphasis). What changed was that in 1948 in *Shelley v Kraemer* the U.S. Supreme Court, pushed by the NAACP, struck down "racial restrictive covenants," which for example, limited ownership and tenancy to "Caucasians and Whites only." Given the great migration of African-Americans to northern cities during the second world war, given the postwar housing crunch in these cities in the 1950s which was aided and abetted by federal housing policies, and given the emerging urban crisis which began in the 1950s not the 1960s, massive conflicts between largely white working class, roman catholic, single-family homeowners on the one side, and African-Americans on the other, erupted. In Sugrue's pioneering study of Detroit in these years, most white residents in the outer city neighborhoods close to the auto plants thought their economic interests and communal identities were threatened by racial integration. They turned to homeowner associations to defend their interests and their world (Sugrue 1998) Federations of property owner associations formed in the city to challenge any property owners and real estate brokers who "breached restrictive covenants" (221). "White Detroiters instigated over two hundred incidents against blacks moving into formerly all-white neighborhoods,

including harassment, mass demonstrations, picketing, effigy burning, window breaking, arson, vandalism, and physical attacks. Most incidents followed improvement association meetings. The number of attacks peaked between 1954 and 1957..." (Sugrue 1998, 233). Similar conditions of competition for space, housing, and community as well as similar uses of homeowner's and neighborhood associations were evident in Chicago (Seligman 2005) and other cities facing housing and economic pressures.

In the post World War II era the conservative Cold War political economy stifled progressive forms of community action and encouraged more anti-progressive forms of community development, both at home and abroad. Conservative eras such as the 1950s tied this necessity for neighborhood associations to a reactionary politics. Segregationist goals were intertwined with community betterment, interconnecting the protection of property values with a politics of neighborhood exclusion and racism. This continued in the next reactionary political economy, the years since the late 1970s. Writing about Los Angeles, Davis (1990) found affluent homeowner organizing to be not only the source of the anti-property tax initiatives in the late 1970s which foreshadowed "Reagonomics," the most powerful social movement in southern California in the 1980s, but also a critical force behind the "deliberate shaping" of "fragmented and insular local sovereignties" which modeled suburban development throughout the United States (p. 164).

Conservative and Right-wing uses of community continue in our current era. The "anti-canon" is not an artifact, but its past and present are filled with lessons. Among the most important are: (1) community action is not inherently progressive, (2) local efforts are heavily affected by the national political economy, (3) in conservative eras the dominant form of community action adopts a conservative and reactionary politics, (4) liberal efforts are moderated and incorporated, (5) Left efforts are marginalized and often repressed, and (6) reactionary community efforts are unleashed.

17.5 Post-1975

In the neoconservative decades after 1975, the impact of a conservative, arguably reactionary, global and national contexts on local organizing continued to be enormous. Other forms of organizing arose in the years since 1975, ones that were much more explicitly reactionary, focused on social rather than political/economic issues. Prominent examples could include groups such as Restore our Alienated Rights (ROAR) in Boston opposing busing; anti-abortion groups picketing women's clinics, harassing women seeking abortions, and even leading to the murder of doctors performing abortions; and Christian fundamentalists organizing at both the national and local level to advance their fundamentalist vision and issues. The New Right movement, which developed and heavily influenced politics since at least 1980, has been among the most successful social change initiative since then. The fusion of disciples and proponents of free market economics and anti-communist/Cold War politics, on the one hand, with leaders and congregation members of Christian fundamentalist churches—including Roman Catholics, but mostly southern Baptists and evangelical Protestants—has resulted in the most powerful political grouping of our era. Much of their efforts were at the national level, most of it was "top down" rather than "bottom up." But a great deal of what has become known as the New Right was also focused on mobilizing people at the grassroots, in their local communities. In the 1970s, in fact, many campaigns, such as opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment, came out of grassroots, community efforts. New Right efforts were successful primarily because they straddled critical divides evident in the Left/progressive "canon" of community organizing. They blended both issues of political economy and culture. They used conflict strategies and tactics against their enemy targets – the forces of radicalism and liberalism. They understood the value of community-based organizing, but they understood even better the importance of national organizations, in concert with local

efforts, fighting for state power. They always saw themselves as part of a broader social movement, not antagonistic to movement activists as is current in much of progressive community organizing today.

Of course, since 1975 a wide variety of efforts continued to promote democratic resistance and left insurgency. A New Left populism, reflected in the work of groups such as ACORN (Fisher 1994) occasioned claims of a “backyard revolution.” Nevertheless, the neoconservative political economy that largely determined the direction of most community organizing since 1980 has moderated most of them, pushed them away from oppositional strategies, and even adopted Left populist practices in Right-populist grassroots efforts. The contemporary load-shedding of public responsibility by the national government foisted new burdens as well as opportunities on local groups. The dramatic increase of non-profit organizations in the past three decades, including but not limited to community-based efforts, is a manifestation of this national policy. Clearly the proliferation of progressive community work since the late 1970s should be seen as an outgrowth of 60s activism and a growing desire for democratic participation. But the proliferation of such community work must also be understood as well as a byproduct of neoconservative politics and policies, the result of the interaction of community concepts and practices, on the one hand, with the broader national political economy, on the other (Fisher and Shrage 2007).

17.6 Update/Conclusion

The recent election of Donald Trump, the current GOP control of Congress, and the strong continuation of reactionary politics and neoliberal policies in the United States and abroad underscore the political diversity—the canon and anti-canon—inherent in the history of community organizing described and analyzed in this chapter. These are clearly perilous and challenging times. Who would have thought even a year ago that Alinsky identifying himself “a professional anti-fascist” in the 1940s would once again have

salience in the community organizing (hereafter CO) world. While the rise of the Right certainly underscores the validity of the argument in this chapter regarding community work spanning the political spectrum, it also calls into question how effective progressive efforts have been. What are the results of these efforts? In general, the impact of CO in the United States does not seem to equal, let alone exceed, the sum of its good work. What will it take to have greater long-term impact in the struggles ahead for economic, political, social and environmental justice?

As we have discussed elsewhere (Fisher and DeFilippis 2017), one of the key issues limiting CO in a global context is the availability of resources, which for organizing takes the form of people or money. With rising demands and distractions on people’s lives, the decimation of so many communities, and the fragmentation of the Left, people seem overwhelmed by the pace and demands of daily living not to mention the challenges faced in mounting social change against a well-funded and relatively united reactionary minority. This is one reason that the issue of funding organizing, finding money for paid staff, has become so important in the past decade (Fisher and Shrage 2017).

But equally critical to finding support for powerful transformative social change organizations is building social movements which are connected to the grassroots. Recent efforts like the anti-globalization movement and Occupy Wall Street lacked community connection, a grassroots base. Prior successful CO efforts, whether by the settlement houses, Alinsky’s IAF, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Black Panthers, National Organization of Women (NOW), or ACT-UP, all successfully connected grassroots work with social movement building. They helped stimulate social movements by providing organizational training and by people modelling democratic dissent and resistance. Or they rode a social movement wave, including large numbers of people and dollars. Throughout US history the most effective vehicles of progressive social change and democratic renewal have tied community-based organizing with social movements, and vice versa.

The importance of this connection has never been truer for contemporary community organizers. Those who come out of a social movement experience are much more political and focused on mass-based organizing at the local scale and beyond. You can see it in young people. You can see it in seniors. It's true for the three of us as well, which reflects some of our biases and arguments. It's true as well for those in the field who do not see themselves as tied to, conceptually if not directly, a broader social movement, and therefore tend to be limited in vision and more open to incorporation and defeat by more powerful and angry opponents.

CO has clearly proliferated across the globe in a paradoxical political economy where functions continue to decentralize into NGO/civil society organizations as power centralizes in corporations and governments. Nevertheless, it has become the dominant—though not singular or unified—mode of social change. This has led to greater and greater numbers of people in the United States and throughout the world with training and experience in community-based initiatives. Despite differences in their organizing models there is a growing potential force for a united front of many, certainly not all, of the disaffected around a grassroots democratic Left vision and politics, if and when the next social movement opportunity occurs. But next time people need to be better prepared to put this experience and skills into play, not to mention operationalizing critical lessons learned in the past 50 years.

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Abstract

This chapter provides an overview of how Saul Alinsky's practices of building democratic power have shaped modern day community organizing. It explains why the Alinsky tradition is useful to the study of community organizations through a description of his enduring core principles of collective power, "native" leadership, and confrontational politics. The chapter makes the case for the continued relevance of Alinsky's main tenets as well as the need to critique and adapt those methods to new contexts in the 21st century. While it focuses primarily on Alinsky-style organizations, this chapter takes into account a larger ecosystem of organizations and the varying schools of thought that influence the practice of community organizing. It also offers a critique of where Alinsky's approach falls short in confronting racial and gender barriers to engagement in building power for social change. In addition to exploring the development of Alinsky's organization, *the Industrial Areas*

Foundation, the chapter features themes of organizational structure and process as they relate to Alinsky's core principles that are reflected in similar types of organizations. The chapter brings together the theoretical underpinnings of Alinsky's approach with the practical implications for how community organizing has progressed. It describes where community organizing today diverges from traditional Alinsky-style organizing, especially in trends towards the professionalization of practice, new organizing practices, and the nationalization of grassroots organizing through intermediaries.

18.1 Introduction: The Alinsky Organizing Tradition

The last decade has seen a resurgence of interest in the organizing practices of Saul Alinsky. In particular, the presidency of Barack Obama who was trained in Alinsky-style methods as a young adult in Chicago and the rise of the Tea Party that embraced time-honored organizing tactics of member recruitment, leadership development, and grassroots mobilization activated a new conversation about the strengths, weaknesses, and impact of Alinsky's community organizing in the 21st century (LeTourneau 2016; Skocpol and Williamson 2012). While fraught with misconceptions about what community organizing

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is, this renewed fame for the controversial and colorful figure serves as an important opportunity for reinvigorating an exploration of Alinsky's methods of building power for collective change (Riley 2012).

Saul Alinsky (1909–1972) dedicated his life to the pursuit of organization building that would activate the voice and participation of seemingly powerless individuals into collective forces of strength, resistance, and power. He was politicized by the unjust effects of the great Depression and influenced by the burgeoning labor movement of the late 1920s and 30s (Horwitt 1989). In recognizing the oppressive conditions of the poor and working class of Chicago (made famous by Upton Sinclair's accounts in *The Jungle*) Alinsky believed that power structures—business, government, and civil society alike—needed to be held accountable for conditions of injustice in order to realize social transformation. To achieve such goals required the organization of local people who are affected directly by inadequate living and working conditions, by social unrest, and by the oppressive constraints of inequality. This belief propelled his forty-year career of teaching people how to organize to improve their lives and broader communities through direct action (Hercules and Orenstein 1999; Horwitt 1989; Schutz and Miller 2015).

The United States of the twenty-first century is marked by a more complex social, political, and economic landscape that abounds in all types of formal, informal, and hybrid organizations. As the global community has witnessed rapid-fire changes in technology, there also has been a steady rise in the porous nature of institutional boundaries. Organizations, businesses, neighborhoods, governments, and the nation-state itself have connections well beyond the narrow parameters that once defined these entities as bounded structures. The world today may be virtually unrecognizable to Alinsky, who died in 1972. Though many decades removed, Alinsky's work remains vital and important because it teaches bedrock principles of community organization. Alinsky's legacy of ideas and examples

has enduring relevance to professional organizers and everyday citizens today especially because of his practice of developing powerful, democratic organizations.

Alinsky began exploring structures that could build collective power in late 1930s Chicago, organizing the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council into what would become community organizing's primary organizational model—a *locally-based organization of representatives and leaders from churches, social groups, and other community institutions that aim to address common issues of local concern*. In the early days of the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council, issues such as unemployment, education, youth, housing, and health status were at the forefront (Horwitt 1989, 68). Biographer, Sanford Horwitt (1989), explains that for Alinsky, the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council became a “bulwark of democracy,” a vehicle for capturing the democratic imagination across diverse groups in the midst of the turbulent political landscape of the late 1930s (Horwitt, 79). With democratic structures for governance and decision-making in place, this unique organization crossed racial and ethnic lines and fostered an “evolving democratic spirit” in the neighborhood characterized by “a respect for individual differences and a new appreciation of the possibilities of communal action,” (83).

In *People Power: The Community Organizing Tradition of Saul Alinsky*, (2015) long time organizer Mike Miller describes the importance of Alinsky in the following way:

He was a small “d” democrat who knew that if people were to participate effectively in a democracy they had to have the latent power of their members brought forth and made manifest in effective people power organizations. He was a hardheaded realist who fully appreciate the maxim from abolitionist Frederick Douglass that ‘power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.’

Miller further explains that Alinsky was “a social inventor who developed and fine-tuned two instruments of people power—the broad based community organization and the professional

community organizer,” (xiv). This chapter focuses on the development and evolution of the organizational model that grew from Alinsky’s early days in Chicago.

18.2 Mediating Institutions and Community Organizing Networks

Alinsky would go on to found the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) out of the nascent Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council (Horwitt 1989, 87), launching a “backyard revolution” (Boyte 1980) in which community groups around the country would take up local issues of common concern (Dreier 2012). He generated support for establishing the IAF from Catholic clergy, union leaders, and department store owner, Marshall Field III (Schutz and Miller 2015). According to Miller, the organizational structure of the Back of the Yard Neighborhood Council “established the pattern for Alinsky’s subsequent organizing,” (4) building from diverse, local institutional anchors as the base of leadership that could shape collective power and develop shared agendas around common demands. While his support from labor waned in the early years of the IAF, Alinsky found significant support among Catholics and mainline Protestants, both seeking ways to translate their values of social and economic justice into public action that confronted the problems facing their communities. Churches became the source of Alinsky’s “organization of organizations,” and the core method for how the IAF has organized in multi-racial communities since the 1970s (Schutz and Miller 2015).¹ This aspect of Alinsky’s history is important, especially given today’s misguided assumption by conservatives that Alinsky was a Communist and promoted communist or socialist ideals. Community organizing scholar, Peter Dreier, draws an essential

distinction about Alinsky’s relationship to ideology:

Alinsky was hardly the subversive, however, that Gingrich and other conservatives have portrayed. During the Depression, some of the key leaders of the industrial labor movement were members of or close to the Communist Party, and Alinsky worked alongside them in building an alliance between the neighborhood, the church, and the unions — but he was neither a Communist nor a socialist himself. He was fond of quoting Madison, Jefferson, and Tom Paine. He considered himself a patriotic American. He eschewed ideology. His closest political ties were with the Catholic Church. He frequently spoke at seminaries advising future priests to express their faith by putting Catholic social teachings into practice by helping to organize their parishioners rather than doling out charity. (Dreier 2012)

Alinsky’s sudden death at age 63 propelled the organization to a time of changing leadership and growth. Under Alinsky’s successors, Ed Chambers and Richard Harmon, the IAF grew to become one of the nation’s leading grassroots community organizing networks rooted in religious congregations. Other networks also developed from the Alinsky school of thought. They have been aligned closely in their practice of building organizations of organizations through the recruitment of churches and congregations as dues-paying member institutions, the development of local leadership through extensive training programs, and collective action rooted in local issues. These networks include the Pacific Institute of Community Organizing (PICO), Gamaliel, and the Direct Action and Research Training Center (DART). Like the IAF, the other organizing networks employ a federated structure in which local organizations are affiliated within larger regional and national networks. Churches, synagogues, and other local institutions including neighborhood associations and some unions primarily make up local organizations. Leadership training and congregational development are essential components of their strategy for building grassroots’ power. The organizations foster individual leadership within member institutions to recruit other leaders and members, to identify common issues of concern, and to develop action strategies for holding public and private entities

¹Warren (2001) focuses on the limited success of Alinsky’s organizations despite his philosophical contribution to organizing. Also see, *The Alinsky Legacy: Alive and Kicking* by Reitzes & Reitzes (1987).

accountable. The emphasis on strong leaders and strong institutions is a signature of the faith-based community organizing tradition that grew out of Alinsky's original framework. By and large, the basic practices and principles of organizing are fairly consistent across the networks. However, geographic competition, personality conflicts, and professional territorialism have impeded their ability to collaborate or convene around shared learning.²

Almost simultaneous to the emergence of the organizing networks, many of the great social movements had reached a crescendo. Activists and organizers crisscrossed movements for civil rights, women's rights, welfare rights, and farmworkers. Notably among those connected to Alinsky was organizer, Fred Ross, who later recruited Cesar Chavez and together developed the United Farmworkers (Schutz and Miller 2015; Thompson 2016).³ Other types of tenant- and neighborhood-based organizations were also born, including The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), founded by Wade Rathke and George Wiley⁴ and National People's Action founded by Gale Cincotta and Shel Trapp. Heather Booth founded a training institute, Midwest Academy, to support the development of progressive leaders and organizers searching for a path forward amidst the social and political foment of the 1970s.⁵ Unlike the Alinsky organizations, Booth and her colleagues have promoted innovations in

building community organizations including multi-issue organizations, statewide organizations, and organizations that engage in electoral work. These organizations and movements differed in their approach to organization building, yet engaged similar tactics and strategies for bringing poor, working class individuals into collectives that aimed to hold power accountable through direct action. Their founders and leaders offered indispensable critiques of Alinsky's method that led to great diversity of thought and practice in community organizing. The growth of organizing, and in particular the varied forms of organization building, matched the growth of robust social movements, fueled by the energies and passions of people coming together for large-scale change.⁶ The legacy of such organizational growth and social movement activity is myriad types of community nonprofit organizations that target a range of social and political issues, employing various strategies for addressing the causes and consequences of poverty, injustice, and inequality.

An outside observer may easily have difficulty discerning the differences and effectiveness of any one group. Such an explosion of groups (Skocpol 1999) has left a rather messy constellation of organizations that claim to "do organizing." While this chapter focuses primarily on Alinsky-style organizations, it accounts for this larger ecosystem of organizations and how it influences the practice of community organizing in the tradition of Saul Alinsky.

²There have certainly been exceptions to this often times toxic dynamic, but the overriding sense in the field is that these groups do not get along.

³The "house meeting" is an organizing strategy attributed to Fred Ross and the farmworker movement. Though not directly from Alinsky, this strategy is an essential element among some community organizing groups to recruit and identify local leaders and determine shared community concerns.

⁴See Swarts (2008) for a discussion of the variations in cultural and political strategies between ACORN and congregation-based community organizing networks. Also see Fisher (2009) for extensive discussion of ACORN's organizing practices and position within the field of community organizing.

⁵Also see Heather Booth: Changing the World (2017) A film by Lilly Rivlin; <http://www.midwestacademy.com/about/mission-history/>.

18.3 Principles

Alinsky's influential writing shaped the practice of organizing. His 1946, *Reveille for Radicals* and later 1971 *Rules for Radicals* have been used as foundational texts for understanding his core principles and approach to building collective power through "people's organizations." These books serve as the primary window into Alinsky's

⁶Swarts also takes up a useful discussion of the dynamics and differences in movement organizations and Alinsky-style organizations. For example, pp. 179–180.

theoretical perspective on the utility of community organizing as a vehicle for political transformation, the roles and responsibilities of the organizer as “outsider,” and the goals of cultivating independent institutions that can hold power accountable by increasing the democratic participation of ordinary citizens (Horwitt 1989; Schutz and Miller 2015; Warren 2001). Biographer Horwitt describes Alinsky’s first book as “a polemic” (166), one that notably attacks well-intentioned liberals. “In Alinsky’s view, reason was to the liberal what power was to the radical,” (168). Within a month of publication, *Reveille* was a *New York Times* bestseller. It quickly became a widespread and popular manual for budding organizers though it was short on the “how to” methods that some organizers have craved (Schutz and Miller 2015). When *Rules for Radicals* was published just before Alinsky’s death the ideological foment of the 1960s and 1970s was reaching new heights. As Warren (2001) writes,

In the midst of the highly ideological politics of the antiwar and Black Power movements, Alinsky argued that community organizations must base themselves on the self-interest of individuals and communities in a pragmatic and non-ideological manner. (44).

Alinsky’s call for independent organizations—separate from party allegiance or entrenched ideology—and his adherence to self-interest as a core tenet of organizing—reinforced his philosophy that people’s organizations are a critical vehicle for empowering the poor as a legitimate and credible political force (Schutz and Miller 2015; Warren 2001).

Three of Alinsky’s principles give shape to modern-day community organizing,⁷ collective power, native leadership, and confrontational politics. These central dimensions of Alinsky’s framework hold particular relevance for understanding the current context of Alinsky-style organizations and the most robust forms of contemporary community organizing. These principles are concrete

and specific with practical implications for today’s community organizer. They also reach for higher ideals of democratic participation in which a powerful citizenry holds public and private institutions accountable to their interests (Gecan 2002).

First, the notion of collective, or citizen, power is manifest broadly across community and grassroots organizations. Alinsky argued that understanding and claiming one’s self-interest is critical to realizing one’s civic potential and is a primary source of power to act. When brought together with others who share a mutual understanding of values and self-interest, and a common analysis of a local problem, the group can act on its collective self-interest for change. Alinsky agitated local leaders and politicians alike around their self-interest. He used agitation to uncover leaders’ anger at injustice and to fuel their action and he used it to galvanize politicians and business leaders to respond in favor of the community’s demands. For Alinsky, acting out of self-interest was the pathway to the collective power needed to fight city hall.

Second, without “native leadership” (Alinsky 1969) and the relationships that come with it, collective power is not possible. Seeking out native leadership is the job of the outside organizer—to locate those individuals who hold the key to broader communities of people. As Alinsky writes,

The building of a People’s Organization can be done only by the people themselves. The only way that people can express themselves is through their leaders...those persons whom the local people define and look up to as leaders. ... A People’s Organization must be rooted in the people themselves, (Alinsky 1969, 64)

Today’s Alinsky-style organizations adopt this focus on local, indigenous leadership in their approaches to building up a base of local constituencies (“base building”) and developing leadership among these groups through various training institutes and workshops. However, there are also many organizations that aim to mobilize people for action but do not invest in recruiting indigenous leaders nor support local leadership development aimed at forming the backbone of organizations beyond professional staff.

⁷Schutz and Miller (2015) offer a more expansive set of principles, each of which are important dimensions of community organizing. For this discussion, I emphasize three of the principles as fundamental pillars from which other principles follow.

Third, confrontational politics—the tactics and strategies for accountability, winning, and making political gains—remain a critical aspect of how the everyday practices of community organizing translate into tangible victories for organizations and communities.⁸ Alinsky’s notorious penchant for confrontational, in-your-face tactics with politicians and business leaders has been embedded over time within the cultural ethos of Alinsky-style organizations. By using conflict to politicize grassroots leaders and hold public officials accountable, a confrontational politics is the source of action and the demonstration of organizational power. It is intended to galvanize leaders and members to action and to yield a reaction from the opposition. Using such tactics as a tool for accountability is a strategy for winning. While there is wide variation in the extent to which these practices are used, confrontational politics plays a central role in citizen groups’ ability to leverage power for social change. Many scholars of organizing have documented this signature element of the Alinsky-style organization when a public official is “in the hot seat,” pressured by leaders to concede power and meet their demands for better schools, affordable housing, accessible health care, and higher quality jobs (Shirley 1997; Wood 2002; Warren 2001; Gecan 2002; Rogers 1990).

18.4 Why Alinsky Matters: Organizational Structure and Process

Understanding Alinsky’s tradition and organizational type is a useful and necessary dimension of studying community social change organizations. Organizations are at the heart of Alinsky’s legacy. For Alinsky and the IAF, effective grassroots political organizations take the form of mass-based, people-powered democratic institutions. Alinsky’s legacy is evident in the current landscape of community organizing: a rich organizational environment peppered with local,

state, regional, and national organizations that claim “grassroots power” as essential to their success. Likewise, we see artifacts of Alinsky’s philosophical ideas and tactics embedded within various social movements since the farmworkers. What exists today is an intricate and overlapping ecosystem of nonprofit organizations, grassroots groups, movement organizations, coalitions, and national intermediaries.

The strands of this broad and deep tapestry of organizations have adopted many of the core principles first articulated by Alinsky in the 1940s and refined through the 1970s and 80s by the early IAF organizers. Whether they are exclusively part of the major organizing networks that grew directly from Alinsky and the early days of the IAF, or they flow from other historical threads of organizing, these organizations have formed the infrastructure of grassroots democratic power in the United States. However, while some of these organizations reflect Alinsky principles, many of these groups do not practice organizing as Alinsky proposed and advocated, nor do they possess what long-time organizer, Michael Gecan calls “the hard edges of effective organizations,” (Gecan 2002, 133).

Given this history and the evolution of Alinsky style organizations, what organizational elements exist from Alinsky that other models of organizing and community building do not possess? The distinctive organizational features of the Alinsky style model—those specific characteristics of structure and process that are the hallmark of Alinsky and the IAF—are an important place to begin. These principles remain valid and essential, even as other organizing tools have been added to the toolbox and as refinements in techniques are made.

18.4.1 Structure

Over the years, the Industrial Areas Foundation has refined a set of organizational structures intended to build and sustain local institutions that are powered by the energy and work of ordinary men and women. IAF affiliates are structured to be an “organization of organizations” founded from

⁸For example, see Mondros and Wilson (1994) and Bobo et al.’s (1996) treatment of confrontational tactics in social action organizations.

the recruitment, development, and participation of local leaders from local institutions. These leaders determine a shared agenda, articulate collective goals, and hold each other accountable to those goals. They facilitate research actions to explore plausible solutions; analyze power dynamics; and develop campaigns that hold public officials accountable to the community's collective self-interest. Particularly notable campaigns have included Baltimoreans United in Leadership (BUILD) for living wage and affordable housing and Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS) for necessary school reforms.

These practices of organization building are one of Alinsky's major contributions to the field of organizing. Such elements not only help to grow and strengthen the power of grassroots organizations, but they also foster the civic skills and political muscle of its individual members. For example, local leaders in an Alinsky-style organization will learn the mechanics of face-to-face meetings (a "one-to-one"), house meetings, community convenings about issues, and accountability sessions with public officials. They will become skilled at formulating meeting agendas, rigorously keeping to a time schedule, recruiting and turning out meeting participants, and evaluating the successes and failures of actions. From these activities and the lessons learned, leaders with their organizer discern and develop a political strategy that will achieve concrete victories for local communities. In aggregate, these structures cultivate discipline, rigor, and focus in the everyday work of organizing for social action. They contribute to fostering a culture of democratic engagement as essential elements of "people-powered" organizations.⁹

18.4.2 Process

Without specific attention to the dynamic processes of citizen engagement such organizational structures will not yield the kinds of social and political change that communities seek. In particular, Alinsky-style organizations focus on the processes of (1) building power through local leadership and (2) garnering the political capacity necessary for winning. These processes create pathways for the voice and participation of everyday people. They are central to what Boyte and Kari (1996) term "schools for public life," spaces in which "people learn the arts and skills of everyday politics, politics far more multi-dimensional than voting," (145). They are environments of learning by doing—a kind of democratic practice with others to articulate one's political beliefs, values and interests, to negotiate and debate issues of concern, to strategize appropriate tactics, and to reflect on the ability of such actions to achieve desired changes (Boyte and Kari 1996). Learning in this context is contingent therefore on transforming the private individual into a public actor. It is also about transforming institutions once thought to be entities reserved for the private expression of one's religious or spiritual beliefs into spaces for public action. In the Alinsky tradition, the processes of building power and winning are key to achieving such transformation.

First, the leadership development of "ordinary citizens" is one of the most prevalent legacies of Alinsky-style organizing. Many existing groups do not embody the approach of organized local people made up of indigenous, native leadership, despite their identity as grassroots organizations. Alinsky-style organizations aim to develop a robust citizenry for political power and action. Professional advocates disconnected from the lived realities of communities facing poverty, injustice, or inequality have no place in Alinsky-style organizations. Organizers recruit, train, and mentor local leaders from member organizations. The primary task of any organizer is to develop leadership that can then mobilize followers for action. Fundamentally, organizing power relies on this process and the strength of

⁹Gecan (2002) explores the notion that organizing is not only about political change but also cultural change in three public realms: market culture, bureaucratic culture, and relational culture (151–166).

the relationships between organizers, local leaders, and their constituencies. Building leadership enables the Alinsky-style organization to have power to win.

Winning matters in Alinsky organizations. By and large, these organizations mobilize local power to influence public decision-making (policy) and private actors (business/industry). Without a large body of well-trained leaders who can turn out large numbers of people as an expression of power, the organization cannot make claims of accountability among policy makers and business leaders. The process of determining a political strategy that aligns with the organization's people power is critical to the success of any community organizing effort. In addition to "organized people," "organized money" plays a critical role in winning. IAF organizations emphasize that just as the leadership of the organization must be derived from within the member institutions, so too must the financial resources that sustain its work. IAF organizations rely on dues paying member institutions to support organizing and to demonstrate their organizational power. Organized people and organized money are therefore used to leverage the political muscle needed for influence. They are indicators of organizational strength and serve as negotiating tools for expressing the political heft of the organization.

18.5 Implications

Community organizing, and the Alinsky tradition itself, contributes to sustaining citizen engagement in democracy. By challenging injustice and abuses of power, and building collective power among poor, marginalized communities to achieve change, community organizing remains the primary vehicle by which broad groups of diverse people engage in the practice of democracy. Alinsky's core principles are visible in the multiple organizing schools of thought, and the elements of structure and process that give texture to what distinguishes Alinsky-style organizations today.

There also has been an evolution of the practice of community organizing since the days of Alinsky. Where Alinsky's influence on congregation-based organizing is prevalent, contemporary community organizing also has come a long way, integrating approaches and methods that reflect new communities, new realities, and deeper alignment with racial and gender justice (Wood and Fulton 2015). Since the 1970s, there has been considerable expansion of grassroots groups, training entities, community-based organizations, and movement organizations that apply Alinsky's core principles and, more importantly, adapt those methods within different political arenas and within different socio-economic contexts. Examining the organizational structure and processes of these groups is one way to see evidence of Alinsky's central tenets as well as how his approach has been adapted over time. For example, community organizing groups that are connected within larger state and regional networks, may have grown from the Alinsky tradition of local organizations built by local leaders, but they also reflect a reality that not all politics is local and that power in certain instances must amalgamate for particular types of political change (i.e. influencing state policy change for health care access or targeting federal immigration offices for improvements in the practices of adjudicating officers) (Stout 2010). Changes in organizational structure also reflect an evolution of methods, contemporary innovations that integrate new practices that Alinsky likely would have eschewed. These include greater emphasis on coalition and alliance building, more substantial engagement in electoral politics, and the increasing use of formal 501(c)4 organizations and political action committees aimed at direct political influence.

Community organizing today differs from traditional Alinsky-style organizing, especially in trends towards the professionalization of practice, new organizing practices (ex: digital organizing through social media tools), and the nationalization of grassroots organizing through

intermediaries like People's Action,¹⁰ The Center for Popular Democracy, and the Center for Community Change. Likewise, PICO, Gamaliel, and the IAF (to a lesser extent) have broadened their focus towards greater national presence. All of these organizations have had to face the challenges of financial sustainability and determine strategic responses to scarce resources that support organizing campaigns.¹¹ Technological advancements have not only improved communication, but also led to the invention of new organizing tools for engaging leaders and tracking data. With these technological advancements and beginning with the Obama campaign in 2008, community organizing strategies have been infused in electoral organizing in new ways. This integration has altered the nature of how campaigns are run on the left and the right (including the rapid rise of Tea Party candidates)—especially through the use of person-to-person recruitment, leadership development, and the growth of neighborhood-based team infrastructures (McKenna and Han 2014). Further, much of community organizing as a field has aligned itself with the Progressive left and its elected leaders, a relationship that for Alinsky would be too close to ideological strongholds and the targets of decision-making.

In the work of social justice, process matters. History has shown that organizations and movements are sustained by their people and how they engage with the opportunities and challenges of the day. While there is certainly continued relevance of Alinsky's main tenets, there is also a

need to adapt those methods to new contexts. For his time, Alinsky did much to cross barriers that divided ethnic groups in the Back of the Yards neighborhood. Yet he and his successors were widely criticized for an approach to organizing that falls short of the ideals of democratic inclusion. As early as the 1970s, organizers were seeking alternative ways to confront racial, ethnic, gender and socio-economic barriers to citizen engagement and promote community building that garners power for social change. The groups that diverged from Alinsky's model, such as ACORN and the Midwest Academy, developed and refined practices of engagement that are intended equally to build power for change through direct action and promote equitable and inclusive approaches to organizing (Sen 2003; Schutz and Miller 2015).

The changing political and institutional environment of the 21st century calls on those committed to the ideals of democracy to formulate new solutions to complex problems, relying on the lessons of history to inspire action for change. At this writing, Donald Trump's presidency has galvanized historic and unprecedented mass mobilizations, especially among women, immigrants, and people of color in opposition to his leadership and policy goals. Now more than ever effective organizations from these movements are necessary for large-scale social and political change.

Alinsky gave us ideas that are rich and adaptable for use in this changing environment. His methods are not without well-founded critiques and the practice of community organizing has benefited from the tremendous innovations and adaptations of its contemporary leaders. With this critique, the organizational form first developed by Alinsky has undergone essential transformations that have yielded a landscape of organizing that is richer and more sophisticated than ever before. There are more organizations, diverse in their structure but with similar goals of empowering citizens for action; there is greater knowledge about effective tools for organizing in different contexts, with different constituencies; and there is a flourishing and growing practice that has been refined to build sustainable

¹⁰People's Action and People's Action Institute were founded in 2016 as a merger of National People's Action, Alliance for a Just Society, and US Action and their 501 (c)4 sister organizations.

¹¹Just as the organizational structure of community organizations have shifted over time, so too has the structure of funding and fundraising. Alinsky-style organizations typically have been supported through dues-paying memberships with limited funding support from outside sources such as the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (a primary funder of community organizing for decades) or private foundations. Today, more and more organizations rely on grants to support their work. As a result, many organizations fall victim to the instability inherent in an inconsistent and unpredictable funding environment.

organizations beyond issue campaign or election and striving towards large-scale political impact. These are the necessary elements for realizing the democratic promise of which Alinsky dreamed.

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Self Help Organized Through Mutual Assistance in Helping Communities

19

Steven P. Segal

Abstract

Self-help organizations facilitate mutual assistance in helping communities. They offer a vehicle for people with a common problem to gain support and recognition, obtain information on, advocate on behalf of, address issues associated with, and take control of the circumstances that bring about, perpetuate, and provide solutions to their shared concern. Self-help organizations may be small informal groups, confined to interactive support for their members, commonly called self-help groups, or differentiated and structured multiservice agencies, mutual assistance organizations referred to as self-help agencies. Such agencies are generally directed and staffed by “self-helpers” and distinct from professionally-led organizations. In these agencies, self-helpers are well-represented as board members with the right to hire and fire professionals in the organization. Self-help groups and agencies empower members through shared example and modeled success. Of late, community-based professionally-led organizations have attempted to integrate self-help principles into their support service offerings, reflecting ongoing financial and ideological

dynamics in systems of care. This effort has led to the development of peer professional helpers, known as peer support specialists, whose contribution to the helping professions are defined by their lived experience. Spread throughout the world, self-help groups, agencies and integrated peer support specialists are considered a major community resource for enabling people to help themselves. This chapter looks at the development, the content, and the effectiveness of self-help organizations and peer support specialists within professionally-led community-based systems of care.

Self-help is the mantra of American life. In the past fort-five years, “self-help”, more accurately described as self-help effort organized or facilitated by mutual assistance in helping communities, has become one of the fastest growing movements and adjuncts to professional helping efforts in the U.S. and around the world (US Department of Health and Human Services 1999; WHO 2001, 2008; SAMHSA 2011).

Helping oneself, and being part of a community of individuals with similar issues who are working together to help themselves, fosters a sense of mastery and is probably one of the most satisfying human experiences. It is hard to replicate the gratification it seems to provide to people with problems who have experienced repeated and significant hardships; gratification evidenced by the changes in facial expressions

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and posture during such participatory experiences. Participation in a community effort of mutual assistance can thus be a gift made possible by finding a position where one, in concert with a peer, in a group, or in an organization, can make decisions that are respected and implemented; people can participate in a meaningful way that provides a context of self-respect for the result of their decision-making process. It is extraordinary to understand that one's problem in such a context is not only accepted, but a qualification for participation. The achievement of such positive effects—though gratifying and validating to the helper—is owned by the individual. Thus the rule for fidelity of self-help intervention—i.e. whether the intervention is truly self-help—is based upon the extent to which the individual is involved in their own decision-making or the decision-making of a group or organization in which they are involved, and the extent to which that decision-making can contribute to implemented action. Whether the self-help intervention is effective is measured by the extent to which participation in decision-making leads to measures of positive outcome.

19.1 Organizational Forms

Self-help settings seek to invest power in a member to recover from a problem or more importantly live a better life with their ongoing problem. Self-help delivered in the form of mutual assistance in a helping community has developed in three major organizational forms: small groups, service agencies, and via peer assistance within a professional service organization. Self-help organizations facilitate mutual assistance (Alcoholics Anonymous 1976; Low 1950). They offer a vehicle for people with a common problem to gain support and recognition, obtain information on, advocate on behalf of, address issues associated with, and take control of the circumstances that bring about, perpetuate, and provide solutions to their shared

concern. It is the shared problem that binds a group together and the belief that having experienced the problem gives one a special understanding of how to address its solution. Such organizations may be small informal self-help groups (SHGs), confined to interactive support for their members, or differentiated and structured multiservice self-help agencies (SHAs). Small SHGs frequently affiliate with national organizations that help promote their philosophy and method and that facilitate the formation of new affiliates by providing support, expertise, and referrals. As SHAs, they may provide drop-in service, social support, vocational assistance, housing help, or access to specialized self-help discussion groups. SHGs and SHAs are run by self-helpers, who are individuals that have “lived experience,” and, as such, are distinct from professionally lead support groups, which are a mainstay of professional helping practice. Professionally led organizations addressing particular psycho-social, health, or mental health problems are increasingly hiring people with lived experience, peer helpers/peer-support specialists, to supplement their helping efforts. Peer support specialists (PSSs) have become part of the staffs of professionally led organizations—staffers whose expertise derives from their lived experience. These individuals have become increasingly concerned about their vocational opportunities, their potential for advancement in professional organizations and the limited compensation for their helping efforts.

Various terms are used to describe the self-help organizations and the people with lived experience who participate in, hold volunteer positions in, or are employed in self-help activities. The organizations have been called self-help groups, consumer-run organizations (CROs), consumer-operated service programs (COSPs), consumer operated programs (COPs), and self-help agencies (SHAs). Herein, for consistency, all small informal aggregations of individuals helping each other will be referred to as self-helps groups (SHGs), and multi-function service programs run by self-helpers as self-help

agencies (SHAs). Participants with lived experience in such programs and in professionally led organizations have been called: self-helpers, members, consumer-survivors, consumers, consumer-providers, peer educators, prosumers and peer support specialists. Herein, again for consistency, all participants in SHGs and SHAs are referred to as self-helpers or members, those holding positions in professionally led helping organizations as peer-support specialists (PSSs).

19.2 Scope

The American Self Help Group Clearing House provides a key-word-searchable database of over 1100 national, international, model, and online self-help support groups and agencies that cover over four hundred separate problems involving addictions, bereavement, health, mental health, disabilities, abuse, parenting, caregiver concerns, and other stressful life situations. In 2015, the single listing of one of the oldest surviving groups—Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., which was founded in 1935—alone included 106,202 Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) groups in 180 countries worldwide. Other listings in the mental health area include Recovery, Inc., with over 700 affiliate groups; Schizophrenics Anonymous, Inc., with 130 groups; and Grow, Inc., with 143 groups worldwide. Other online resources focus on particular problem areas, such as the National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse, which offers news, training, technical assistance, and listings of consumer-driven services in their area of specialty.

A 2002 national survey of mental health mutual support groups and self-help organizations run by and for mental health consumers and/or family members, and consumer-operated services found 7467 groups and organizations—more than the number of traditional mental health organizations (4546). Mutual support groups reported that 41,363 people attended their last meetings and that approximately 1.5 million members were served in 1 year (Goldstrom et al. 2006). In the U.S. alone, the Center for Self-Help

Research's (CSHR's) collaborative survey with the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) showed that in 1993 (Segal 1994), 46 states were funding 567 such organizations; by 2015 a similar survey compiled a sample frame of 895 (Ostrow and Leaf 2014). Directors of 190 self-help mental health programs tended to view their services as alternatives to traditional mental health services (Ostrow and Hayes 2015).

Driven in part by policies, which, to varying degrees, mandate peer support (DOH 2009; Kirby 2006; Surgeon General's Report 1999; New Zealand Ministry of Health 2005; AHMC 2009), peer helpers/peer-support specialists are being employed in Canada, the United States, New Zealand, Australia, and the United Kingdom (Walker and Bryant 2013). In the U.S., peer support workers bill Medicaid (GCPSP 2010) and peer operated services are recognized as best practices (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration 2011; NASMHPD 1989). In 2008, funding was available for associations of service users or consumers in most of the EU15 countries. In the United Kingdom, a Recovery College has been set up, which trains peer support specialists (Wilson 2010). In Ontario, Canada, community mental health care teams are mandated to hire peer support specialists (White et al. 2003).

19.3 Groups and Self Helper Operated Organizations: Philosophy, Method, and Objectives

SHGs share much with SHAs in terms of philosophy and method, yet vary in the breadth of their functional objectives. Both organization types attempt to empower people to change their own lives and to provide them with an accepting, safe, nonjudgmental place where they can find community, information, and support. Their purpose is to pursue personal growth and change. Everyone is a peer. They typically facilitate sharing or interaction or both among members. Decisions are made in a democratic fashion.

Leadership is nonprofessional. Leadership positions in the SHG are shared or rotated, though are more established in the SHA. Each member can become a leader with minimal training. Neither the SHG or the SHA is dependent on a particular person for its continued existence. Each member has a right to due process in disputes within the organization. Dues and fees are nominal, covering group expenses (Share 2016; Alcoholics Anonymous 2016, 1976; Low 1950).

The SHA, which is usually incorporated as a nonprofit with a lay board, looks from the outside very much like a traditional community-based nonprofit multiservice agency. It differs in that it is run by and for the service user. Its director, a majority of its governing board, and its staff are current or former service users. Like in the SHG, the expertise underlying the recovery or helping process derives from personal experience with the problem. SHAs serving people with mental illness include independent living programs that help members access material resources and gain practical skills, as well as drop-in community centers that provide a place for members to socialize, build a supportive community, and get advocacy and a gamut of independent living services (Zinman 1987).

The program of the free-standing SHG generally is embodied in a written text and constitutes a structured *philosophy of life and a psychology of mental health for the ordinary person*. This document is often born out of the founders’ resolve to record and share what worked in their own recovery or the recovery of others they are familiar with. The continued development of the structure and philosophy of the groups are ensured by the leaders and the groups’ umbrella organizations over the years.

Many SHGs are modeled on the AA philosophy and method, which is contained in the 12 steps and 12 traditions approach that is discussed in Alcoholics Anonymous, and are adapted in such places as Grow’s “Blue Book,” or “Dual Recovery Anonymous’ The twelve steps and dual disorders”. Important elements in these 12-step groups include the recognition that the problem is out of control, and that the member wants to deal with the problem within a spiritual

framework. AA describes itself as a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other so that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; they are self-supporting through their own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization, or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; and neither endorses nor opposes any causes. AA’s primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety (<http://www.aa.org>). Their 12 steps and traditions are included in the following text box.

The 12 steps of alcoholics anonymous	The 12 traditions of alcoholics anonymous
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God <i>as we understood Him</i> 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity 2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern 3. The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking 4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole 5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers 6. An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the

(continued)

The 12 steps of alcoholics anonymous	The 12 traditions of alcoholics anonymous
<p>willing to make amends to them all</p> <p>9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others</p> <p>10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it</p> <p>11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, <i>as we understood Him</i>, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out</p> <p>12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs</p>	<p>AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose</p> <p>7. Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions</p> <p>8. AA should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers</p> <p>9. AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve</p> <p>10. AA has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy</p> <p>11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need to always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films</p> <p>12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities</p>

formal investment of power. Power may constitute influence over the inner self so that one may take control of one’s impulses to abuse drugs, food, gambling, or other substances or activities, or it may constitute formal power to cope with one’s inner emotions in grief, in gaining control over one’s internal voices or demons, or it may constitute power over one’s social and political context so as to create accommodation of disability, direct one’s own care, and overcome social stigma, poverty, homelessness, and other structural impediments to solving one’s problem. The SHG, in its written principles and by the examples of its members who have actually taken control of their situations or exercised control over their problem, provides a supportive testing ground for the individual to take control of their own problems—as power is rarely given, but rather is taken. Power can be formally invested but must be exercised. The SHG invests power by structuring participation in the 12-step ceremony of spiritual awakening or other through other ceremonial participation. The SHA provides roles for the exercise of power in organizational and extra organizational activities. The peer support specialist invests power by role modeling coping behavior based on lived experience.

The 12-step SHG legitimizes and supports the member’s appeal to a higher authority to help provide the internal strength to exercise such power (Alcoholics Anonymous 1976; Low 1950). While many SHGs originate to deal with an internal issue and are nonpolitical, others come from dissatisfaction with external conditions and their seeming lack of power to do anything about these conditions—such is the case of those groups arising from the disability rights movement and the antipsychiatry movement. Disability rights advocates banded together to empower themselves to force society to accommodate their disabilities; similarly, the antipsychiatry movement encourages consumers of mental health services to empower themselves to have a voice in the design and implementation of mental health services and their own care and to stop what many described as patient abuse, as reflected in its motto: “Nothing About Us

19.3.1 Empowerment

Self-help is about empowerment, that is, the investment of power in a member to overcome a problem. According to The Oxford English Dictionary (2012), “to empower” implies a

Without Us!” These newer SHGs and SHAs address issues of personal, organizational, and extra-organizational empowerment of their members through the following related activities:

1. Individuals are directly provided or helped to gain access to resources and skills necessary to reach desired goals, and alternative models are provided to counter stigma.
2. Organizations are structured to give clients access to roles that permit them to take responsibility for and exercise discretion over policies that affect them collectively within the agencies.
3. Changes are sought in the larger society that both better the condition of people with disabilities as a class and empower them to participate in making decisions concerning policies that affect them (Segal et al. 1993, 1995).

People who use the services run them, making all the decisions; service providers and recipients are one and the same. The groups strive to share power, responsibility, and skills and seek a nonhierarchical structure in which people reach across to each other, rather than up and down. They are based on choice; they are totally voluntary... And finally, they address the real economic, social, and cultural needs of suffering people (Zinman 1986).

19.3.2 Self-help Activities

Providing Resources and Skills. Any discussion of empowerment and self-concept runs the risk of blaming the victim and of ignoring the very large disempowering structures faced by the person with the disability. As a master status, “mentally ill”, “addict”, “fat person” and other disabling conditions create a real barrier to a person’s ability to marshal necessary and desired resources. A mentally disabled person’s control of life circumstances is often limited by decisions that view his or her competence as more limited

than the actual disability would make it, by societal and organizational structures unwilling to accommodate the disability, and by political decisions limiting available resources.

For many self-helpers the disabling aspects of their disability cannot be separated from their poverty. SHAs seem to be offering the social and psychological package of services unfunded and missing in mainstream programs. Results of a study of 226 new users of eleven mental health SHAs in the greater San Francisco Bay Area indicate that during a six month assessment period, basic resources from the SHA were received by the following percent of sample members: food (71%), bus pass (31%), place to shower (35%), clothing (33%), mailing address (29%), personal items (28%), housing (23%), storage (16%), employment (10%), help in finding a job (10%), help with rent (10%), and service information (20%) (Segal et al. 2002).

SHAs also attempt to provide their clients with necessary skills. For example, many such agencies employ clients on either a paid or volunteer basis, thus giving them a work history and references. Many offer independent living classes taught from the perspective of someone who has experienced disability and poverty.

Building Self-concept. For empowerment to occur, the person with the disability must command the necessary skills and resources to secure desired outcomes. However, even commanding the necessary skills and resources is insufficient when the environment is unresponsive or the individual does not believe in the possibility of success and therefore does not exercise power (see Rotter 1966 on “locus of control” theory and Dweck 2007 on the impact of “learned helplessness”). A person with a mental disability or an addiction is given an overriding basis for self-identification: He or she is largely defined by that status; it organizes others’ expectations about a large range of behaviors unrelated to the disability and leads to negative evaluations based on these expectations. For SHAs one of the

aspects of empowerment is to alter the meaning of the disability for the member-clients. Of particular importance is altering all the negative stereotypes that attack the person's identity and create an expectation of rejection.

To alter the meaning of the disability, the self-help agency first provides the individual with concrete proof that he or she is not alone and that there are others who share and effectively cope with the same problems. The agency then provides a community that accepts and values the person.

Rosenberg (1979) discussed how self-concept is formed by social comparison with others. This concept, with a slight revision, can be applied to the work of SHAs. By presenting the client with evidence that a group defined by a mental disability is capable of creating an organization, staffing its services, and governing its own behavior, the self-help community redefines the implications of the disability. In effect, the group rather than the individual serves as the basis of comparison with other groups. In particular, to the extent that the agency expands the work of social services agencies, it shows that people with disabilities can be as competent, if not more so, than the professionals who serve them (Katz and Maida 1990; Mowbray et al. 1988).

The SHA can also serve as a local frame of reference (Gecas 1982). Some client-members are given controlling power in the organization as well as the possibility of filling positions of importance and trust. By directly empowering its members in this manner, the agency provides them with direct evidence of competence and worth to the group. Following Bem's (1972) notion of self-attribution, individuals are able to observe their own behavior and make positive inferences about themselves (see also Weiner 2000, 2010).

SHAs also deal directly with issues of stigma and self-worth. All strive to provide a setting in which individuals are accepted for who they are and for their contributions to the organization, rather than for their disability. All run some form

of discussion group and provide peer counseling. Furthermore, the self-help community has worked to develop understandings of mental illness that avoid the stigmatizing implications of the term, and these writings and concepts are available to clients through written sources as well as discussion.

Organizational Empowerment. Perhaps the single most important factor established to be empirically associated with enhancing client outcomes in SHAs is organizational empowerment (Segal and Silverman 2002). Clients are given an active role in the running of the agencies. All agencies are controlled by clients. At community meetings, the entire membership is given authority over important policy decisions, including such things as staffing, services offered, and center rules. Governing boards are elected by members and contain a majority of member seats. Staff positions, both paid and unpaid, are largely or totally filled by members. When members break center rules, decisions about what should be done are made either by elected committees or by the entire center membership. Furthermore, the membership attempts to minimize hierarchy within the organization, despite the exigencies of maintaining corporate structures (Zinman 1987). As result, members are empowered within the organization through exercising control over their collective experiences. Experience with responsible decision making within the organization seems to carry-over to more effective decision making in their personal lives and a sense of personal empowerment.

Empowerment Efforts Directed at the Larger Society and Systems Change. As noted earlier, empowerment in the social services context must occur at the policy level as well as in the spheres of the organization and worker client interaction. Such power in policy formation translates, in turn, into increased influence at the local, state, and national levels. In general, self-helpers have worked to attain legitimate power, the normative

assumption being that disabled individuals should be involved in policy roles (French and Raven 1960). Strategies to attain power include advocacy work to influence policy development; input into systems planning, including needs assessments, program design, program management, and evaluation; allocation of existing resources; development of new resources; governance of other agencies; research direction; and community education. Involvement is intended to create conditions in which the disabled can gain greater control over their environments and realize their aspirations.

Self-helpers have influenced legislative and regulatory policy decisions at the national, state, and local levels; in turn, these reforms have led to greater involvement in other spheres of systems change. Mentally disabled self-helpers have been an increasingly visible presence on local and state systems planning boards. The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 (P.L. 100–690) and the ADAMHA [Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration] Reorganization Act of 1992 (P.L. 102–321) mandated the inclusion of mental health clients and family members in planning councils.

Self-helpers are increasing their representation on the governing boards of nonprofit agencies whose client base may include individuals with similar disabilities. As board members, self-helpers can help these agencies become more responsive to the needs of their clients. The impact goes beyond the ability of individual organizations to meet those needs; the aggregate effect is to increase the resources in the community clients can use to improve their lives.

19.3.3 Eleven Self-help Programs

In order to better illustrate self-help agency objectives I describe eleven self-help agencies (Segal et al. 2002). The observations are drawn from several years of structured and informal observations at these agencies. The programs combine unstructured drop-ins with structured meetings and other activities and services. All

call themselves self-help because the entire membership, staff, volunteers, and others must fit the self-helper control criteria specified above and because the programs employ an empowering approach directed to helping members gain the resources and capacities to better their lives and self-concept. The programs served people with a mental disability at least two-thirds of whom were homeless or marginally housed.

The programs vary in the services and activities offered. All offer a drop-in space, and coffee and several of the programs offer meals. All run support groups and serve as advocates, helping members to obtain shelter and housing referrals, assistance with securing benefits and negotiating the welfare bureaucracy. All offer peer and job counseling, independent living skills training and general discussion sessions. Four programs schedule weekly movies and organized recreational activities such as excursions to baseball games and roller-skating parties for their membership.

The programs are funded from a variety of sources including federal, state, and county monies and foundation grants. They serve anywhere from 20 to well over 100 people a day. Although there are important differences among the programs, we find fundamental similarities in the way each establishes a viable self-help setting. The following five organizational characteristics seem to be important features of such organizations:

Focus on shared experience. The self-help agencies differ from regular social service agencies in that the majority or all services are delivered by people who have and continue to struggle with the kinds of disabilities that bring new clients to the agency. Thus, for example, many of the staff and volunteers that we interviewed were literally homeless (street or shelter) at the time of the interview or had been homeless at some point in their lives. People draw on their own experiences in living with disabilities, stigma and racism, and in dealing with the sometimes chaotic and seemingly irrational world of social service agencies. They offer advice, for example, on how best to secure

disability benefits or which shelters are most accommodating. They offer peer counseling on living with voices that counsel suicide or on trying to stay clean of illegal drugs in an environment where drug use or alcohol use may be the norm. Their advice to clients and ability to listen resonates perhaps with greater authority since they have been there themselves.

One pattern often observed was for staff to tell clients that they did not need to play the games that were seen as necessary to secure informal and formal assistance in the larger world. Staff told the client that they had played such games themselves to get social service personnel to give them a scarce referral to housing or to maintain a benefit after a rule had been broken. Staff in theory and usually in practice, did not divide clients into the deserving and the undeserving poor as a basis for giving assistance. Staff felt further that when clients did not think they had to spin stories to receive help, they were better able to take fuller responsibility for their actions.

At this point, there is no rigorous evidence on whether staff claims are correct. On the one hand, staff and volunteers do serve as models of what is possible for clients. Yet, those who give help continue to struggle with the problems that brought them to the agencies and sometimes these problems gain a greater hold over them. Some clients interviewed spoke bitterly about how they could be expected to be helped by someone who had their own troubles. Unlike a typical social service agency where there is a greater formal separation between client and staff, the SHA blurs the boundaries. The possible greater identification of the client with staff may lead to a greater set of expectations of how the staff should behave.

Focus on mutual assistance. Certainly the staff helped the clients but clients who did not have a formal role helped out as well. The agencies themselves did not have sufficient personnel to perform all duties. In result, clients might volunteer to go pick up donated coffee, or to answer phones when a staff member was not available. The agencies formalized this informal helping by

creating the role of volunteer. Clients who performed volunteer duties were often rewarded through the provision of bus passes or an addition to their resume. However, most, as the staff, worked far more hours than necessary since their duties gave them a chance to help and to be valued for that help.

Clients also helped each other directly. One client was observed giving another in visible distress the valued and scarce resource of a cigarette. They were not friends he just knew how it felt to be depressed. Another was observed giving information about the best place to obtain free meals or to secure needed services.

Re-evaluation of the meaning of having a disability. Where elsewhere the problems that bring clients to the agency serve as a source of stigma, at these agencies in addition to a brief period of voluntary attendance they define membership. The agencies work to make that membership have a real positive meaning. It is indicative that only one percent of the long-term self-help members were ashamed of being a client at an agency for homeless and mentally disabled individuals while 51% were proud of being a client at the agency (Segal et al. 2002). Seventy-eight percent disagreed with the statement that, "This (the agency) is just a place I come to, it's not that important to me." (Segal et al. 2002) The agencies provide direct evidence that people with disabilities can govern their own affairs. Even if an individual is not capable at that moment of contributing to the agency, he or she can see that others with similar disabilities can help and be trusted to assume important positions. Several vignettes are indicative: A newcomer to one of the agencies was sitting in a community meeting. He questioned the leader of the meeting about a statement. In listening to the leader's answer, the newcomer began to realize that the leader was just like him struggling with the problems of being homeless and having a mental disability. For a few minutes the newcomer kept questioning the leader, unable to believe that an agency of that size would use people with disabilities in important positions.

As he began to understand the agency, he was visibly shaken. In another case an individual talked about truly understanding what it meant to be empowered. Although a relative newcomer to the agency, he had been selected to represent the agency's interests at a city function. He had asked the coordinator what he should say and was told that he would be supported in whatever he proposed. He had been homeless and a client of the mental health system and therefore was an expert on what was really needed.

Accommodation of disability. While the programs turned what were elsewhere stigmatized attributes into sources of contribution and worth, they also had to deal with the day-to-day realities of members who had mental disabilities, substance abuse problems and general problems from dealing with the frustrations of being homeless. There were ongoing problems of maintaining order and permitting the programs to continue. The agencies evolved a series of strategies to deal with members' difficulties. People who were severely depressed or lost in conversation with their voices would be treated with respect. One man, for example, sat in a chair working on a painting with a brush that had no paint. He was left to his art but also involved in activities or discussions when he turned outward to the meeting. Another man who lost track of his actions and refilled a coffee pot several times so that its water spilled over was not visibly noticed or ostracized but instead calmly permitted to clean up the resulting mess. A very depressed woman who was also screaming obscenities was asked by a staff member if she would help him. The request showing that she had value to the organization was sufficient to cause her to smile and help out. Finally, the agency board interviewed a man who was actively hallucinating for a porter's job the organization was recruiting for along with all other applicants. The man was responsive to questions and was considered like all other applicants on the merits of his application and interview.

Some behavior went beyond what was permitted if the agencies were to continue to function. Violence and theft were recurring problems. Members who broke agency rules were brought

up to a rules committee composed of their peers and were able to defend their own position. When behavior went beyond what the organization could reasonably tolerate clients might be suspended but were permitted to reapply for attendance privileges after a reasonable period of time. Even while banned, these individuals could continue to use the SHA as a mailing address so that they would not lose a necessary service.

In this manner the agencies recognized that it would be naive to expect anything close to perfection in the behavior of the membership. However, unlike other agencies that permanently banned individuals, the SHAs gave people second and third chances.

Participatory democracy. The formal organizational structure of the SHAs supported the above practices by moving much of the important decision-making into the hands of the clients. Boards of directors had a mandate and a large number of client held seats on the board. As mentioned staff positions were largely held by clients. Furthermore, all agencies are at least partially run as participatory democracies where at weekly community meetings members discussed and voted on center policy, staffing, rules, and discipline. Staff were selected by a vote of the membership (membership status usually being achieved after a modest period of attendance) at four agencies and by a committee composed of members and staff at the others. Similarly, members determined center rules and policies such as the timing of service availability, location of non-smoking areas and agency positions on external issues that affected the organization. Policies toward and case by case decisions on those who broke the rules were decided either by an open vote of the membership or by an elected committee.

19.4 Peer-Support of Professional Practice

Throughout the United States there is increasing commitment to actively involving individuals with lived experience in the decision making and

service delivery of professionally run organizations. Such individuals are involved either as volunteers or peer employees—i.e. peer support specialists (PSSs) working either alongside professionally trained personnel, as part of a team or independently in assisting clients of a professionally led agency.

In both SHGs and SHAs, the relationships that peers have with each other are valued for their reciprocity; they give an opportunity for sharing experiences, both giving and receiving support and for building up a mutual and synergistic understanding that benefits both parties (Mead et al. 2003). In contrast, where peers are employed to provide support in services, the peer employed in the support role is generally considered to be further along their road to recovery (Davidson et al. 2006). Peers use their own experience of overcoming their own problem to support others who are currently in crisis or struggling. This shift in emphasis from reciprocal relationship to a less symmetrical relationship of ‘giver’ and ‘receiver’ of care appears to underpin the differing role of peer support in SHGs and SHAs versus professionally-run organizations (Davidson et al. 1999). This shift in status is perhaps the most difficult issue in justifying the position of the PSS, especially when that person has been in a position of such differential status for an extended period of time and may have had a very limited amount of lived experience. No threshold regarding the nature of the lived experience is rigidly employed. Repper and Carter (2011) and others have attempted to address this issue, perhaps doing summersaults to justify the role, in light of expert status claims made for the PSS. They note that while: “...reciprocity is integral to the process of ‘peer-to-peer support’ as distinct from ‘expert worker support,’ this is not to say that peer support is not an ‘expert role.’... ‘Peer support is about being an expert at not being an expert and that takes a lot of expertise.’” Peer support could therefore be defined as: ‘social emotional support, frequently coupled with instrumental support, that is mutually offered or provided by persons having a mental health condition to others sharing a similar mental health condition

to bring about a desired social or personal change’ (Solomon 2004, p. 393).” As the similarity of lived experience is unspecified, the extent to which this is a mutual assistance activity is open to significant question. Further the extent to which the helping is hierarchical in its presentation subjects it to the same difficulties often attributable to critiques of professional/client relationships. This said professionals whose expertise derives from their lived experience have become a part of helping organizations. They strive for professional identity and have become increasingly concerned about their vocational opportunities, their roles for advancement in professional organizations and their more limited compensation for their helping efforts.

19.5 Effectiveness

Studies have demonstrated that if the current members of any SHG are surveyed at any given time, the members will respond positively about the group and say that it helps them. As such, a review of more methodically sound studies, focused primarily on studies that compare self-help participants to non-participants in the areas of addiction related recovery, bereavement, cancer groups, caregiver groups, chronic illnesses, diabetes, groups for elderly people, mental health, and weight loss all report salutary outcomes (Kyrouz et al. 2002).

Self-help delivered as a form of mutual assistance, though, is delivered via diverse organizational forms that have considerable variance within groups and organizations. It is assumed useful for diverse problems with diverse definitions of what is self-help and considerable variance in desired outcomes. When addressing the expertise associated with efforts of PSSs no consistency in the definition of lived experience or its match to clients prevails. It is thus not a surprise that a general finding in multiple meta-analyses and some multisite studies is no or little difference in outcomes attributable to the PSS (Lloyd-Evans et al. 2014), or when focused on RCTs, inconsistent findings (Repper and

Carter 2011; Doughty and Tse 2011). In order to address this variance in outcomes, herein the focus is placed on the efficacy of self-help efforts to serve people with mental illness. The starting point for considering the effectiveness of such programs is the assumption that the answer is embedded in the details of the program and the conformity of that program to the primary ideology and outcome objectives of the founders of the self-help mental health services movement.

“Nothing about us without us” is the defining objective of the process activity that defines self-help mental health services. It is the giving of agency to participants. In considering the effectiveness of such self-help activities, intervention fidelity should be defined by the extent to which the process conveys agency. The outcome should be criteria-defined as those discussed among self-helpers, and include empowerment, hope, self-efficacy, functional enhancement, and reduced symptomatology. Interventions calling themselves self-help enable people to help themselves, but most importantly do not do things *for* people that they can do for themselves, thereby stealing agency.

SHAs, though founded on the principles of self-help, are not all self-help services, and their essential components are poorly-defined in the literature. Generally, mental health research has failed to make the distinction between those with fidelity to the self-help approach and those that are simply run by individuals or organizations who employ a former patient/consumer. Even the definition of who is eligible to be a consumer, one with lived experience, has blurred from an original criterion of inpatient hospitalization, to an unspecified outpatient contact, to a member of an underrepresented minority. In the face of vague definitions and funding mandates requiring participation of those with lived experience, organizations define their own version of self-helper led services and peer support with little specification of what self-helper-providers actually do or the model of lived experience they are supposed to represent.

The general finding in multiple meta-analyses and some multisite studies of no or little difference in outcomes attributable to the self-helper

service (Lloyd-Evans et al. 2014), or when focused on RCTs, inconsistent findings (Repper and Carter 2011; Doughty and Tse 2011) can result from mixed programmatic efforts, some of which enhance outcomes as they are true self-help programs and some of which degrade outcomes, for in the false claim of providing agency comes disappointment and another failure. The indiscriminate combining of studies produces the average: no effect, or inconsistent effects that support self-helper-run service by relying on failure to report significant differences from usual professionally-delivered care, i.e. inappropriately accepting the null hypothesis.

Self-helper control, while a necessary condition for SHA service, is not a sufficient condition to ensure that the organization’s empowerment ideology and its major contributions to member outcomes will be carried into practice. The most challenging RCTs to date, indicate that organizations with a participant democracy approach succeed by truly empowering their membership with significant decision making responsibility; those organizations with a top-down traditional non-profit agency approach that fails to empower their membership fail as helping agents and may be harmful (Segal et al. 2010, 2011, 2013). A self-helper operated service without its empowering approach may be no more than cheap care at best, not an organization within the conceptual and operational achievement of the mental health self-help movement’s founders.

Having emphasized the importance of an empowering approach to SHA recovery-focused service, it must be acknowledged that making such programs work is not a simple task. Empowering members is a strength but also a weakness of the SHA. The organizational functionality of more democratically-oriented organizations is often challenging. The less hierarchical enterprises often appear to be more confusing and disorganized the more democratic their operations tend to get. This is also often accompanied by diffusion of responsibility and accountability—while people are empowered to take action within organizations when activities are enjoyable or self-serving, there may suddenly be fewer empowered people available to help as

major organizational challenges arise. This can only be addressed by strong leadership that respects cooperative effort without exerting uni-directional control. Thus, the SHA may seem a contradiction of mutual-support and wise leadership—in fact at its best it is a model of joint governance and needs to be evaluated as such.

As self-helper operated service programs demonstrate their success in serving people with mental health challenges, they become recognized as a source of specialized knowledge; thus, they develop expert power (French and Raven 1960). Providers of mental health services and other social services have invited self-helpers to assist them in making their services more responsive to the needs of their clientele. To the extent that self-helper operated program directors fail to appreciate the unique contribution of the empowering approach to their organizational successes and fail to protect it within their organizations, the self-helper-run approach may ultimately join the ranks of previously promising but discredited psychosocial treatment efforts.

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Promoting Spatial Inclusion: How Everyday Places Signal Who Is Welcome

20

Amy Hillier

Abstract

Regardless of whether we live in urban, suburban, or rural areas, we all “read” landscapes for indications of whether we fit in and are welcome. Identities relating to race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality all contribute to the lenses through which we interpret these signs. This chapter considers how we make sense of public and private places and what elements of the built and social environment we can change to make a wider range of people feel welcome. Specific examples focus on how people navigate food stores and neighborhood parks based on their intersecting identities.

20.1 Introduction

Invariably, a student in the undergraduate urban studies class I teach will make reference to a “bad neighborhood” when describing a place featured in the course readings, their homework, or a recent trip they made within the city. Usually, the student is white, but otherwise there is little pattern across gender, social class, or hometown. I often hear

elements of fear and racism in their unsophisticated characterization of places where they are reading cues in the landscape that they are not safe and do not belong. Some combination of the built environment—perhaps the poor condition of housing or litter-strewn vacant lots—and the social environment—the clothing that people are wearing, the way they are standing together, the language they use, and the color of their skin—provokes a physical reaction and what sounds like a moral judgment. They are not yet practiced in self-reflection to the point that they recognize how much their “read” of an area reflects their own sense of self, their positionality, and their privilege.

Members of marginalized communities similarly look for signs in the built and social environment that indicate whether they are welcome. Veronica Hodges, an African-American social worker born and raised in Philadelphia, shared the story of her frequent visits past the house where her grandmother was born and great-grandmother, who was born into slavery, had died. She grew up in a predominantly black section of Philadelphia several miles away, like so many other black residents who left the historic Seventh Ward that W. E. B. Du Bois wrote about as new and predominantly segregated neighborhoods opened up to black homeownership. Despite working at a public health clinic downtown, she felt out of place as she walked the few blocks from her work to the house about which she had grown up hearing.

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I can't even count the times that I have walked down this street and just stood here and looked. I was always afraid to knock on the door because I didn't know what to expect. Whether this person would say, 'Who is this black female, coming in here on our ritzy block,' because that's how it's perceived, as a ritzy block. I just didn't know what to expect. I was afraid. I didn't want to be hit with anything negative or looked upon as someone who was casing the joint, or something like that. So that was one of the reasons I didn't knock on the door. (Mapping Du Bois 2011)

She was pleasantly surprised when the white homeowner emerged one day and showed interest in her connection to his house. She asked if she might bring her grandmother by to take a photograph outside the house. "No," he replied. "I want you to come into the house. I want to know your story."

Across race/ethnicity, gender, age, and social class, human beings are constantly reading the landscape to make sense of new places and contexts based on their own identity. This chapter begins by considering the ways that scholars across fields, including psychology, public health, sociology, landscape architecture, city planning, geography, and visual studies, make sense of this very human activity. Next, two case studies featuring primary research on food stores and neighborhood parks are presented to explore in greater depth the ways in which this process of reading the landscape plays out among different groups of people and across different settings. Both case studies highlight ways in which organizations and communities can reshape built and social environments and influence the way visitors read those environments in order to make them feel more welcome. The final section considers the concepts of positionality, intersectionality, and queering as key to rethinking and remaking public spaces to signal that all people are welcome.

20.1.1 Background: "Reading Landscapes" Across Disciplines

Scholars across the social sciences contribute to our understanding of how people interpret cues

—socially and biologically—in their environment about whether they are safe or welcome. Psychology and neuroscience focus on the physiological response to stress. When in a new environment or new context, our brain makes a quick assessment of whether or not we are threatened, based on sensory inputs such as what we see, hear and smell and stored memories about what happened the last time we were in a similar situation. The amygdala instantly assesses these sensory inputs for signs of danger, triggering our hypothalamus to initiate a stress response. The hypothalamus sends a signal to the pituitary gland which in turn sends a signal to the adrenal medulla which releases cortisol. Our bodies respond further with increased heart rate, increased breathing, decreased digestive activity, and release of glucose by the liver to sustain energy. This reaction to stress, known as the "fight-or-flight" response, has enabled humans and other mammals to act quickly in life-threatening situations. The problem comes when our brain misinterprets the cues and overreacts to situations where our survival is not at risk, and when someone lives in a chronic state of stress, continuously releasing cortisol and disrupting many body functions and wearing out their immune system.

Public health and medical researchers are beginning to capture data in real time about this physiological response in order to document how people respond to different environments and situations in order to understand how exposure to different environments impacts the health of individuals. GPS-enabled heart rate monitors provide one mobile technology that allows researchers to detect changes in heart rate caused by the release of epinephrine as part of the body's stress response. For example, South et al. (2015) measured the heart rate of study participants as they walked within view of vacant lots before and after greening remediation treatment, using objective measures to determine whether greening lots could reduce stress and improve health. Mobile devices can also capture and analyze sweat, identifying cortisol levels and other biomarkers that indicate physical

conditioning, disease risk as well as stress. Other research uses cameras and sound monitors to capture sensory data continuously in order to understand what specific inputs prompt a stress response. These objective measures of stress response are in contrast to studies that focus on subjective measures of stress. For example, Wiebe et al. (2013) used interactive GIS mapping to retrospectively record minute-by-minute movements of youth study participants and their perceived level of safety during travel to school.

Sociology sheds light on the more conscious meaning-making that happens as other parts of our brain instantaneously judge environments based on their threat to our survival. In his 1999 book, *Code of the Street*, ethnographer Elijah Anderson narrates a tour “Down Germantown Avenue” in Philadelphia, highlighting how visitors and residents read the streetscape and social interactions to understand social organization of the communities along this historic 8.5 mile artery. Multiple cues signal that the northern end, in predominantly white and wealthy Chestnut Hill, is characterized by a code of civility while the southern section, made up overwhelmingly of people of color who are poor, is characterized by a threat of violence.

Anderson describes in detail how in Chestnut Hill, visitors pass by large residences, lawns and trees, upscale businesses, and a commuter train station. People walking along the sidewalk are polite and relaxed; they make eye contact with one another. Further down the Avenue, businesses appear that have security bars on their outside windows and riot gates on their doors, and the types of businesses change as discount stores, take-out restaurants, and check-cashing agencies begin to dominate along with empty lots and boarded up buildings. “A certain flagrant disregard for the law is visible,” explains Anderson. “People here feel they must watch their backs... In general, there is an edge to public life” (pp. 23–24) Anderson dedicates the rest of the book to discussing how young black men learn to read the “code of the street” and negotiate public spaces as a means of survival, a process that is explicitly gendered and racialized.

In a subsequent book, Anderson focused on “cosmopolitan canopies,” defined as “settings that offer a respite from the lingering tensions of urban life and an opportunity for diverse peoples to come together” (xiv) Familiarity breeds the kind of comfort visitors find in these spaces, and through people-watching and interactions, “a cognitive and cultural basis for trust is established that often leads to the emergence of more civil behavior.” Practiced in patient watching, listening, and gently inquiring, Anderson uses his own skills as an ethnographer to identify the physical and social cues that signal to others a place of relaxed civility.

Anderson offers Reading Terminal Market in Center City, Philadelphia, as one such example. Colorful, bright and busy, the terminal is organized around food, with the inviting smells and tastes of bakeries, ethnic eateries, and soul food vendors. Merchants from all racial and ethnic groups and a racially, ethnically, and economically diverse clientele signal that all are welcome at the Market. “People appear relaxed and are often observed interacting across the color line,” he writes. “This is a calm environment of equivalent, symmetrical relationships—a respite from the streets outside” (p. 33). Strangers necessarily interact, sharing food in tight spaces, making eye contact and exchanging pleasantries if not engaging directly in conversation. People perform race here, he explains, but on occasion, the inter-racial nature of the Market allows for deeper conversations about race and racism. Anderson says that a “generalized feeling of tolerance” is infectious and “allows people who go there to take leave of their particularism and show a certain civility and even openness to strangers” (p. 43).

Geographers—cultural, critical, feminist, and queer—provide additional ways for understanding how people read spaces to determine if they belong and how they should behave. Some of this work focuses on the geography of everyday life and the emotions attached to those geographies, particularly as they reflect the different lived experience of people across gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, and age. Individuals make decisions about how to travel—what

modes of transportation and particular streets are safest—according to mental maps they have developed based on previous experience, shared knowledge among family and friends, and media.

Feminist geographer Mei-Po Kwan drew attention to the geography of fear among Muslim women in the U.S. following the events of September 11th in order to counter the master narrative that all Muslims were terrorists. By asking Muslim women to complete activity diary surveys and participate in in-depth interviews, she elicited detailed spatial information about their lived experience and the short-term and long-term strategies they used to cope with the threat of anti-Muslim violence. She chose to focus on Muslim women because their religious attire often makes them identifiable in public, and their traditional gender roles within families leave them with household responsibilities that “impose rather restrictive space-time constraint on their daily lives” (Kwan 2008, p. 657). In using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to map 3D representations of the daily movements of Muslim women, as they chauffeured children to school and attended *Quran* classes, Kwan repurposed geospatial technologies—designed in part to aid Cold War military activities—to link meaning, memories, and emotions to physical spaces to tell stories about the everyday lives of marginalized people as a way to affect social change.

Jen Jack Gieseck, cultural geographer and feminist and queer theorist, looks to the everyday movements of lesbian and queer women as a way of understanding territories and borders within an urban environment. Based on in-depth interviews with lesbian and queer women who came out between 1983 and 2008, he describes how women cross over social and spatial borders, producing territories that are less formal than the “propertied neighborhood” made up of commercial and residential spaces frequently owned by gay men (p. 264). One study participant related a story about being punched in 1985 while walking through the “gayborhood,” underscoring how places considered safe by some marginalized identities, namely game men, may be places of fear and violence for others.

Another explained how she waited until a particular subway stop before allowing her girlfriend to touch her, reflecting her sense that her white privilege offered protection against heteronormative expectations she associated with the earlier subway stops as white people boarded the train.

Similarly, Portuguese geographers Eduarda Ferreira and Regina Salvador highlight the invisible nature of lesbian sexualities in public spaces as critical to understanding how power inequalities and heteronormative expectations “inscribe socio-spatial landscapes” (p. 954). They explain that public spaces “are constructed around hidden, subtle, nonverbalized and implicit codes of behavior” that individuals interpret based on their intersectional identities and life experiences. Through a collaborative web mapping workshop, they invited lesbian and bi-sexual women to describe and locate on a map their experiences with public displays of affection. Consistent with previous research, their results underscored the distinct spatialities of gay men and lesbians as well as generational differences among lesbians, particularly in bars and at parties. Most participants indicated that they limited same-sex public displays of affection near home or work to avoid disclosing their sexual identity to people they know from their daily lives.

Borrowing from literary theory, geographers have also proposed that landscapes are like texts, in essence concrete transformations of ideologies that can be read and interpreted (Duncan and Duncan 1988). Geographer Rickie Sanders makes use of photography in her teaching to enable students to make visible the invisible elements of cities. Photographs facilitate translation and decoding of landscapes, a process she describes as “re-presenting.”

With these different theoretical and methodological approaches to understanding how people read landscapes in mind, I turn to two case studies to illustrate how some of these dynamics play out across race/ethnicity, class, and gender in two types of common urban settings: food stores and neighborhood parks. Public health professionals, among others, have underscored their value in low-income urban communities as

places that promote access to healthful foods and physical activity. Municipal, state, and federal policies as well as practices among major charitable foundations reflect this thinking. Public and private subsidies are directed toward their construction, maintenance, and activation across scales, from healthy corner stores, mobile vendors, and farmers markets to full-service supermarkets and from urban trails, bike lanes and pocket parks to recreation centers and urban park systems. Rather than considering these as public health interventions aimed at increasing physical activity and decreasing obesity, I consider them as politically and culturally-inscribed sites that urban residents visit, read, and interpret as they negotiate their intersecting identities in their everyday lives.

20.2 Case Study 1: Food Stores

While most of the public health studies about food stores published in the last decade focus on supermarket access as an environmental justice issue with implications for healthy eating and chronic disease risk, a handful of qualitative and survey-based public health studies focus more broadly on the experience of food shoppers. Zenk et al. (2011) asked 900 adults across gender and race/ethnicity how often within the previous 12 months they had received poorer treatment than other people. They linked survey responses to demographic information about the store location and the food environment. Nearly one-in-four participants reported an experience of discriminatory treatment, disproportionately those who identified as African American or very low income.

In a qualitative study of 30 women from Chicago, Zenk et al. (2014) found that women faced “socio-interactional deterrents” in addition to physical and economic barriers to purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables for their families. Proximity of food stores to liquor stores and strip clubs and presence of people hanging around outside food stores contributed to feelings that they were not safe. For other shoppers, treatment by store staff, who failed to be courteous or

helpful and were described at times as “surly” and “snotty,” contributed to a hostile environment for food shopping. Crowding was a concern, particularly at the beginning of the month when public benefits were distributed, as well as store practices of selling cigarettes and alcohol to minors and not accepting SNAP or WIC benefits.

As part of several funded public health research studies, my colleagues and I have come to understand decisions about where to shop and how to travel to food stores as reflecting broader ideas about identity and well-being than studies focused on food item choice might suggest. Across these studies in Philadelphia and Chester, PA, we interviewed the primary food shopper in the household—disproportionately black middle-aged women—to discuss the social and physical environment in which stores were located and within the stores, themselves. Their choices about where to shop, while generally influenced by physical proximity from home or work and whether or not they had access to a car for shopping, varied significantly, often based on efforts to maximize convenience and value. Those choices also varied based on gender and race/ethnicity.

Results from a door-to-door survey of 500 West Philadelphia residents revealed distinct patterns of racial/ethnic and economic sorting in food store choice. Women were more likely to travel further than men who served as the primary food shoppers for their household. Black shoppers were more likely than white shoppers to choose larger stores (Hillier et al. 2015). White participants were seven times more likely than non-white participants, college-educated participants were four times more likely than less educated participants and participants with annual household incomes above \$25,000 were ten times more likely than lower-income participants to shop at high-end stores. Non-white participants were 2.7 times more likely than white participants and participants without a college degree were 3.5 times more likely than less educated participants to shop primarily at a discount food store (Cannuscio et al. 2014).

In a study of 150 Philadelphia WIC participants about their use of farmers’ market coupons,

we similarly found racial/ethnic differences in where people shopped. About half of study participants redeemed their coupons at neighborhood farmers' markets and about half redeemed their coupons downtown at Reading Terminal Market; some used both options. Most spoke in positive terms about the neighborhood markets, citing good quality, fresh produce and helpful staff. Reading Terminal offered a "fun" option that was familiar to many long-term residents of Philadelphia, involving a subway trip and a "nice environment downtown" that her children could share with her. Nothing in the descriptions of either option hinted at racial/ethnic differences in their experiences, but descriptive statistics revealed that black participants were significantly more likely to shop at Reading Terminal Market than Latino or white participants. Was there something about that space that made them feel welcome and valued as customers and human beings, along the lines of what Anderson described in *Cosmopolitan Canopies*?

In-depth interviews from a subset of residents who participated in the door-to-door surveys revealed a strong sense of pride in choosing food stores with the best deals. Stretching their dollars was an essential strategy for taking care of their families. Using shopper loyalty cards and coupons, studying store circulars, and traveling to multiple stores were all part of working the system. "So I left outta that joint with two and a half shopping carts and the tag was only \$258!" declared one participant. "I mean that's brilliant! Brilliant." Many of these heads of low-income households saw corner stores as expensive and exploitative, and it was their responsibility to avoid wasting money there. "That's wasteful, really, shoppin' at these joints. I only go there for little things, like maybe a soda." Wasting money by shopping at the most convenient store was deemed irresponsible, especially for those with children to feed (Cannuscio et al. 2014).

Participants in the door-to-door survey of food shopping made reference to the types of food sold at stores as one of the cues they used to decide if they belonged or not. One African-American man described seeing African foods "that are not in our taste buds" while another

shopper mentioned that some warehouse stores "don't sell food for my country" (Cannuscio et al. 2014). Cleanliness was another important factor. One participant described her disgust at how filthy the shopping baskets were in one discount store. Beyond her concerns about bacteria and germs, she seemed to take offense at the lack of pride and care staff took with store upkeep, as though the dirty baskets were symbolic of the regard with which they held their customers. For others, the degree to which food stores welcomed children influenced store choice. For one woman who needed to shop with two children with autism spectrum disorders, she appreciated a store that was well-organized, fresh and clean. "I feel comfortable going to that store." For others, the availability of shopping carts that hold children and accessibility for strollers made the difference. Still others complained about the inconvenience and unwelcoming climate created by security bars outside stores that prohibit customers from taking their shopping carts to their cars in the parking lot.

For some shoppers, the environment outside or along the way to the store leaves them with the feeling that they are unsafe or unwelcome. One study participant described her discomfort in traveling to stores in her neighborhood. "That was a pretty difficult experience for me as a white woman living there," she explained. "Literally for a year I never left my apartment without getting a comment about being white or being a woman." For many, fears of violence made them cautious or adapt the time of day they would visit certain stores. "You see the activity that's illegal going on," explained one participant, but he learned to pretend not to see it for his own safety. "So it's a code of ethics and a code of survival in our neighborhoods to see and don't see." Explained another participant, "Because a lot more people would go up to the store if it were not for the bar," a reference to the constant threat of violence surrounding the area. "So it puts a lot of fear in you. A lot of us live in our neighborhood in fear."

The advertisements and various activities taking place outside stores also signal messages about safety and belonging. In our survey of

tobacco outlets in Philadelphia, we found that corner stores or “bodegas” were more likely to advertise cigarettes aggressively on the outside. Windows and doors were frequently covered with individual signs advertising prices for particular brands of cigarettes. Together, they gave the effect of tobacco billboards, disproportionately in low-income residential areas. Signs indicating that these small stores accept SNAP and WIC, interspersed among the cigarette ads, further reinforce the message that the stores are for poor people. Activities outside some of these stores—loitering, panhandling, selling drugs—contribute to a climate that encourages people to be on their guard and outsiders to keep on going. One researcher on our team, a 50-year old black man, conducted hundreds of visits to corner stores in the context of two different funded research studies in order to conduct audits of healthful foods and tobacco and sugary beverage advertising. Having grown up in Philadelphia and working with at-risk youth across school and child welfare settings, he felt at ease entering most corner stores. However, there were occasions when he read the situation outside stores as indicating that he was not safe and would not complete the audits.

The opening of dozens of subsidized supermarkets in “food deserts” across the U.S. has created a series of natural experiments for public health researchers to assess the impact of these new stores on food shopping and eating. They also provide an opportunity to see how shoppers experience these new food environments, particularly as they represent significant change over the smaller groceries and corner store options that existed nearby before. Chrisinger (2016) used walking interviews with a sample of 32 urban residents, most of them middle-aged African American women, to understand the food shopping experience at a new subsidized supermarket in what had formerly been a “food desert.” The new store compared favorably to existing retail options in regard to cleanliness, with scrubbed floors that “sparkle,” and reliability, consistently having sale items available. Customers perceived items to be fresh, an important issue of food safety for some,

particularly when it came to meats. They also had positive impressions of store staff who they found to be courteous and helpful. Some participants chose to visit the store even when they did not need to purchase any foods because they felt welcome in these familiar settings where staff greeted them warmly.

Chester, Pennsylvania, located 13 miles south of Philadelphia along the Delaware River, experienced significant population loss as a result of industry closures during the second half of the 20th century. As Chester lost population, it lost its many supermarkets, leaving the city of 30,000 residents without a single supermarket for more than a decade. Despite the availability of federal tax credits, no for-profit supermarket chain was willing to open in Chester, leading the region’s largest food bank, Philabundance, to open a first-of-its-kind nonprofit market in Chester in 2013. Long-term Chester residents marveled at the sudden availability of high-quality fresh foods, including produce and meats, in contrast to the limited assortment.

While it has taken time to grow the customer base, largely because residents are accustomed to traveling outside the city to shop at conventional and discount supermarkets, the response to the high-quality social and physical environment have been overwhelmingly positive. “There is just a sense of pride ‘cause this is our market,” explained one study participant. “I see a lot of people I grew up with and it’s like OK, yeah, we finally have a market that we can call our own.” Another participant also used the word “pride” to describe the market, particularly because it represented job opportunities for local residents. “We are investing in our future and in our city,” she explained, interpreting the store as much more than a source of food. “And our kids are saying...we can go in this market, we see people that look like us, people that live across the street are working in this market.” The kids also marveled that there were fresh fruits, vegetables and meats, “and it’s not pre-packaged.” Another participant explained that some residents assumed the store would cater exclusively to low-income households, “They think, ‘Oh that’s a poor person’s market’,” but in her experience, that was not the case.

“When I first came, I was impressed at what I seen,” explained one participant. Well aware of the history of supermarket closings in Chester, she continued, “How long is this gonna last, because markets in Chester seem like they just come and go.” In other words, she was in disbelief that Chester could maintain such a high-quality market. The quality and selection of foods conveyed a strong message of respect to customers. “Everything is like really organized, like the floor is clean, everything is clean,” explained one participant. Others described the inside of the store as “kept up.” “Everything is up to date,” explained one participant. Residents of Chester constantly checked expiration dates because they were accustomed to purchasing expired foods when shopping at the small food stores and dollar stores.

One study participant appreciated the availability of what she termed “Spanish” foods, including rice and seasonings such as Sazon and adobo, foods she could not consistently find at other stores around Chester. Recognizing that the small but growing Latino population in the area had no good options, Fare and Square began stocking foods for Mexican, Puerto Ricans, and Caribbean customers. The manager proudly shared a story of finding a Latino customer crying in the produce section; he was overjoyed at finding panapen, a Puerto Rican term for breadfruit at the store.

“Like I said, [if] they are not in stock, you can always ask the store manager or the cashier, they’ll, you know, take time out, if they don’t have nobody to wait on, they’ll help you to see if the item you need and show you where it’s at,” explained one customer. “They know me by name,” commented another, “They’re awesome.” One described the manager as “honest” and “nice,” explaining, “If you see there is a problem, he will try to, you know, resolve it, talk to customers to let them know.”

Most participants indicated that they felt relatively safe in the new store, noting the presence of security inside the store, frequent visits by police outside the store, nearby parking, and outdoor lighting. “I definitely feel safe... if I feel

uncomfortable I could ask one of the staff members, could you walk me outside and like they wouldn’t have a problem.” For others, the time of day influenced their perception of safety. “Now, in the daytime, you can feel more safe but say... you have to run to the store and it’s dark, you will go somewhere where there’s more light before you come here,” explained one woman. In her mind, there were too many places to get robbed outside the market. “If you don’t believe me,” she said to the interviewer, a young white graduate student, “come around here like 5 o’clock and maybe you’ll change your mind then.”

Our experience conducting research on food stores in low-income parts of Philadelphia and Chester, Pennsylvania underscored the social nature of food shopping. Low-income heads of household consistently demonstrated their agency by choosing stores reflecting their own sense of identity and pride within the constraints that their economic circumstances dictated. This process played out most clearly with the opening of a new market in a “food desert” where residents who chose to shop at the new store found food shopping validated their ethnic food preferences, desire for community, and pride in their city.

20.3 Case Study 2: Parks and Public Spaces

This second case study describes the experience of urban residents with neighborhood parks. Public health research focused on parks has focused primarily on parks as sites of physical activity and the physical health benefits of exercise. Some public health studies consider variability in park use across racial/ethnic, gender, and income groups, pointing to lack of physical access as one of the chief barriers. Other studies consider the role of perceptions of crime as well as park amenities (such as walking trails and indoor recreation space) and disamenities (such as traffic hazards and noxious land uses) to understand racial/ethnic, income, and gender disparities in park use.

To think more deliberately about the social cues urban residents are reading about whether they belong in certain parks, we look to the fields of leisure studies, social and environmental psychology, and geography. Here we find discussion of parks as “ideologically charged” spaces that are often “ethno-racially inscribed” (Byrne and Wolch 2009). Parks must be understood as operating within a historical, socio-ecological and political-economic context. During the nineteenth century, development of large urban parks systems was motivated by concerns about the negative impacts of the industrial city and miasma (“bad air”) on the physical and moral health of residents. In the early twentieth century, playgrounds and public gardens were looked to as places for physical fitness, social mixing, and moral uplift (Byrne and Wolch 2009). Following widespread race riots in the 1960s, parks were looked to as places of social control, revitalization and participation. As parks became accessible to a wider range of people across the 20th Century, park staff developed rules about behavior, dress, and times of park use in order to promote specific cultural norms and control, particularly among working-class and immigrant communities. In the Jim Crow South, racial segregation within parks and recreation facilities was codified in law; in northern cities like Chicago and Philadelphia, there were unwritten rules about where black and white residents could swim and play (Byrne and Wolch 2009). As strict segregation practices have loosened, researchers have considered how motivation for park use and preferences regarding park activities vary across racial/ethnic groups and nationality.

Byrne and Wolch (2009) explain that accessibility, safety, and sense of whether parks are welcoming or not are “mediated by personal characteristics, and the park’s political ecology, history, and cultural landscape.” This means that women of color may read the cues about whether or not they are welcome differently from men or white women. In other words, “multiple axes of difference can exacerbate environmental injustice” and “fusions of gender, class, and race can seriously diminish access to environmental goods and services like parks” (p. 754).

Our first-hand experience with research about parks came in the context of a federally funded study of park use involving 24 parks across four U.S. cities. The study focused on validating an observational measure for identifying different levels of physical activity across small sections, or “target areas,” in neighborhood parks. Each site developed a team of people to conduct the field research who were trained by the developer of the audit tool we used. Training involved presentations, practice video, and field work. Our team included high school students (male and female; all of them black) undergraduate and graduate college students (male and female, mix of black and white students), and adult community researchers who worked full-time at other jobs (male and female, all of them black). In addition to the extensive observations, we conducted an incivilities audit around all the parks, noting the amount of litter and graffiti, condition of buildings, and amount of lighting, and survey of park users and neighborhood residents.

Survey results showed that residents were nearly five times more likely to have visited the nearby park if they perceived it as safe. Black/African-American survey respondents were nearly 3 times as likely as all other groups to perceive the park as safe. Women, those 47 or older, and those who reported being in fair or poor health (rather than excellent or good) were significantly less likely to perceive the park near them as safe. These findings underscore how differently people read their environments based on their own identities. Nearby residents were also more likely to visit parks that had lower incivilities scores (Lapham et al. 2016).

The observation data included information about the specific types and levels of activity taking place in each target area of the park, but it also included information about who was in each target area together across race/ethnicity, gender, and age. By examining the approximately 7000 observations (16.8% of all observations) where two or more people were in the same target area at the same time, we were able to identify conditions that made inter-racial/ethnic groupings more likely. For the purposes of this analysis, inter-racial was defined as white and non-white

(including black, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian), a choice that we know has limitations but proved practical given the distribution of the data.

Less than a third of the observations where two or more people were present involved inter-racial groupings. This varied across the five cities, with Chapel Hill NC having the greatest proportion (40.5%) and Philadelphia the least (23.6%). Multivariate analyses showed that the gender and age make-up of the group made a difference. The presence of children and teens and of both men and women all made it more likely that people across race/ethnicity were observed in the same target area. The type of activity was also a factor. If activities were being supervised—by a coach, park staff person, or other adult—or involved vigorous physical activity, they were significantly more likely to involve inter-racial groupings. The day of the week for the observation made a difference. Observations during weekdays were significantly more likely to reveal inter-racial grouping than observations during weekend. These findings point to the central role of park supervision and programming—two modifiable factors—in park social interactions, rather than capital investments, the more typical strategy for making parks more inviting.

Finally, the demographics of the neighborhood where the park was located were also a factor. The percent of white residents had a significant and positive relationship to inter-racial groupings. Racially/ethnically-mixed neighborhoods, defined as having no more than 70% of one racial/ethnic group, were significantly more likely to have inter-racial groupings within target areas than those that were racially homogenous. Poverty rate also made a difference and interacted with racial composition. In predominantly white neighborhoods, poverty level was not a significant factor, but in neighborhoods with a low percent of white residents, higher poverty rates were associated with significantly fewer inter-racial groupings (Hillier et al. 2016).

These results underscore the importance of looking at micro-behavioral data about park use—like survey data or administrative data about food store choices—to understand the choices

people make about where to spend time. They offer an important complement to qualitative data that more explicitly address perceptions about these spaces which inevitably involve much smaller samples and less generalizability. They also reveal that across activities—be it food shopping or playing in neighborhood parks—black residents are more likely to travel to predominantly white neighborhoods than white residents are to travel to predominantly black neighborhoods. Reading the landscape is a highly racialized experience, as people read cues in the social and built environment differently based on their racial/ethnic identities.

The less-structured field observations from our research teams provided additional insight into understanding whether and how people are made to feel welcome or unwelcome in certain neighborhood parks. In regard to safety, two of our middle-aged African-American male community researchers were in a neighborhood park when gunshots were fired. They left the park immediately, going to a nearby corner store where they learned that the bullets had been fired into the air. They decided to call it a day but were back in the park the next day to continue their observations and surveys, having interpreted the gun shots as a temporary and somewhat routine threat. Other staff members, particularly the college students, would have been unwilling to return.

Staff from across the multiple cities came to Philadelphia for our initial training, and as part of that we visited a park in a predominantly black neighborhood with a moderate level of poverty. By our local Philadelphia standards, the site was fairly typical of neighborhood recreation centers, with large, well-used playing fields, pool, playground and basketball courts. The facilities, particularly the indoor facilities, are worn and show their age. One researcher from another city expressed surprise about the amount of litter, interpreting it as a message about lack of upkeep. Those of us from Philadelphia were surprised and a bit defensive by her comments, seeing the occasional piece of litter on the ground as par-for-the-course among parks and better-than-average relative to sidewalks and

other public spaces. This example doesn't say anything about race or gender differences, but it does highlight how points of reference influence how people read the environment.

At another park where we conducted observations, we witnessed some distinct claims of ownership and control that likely communicated who was welcome. The neighborhood has a well-known history as home to Italian immigrants, with an open-air market with meat, cheese, and bread specialty stores and Italian restaurants. Over the last 30 years, the neighborhood has become home to a wide variety of immigrant families—Cambodian, Laotian, Vietnamese and most recently Mexican. The park we researched reflected this mix of races/ethnicities and nationalities, particularly in the playground area. The well-maintained baseball field, on the other hand, was locked and used exclusively for organized baseball and softball leagues—predominantly white, based on our observation and conversations with residents. Despite being part of the city-owned park land, the baseball field was essentially controlled by the white organizers who opened the fields up for their specific activities. When we inquired as to the practice, staff at the recreation center said that if everyone had access to the baseball field, it would get “trashed.” A chain-link fence surrounded the entire park and the main section of the park was locked at night. All parks in Philadelphia have posted hours (5 a.m.–10 p.m., for example), but no other park where we conducted observations was locked at night. We were dismayed to find a number of parents with young children, all of them people of color, waiting outside the locked gate one Sunday morning for someone to come and open the gate. Finally close to 9 a.m., a white man drove up and opened the gate—without acknowledgment or apology for the delay.

In another historically white, immigrant neighborhood, our staff struggled to find park users and residents who were willing to participate in our short survey. We were aware of the neighborhood's reputation as protective and inward-focusing and made a point of connecting with various community leaders, including park

staff, a restaurant owner, and leaders of a local Catholic school. Our African–American staff did not report feeling unsafe, but they did report feeling unwelcome in a way they had not experienced in any of the other research field work they had done. They didn't face any open hostility or locked gates, just a lack of interest and willingness to engage them on the part of residents.

The one location where our staff reported feeling unsafe was at a public housing development with a predominantly black population adjacent to a neighborhood park that was used by a much broader range of people including school groups. Unable to recruit residents to complete our survey about park use from inside the public housing, our staff positioned themselves just outside. News of the \$5 gift card compensation traveled fast so a trickle of residents came outside on their own to take the survey. Our project manager, an African–American woman who grew up in the same general section of the city, was completing the interviews with one other staff member. For safety reasons, our staff never carried more than the number of gift cards they expected to use on that particular day, maybe 20 gift cards at most, for a total value of \$100. This was the only site where staff reported feeling unsafe because residents knew they had multiple gift cards with them. The project manager overheard one resident say to another something to the effect that these fools were ripe for being robbed and made the quick executive decision that our staff would not conduct any more surveys at that location.

The research protocol across the five cities specified that we were to conduct surveys of people we found in the parks as well as door-to-door surveys of residents who lived within a ½ mile of the park. In both cases, staff were to approach randomly-selected people or houses. Our staff had no trouble completing surveys with park users in most locations, but they did struggle to complete door-to-door surveys across all of our sites. When staff were matched with someone from our team of a different race, they would often try to send the staff member whose race matched the anticipated race of the homeowner to knock on the door. One African–American high school student described

his awkward attempt to persuade a white homeowner who came to the door to complete the survey. Together with the other staff, he convinced me that conducting random door-to-door surveys was infeasible given the culture of suspicion, particularly across race, of Philadelphia residents. As a result, I petitioned my colleagues in the other cities to modify our shared research protocol to allow us to set up stations at high traffic areas outside the parks to recruit residents to complete the surveys. This modification had implications for the study sample, as we moved from a randomly generated sample to part convenience sample, but that was a compromised dictated by the historical, cultural, and racial history of Philadelphia neighborhoods.

These two case studies, looking at every-day experiences in food shopping and visiting parks, highlight the centrality of one's own identity to interpreting cues in the social and built environment about where we are welcome. As psychology and neuroscience teach us, this feeling of being welcome has a physiological basis involving human stress response. As sociology teaches us, we give meaning to these experiences, identifying certain places as safe, civil, familiar or threatening and hostile. Geographers, among others, make explicit the gendered and racialized nature of demarcating and reading landscapes that make simple everyday spaces like supermarkets and neighborhood parks culturally and ideologically charged. Becoming aware of this process of reading landscapes, how it reflects individual identity and larger power dynamics it involves, is an essential component of opening up those spaces to marginalized communities. The final section of this chapter considers how three concepts—positionality, intersectionality, and queering—are helpful to understanding how people read landscapes and promoting greater spatial inclusion.

20.4 Conclusion: Promoting Spatial Inclusion

A first step in making spaces—be they supermarkets, corner stores, neighborhood parks, or other public places—more inclusive is

recognizing who is or is not actually using them and how their decision about whether to enter or not is shaped by their perception of who is welcome. Too much research on access—be it access to parks, food stores, or medical services—has focused on physical proximity as a proxy for access. Research that analyzes data about individual behavior, where someone shops, where they are physically active, where they seek social and medical services, is critical to understanding how elements in the social and physical environment can act as barriers or facilitators to access and are interpreted differently by individuals based on their identity.

The concept of positionality calls on researchers to unpack the layers of personal identity, insider/outsider status, and relationship to power that influence how they see their research, in essence their subjectivity. As a concept, positionality has application well beyond research, calling on us as professionals, neighbors, and human beings to recognize how differently we see the world, read cues in the environment, and craft narratives about who belongs where based on where we are standing, literally and figuratively. It insists that we step out outside ourselves and our own narrow view of the world to recognize that how we see the world reflects our many layers of identity, with the implication that others see and experience the world differently. It means recognizing that, for those with racial/ethnic, class, cis- and heteronormative privilege, a whole range of public places likely feel more welcoming and civil than for those who have marginalized identities.

The concept of intersectionality helps us to further consider how individuals negotiate multiple identities as we move through spaces. This means that we don't assume that all black people or all women or all queer people experience places and read landscapes the same way, because those categories don't fully define them. Frish (2015) encourages city planners to use intersectionality as a guide to challenging entrenched heteronormativity within the planning profession and interrogating the concept of "public interest." For *whom* is a space being

designed? For *whom* is it safe? How do we recognize the multiple identities of stakeholders beyond that of attachment to a particular neighborhood? “Rather than just framing people within a group as the objects of discrimination,” he writes, “intersectionality highlights the ways that individuals and collective organizations experience structures of power” (p. 136) He challenges city planners to explore intersectionality as a means of questioning assumptions about power relations. The process of designing, activating and evaluating spaces must deliberately consider the role of intersecting identities if they are to be inclusive and democratic. Planning professionals can acknowledge intersectionality by formally or informally surveying residents about their perceptions of safety, space and power during the planning process.

Frish also used the word “queer” throughout his book chapter about planning spaces of intersectionality. Sometimes he used queer as an adjective, to characterize people, spaces or politics; sometimes he used as a noun to describe LGBTQ populations. In the context of social action and making spaces more inclusive, queer as a verb is an even more useful concept. Queering spaces means to make explicit the process of questioning how and why spaces are constructed and coded in ways that exclude certain people and then actively making them more inclusive. It means challenging and redefining traditionally held beliefs and, more generally, “imploding the binary” that governs normative talk around gender and sexuality (Frietag, p. 7).

In this context, queering a school might mean making queer-identified staff and student leaders visible, having queer-positive and gender-neutral school policies, and ensuring the physical and emotional safety of all children (Freitag 2013). Queering curriculum might mean introducing a critical lens to social studies, science, and reading classes so that students learn to question the positionality of those who write their text books. In the context of health education, it might mean reframing education about puberty and sex as teaching students to love and respect their bodies

and whole selves rather than as exclusively about reproduction and risk.

It also means validating transgender and gender non-conforming students in their identity by allowing them to use the restroom consistent with their gender identity. Restrooms are highly contested political spaces as advocates have highlighted the inherently unwelcoming nature of gendered bathrooms marked “men” and “women” or with stick figures dressed in pants or a dress. Queering restrooms involves new signs, new designs, and new norms and rules about where and with whom we relieve ourselves. Some of the more provocative signs have messages such as:

This bathroom has been liberated from the gender binary.

Whatever Rest Room (there are no hoo-haa checkers in this restaurant).

A trans person peed here (and no one was harmed)
Even the Obama White House moved to “All Gender Restroom” signs.

These concepts of positionality, queering, and intersectionality are essential tools to creating inclusive spaces. Only when social cues and power relations are made explicit in the process of design can we expect to see people across identities using the same spaces, be it a supermarket, neighborhood park, school or restroom. These concepts are also helpful in teaching my undergraduates to think critically about how they read urban landscapes—including “bad neighborhoods”—just as they read books and articles. By recognizing how their own layers of identity situate their knowledge and interrogating their instincts around whether they belong in a space or not, they can learn more about who they are. They can also learn to value the life experiences and identities of others with whom they may exchange pleasantries or simply a smile in the supermarket check-out line, on a park bench, at a parent-teacher association meeting, or in a public restroom. It is through everyday activities in these everyday spaces that these larger social processes—including social change—take place.

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Intentional Sub-communities and Identity Continuity Among Baby Boomers: Grateful Dead Fans

21

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Abstract

In this chapter, we discuss intentional communities and their role in maintaining identity continuity and facilitating successful aging. An *intentional community* is a planned residential community designed from the start to have a high degree of social cohesion and teamwork. According to contemporary theory, successful aging is achieved when older adults maintain as much continuity as possible. To compensate for age-related changes, they modify their behaviors and environments, optimize their resources, and focus on selected priorities, such as living in a community with like-minded people. Some baby boomers are discussing one type of intentional community as a potential retirement option—a community organized around lifestyle preferences such as musical taste. We examine the potential for the development of

such lifestyle communities organized around shared musical taste by focusing on the aging fans of one band, the Grateful Dead. Although we argue that having a Deadhead identity alone is not likely to be an adequate basis for an intentional residential community to support successful aging, we do see potential for the formation of such communities among smaller, more homogeneous, and tightly-knit sub-groups of Deadheads. It is thus possible that the potential exists in other fan bases as well.

The 77 million babies born between the years of 1946 and 1964 have begun to retire (Moody and Sasser 2018). In 2016, the oldest baby boomers were turning 70. Approximately 10,000 members of the largest U.S. cohort ever to enter old age turn 65-years-old every day (Cohn and Taylor 2011) and will live longer on the average than those in generations before them (Hooyman and Kiyak 2011; Nelson 2002). The resulting phenomenon, variously called the Silver Tsunami (Barusch 2013), the Longevity Revolution (Butler 1969; Roszak 1998; Fullen 2016), or Boomsday (Buckley 2007), among other names, is changing the face of retirement just as education was changed by this cohort's movement through elementary, high school, and college.

Many of these baby boomers, as this cohort is called, though not all are throwbacks to the 60s (Moody and Sasser 2018) as they are sometimes

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portrayed (Roszak 1968, 1998), are choosing to retire differently than their forbears. Though they are not uniformly healthy as they are sometimes described (Manton et al. 2006), they do feel healthier and expect to have more control over their destinies (Baker 2014; Moody and Sasser 2018). Their relatively high levels of education (Moody and Sasser 2018) compared to members of previous cohorts lead them to think more critically about their later-life opportunities, and in addition their notable diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, age, and lifestyle (Baker 2014; Colby and Ortman 2015) often leads them to find their options lacking. Just as they have exercised choice regarding what constitutes family and have entered interracial and same-sex unions at unprecedented rates (Rosenfeld 2007), they are beginning to challenge stereotypes about what life during old age can be. Some people still follow well-worn paths to age in place, to move in with family, or to relocate to a retirement community in which age and economic resources and sometimes religion are the main commonalities among residents; however, many baby boomers are intentionally creating alternative communities that give them more control, companionship, dignity, and choice than previous generations had (Baker 2014; Freedman 2002). Research bolsters hopes that aging in a community of like-minded people—whether it be in a retirement village, naturally occurring retirement community, or cooperative—will buffer the effects of the challenges of aging (Baker 2014).

In this chapter, we begin by discussing intentional communities and their role in successful aging. Then we focus on one general type of intentional community now discussed by some baby boomers as a potential retirement option, those organized around lifestyle preferences such as musical taste. Finally, we examine the potential for the development of intentional retirement sub-communities among the aging fans of one band, the Grateful Dead. Based on our observations of this fan community, we end with some theoretical comments about the role of sub-communities in preserving identity continuity with larger, more heterogeneous, and more loosely-knit cultural fan groups and how

continued participation in these subgroups might contribute to successful aging.

21.1 Intentional Communities and Their Role in Successful Aging

Since the early days of gerontology, theorists have been discussing what constitutes successful aging. During the 1950s and early 1960s, gerontologists debated whether older adults age well when they remain active despite age-related changes or when they disengage in response to them (Havighurst and Albrecht 1953; Havighurst 1961; Cumming and Henry 1961). More recent scholars generally accept that the most likely path to successful aging is to maintain continuity as much as possible (Atchley 1989) by changing individual behaviors to adapt to age-related changes (Baltes and Lang 1997), modifying environments to support as much continuity as possible in the face of these same changes (Wahl et al. 2009), or relocating to a more suitable environment (Kahana et al. 2003). As part of this adaptive process, older adults select among possible priorities (such as living in a community with like-minded people), optimize resources, and compensate for age-related changes (Lang et al. 2002).

Definitions of “intentional community” abound in the scholarly literature (Baker 2014) and on the websites supporting such communities (e.g., Fellowship for Intentional Community 2017). According to Wikipedia (2010), which offers the most general definition:

An intentional community is a planned residential community designed from the start to have a high degree of social cohesion and teamwork. The members of an intentional community typically hold a common social, political, religious, or spiritual vision and often follow an alternative lifestyle. They typically share responsibilities and resources. Intentional communities include collective households, cohousing communities, coliving, ecovillages, monasteries, communes, survivalist retreats, kibbutzim, ashrams, and housing cooperatives. New members of an intentional community are generally selected by the

communities existing membership rather than by real-estate agents or land owners (if the land is not owned collectively by the community).

The collective goals an intentional community may wish to achieve vary, and might include, for example, procuring resources, acquiring power, redefining group identity, or improving an institution's efficiency, effectiveness, or relationship with those it is supposed to serve (Chaskin et al. 2001). Facilitating the successful aging of residents is one such goal.

Although intentional communities have been receiving more attention in the scholarly literature lately, some classic examples have been discussed at length previously, including the Plymouth Colony, which formed in early seventeenth century (Brown 2002), and Israeli kibbutzim, developed in the twentieth century (Cnaan and Breyman 2007; Weintraub et al. 1969). Perhaps not so coincidentally, given that baby boomers are now considering the development of intentional communities as they grow older (Baker 2014), the 1960s and 1970s birthed more of this type of community than any other era. These "communes," as they were called, like other more contemporary intentional communities, represented a "living critique" of the larger society (Dunlap 2009) and were often short-lived due to lack of resources, leadership, or relevancy (Zablocki 1980). Baby boomers, including those who were not involved in communes in their youth, have learned from this history and can now apply this wisdom to forming communities to support their aging.

21.2 Baby Boomers and Life Style Communities

Since the 1960s, and perhaps in direct response to the social experiments of that era, communitarianism has developed as a form of sociopolitical thought which "allows people to experience their life as bound up with the good of the communities which constitute their identity" (Bell 1993, p. 93). These communities come into being through a system of shared values where members are united to stress the

importance of that community involvement for personal development and fulfillment (Pedlar and Haworth 2006). Relevant to this discussion, communitarians emphasize the valued participation in social leisure networks that bring people together around objects of shared meaning (Arai and Pedlar 2003). Leisure, for those involved in communitarian communities, is not merely consumption, but a celebration of the central components that make up the community where members are not viewed as objects in a selfish and hedonistic quest for individual fulfillment, but rather viewed as subjects who add to the total experience (Arai and Pedlar 2003).

Accepting that intentional communities based on shared interest in leisure activities such as musical consumption and production are in keeping with the communitarian agenda requires us to acknowledge that participation and involvement in such activities is a serious endeavor (Gallant et al. 2013). Dedication to an intentional community, and the multiple components and people who comprise it, "provides a forum which encourages people to redefine themselves and their community through the creation of [an] activity" to build on and sustain that community even in the face of external constraints and setbacks (Reid and van Dreunen 1996, p. 48). Intentional communities, then, are said to possess what has been called a "sense of community," thus defined as a "feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (Gallant et al. 2013, p. 323). As we argue as this chapter unfolds, though shared taste in music might provoke interest in forming an intentional community, a stronger sense of commonality of purpose would be needed to achieve this collective commitment to the well-being of residents.

However inaccurate the descriptions of baby boomers being uniformly counter-cultural are, there is no disputing that they made rock 'n' roll their music, did not grow out of it as they were expected to do, and still consume it, all-be-it at lower rates than millennials (Puente 2010;

Resnikoff 2016). For baby boomers, then, musical taste and participation in a relevant fan community, is sometimes a serious matter. A quick internet search produces many “hits” on articles proclaiming baby boomers’ continued love of rock ‘n’ roll music. A sponsored story on *The Atlantic* website proclaims: “The generation that changed the world in the 1960s is entering retirement—and, with decades of life ahead, reclaiming what was once rightfully theirs: pop culture” (James 2015). The opening paragraph of the section on Boomer Life Style Experiences on another website begins: “From Beatles and Beach Boys to Springsteen and Michael Jackson. From the Summer of Love to the autumn of our lives, this is our journey” (Boomer’s Life 2017). Even more relevant, one website (www.55-places.com) has the tagline: “Find the perfect 55+ active adult community” and includes an article that lists the best places to retire if you love music (Rocha 2016).

If this love of music were just a matter of personal consumption patterns, it would not be nearly as significant, but as Simon Frith first wrote in 1996 (1996/2011):

... [M]usic is obviously collective Music, whether teenybop for young female fans or jazz or rap for African Americans or nineteenth century chamber music for German Jews in Israel, stands for, symbolizes and offers the immediate experience of collective identity. (p. 121)

For some baby boomers, their collective music fan identities have remained important to them throughout their life course, and it is important for them to maintain these musical identities beyond retirement. It follows that some baby boomers will want to retire in communities with other people who share their musical tastes and their collective fan identities.

Here is the issue, however: In mass society, music fan bases are often large and heterogeneous and membership is constantly changing (Bennett 1999). Many of them are thus intermittently-territorial at best, coming together periodically for performances (Adams et al. 2015). Shared musical taste then does not necessarily imply a shared system of beliefs, values, norms, customs, rituals, ideas, knowledge,

physical artifacts, language, symbols, and gestures. The development of the Internet has further exacerbated concerns of post-modernists about the quality of communities without a permanent shared territory that are based solely on common interests, such as unstable identities of members (Lash and Urry 1987, 1994) and a lack of emotional and moral depth (Bauman 1992). So the resulting question is how rewarding could living in an intentional retirement community based solely on musical taste be?

21.3 An Example of a Baby Boomer Music Fan Community: Deadheads

One group of baby boomer music fans who have maintained a collective identity are Deadheads, as fans of the Grateful Dead are called. The Grateful Dead were a rock band that grew out of the hippie culture in San Francisco in the 1960s. They played together as the Grateful Dead until their lead guitarist, Jerry Garcia, died in 1995, and the original members have continued to play together in various combinations since then. Although in the summer of 2015 they played what was billed as their last series of shows together as the Grateful Dead, various remaining members have continued to collaborate and their fans have continued to maintain a collective identity.

This community is not typical of mass fan communities. It is not only long-lasting, but it is also geographically distributed (the band played in 45 of the United States and 13 other countries), large (a conservative estimate of the number of Deadheads in 1998 was half a million), and intensely involved (three years after Garcia died, the average Deadhead had been involved for 11 years, traveled over 1200 miles to see a show, and attended more than 60 concerts) (Adams and Rosen-Grandon 2002). Furthermore, unlike some music fans, Deadheads did not attend shows merely for entertainment or to socialize with like-minded people; for many Deadheads their involvement in this community was and is an important part of their identity and

contributor to their well-being. Many of them reported having spiritual experiences at shows (Sutton 2000) and understood “these spiritual experiences as inseparable from the music, the scene, and a cooperative mode of everyday existence” (Adams quoted in Shenk and Silberman 1994, p. 106). Thus, by having spiritual experiences at many shows over a long-period and being collectively subjected to the stigma associated with being adult fans of a hippie band (Bennett 2013), Deadheads developed feelings of closeness, a high level of commitment to the band, and a high level of identification with the community (Adams and Rosen-Grandon 2002).

This high level of community solidarity distinguishes Deadheads from other large, distributed fan bases. So, in this chapter, rather than arguing that intentional communities are as likely to develop among other fan bases as they are among Deadheads, we instead argue that even among Deadheads, who often share more than musical taste, the development of intentional communities is more likely to occur among sub-groups of Deadheads defined by more than their involvement in the larger community surrounding the band. More specifically, based on an examination of this community over time, we argue that shared musical taste operates as an initial filter for identification with a large community that is at least loosely bound by affect and shared meanings. Then through repeated social interactions within subgroups of participants, sub-communities develop, in which people have more in common than the shared musical taste that brought them together initially. These sub-communities, which are more homogeneous and personal than the larger fan communities that foster them, do provide a potential basis for intentional communities that could support successful aging for their older residents.

21.3.1 The Deadhead Community Project

Although the first author of this chapter has been studying Deadheads since the mid-1980s, her Deadhead Community Project was not designed

to study the aging of Deadheads. The analyses presented here are therefore based on a synthesis of published works and on informal observations made by both authors as they have participated personally in the post-Grateful Dead festival and concert scene (see Adams and Harmon 2014, for a detailed description of the data collected as part of the Deadhead Community Project).

As part of the Deadhead Community Project, however, Adams (2010/2012) did examine and then report the age distribution of Deadheads based on her analysis of a very large survey data set (N = 6020) collected by Grateful Dead Productions at 22 concerts throughout the United States during the summer of 1998. It is therefore possible to estimate what proportion of Deadheads are now old enough to be considering the development of intentional communities to support successful aging. Assuming these data accurately represented the age distribution of Deadheads in 1998 and assuming this distribution has not been greatly affected by attrition and recruitment, it is possible to project that, 19 years later, the average age of Deadheads is approximately 51 years and the range in ages is now from 29 years through 81 years. Comparisons of these 1998 data and the projected 1998 ages of Deadheads who participated in older, smaller studies, however, suggest that there is some attrition from shows as fans age (Adams 2010/2012). Although 2.9% of the 1998 respondents were more than 49 years old, it is probable that 19 years later, in 2017, that a lower percentage of those still actively attending live performances of the bands in which the remaining members of the Grateful Dead perform are 65 years old or older. Furthermore, continued informal observations of relevant crowds suggest that the proportion of older individuals is probably further reduced due to the continued recruitment of younger people who identify as “Deadheads” even though they did not attend a related performance until after Garcia had died. The next youngest cohort of Deadheads, who were between 40 and 49 years old in 1998 and would now be between 59 and 69 years old, was much larger (21.5%), however, so the number of fans facing the challenges of aging is increasing, no matter what their overall

proportion of Deadheads. So, both because the larger Deadhead community is not typical of fan communities in ways that make it more likely that intentional communities might form within it and because the fan base is aging, this community represents a best-case opportunity to explore the likelihood for the formation of intentional music communities to facilitate successful aging through identity continuity.

21.3.2 Perseverance of the Deadhead Identity Despite Death of Garcia and Aging Crowd

One threat to Deadhead community solidarity was the death of Garcia, often seen as the most crucial original member of the band, because it challenged Deadheads to rethink their identities and lives as fans (Adams et al. 2014), and another threat has been the aging of the fans themselves and their need to modify their ways of participating in the community (Adams and Harmon 2014). Despite these circumstances, however, older Deadheads continue to identify with and participate in this community, which is an indication of its central importance in their lives.

Fortunately for Deadheads, because an infrastructure for maintaining contact between shows already existed when Garcia died, they did not have to start from scratch in developing mechanisms to achieve continuity. After his death, they continued to listen to recordings of Garcia's music; organized and participated in Deadhead subgroups and networks; planned and attended local annual celebrations; established and participated in sometimes more frequent local gatherings; connected with other Deadheads on the Internet; attended performances by or themselves played in cover bands, other jam bands, or bands including one or more of the remaining members of the Grateful Dead; and traveled to annual festivals outside of their local areas. Far from being passive consumers, they have actively participated in the creation of opportunities to enjoy music and other

community activities. For example, even immediately after his death Deadheads have already begun to help establish annual festivals that now attract national audiences. One consequence of Garcia's death was thus the strengthening of this infrastructure—locally, nationally, and virtually.

This infrastructure is still in place to facilitate the continued involvement and community identification of aging fans. Elsewhere (Adams and Harmon 2014), we have described the ways in which the show infrastructure has been modified to accommodate the aging of the Deadhead fan base and how older Deadheads have changed their behavior to enable them to continue to go to shows. For aging Deadheads, this sometimes means attending fewer shows, perhaps closer to home, taking precautions to protect their physical well-being, and participating in them less strenuously. For other aging Deadheads "adaptation" means moving to areas of the United States where it is more convenient to attend shows, attending shows in venues designed for all-age access, or participating in the community online.

Relocating to sustain their involvement in the Deadhead community is not a new idea for fans of the Grateful Dead. Some Deadheads relocated to San Francisco years ago to be closer to where the band members have always lived and given the most performances. With the development of bassist Phil Lesh's Terrapin Crossroads in San Rafael and rhythm guitarist Bob Weir's Sweetwater Music Hall in Mill Valley, San Francisco remains a retirement destination for Deadheads, but other areas of the country where music is easily available also attract them. Due to the common use of marijuana by older adults in general (Benyon 2009) and some older Deadheads specifically, the recent legalization of marijuana in some states and not in others could affect some Deadheads' retirement destination decisions as well. Recently Phil Lesh, the band's bassist, has played multiple concerts at his New York venues (the Brooklyn Bowl in Williamsburg, New York, and the Capitol Theater in Porchester, New York) as well as the Lockn' Festival Shapiro sponsors in Arrington, Virginia (Sisario 2013). This decision to perform multiple shows in a few locations, made by Lesh in

deference to his own aging, has provided an opportunity for older Deadheads to attend multiple shows without traveling in between them, whether as visitors to the area or as residents.

Relevant to this chapter, among at least some Deadheads, discussions have begun about the development of “dedicated” retirement communities—communities owned, operated, and occupied by Deadheads themselves or at least designed to support their collective identity and successful aging. The authors of this chapter have personally heard intentions stated to form such an assisted living facility in the Bay Area of California, rumors regarding retirement community opportunities surrounding the Lockn’ venue in Southern Virginia, as well as discussions among informal friendship groups who have attended shows together overtime about retiring together, sometimes with property already in hand. Whether these plans will come to fruition is not yet clear. In the section below we argue that if such communities are to form, the members of each are likely to have more in common than a love of the Grateful Dead’s music.

21.3.3 Building an Intentional Community Based on Existing Subgroups

Even when Deadheads’ involvement began solely due to an attraction to the music, they often developed close-knit and meaningful relationships with other fans, and these friendships, in turn, helped create a foundation for a community that has outlasted many of the original members of the band (Adams et al. 2014). In fact, as has been studied in fan communities of other “jam bands” (bands like the Grateful Dead who tour frequently, draw from an extensive catalog, and engage in frequent improvisation on-stage; Budnick 1998), the loose friendships that are formed through shared participation not only evolve into communities, but oftentimes become what are referred to as “family” by their members due to the closeness of the relationships (Harmon and Kyle 2016). When friendships develop to this high level of reciprocal loyalty

and commitment, especially when sustained in pleasurable and meaningful contexts like concerts, it follows that those individuals would want to perpetuate these relationships and strengthen them. Music scenes, like the one surrounding the Grateful Dead, are a “simultaneously musical, discursive and aesthetic temporal space that brings together people who share a passion” for a specific band (Moberg 2011, p. 407). So, although people often get involved as music fans for personal reasons, they often end up joining and contributing to a community.

Dunlap (2009) stated that “intentional communities form to create and solidify connections between individuals, which in turn facilitate the pursuit of particular values, spiritual beliefs, or philosophies” (p. 420). So, with this as our theoretical foundation, initially it would seem that Deadheads were not an intentional community; rather they comprised a spontaneous community that came together based on shared musical taste. Furthermore, the decisions the band made structured the opportunities Deadheads had to form friendships by creating a context in which the same fans repeatedly interacted with each other in the larger show context and thus developed relationships with each other (Adams 1999). For example, by creating a section where tapers could record shows live, the band created an opportunity for these tapers to get to know each other. Similarly, by providing an area where Deaf Deadheads could see a signer, they provided an opportunity for friendships to form among these fans. Because Deadheads did not feel obligated to sit in their assigned seats, they moved around the venue freely, and some groups also formed without further band intervention due to shared taste in where to locate in the venue (halls, rail, near sound board, etc.).

The band’s job was never to form a community; it was to play music. And while community did form around the band based on the multiple unique nuances of both band and fans, it was not until *after* the death of Garcia in 1995 that intentionality became more prevalent and important (Adams et al. 2014). With the passing of Garcia, an opportunity emerged for fans to walk away from the phenomenon or forfeit

affiliations because the band no longer existed in its original form. For many Deadheads, however, just the opposite occurred. Fans still felt a connection to the music and lifestyle, but just as importantly, they felt a connection to each other. The relationships they built through music were still integral to their identities and imperative to maintain to live quality lives (Adams and Harmon 2014).

When the community surrounding the Grateful Dead was threatened due to the passing of one of its core members, it was in effect a rallying cry. Brown (2002) described the development of intentional communities as a response to:

A call to action that is personal and communal, bringing together the needs of the individual with those of other individuals, reestablishing the bonds that connect human beings, but in a particular fashion. The members of these communities often see themselves at odds with or needing to withdraw from the larger society; however, that withdrawal occurs within the context of the larger society. (pp. 5–6)

For Deadheads, the passing of Garcia, was in effect a “call to action.” Simply abandoning their identity, lifestyle, and friendships was not an option, even while mourning. Deadheads had amassed significant social capital in their accumulated experiences and relationships, so to maintain a thread of continuity, they had to find alternate ways to sustain their community. At this point, Deadheads became more intentional.

Dunlap (2009) observed that intentional communities are “social experiments” where members develop “strategies to foster communal bonds” (p. 420). Strategy was required of Deadheads if they were to have a future; they had to organize around their common interest to find new channels that would help them sustain their identity and associations for the better of the collectivity. As many had been with the band since its earliest inception, the desire and need for an intentional community surrounding the band was essentially a requirement for sustaining a high quality of life. The social capital that they had developed over years, and in many instances, throughout decades, was essential to this future success (Glover 2004). Through the concerted

efforts of Deadheads, not only to save their community, but to develop it further, the communal relationships served as a refuge from the “ever-changing world and a collective response to threats [of their] collective identity” (Glover and Stewart 2006, p. 317). By having an objective indicator of their leisure participation—going to concerts with “family” and friends—as well as having objects of orientation to maintain their personal identities—continued involvement in, and affiliation with, the intentional community of Deadheads—allows many to sustain a high quality of life by connecting to a personal and shared history of music and friendships (Lloyd and Auld 2006).

To navigate the larger Deadhead culture, especially due to the geographic distribution of fans and the dissolution of the band which brought the larger network together in the first place, Deadheads had to organize smaller sub-communities intentionally to maintain those ties to one another and their master identity of Deadhead in general. After Garcia’s death, ties among fans became more important, but it was difficult to have meaningful interactions and sustain personal ties in such a large community that had no longer had a reason to come together simultaneously all in one place. Seemingly in response to these changes, existing sub-communities were reinforced and others developed.

While the Grateful Dead were still playing together, subgroups such as the Wharf Rats (Deadheads wishing to remain straight and sober; Epstein and Sardiello 1990) and Deaf Heads (Ladd 1990, 1996) were formed, to name just two. After the passing of Garcia, other intentional sub-communities have been developed, like the Grateful Dead Scholars’ Caucus (Weiner 2013), or transcended, like Jewish Deadheads (Lawton 2015). Still other fans, while still maintaining their Deadhead identity, have found other bands whose music scene captures the spirit of their past involvement with the Grateful Dead. That they can participate with others who have the shared history and identity as Deadheads, makes those experiences more meaningful (Harmon and

Woosnam 2016). All three types of these sub-groups are smaller, denser, more homogeneous, and therefore more personal than the larger Deadhead community, and thus we argue each forms a more likely basis for a residential intentional community than does the broader Deadhead community. Here we describe three such sub-communities of many, largely chosen because they have been studied previously.

The Grateful Dead Scholars' Caucus. Defined by its members as a "discourse community" (Meriwether 2013), the Grateful Dead Scholars' Caucus came into being by a felt *need* of Deadhead academics to have a forum in which to enact their dual-identity as Deadheads and as scholars and to continue to participate in and to investigate the phenomenon. In 1995 when Garcia died, Robert Weiner had already been involved in the Southwest/Texas Popular Culture and American Culture Association (SWTXPCA) as area chair for popular music when he realized that some scholars had started to submit abstracts for their work on the Grateful Dead. A devoted Deadhead himself, in 1998 he organized the first panel devoted solely to research on the Grateful Dead, its music, its fans, and the culture that encompassed it. This eventually evolved into a caucus exclusively focused on the Grateful Dead. While the entire attendance at the 1995 meetings of the SWTXPCA was 200, now, almost 20 years after the birth of the Grateful Dead caucus, many more than 200 scholars have been involved in this niche group alone. The scholars also interact online through an invitation-only and moderated listserv, as well as engage in more social forums together such as concerts, thus allowing their dual identities to synthesize in multiple venues which in turn helps to sustain this intentional sub-community.

Although the group itself has its root in this initial 1998 panel, many of the scholars now involved in the Caucus had met each other before then, brought together largely due to their scholarly interests in the Grateful Dead. As one of the early Deadhead scholars herself (Meriwether 2009), Adams remembers discovering like-minded Deadheads (i.e., Deadheads who were also scholars) through their postings in

online forums, through bibliographic searches, and at shows when she was recognized after she appeared in a documentary on the community (Adams and Edwards 1990). Interesting here, Harmon originally contacted Adams because of his familiarity of her work on Deadheads and his interest in studying fans of the Jackmormons (described below). Harmon subsequently joined this community himself and now has joined the faculty at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro where Adams continues to teach. This personal story of the growth of the friendship of the two authors of this chapter illustrates the way this sub-community initially grew organically and how the members have supported each other intentionally since Garcia's death. The growth of this sub-community has been fostered by the inclusive perspective of the host group; the study of popular culture is defined as an interdisciplinary (or, at its best, transdisciplinary) pursuit and the Southwest Popular American Culture Association, as the larger group is now called, invites "independent scholars" to submit abstracts. Many of the Grateful Dead scholars are journalists, film makers, novelists, or well-informed observers of the scene whose day jobs do not involve expectations of scholarship or creative activity. So, over the years, those Deadheads with scholarly inclinations have continued to seek each other out intentionally and subsequently to join this sub-community.

Although it is the love of the music of the Grateful Dead that attracted these scholars to the larger Deadhead community, it is their commitment to scholarship and a desire to document the Grateful Dead experience that has sustained their involvement in this sub-community. One participant said she had to attend the meetings last year because she "needed to be with her people"—she did not mean she needed to be with Deadheads because she often is. She meant she needed to be with Deadhead scholars. This group has engaged in discussions of how wonderful it would be "to be together" as we age, and a couple of members have floated specific plans. It is possible it will never happen, but if it does, such a community would sustain the identities of the participants

not just as Deadheads, but as Deadheads of a specific type—scholars.

Jewish Deadheads. Spirituality is a topic that is often associated with the concept of community. For believers of many faiths, churches, synagogues, and mosques are the primary source of community relations, or at least an expedient route to finding community. Spirituality is not confined to traditionally defined religious organizations; numerous studies have explored the role of secular spirituality and how people find a connection to a “higher power” or “something greater than themselves” through non-traditional outlets like concerts (Harmon and Dox 2016). Jewish Deadheads blend traditional philosophies with contemporary, and widely perceived as secular, practices to find the parallels in participation and belief that allow them to address their spiritual needs through simultaneous participation in Judaism and the Grateful Dead community (Alexander 2015; Lawton 2015). That this practice has continued for decades beyond the last concert of the Grateful Dead highlights other similarities to the Jewish faith: an evolution beyond the “classic texts” that paved a path for the culture (Alexander 2015). By continued involvement in this intentional community, a sub-community of the larger culture, Jewish Deadheads address numerous aspects of their multifaceted identity in one focused and meaningful network.

Much of the scholarship focused on Jewish Deadheads addresses the question of why they are disproportionately represented among Deadheads in general; in the United States, Jews are over-represented among Deadheads by a factor of five (Lawton 2015). One scholar (Gertner 1999) explains this disproportionate representation by observing that the Grateful Dead filled a spiritual void for Jewish baby boomers. Another scholar (Lawton 2015), proposes a structural explanation to supplement this cultural one—Jews are more likely to go to college and to live in big cities than members of other United States religious groups and these demographic patterns afforded them more opportunities to become Deadheads. However Jewish Deadheads become involved in the Grateful Dead community, once

they are involved it distinguishes them from other Jews. Although for observant Jews, especially Orthodox ones, their religious affiliation might trump their Deadhead identity in the choice of an intentional retirement community, seeking the companionship of other Deadheads within the Jewish community is also a priority.

Even in Israel, Jewish Deadheads have formed an intentional sub-community (Schoenfeld and Schoenfeld, *in press*). As of 2014, there had been five annual Grateful Dead gatherings, all organized voluntarily by a few people who love the Dead. Each year, the number of participants has steadily increased and interest has been expressed in becoming more intentional about more frequent gatherings. Israeli Deadheads express a strong sense of community, with 84.6% responding that they felt themselves to be part of a special community with other Deadheads while 8.6% stated that *most* of their friends were Deadheads. Like the members of the Grateful Dead Caucus, this Israeli Deadhead sub-community, as well as the more diffuse sub-community of Jewish Deadheads, are smaller, more homogeneous, and denser than the larger Deadhead community that originally created commonalities among the members and are therefore more likely to provide the foundation for an intentional retirement community. Especially in Israel, with its history of Kibbutzim (Cnaan and Breyman 2007; Schoenfeld and Schoenfeld, *in press*) such a possibility seems realistic.

Deadheads and their “second families.” While the death of Garcia, and thus the dissolution of the Grateful Dead, had a significant impact on the larger Deadhead community, it also affected the many friendships that had formed while the band was providing a focus of activity. Additionally, individual identities and preferences were formed, molded, and sustained through the culture of the Deadhead community, and without these points of connection, Deadheads had to look for other avenues to address their personal needs of music scene participation, personal gratification, friendship, and community involvement. They needed to find a place to release, recharge and refuel their collective spirit. Some fans drifted to other soon-to-be behemoths

in the jam band world, like Phish and Wide-spread Panic (Harmon and Kyle 2016; Harmon and Woosnam 2016). Others pursued bands that have not become as popular.

While the type of music, how it was received by the fans, and the meaning it had for them was of paramount importance, of significant, if secondary, importance was the size of the fan base. After years of involvement and finding out who they were, and who their friends were in the Deadhead community, some lacked the desire to navigate the larger fan communities of popular bands and instead found it easier, and more fitting and comfortable, to find a new home, or a second “family,” in the smaller music scenes of bands like Jerry Joseph & the Jackmormons (Harmon and Kyle 2016). Not only did the small size of the group make it easier to navigate the initial process of friendship making, but because the fan base is older on the average than the fans of other jam bands (Hunt 2008), there was a more mature appreciation of the culture and one’s involvement. Additionally, Jackmormons’ fans were experienced fans—many had followed the Grateful Dead for a long period. In most instances, these “shared histories” with the Grateful Dead were not experienced literally “together,” but instead the history of experience served as a filter for friendship that directed the future course of relationships and their involvement in their new music scene (Harmon and Kyle 2016; Harmon and Woosnam 2016). Having had such significant experiences to orient themselves, coupled with a newfound “home” in a tangentially-related music scene, allowed for a communitarian ethos that engaged the participants and increased their motivation to be involved in this new community.

The fan base of the Jackmormons is spread throughout the United States, with the two most concentrated clusters of fans residing in Portland, Oregon and Denver, Colorado. Based on lifestyle preferences, and especially on music preferences, these two major Western cities foster identity maintenance and the continual growth of the communal bonds developed and sustained through music. That each of these cities are known for their music culture allows for further

opportunities for the fans to come together around the music they love; both that of the Jackmormons and the Grateful Dead. Because the music scene of the Jackmormons is rather small (250 attendees at a concert would be considered a large turnout), this also fosters the growth of dense and intimate relationships amongst the fans, especially as their participation evolves. The majority of fans has been involved in the Jackmormon sub-community for well over a decade, and some have been involved for nearly 30 years, with the most devout fans attending on average 10–15 Jackmormons’ shows per year (Harmon and Kyle 2016). Finally, because the fans of the Jackmormons are largely middle-aged (average age of participants at time of data collection was 45 in 2014), they have not begun to discuss aging together but they have had some time to develop their community in a way that could support successful aging when the time comes.

21.4 Conclusions

Although continuity is desirable in old age, with the physical, social, and financial constraints imposed by aging, it eventually becomes necessary to prioritize and focus on the activities most vital to well-being (Kleiber et al. 2008), to preserve involvement in the most significant leisure pursuits (Lang et al. 2002), and to pursue meaningful relationships rather than superficial social interactions (Tornstam 2005). Forming an intentional community based on musical taste and a shared perspective on its meaning could represent such an opportunity especially for baby boomers whose identities as music fans (or fans of various other forms of popular culture) are of more importance to them than was true for previous generations.

The Grateful Dead community, which for a variety of reasons discussed earlier, is higher in solidarity than many other music fan communities, provides an opportunity to examine the potential for the formation of such sub-communities within a much larger one. If no potential were to exist for such intentional

sub-communities among Deadheads, it would be unlikely for it to exist in other very large fan bases that have lasted a shorter length of time, in which fans are less intensely involved, and which are lower in solidarity. Although we argue that having a Deadhead identity alone is not likely to be an adequate basis for an intentional residential community to support successful aging, we do see potential for the formation of such communities among sub-groups of Deadheads so it is possible that the potential exists in other fan bases as well.

More specifically, we argue that shared musical taste operated as an initial filter for identification with the Deadhead community. Because of the large size and related relative heterogeneity and low density of the Deadhead community, smaller sub-communities are necessary to sustain and develop a larger master identity as Deadheads. It is these sub-communities, more intentionally maintained and developed since Garcia's death threatened the continued existence overall Deadhead community and since the fan base began recognizing its own aging, which represent the potential for intentionally-formed residential communities to support the aging of fans. Within these smaller, denser, more homogeneous communities, close relationships are beneficial on an individual level, but also significant to the sub-community that makes these meaningful relationships possible. These relationships and the communities they form are enacted and strengthened *intentionally*, and sustained through a collective ideal and commitment of shared values and interests that embodies the communitarian ethos (Arai and Pedlar 1997) that is integral to the success of intentional communities.

Interestingly, two of the communities described here are guided by co-master identities: Jewish Deadheads and Deadhead scholars. It is possible that having two master identities creates more connective tissue that allows for the potential to build "weak ties" into "strong ties" (Gladwell 2010; Krackhardt 1992). And while the numbers of participating members in the scholar's caucus is considerably smaller than those who identify as Jewish Deadheads, this

difference does not discount the intentionality or importance for those members who participate. The double nature of these identities may lead to a greater desire to affiliate due to the selectivity and commonality that accompanies an initiation into the group. Larger intentional sub-communities, such as Jewish Deadheads, use their size to their advantage to blend together smaller social networks within the larger cultural sphere to draw on the similarities that bind them together in the first place. Thus, Israeli Deadheads, for the most part, form a sub-community of Jewish Deadheads.

"Second families" developed through music like that of the Jackmormons, are quite common to find in the larger jam band culture. While the Grateful Dead's surviving members still play, numerous tribute bands and other jam bands have also been inspired by their music. Grateful Dead fans have always had eclectic musical taste. In fact, the Grateful Dead's tendency to cross genres and cover their musical inspirations in concerts led their fans to consume many types of music; this eclectic consumption still continues today. It is through refining the music interests of individuals alongside likeminded fans with similar backgrounds that the larger Deadhead "master" identity can be fine-tuned to meet the subtle needs of individuals as they age. That there is always a direct connection to their Deadhead being signals the importance of the temporal element of music consumption on personal growth (Adams and Harmon 2014). To be able to find the often ambiguous and aspirational aspects of community through smaller networks then benefits the larger music culture and ethos of what it means to be a fan of the Grateful Dead; the Grateful Dead never expected strict allegiance, rather they sought to create opportunities for positive experiences through music that led to their fans living life well, even after their time was done.

The takeaway point is that existing friendship networks spawn intentional communities in the communitarian ethos by supporting the intentionality of both individuals and the communities themselves. Without a social structure in place to congeal common interests and serve as an anchor

point for orientation, there would be a lack of opportunities to address meaning, identity, and community formation. In the case of the Deadheads, a shared history that spans years if not decades and is supplemented by post-Grateful Dead community assets in the form of music archives, chat forums, cover bands, dress, mannerisms and language, and most importantly, the continued performance of the surviving members of the Grateful Dead, leads to greater potential to enact one's Deadhead identity in the social confines of their chosen intentional sub-community, thus extending the potential for the continuity of their master identity of Deadhead.

So, the answer to our initial question regarding how rewarding living in an intentional retirement community based solely on musical taste could be is: "probably not very satisfying" That does not mean, however, that musical taste and music community identification is not important to preserve simultaneously while sustaining continuity in other aspects of identity. So, though shared taste in music might provoke interest in forming an intentional community, a stronger sense of commonality of purpose would facilitate a collective commitment to the well-being of residents and to support their successful aging.

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Part IV
Institutional Examples

Hometown Associations and Transnational Community Development

22

Deepak Lamba-Nieves

Abstract

This chapter examines how Dominican migrants and their counterparts back home are able to engage in impactful community development projects across borders through their participation in hometown associations (HTAs). Employing a transnational perspective, the analysis moves away from conventional approaches in the migration and development literature that center on migrant remittances and their economic impacts, and pays closer attention to the political and social dimensions of what transnational community organizations do and how they do it. The ethnographic evidence presented advances a more nuanced understanding of transnational community development by revealing the complexities of how members in both home and migrant communities define HTA projects, and are ultimately able to accomplish them. By carefully examining cross border ventures, the chapter reveals how HTAs generate new opportunities to experiment, learn, and deliberate who gets to decide what development means and how it should be carried out in localities impacted by migration.

22.1 Introduction

According to some estimates, one in seven persons around the globe is a migrant. People are constantly on the move, primarily due to the stark disparities in opportunities for socioeconomic advancement between countries and regions. The poorest Americans, for instance, have much higher annual incomes than over half of the world's population. Hence, where one lives or can end up matters a great deal when it comes to life chances (Milanovic 2012). But moving in search of new possibilities is not only a strategy that benefits those who leave; those that stay behind can also reap certain rewards, as the mainstream literature on migration and development has pointed out. In numerous localities across the Global South, migrants have become the primary purveyors of economic assistance, primarily through the sending of financial remittances. In 2015 alone, migrant remittances sent to developing countries totaled \$431.6 billion. These vast flows have become a steady source of foreign income for national governments, outpacing official development assistance and much more stable than private capital flows (WB 2016). In countries like Haiti, Tonga and Nepal, remittances account for over 20% of the Gross Domestic Product, while in Mexico

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they have surpassed oil revenues to become the nation's primary source of foreign income (WB 2016; Estevez 2016).

For many poor families that can rely on these streams, receiving remittances means having a shot at a better life.

Nonetheless, financial transfers are only part of the story. Migrants have also contributed to the development of their countries and communities of origin by coming together and working through associations. Historical accounts highlight how “campanilist” societies founded by Italian migrants during the 19th Century, spanning from Boston to Buenos Aires, would take on the construction of bell towers, sewers and other civic projects in their hometowns. Records also indicate how Jewish *landsmanshaftn*, Chinese *hui kuan*, and Japanese *kenjinkai* would appear in numerous locations where migrants wanted to preserve and promote connections to their home communities (Moya 2005). Beyond helping establish transnational ties, these groups lent support for hometown projects and activities and created spaces for communal interaction in the diaspora by publishing newspapers and organizing diverse social gatherings. More commonly known as hometown associations (HTAs) in the academic literature, these groups have a long and rich tradition that lasts to this day.

Technological advances such as the Internet, social media, cheap telephone calls and faster air travel has allowed present-day HTAs to maintain repeated and more frequent interactions with their hometowns. Thus, these associations have been able to become more involved in addressing the needs of their origin communities. In localities within Mexico and the Dominican Republic, for example, hometown associations have been able to break long-standing patterns of state neglect by bootstrapping a series of transnational community development projects, like building roads, schools, and even opening small factories. They have made this possible, not just by sending financial contributions back home, but also by remitting development ideas and executing projects inspired by their experiences abroad. Through the execution of these transnational

projects, these associations help expand development thinking by stretching the boundaries of what is possible, generate new opportunities to experiment and learn, and also spark debates about who wields the power to decide what community development means and should look like in communities impacted by migration.

This chapter provides some insights on what HTAs do and how they do it, and describes some of the contributions they make to community development by examining the projects and histories of three associations hailing from the Baní region of the Dominican Republic. In doing so, the analysis helps shed light on overlooked aspects of HTA work in the migration and development literature, which have largely been focused on financial remittances flows.

22.2 Understanding HTAs

HTAs can be broadly defined as voluntary organizations whose members share a common place of origin and generate support—both financial and social—to carry out significant projects in host and home communities (Lamba-Nieves 2013). As such, they occupy an important place in the networks that stem from transnational migrant practices. A transnational analytical framework or perspective, as numerous scholars have argued, recognizes that migration is not a one-way process that inevitably leads to assimilation into host societies, but that migrants become simultaneously embedded in “social fields” that link multiple geographies and transcend national borders. Migrant transnationalism was initially understood and theorized as a repossess to the oppressive racial and class inequities immigrants faced in destination countries (Basch et al. 1994; Portes 1996), but subsequent scholarship has helped refine early definitions and expand its analytical reach.¹ Examining HTAs through a transnational

¹Numerous academic inquiries have also raised important critiques that have led to calls for a more precise nomenclature, and to the advent of new concepts such as “translocalism”, “binational”, and “transstate” (Waldinger and Fitzgerald 2004; Barkan 2006, cited in Levitt and Nadya Jaworsky 2007). Others have disputed the seemingly

lens or “optic” (Khagram and Levitt 2007) enables us to better understand how their efforts link communities of origin and destination, and how HTA members are able to keep feet in two worlds, conserving strong ties “back home” while simultaneously attempting to become more closely integrated into the places they migrated to. It also allows us to look beyond the money and decipher the social and political impacts of migration, which are central to a more nuanced understanding of cross-border development.

Precise figures on the numbers of HTAs in existence are lacking, given the dearth of official government registries and that many such organizations are informal and short-lived. Nonetheless, some surveys provide a snapshot of migrant participation in HTAs. A study conducted by Orozco and García-Zanello (2009) amongst Caribbean and Latin American groups indicated that 38% of Paraguayans, 20% of Dominicans and 15.5% of Mexicans in the United States belong to an HTA. More recent figures captured by the Comparative Immigrant Organization Project (CIOP) on immigrant organizations in the United States indicate that 63.8% of Mexican, 3.53% of Dominican and 1.90% of Colombian organizations are HTAs. Moreover, there is a strong HTA presence in different parts of the world, including European Union countries (Caglar 2006; Christiansen 2008; Mercer et al. 2009), and in countries of the Global South (Okamura 1983; Orozco and Fedewa 2005; Lampert 2014).

The bulk of scholarship on contemporary HTAs comes from studies of Mexican and Central American associations in the US. This regional focus is due to a vast migration history, sustained flows from these countries to the US,² and media attention, but also to the existence of targeted

programs that aim to channel HTA contributions to countries of origin. In an effort to expand the national state’s influence and regulatory capacity over emigrants and their organizations, the Mexican government has pursued a series of “state-led transnationalism” projects (Goldring 2002). One of the most widely known efforts is the 3-for-1 program, which provides matching funds for qualifying projects proposed by HTAs, from local, state and federal government funding sources. The program has become a paradigmatic example of how migrants and state actors can come together to deliver development opportunities given its notable achievements: over 19,000 projects, ranging from infrastructure to health, education and other productive activities, and the participation (and creation) of thousands of migrant-led associations, have been registered since 2002 (BID 2012; CONEVAL 2013).

Evaluations and analyses of the 3-for-1 program provide a more complex picture than what can be inferred from official figures. Several studies point to positive governance outcomes stemming from the interactions between HTAs and government units at different levels. Some of these include increased transparency in the handling of community projects (Burgess 2006), the emergence of “civic spillover effects” (Fox and Bada 2008) that expand accountability and voice to the demands of residents and transnational citizens (Williams 2008) and the creation of new, civic oversight structures in municipalities that benefit from the program (Fox and Bada 2008). Similarly, analyses focused on socioeconomic outcomes paint a positive picture, highlighting how the program has been able to spur local development (Orozco and Welle 2006; Orozco and García-Zanello 2009).

However, other researchers have provided evidence of the program’s limitations. Critiques have centered on distributional concerns—as localities with large migrant flows benefit disproportionately from the program—how migrant elites bypass municipal authorities and exercise disproportionate authority over hometown locals (Burgess 2006; Bada 2014), and problems with the program’s design that introduce bias and

ubiquitous nature of transnational practices, arguing that a rather small percentage of the migrant population engages in sustained transnational practices (Guarnizo et al. 2003; Portes et al. 2002). Several scholars have also argued that cross border connections between migrants and their homelands are not a new phenomenon, but a common practice amongst earlier waves that has been dutifully documented (Foner 1997; Morawska 2004).

²The Mexico-United States corridor is the largest migration passage in the world (WB 2016).

capture by diverse interest groups (Aparicio and Mesreguer 2012; Mesreguer and Aparicio 2012).

Mexico's experience with HTAs and the 3-for-1 is by no means universal, but provides some valuable lessons. First, HTAs have become protagonist players in Mexico's efforts to link migration to development efforts. While the amounts remitted pale in comparison to the funds sent by families and individuals, their efforts have been instrumental in capturing the attention, and often the support, of policymakers, politicians and international development agencies. Thus, it should come as no surprise that El Salvador looked towards the 3-for-1 program a model for their short-lived *Unidos por la solidaridad*, or that the Philippines, Peru, Colombia and Ecuador have considered establishing similar programs (Zamora 2007).

Second, there's much more to HTAs' involvement in community development across borders than bricks, mortar and cash. When migrants get involved in helping erect a structure or start a needed service in their hometown, they're not only acting as faraway financiers, but also building political capital. Sending funds, following up on how projects evolve, and holding hometown peers and government officers accountable allows migrant HTA members to become "long distance citizens" who have a say in critical affairs within their home community (Fitzgerald 2000). This seemingly benign role can often be seen as threatening by hometown politicians who have to contend with HTA project partners that may have different political and development agendas. Partnering with state actors is a complicated feat that can lead to successful projects and policy innovations (Iskander 2010; Duquette 2011; Duquette-Rury 2016) but can also generate cross border tensions and problems (Smith 2006).

Third, because politics and social context matter, it is hard to make definitive assessment of HTAs' development capacity. Projects may reflect the desires of migrants more than the needs of hometown locals, but even these self interested ventures can have far reaching benefits. Building a baseball field or a town plaza may seem like a non-essential project in small towns

where basic needs are often hardly met. Nonetheless, the requisite transnational coordination between migrants and non migrants, the political negotiations, and the technical and managerial experience that is attained along the way, help build community development capacities and offer valuable, cross border learning opportunities. Similarly, a project that can provide lasting benefits for a broad majority, like potable water delivery system, may lead to lasting divisions between migrants and local authorities. As Smith (2006) describes in his transnational ethnography, *Mexican New York*, when HTA leaders in New York City demanded that everyone in their hometown of Ticuani pay their fair share of the cost to run a water service that migrants had substantially financed, a tense standoff ensued between residents, powerful political figures and diaspora leaders. Thus, a transnational community development effort is often more than just the sum of its parts.

Beyond the Mexican experience, what the historical and contemporary evidence points to is that although HTAs vary significantly with regards to membership, capacity, organizational structure, longevity and origin, they share a common attribute: taking on projects. It is through these undertakings that they become involved in local development efforts. But a more precise understanding of what community development means in a transnational context and how HTAs help carry it out, requires that we move beyond the standard metrics and simplified definitions that the mainstream literature focused on the migration-development nexus have offered. This requires formulating a more complex understanding of development, one that moves away from definitions anchored on standardized economic indicators and metrics. As authors like Goldring (2008) and Skeldon (2008) have argued, these approaches, primarily advanced by economists within the development industry, aim to evade the inherent tensions and contradictions that are at the center of developmental pursuits. The "de-politicization" of the concept avoids a closer inspection of the "messy politics" (Li 2007) that are at the center of these pursuits. But in order to better understand how

organizations like HTAs contribute to how development is pursued and conceived in transnational communities, we must pay closer attention to political, social and place-based dynamics. That is, the analysis must elucidate the processes through which HTAs engage in “messy” projects, where development is not a predetermined goal but a mutually constituted and contested category that is negotiated over time. This requires that we shift the emphasis from *how much* development occurs to *what kinds* of development processes emerge when HTAs become involved in transnational projects.

As the Mexican experience foreshadows, the often unpredicted and messy effects resulting from HTA projects demonstrate the contentious character of transnational community development practice. In the following section, I provide a more detailed description and analysis of different transnational projects that were undertaken by three HTAs hailing from the Baní Region of the Dominican Republic. In order to better understand the social and political dynamics that undergird HTA projects, I employ a transnational ethnographic approach (Smith 2001; Smith and Bakker 2005), that allows me to examine the complex webs of interconnection and simultaneous interaction between HTA members and chapters situated in multiple locales. The ethnographic data was collected over a 6 year period (roughly from 2008 to 2013) in three hometowns within the Dominican Republic, and in and destination enclaves established by *banilejos* in New York City and Boston. I relied on direct observation of meetings, fundraisers and other social activities, internal documents, journalistic and academic accounts, government reports, census figures and in-depth interviews. In total, 85 individuals were formally interviewed,³ and 15 core informants have provided important information and insights throughout the years.

³Unless otherwise specified, all the interviews were conducted in Spanish. All of the translations from Spanish are mine.

22.3 What HTAs Do and How They Do It: Evidence from the Dominican Republic

Different from most cases analyzed in the academic literature, where international migrants in destination communities of the Global North founded HTAs, the three associations studied were founded in the Dominican Republic during the 1970s, as a response to the state’s inattention towards the development needs of impoverished rural communities and during a period of political and economic turbulence. Initially organized by enterprising internal migrants who moved from the countryside to the capital city of Santo Domingo, and by successful hometown agriculturalists, the associations helped build and run vocational schools, health clinics and community infrastructure projects in order to take care of basic needs that were unmet by a repressive and inattentive regime. Ironically, during Joaquín Balaguer’s first twelve years in power (1966–1978)—which came at the heels of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo’s brutal dictatorship and a US military invasion—a series of youth groups and other associations began to spring up across the Dominican Republic. Some of these, like the 5-D clubs,⁴ were organized and financed by the regime with the help of the US government as a way to keep youth distracted, away from radical politics and “communist” ideals. Other collectives, like the agriculturalist associations, were outgrowths of pre capitalist rural traditions like the *convites*. An important community institution, *convites* are self-help networks where farmers come together to complete important agricultural tasks. In Baní, participants would donate a day’s work in exchange for food and the promise that others would help them with harvesting, planting or other laborious tasks. Thus, HTAs sprang up in Santo Domingo and throughout Baní following a rich and varied history of associational practices (Lamba-Nieves 2018).

⁴Dominican 5-D clubs were modeled after the American 4-H experience and were oriented towards individual advancement and the reproduction of the values and ideas sanctioned by the regime in power (Pérez and Artilles 1992).

Because many of the HTAs' early leaders were small businesses owners in the capital city or rural merchants, they could use their elite status as political cover while making claims and lobbying state authorities for the benefit of their home communities. Balaguer's regime actively persecuted, harassed and even murdered political and ideological opponents, including vocal youths who had leveraged the club tradition to establish organizations where they could express political messages against the regime using artistic and other creative expressions. Amidst this charged civic environment, HTA leaders occupied a unique position where they could access the political establishment and middling bourgeoisie, while also becoming strategic and measured brokers between the government and more vocal groups.

In the town of Villa Fundación, the leaders of the Asociación para el desarrollo de Villa Fundación [Association for the Development of Villa Fundación] or ADEFU, took on great risks to establish a reputation as an empowered and effective community organization. In 1973, they began building the town's main plaza in a plot previously designated by the community's forbearers. Employing a division of labor and management system that resembled the *convites*, they fundraised in Santo Domingo and relied on hometown volunteers to carry out the manual work. Executed without government support, they completed the highly visible project over several months. To assert their standing in the community and displeasure at the inattentiveness of the authorities, they invited the province governor to the inauguration, where the local youth poetry club recited denunciatory verses that were not well received by the politicians in attendance. Shortly after the event's conclusion, several of those involved were detained and some were beaten by the police. A couple of leaders who suffered the consequences explained that the experience helped the community gain "political prestige", and their daring attitude helped define their political stance: ADEFU would not wait for the authorities to respond to their claims, but proceed on their own. They

would also voice their displeasure publicly, and not let the state off the hook.

But most of the interactions between the state and the HTAs during the early years were not conflictual or violent. More often than not, they would involve some savvy political maneuvering. In 1977, the members of the *Movimiento para el Desarrollo de Boca Canasta* [Movement for the Development of Boca Canasta] or MODEBO, sought to build a new primary school just a couple of years after successfully starting and running a local health clinic. Given the magnitude of the project, they had to lobby the government, which at the time meant petitioning President Balaguer directly to receive his blessing. In order to do so, they brought with them high-caliber leaders from Balaguer's *Partido Reformista* whenever visiting state offices and even persuaded the province governor to speak on their behalf. But sealing the deal required additional political maneuvers. During a presidential visit to Baní, they made a direct petition to the President, who agreed to build the school after confirming that the HTA had been able to secure and purchase a suitable piece of land where the new structure would be built. Balaguer's authoritarian consent made all the difference. The day after, there was a government engineer surveying the site. Months later, Boca Canasta had a new school.

22.3.1 Becoming Transnational HTAs

Throughout the 1980s, thousands of dominicans made their way to the United States, facing a dire socioeconomic situation in the tropics: a government on the verge of bankruptcy, high costs of living, a devaluing currency, a decline in real wages, and austerity policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Moya Pons 1998; Hernández 2002). New York City had long been a key destination for Dominicans fleeing the dictatorship and the turmoil that ensued in the country following Trujillo's assassination in 1961, but by the mid 1970s other cities, like Boston, were also becoming home to a growing Dominican community.

As migration to the United States became more frequent, the HTAs from Baní saw new chapters emerge in host enclaves. As Levitt and Lamba-Nieves (2011) describe, migrants from Baní to the United States brought with them cultural and associational practices. Beyond the founding of new HTA affiliates, they also organized baseball and softball leagues, and would host community gatherings known as *kermesses*, where *banilejos* could connect with friends and family, strengthen social ties and keep sporting traditions alive. The 1990s would see another massive exodus, as many the economy shifted towards tourism and export industrialization, leaving many agricultural and traditional sector workers out of jobs. During that decade, 360,000 Dominicans were formally admitted to the United States, and many others entered the country without documentation (Torres-Saillant and Hernández 1998; Duany 2011).

Former youth club members and association leaders from Baní who arrived in the United States during the 1980s and 1990s sought new opportunities in a foreign and tough environment that was also rapidly deindustrializing. Thus, well-paying jobs that had been available to generations of factory workers before them were hard to come by. But because several had migrated to Santo Domingo before leaving their country, and amassed experience in the commercial sector, they were able to get by and work their way up the ladder. Once they had learned the ropes in the United States and had a chance to go back to visit their hometowns, they noticed the stark disparities between the places they now lived in and the ones they left behind.

Sending money home to help family and friends was considered a duty, one that most migrants assumed upon their arrival to the United States. And while some were also donating money for collective efforts in their towns of origin, concrete steps to organize new HTA chapters in the United States would materialize once home country leaders and international migrants understood that overseas support would further their efforts to address important needs,

and allow them to pursue bigger projects. Beyond expanding their capabilities, the inclusion of new franchises would also transform organizational dynamics and relationships with state actors in interesting ways.

During the mid 1980s, the home country leaders of the *Sociedad Progresista de Villa Sombrero* [Progressive Society of Villa Sombrero] enlisted the help of their New York City peers, several of whom had participated in the organization before migrating, to build the town's central plaza or *parque*. An important public space and distinguishing landmark in reputable towns, building the plaza would help rally transnational migrants, enhance SOPROVIS' reputation in the region and allow Villa Sombrero to catch up with their neighbors from Villa Fundación, who had built their own *parque* years before. Because the newly-minted New York City chapter included motivated merchants who could raise donations in dollars, and take advantage of a favorable exchange rate, they quickly became the project's and the association's principal financiers.

Despite a series of fits and starts in the United States, MODEBO was also able to enlist the help of their Boston chapter to carry out a major project. In the early 1990s, the HTA sought to address a growing problem with the town's water supply infrastructure, which needed to be upgraded and expanded. Once again, the HTA members understood that waiting for the state to make the first move would only worsen the situation, despite their recognition that it was a complex and costly undertaking. With the help of many Boston migrants, who organized an all day fundraiser in Boston's Jamaica Plain neighborhood, they gathered thousands of dollars for the project. These funds allowed them to begin digging a well in Boca Canasta. When Balaguer, who was back in power, was informed of the effort, he told the community to "keep its money" and promptly began building a new aqueduct. Not wanting to become upstaged by a community and an association that was capable of identifying solutions on their own, he finally delivered what the townspeople needed.

Villa Fundación's stateside chapter would emerge in 1991, following Don Isaac's⁵ visit to New York City. A renowned businessman, and de facto leader of ADEFU in the Dominican Republic, Don Isaac rounded up over 50 *fundacioneros* in a Manhattan restaurant and laid out a highly ambitious agenda for the HTA, which included two impactful projects: constructing asphalted roads and building a new aqueduct for Villa Fundación. According to those present at the gathering, mostly bodega owners and other merchants, an outpouring of cash and solidarity followed. ADEFU-New York was born, and for the next two years they would dutifully organize fundraisers to help complete the 18-km road network. International migrants would supply the cash, and following the experience of the plaza project, home country members would provide coordination support and sweat equity. Once the major stages were finished—cement sidewalks and gutters were built, ground was flattened and the aqueduct pipes were lay below the earth—ADEFU approached the Secretary of Public Works and asked them to take care of laying the asphalt. Much like Boca Canasta's experience, the government did not want to be completely bested by a community that had almost completely taken care of what are usually considered state projects. Understanding that there was a political cost to ignoring a well known effort (as numerous press outlets flocked to Villa Fundacion to report on the project), their petition was approved.

22.3.2 Navigating the Messy Politics of Transnational Community Development

Becoming transnational HTAs meant that bigger, more costly projects could be pursued. It also allowed the associations to become more visible to politicians and state authorities, who could not

afford to ignore their claims or their feats. With the support of international migrant contributions, the HTAs from Baní were able to redouble and refine a “coproduction” (Ostrom 1996) approach⁶ that had allowed them to achieve significant development opportunities. This modus operandi was eloquently summed up by Pedro R. an HTA leader from Villa Fundación:

...we are a community that's known for requiring organizing to do things. We're a community that's not waiting for the government to plan in order to do [something] for us. We plan, begin to undertake and if the government is interested, they finish [the projects] on our behalf.

Engaging with the state has meant working with different types of national and local governments, from repressive regimes to neoliberal administrations. Along the way, the HTAs have learnt to converse with those in power and sometimes persuade them. They exert positive pressure to get the politicians' attention. But this strategy, while offering opportunities for effective claims-making, can also lead to a political bargaining exercise that fosters a “semiclientelistic” (Fox 1994; Goldring 2002) relationship between powerful state actors and an influential but relatively weaker transnational civic association.

In Boca Canasta, for example, MODEBO's leaders have had to employ a shrewd political bargaining exercise where votes are promised in exchange for collective demands. Explaining how they have taken advantage of the political

⁵In order to protect the identities of the interviewees and other study participants, I have used pseudonyms. This does not apply to individuals who held public office at the time of the interviews.

⁶Coproduction refers to “a process through which inputs from individuals who are not ‘in’ the same organization are transformed into goods and services” (Ostrom 1996: 1073). The primary logic behind coproduction is that citizens and state actors have different but complementary ideas and know-how that can be appropriately brought together to generate improved opportunities for providing important public goods and services. In addition, by working together towards mutually beneficial goals, coproduction arrangements can also help generate social capital between citizens and with public agencies that can be drawn upon for future endeavors. Duquette-Rury's recent work (2016) on Mexican HTAs and the 3-for-1 program employs a “coproduction” framework to analyze migrant involvement in hometown development efforts.

process in recent years, Joaquín V., a veteran member of the hometown chapter described:

We would tell him [the candidate for mayor], behind the scenes, in a hushed way: ‘if you want to win, you have to make a big contribution to the churches and MODEBO. Now, if you want to lose in Boca Canasta, if you don’t give us anything, we’ll pay you back the same way’. We didn’t do this publicly, but when we were in closed quarters.

While this is not the preferred strategy employed by Bani’s HTAs, it is one that has helped organizations like MODEBO complete important projects and achieve gains for hometown residents. Nonetheless, it is an approach that does very little to transform the unequal and often corrupt power dynamics between the state and society in the Dominican Republic, and limits the possibilities for effectively leveraging “coproduction” to achieve gains in other domains.

On the other hand, avoiding political bargains and openly challenging the government to do its part can also lead to tense confrontations with those in power. During a public activity in Villa Sombrero to commemorate the 40-year anniversary of SOPROVIS, Giovanni Q., then President of the New York chapter remarked:

Why aren’t the authorities here? [...] we don’t have to solve governmental and social problems, there’s a mayor and a governor [for that]. We have to demand that they take care of these problems. Why does SOPROVIS have to reach into its pockets? Why don’t we unite to make demands?

A veteran member from the Santo Domingo chapter went further: “We don’t know what they’re spending the [public] funds on. The members of the municipal council have to demand that [information].” These public remarks irked the town mayor, and led to a series of tense exchanges, where the municipal chief described the stateside leaders as “newly minted pharaohs [...] [that] have no moral quality to rant against me or the institution that I lead.” Although this not uncommon quarrel can be easily reduced to small town political theater, it reveals some of the tensions and power struggles that lie at the core of the complex state-society relationships that emerge over time when cross-border civic actors become actively engaged in transnational community development. Given the lopsided balance of

power, railing against the authorities further complicated an already “messy” relationship and hindered advancement on projects and plans.

Over time, working across borders has also transformed the intra organizational dynamics and the division of labors within the HTAs (Lamba-Nieves 2018). Initially, stateside leaders played a fundamental role in ensuring that hometown projects were adequately funded, usually by organizing fundraising parties and events in the United States for the execution of projects conceived in Santo Domingo and in the hometowns. But after contributing to several successful efforts, and proving their worth and commitment to veteran leaders back home, stateside members began proposing and supporting projects that reflected their particular development values and goals. As Levitt and Lamba-Nieves explain (2011), migrant’s experience in the United States have an important effect on their perceptions of how development is defined and should be carried out. Encounters and brushes with different systems and institutions affect both their individual “outlook” and their collective pursuits.

After completing the roads and water project, ADEFU-New York’s members began to propose and support projects that reflected their development values and goals and were shaped by their experiences with “modern” installations—like the construction of a cafeteria in the high school building, refurbishing the local cemetery, and financially backing a community technology center. As Ignacio V. explained: “Modern things, like computers that we didn’t have when we were studying. We also proposed a project to build a children’s playground...we had seen similar playgrounds here [in New York].”

For the most part, projects proposed by overseas migrants have addressed important needs in home communities. In Villa Sombrero, for example, the SOPROVIS New York Chapter has championed a yearly health drive, worked closely with the local clinic, and established a condom distribution program. In a similar fashion, their counterparts in Boston started an educational scholarship program and supported projects focused on public safety.

Nonetheless, they have also proposed the construction of projects that primarily serve their

interests and desires, like sports and leisure facilities, which they can enjoy during their visits back home. In all three hometowns, migrant HTA members have fundraised and pursued these ventures. Their experience in the United States, where they are able to enjoy the use of public spaces with their families, and where organized sports leagues keep communities together and kids off the streets, fuel their desires.

Some of the projects proposed by migrant leaders create opportunities for learning about what's possible in home communities in important domains like public safety, health services and economic development. For home country leaders, their ideas sometimes seem far-fetched and grandiose, but not impossible. For Don Sergio, one of the original founders and most respected elders of SOPROVIS in Santo Domingo, the Boston's chapter proposal to build a sports complex presented an important challenge that the community was willing to meet, and a valuable learning opportunity:

Because they've resided in the United States for so long, they have some attributes of things from there. [...] it's not bad to share their ambition of having that [sports complex] in our community, that's very good. Human beings and organizations should aim to have the best. I see that as something good, I see it as normal; what's more, I see it as a challenge. ...SOPROVIS Boston has challenged the members of SOPROVIS, and SOPROVIS has accepted the challenge. That's something of value.

At times, these aspirations are not met with enthusiasm by home country leaders who understand that there are more pressing priorities, and want to exert their traditional influence over project selection. Such is the case in Boca Canasta, where hometown and migrant leaders clashed over whether to build a new cemetery or a sports complex. Following Villa Sombrero's lead, Boston's leaders understood that a public space where families could congregate and the youth could concentrate on sports activities, would allow them to better enjoy their time during their visits and contribute to a decline in delinquency and drug use, which is a growing concern in Boca Canasta. But several leaders of

the hometown chapter, and even some in Boston, saw things differently. They claimed that it was a capricious project that would only please those migrants who like to play softball during their visits back home. As Levitt has argued, the venture reflected an "ossified" perspective (Levitt 2007, 2009) where the hometown becomes a vacation destination, a place where they can escape the incessant hustle and bustle of Boston.

Hometown leaders understood that a new cemetery was the top priority, given that the old plot had filled up, partly with the remains of many migrants who wanted to be buried in their home soil. So their plan was to follow a proven formula: get organized, fundraise, buy some land ask the state for help and start building. But some of Boston's more vocal leaders were initially hesitant to follow the previous strategy. Having lived in the United States for many years, they had developed a different set of expectations of what the state should provide and how it should do so. They argued that a community cemetery is a public good, and as has been the case in some neighboring communities, the state should be the one responsible for building it. For months, leaders in the United States and the Dominican Republic failed to see eye to eye. Competing notions of who holds the power and moral authority to call the shots, and a misalignment in development priorities produced by different perspectives of what the community is and who gets to call the shots lay at the core of the disjuncture.

A solution was identified after numerous cross-border trips and meetings in Boston and Boca Canasta between hometown and migrant directors. In the end, both projects would be pursued. The Boston directors agreed to build the new cemetery in a far corner of a lot that the migrants had purchased to build the sports complex. Furthermore, leaders from Boca Canasta consented to lending a hand in the long-term completion of the stateside's proposal.

But MODEBO's case is not unique. As stateside chapters have become more embedded and committed to working for their communities, all

three study HTAs have had to travel down the bumpy and circuitous road that leads to transnational consensus. Finding an appropriate and feasible division of labors and responsibilities is central to how HTAs are able to complete complex projects while navigating the messy politics of transnational community development.

22.4 Conclusion

This chapter examines the experience of three transnational associations as a window into how community development is defined, negotiated and carried out across borders. The analysis heeds the call of critical scholars within the migration and development literature who argue in favor of a broader understanding of development. One that moves away from conventional approaches that privilege economic understandings and metrics, and pays closer attention to the “messy” political and social dimensions of what they do and how they do it (Goldring 2008; Skeldon 2008; Bakewell 2012).

A positive outlook towards the migration-development nexus has spread widely across academic and practitioner circles, thanks, in part, to a growing interest in financial remittances flows to developing countries, and the idea that migration can spur “brain circulation” instead of “brain drain”—the reduction of important human capital stocks from countries that most need them. Nevertheless, while an optimistic perspective has helped advance important programs and policies, scholars attuned to the complex migration experiences evidenced in the Global South and experts concerned with the lack of attention devoted to definitions of development have also furthered important critical assessments that refine ongoing debates.

Some of the more compelling and cogent arguments highlight how migration is both a cause and consequence of underdevelopment in poor countries thanks to neoliberal policies that have exacerbated asymmetries between North and South countries, and how a growing dependence on remittances for development have

placed an unjust pressure on the backs of migrants.⁷ Too much emphasis on the migration side of the dyad—focused mostly on who moves, what they remit, and its effects—has led to unrealistic claims regarding the potential of migrants’ efforts, oversimplified the complex interaction involved in the migration-development dynamic and eliminated discussions regarding the structural dynamics that condition development processes (Faist 2009; Wise and Covarrubias 2009). As Ronald Skeldon has argued, the mainstream debates are losing perspective, to the point that “the migration tail is beginning to wag the development dog” (2008, 5). From this limited perspective, promoting migratory streams that can yield sizeable macroeconomic profits becomes a primary motivation for migrant sending and receiving countries, at the expense of a more precise debate regarding what development means and how governments can be held accountable for helping achieve it. But engaging the development debates may prove to be a daunting challenge. As Bakewell (2012, xvii) explains,

The vast majority of studies that explicitly focus on migration and development spend little time defining ‘development’ let alone questioning its suppositions. For the most part, development is seen from a modernization perspective, concerned with progress towards universally recognized desirable goals: a common idea of the ‘good’. [...] However, if we are concerned with contested notions of development whose meaning may change both with different actors’ perspectives and over time, things become more challenging.

Moving beyond mainstream conceptions of development requires an adjustment of our analytical lenses. As the data in the chapter demonstrates, paying attention to how hometown association projects were carried out, allows us to take stock of the contesting visions and plans, document the fits and starts, and learn from the

⁷See the Cuernavaca Declaration of 2005—a statement that emerged from a workshop titled “Problems and Challenges of Migration and Development in the Americas” and was subscribed by a notable group of scholars and practitioners (http://rimd.reduaz.mx/documentos/declaration_of_cuernavaca.pdf).

experimental and sometimes unsuccessful pursuits of well meaning organizations that attempt to advance new opportunities in communities impacted by migration. In other words, careful observation of development projects reveals how these efforts are rarely straightforward ventures that follow clear and neat blueprints (Hirschman 1967).

As planners who engage in international development work can attest, official project assessments usually favor examining outcomes rather than processes. To be sure, outcomes should matter, but their definition should include a detailed accounting of the lessons and knowledge acquired on the way to a desired destination. Ignoring process, for example, might lead us to misclassify MODEBO's internal disputes over the cemetery project or SOPROVIS' heated exchanges with the town mayor as organizational failings or weaknesses. This limited approach overlooks the messy pathways that lead to the eventual completion of a project and the resolution of seemingly intractable problems along the way. It also fails to take notice of the diverse ways HTAs relate to and sometimes "coproduce" with state actors, and how cumbersome it can be to successfully negotiate development goals across borders. Rather than attempting to arrive at a definite metric that allows us to effectively measure the extent of HTA contributions, the analysis and evidence presented advances a more complex understanding of transnational community development. One that takes into account the political and social ramifications of HTAs' work and allows us to see how the completion of a town plaza, a sports complex or a cemetery can help further important discussions and spur transformations in terms of: government accountability, planning and public management, and organizational capabilities, amongst others.

22.4.1 Issues for Future Analysis and Research

The evidence also spurs a series of questions and themes that should be addressed in future rounds of research and analysis. First, given the

development potential of HTAs, what kinds of policies and programs can help bolster their work and performance? Mexico's 3-for-1 program serves as a signpost for many countries interested in linking migrant HTAs to development efforts. Nevertheless, the program's genesis and permanence has been associated with a "creative state" apparatus (at the national and local scales) that has been able to establish a series of unique engagements with its migrant population to bring about innovative development policies (Iskander 2010). But not all states are as "creative" or demonstrate such a disposition. Thus, in the absence of these policy and institutional conditions, as is the case in the Dominican Republic, HTAs move forward as best they can. This allows them to engage in diverse experimentation and problem solving strategies. Sometimes, this troubleshooting approach allows organizations to avoid the strictures of policy and program "monocropping" (Evans 2004; Portes 2010), which opens the door to novel learning opportunities. Nonetheless, experimentation can also lead to costly mistakes. Thus, devising the most appropriate policy and program frameworks that provide both systematization and allow creative organizational responses to flourish, is key.

Second, given the primarily first generation migrant member profile of stateside HTA chapters, how long will migrant support for HTAs last? Second generation involvement in HTAs and other ethnic organizations has been an on-going concern in for academics interested in understanding the longevity of migrant organizational practices and traditions (Levitt and Waters 2002; Smith 2006; Levitt 2009; Bada 2014). Amongst many of these studies, the consensus seems to be that while first generation migrants primarily populate HTAs, some second-generation children who grow up learning about community development, tend to leverage these social skills to engage in diverse forms of host country civic engagement, like professional ethnic networks or sports leagues. But this leaves us with few answers regarding the future of HTAs, especially given an increasingly restrictive migratory policies and political rhetoric that aim to curb first generation arrival into countries of the Global North. Some of the study HTAs,

like SOPROVIS-New York, have taken steps to socialize and incorporate 1.5 and second-generation youngsters into their ranks. This has forced them to begin conversing about host city community development issues, which are increasingly appealing to new recruits. Thus, it seems plausible that HTA survival in the years to come will involve a gradual shift in organizational focus towards migrant community issues.

Third, while HTA practices have become transnational, their impacts are mostly one-sided, primarily evidenced in hometown areas. Given this lopsided scenario, what can be done to channel their development capacity to also address host community issues? Levitt's assertion (2001: 128) that "transnational practices do not automatically produce transnational results" applies to the experience of the three associations studied. But this is not the case amongst numerous Mexican HTAs that have begun to mobilize around domestic political issues, or practice "civic binationality" (Fox 2005; Ramakrishnan and Viramontes 2010). In places like Chicago and Los Angeles, HTAs have been actively involved in rallies against anti-immigrant proposals and mobilizing in favor of advancing migrant rights. Contextual factors play an important role in defining the opportunity and support structures that migrants can take advantage of (Marquis and Battilana 2009), so practitioners and other intermediaries need to take geographically delimited factors (policies, norms, social class relations, etc.) into account as they attempt to build coalitions and build bridges with different communities of interests. Nonetheless, opportunities exist for structuring stable and possibly effective partnerships that can lead to increased civic capacity and much needed public problem solving (Briggs 2008).

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The Community Resilience Approach to Disaster Recovery: Strategies Communities Can Use

23

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Abstract

The community resilience approach to disaster management has gained prominence over the past ten years as a response to documented inadequacies in traditional approaches. Distinct from traditional, top-down approaches to disaster management that tend to see community members as victims of disaster events, this approach positions community members as important key actors in response and recovery efforts. The community resilience approach focuses attention on understanding community context and enhancing community-level capacities to work with response agencies post-disaster, so that the community as a whole is able to quickly return to a stable state and lead its own recovery efforts. This chapter introduces the community resilience approach, setting it in the context of four key findings from disaster research and identifying a corresponding set of challenges communities face when planning for disaster response and recovery in practice. It provides examples from a community resilience program in San Francisco to illustrate how three strategies integral to the

approach can work to address those challenges in practice. The chapter concludes with implications for practice and research.

23.1 Introduction

Disasters are non-routine, unexpected, often severe events that disrupt communities by interfering with normal activities and causing substantial damage. Distinct from routine emergencies, disasters challenge existing capacities and require responses outside of usual protocols (Auf der Heide 1989). Disasters can be large in scale, with widespread regional impacts, or small in scale, impacting a single community. They can be caused by natural or man-made phenomena. Recent examples of large scale disasters include Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Christchurch, New Zealand earthquake in 2011, and the Louisiana Flood in 2016. Smaller scale disasters like the 2016 Ghost Ship fire in Oakland, California, affect communities around the world on a regular basis. Whether large or small in scale, the damage and suffering disasters cause are felt most acutely in communities. At the same time, community members often act as first responders, directly involved in response and recovery efforts.

Even though communities are at the center of disasters, mainstream disaster research and planning historically focused on understanding

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the disaster events—the hurricane winds or rising flood waters—and formal response mechanisms (i.e. disaster declarations, Federal Emergency Management Association response, Red Cross) without an explicit concern for community context. That focus began to shift in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, a disaster that devastated the Gulf Coast of the United States in 2005, resulting in more than 1800 deaths and an estimated \$100 billion in damage. Response and recovery efforts were widely criticized and revealed severe inadequacies in coordination, communications, and top-down approaches to disaster management. Low-income and working class black communities suffered disproportionate impacts after Katrina, a reflection of pervasive social inequalities that existed long before the hurricane struck (Reed 2005; Rivlin 2006). These realities led some researchers to examine the relationship between disaster and social inequality in other settings more closely (Tierney 2007).

Informed in part by sociological studies, which focus more on the social disruption resulting from disasters rather than the events themselves (Perry 2006), subsequent research about disasters around the world helped inform a fundamental shift in how disaster management is approached. That body of research converges around concepts like resilience, capacities and vulnerabilities; it also recognizes that community members are important key actors in response and recovery efforts (McEntire 2006). Called *community resilience*, this approach focuses attention on understanding community context and enhancing community-level capacities to work with response agencies post-disaster, so that the community as a whole is able to quickly return to a stable state and lead its own recovery efforts.

This chapter begins by taking a closer look at how disaster management is understood, then summarizes four key findings from disaster research and identifies a corresponding set of challenges communities face when planning for disaster response and recovery in practice. The chapter goes on to explain the community resilience approach, including three strategies integral to its implementation. The next section

provides examples from a community resilience program in San Francisco to illustrate how those strategies can work to address the challenges communities face in practice. The chapter concludes with implications for practice and research.

23.2 Understanding Disaster Management

Disaster management is divided into four phases, with each phase focusing on distinct sets of activities meant to help communities prepare for and respond to disaster events. Mitigation activities focus on prevention efforts and include identifying risks and hazards to either reduce or eliminate the likelihood that an incident will negatively impact a community. Examples of typical mitigation activities include enforcing building codes that address risks like fires or earthquakes (i.e., sprinkler systems or seismic retrofit requirements) and construction zoning rules that restrict building in low-lying floodplains. Preparedness activities focus on ameliorating disaster impacts by ensuring that individuals and organizations know what to do when disaster strikes. Examples of preparedness activities include training, planning, and engaging in practice drills. Response activities include the immediate actions taken to save lives, protect property, and meet basic human needs in the wake of a disaster. Examples of response activities include evacuating victims and deploying response teams and resources. Recovery activities focus on restoring essential services and repairing infrastructure damages. Examples of recovery activities include the resumption of normal government operations and services (e.g., water/sewer services and public schools). Though conceptually distinct, in reality these phases often overlap. For example, recovery projects frequently include elements of mitigation, such as rebuilding structures using current building codes, while response may include recovery measures like removing debris (Lindsay 2012). Disaster research often focuses on individual and organizational behaviors during one

or more of these phases and identifies practical implications.

Sociologists have long recognized that disasters are inherently social phenomena that impact individuals, communities, and social systems more broadly. Disaster researchers concerned with sociological aspects of disasters have studied them from two main traditions.¹ One sees disaster events—the hurricane winds or earthquakes that trigger the disasters—as catalysts that disrupt social systems. This event-based tradition dates back to the post-World War II era and sees disasters as non-routine, unexpected intrusions on the usual activities and exchanges that take place in affected communities. From an event-based perspective, a disaster is:

an event, concentrated in time and space, in which a society, or a relatively self-sufficient subdivision of a society, undergoes severe danger and incurs such losses to its members and physical appurtenances that the social structure is disrupted and the fulfillment of all or some of the essential functions of the society is prevented. (Fritz 1961, p. 655)

From this perspective, disasters are caused by factors largely outside of society’s control and disrupt otherwise orderly social systems, causing physical damage and human suffering.

Later scholars (1980s–2000s) who follow in the event-based tradition retain the emphasis on disaster events as catalysts for change but also recognize that disasters are characterized by a “cycle of stability-disruption-adjustment” (Perry 2006, p. 8). From this perspective, disasters are seen to provide unique conditions for examining how communities confront social problems and navigate social change (Drabek and McEntire 2003; Tierney 2007).

The second tradition lacks a specific concern for the physical catalyst or disaster event itself. Instead, its focus is on the relationship between social phenomena and disasters so that disasters cannot be fully understood without making direct connections to the contexts in which they occur

(Gilligan 2006; Perry 2006). For these scholars, understanding a community’s social structures, norms, and relationships is fundamental to understanding the disaster it experiences, including its causes and consequences. These more socially-focused scholars see the causes and consequences of disasters as socially constructed, meaning that societal ideas and perceptions about things like threats, vulnerabilities, risk, blame, and responsibility affect how disasters are viewed and the types of assistance provided (Perry 2006; Tierney 2007). It sees disasters as fundamentally social phenomena with origins in broader social structures—or patterns of social arrangements in society (e.g., socio-economic class, religion)—that may reinforce persistent racial, gender, and socio-economic inequalities. For these scholars understanding social structures provides insights into how and why differences in post-disaster resource allocation or recovery priorities arise. When disaster management is informed by those insights, mitigation and preparedness efforts can include strategies aimed at altering those social structures to minimize differences in response and recovery outcomes (Perry 2006).

23.2.1 Four Research Findings and Corresponding Challenges in Practice

In looking across studies conducted in both traditions, four key findings arise. They pose a set of overlapping challenges that communities face across the four phases of disaster management (see Table 23.1).

One finding is that communication and coordination challenges between public officials, response organizations, and community members are pervasive and often threaten effective recovery efforts (Auf der Heide 1989; Drabek 2006). Effective disaster management requires otherwise independent organizations to cooperate and direct resources to a common cause (Form and Nosow 1958). In post-disaster environments, individuals and organizations in affected communities rely on an array of mediating

¹The hazards-disaster tradition is a third tradition in disaster research, but is not sociological in its approach so is not discussed here. Its focus is on understanding the hazard or disaster event itself rather than related social phenomena. See Perry (2006, pp. 8–11).

Table 23.1 Research findings and corresponding challenges for practice

Research finding	Practice challenges across four phases of disaster management			
	Mitigation	Preparedness	Response	Recovery
Problems with communication and coordination threaten effective response and recovery	Know who key formal and informal response actors at multiple levels are	Establish mechanisms to facilitate communication and coordination Engage formal and informal response actors from multiple levels in ongoing communication and coordination activities	Ensure that formal and informal actors, including emergent groups, coordinate and communicate about response activities and priorities	Ensure that formal and informal actors, including emergent groups, coordinate and communicate about recovery activities and priorities
Disasters create space for emergent norms, practices, and groups to surface	Understand pre-disaster context and how it may change after disaster	Create spaces for community members to discuss emergence potential	Ensure formal response protocols and organizations work with emergent groups and understand emergent norms and practices	Ensure that community has mechanisms in place to adapt to any permanent shifts in norms and practices and embrace new groups
Disasters often exacerbate inequalities	Recognize inequalities and develop strategies to address them	Engage diverse community members in designing response and recovery protocols that take inequalities into account and minimize uneven response	Ensure response teams and resources are deployed evenly	Ensure recovery plans and processes reflect concerns and priorities of whole community
The presence (or absence) of social capital matters for effective disaster response and recovery	Engage community members in shared learning experiences that facilitate collective problem identification, priority setting, and solution identification	Identify gaps between social capital existing in the community, who has access to it, and what is needed for effective response and recovery; Develop strategies to close those gaps	Activate networks to mobilize social capital so community members can be active participants in response efforts, including setting priorities and identifying solutions	Sustain social capital mobilization and ensure community members are active participants in setting priorities and identifying solutions for long-term recovery

organizations (Berger 1976) to help link them to formal response systems at the state and local levels. These mediating organizations include community response groups like Neighborhood Emergency Response Teams, neighborhood associations, houses of worship, and other secular and faith-based community groups.

However, studies consistently expose failures in communication and coordination among formal response organizations at the federal, state, and local levels and with community groups (e.g., Colten et al. 2008; Comfort et al. 2010b; White House 2006), suggesting that mediating organizations have been ineffective at the

community level. Much of that work also identifies the importance of working across sectors to access and mobilize resources communities need for effective recovery and response, noting that:

Just as it is important to coordinate the disaster response among the various local emergency organizations, *coordination with outside private as well as with state and federal organizations* increases the likelihood of an effective response. *Maximizing use of the resources available* has already been noted as a contributing factor. (Fischer 1998, p. 93; emphasis in original)

These coordination and communication challenges, if unresolved, result in increased animosity among community members as well as between them and the host of response organizations that appear to help after disaster strikes. Obstacles to effective coordination include jurisdictional disputes, an absence of pre-existing relationships among response agencies at different levels, breakdowns of trust, misalignments between the cultures of response organizations and affected communities, and over-response that results in an overwhelming, unexpected influx of volunteers and other resources directed toward the community (Auf der Heide 1989; Form and Nosow 1958; Gilligan 2006). Even when robust emergency protocols exist, the uncertainty of the post-disaster environment, including damage to the established emergency response infrastructure, can render those protocols ineffective and require responders to improvise (Auf der Heide 1989).

At the same time, research reveals that some communities organically self-organize outside of formal response protocols to mount an effective response in the immediate aftermath of a disaster (Aldrich 2012; Barton 1969; Fischer 1998; Gilligan 2006). Although disaster mythology propels the belief that disasters frequently bring out the worst human behaviors (i.e. looting, price gouging, panic flight, widespread deviant and disorderly behavior), this research suggests that community members more frequently respond altruistically and support one another in a calm and orderly way (Aldrich 2012; Fischer 1998; Fritz 1961). Disasters are more likely to foster social solidarity among community members and

cooperative relations between community members and formal response organizations when their values, goals and means converge (Barton 1969).

A second finding is that disasters create space for—and often require—new norms, behaviors, organizations, and ways of organizing to emerge. Norms will shift and new organizations or ways of organizing will appear, at least temporarily, as community members, volunteers, formal response organizations, and agency staff interact during response and recovery efforts (Drabek and McEntire 2003; Perry 2006; Stallings and Quarantelli 1985). So-called emergent groups rise in that space to fill gaps created when community needs are not addressed by existing organizations (Auf der Heide 1989), when usual roles and structures fail to work (Stallings and Quarantelli 1985), or when realities on the ground in the aftermath of a disaster catch response organizations by surprise (Fischer 1998), so that community members feel the need to take control of their own recovery efforts (Drabek and McEntire 2003). Emergent groups can be informal collections of individuals or formal organizations, including first responders, community residents, extra-local volunteers, local businesses, nonprofit organizations, religious congregations, and government agencies. They are considered emergent because they take on new roles, perform different functions, or engage in unfamiliar relationships as compared with times of calm (Drabek and McEntire 2003; Perry 2006; Stallings and Quarantelli 1985).

Emergent groups like Neighborhood Emergency Response Teams, local church groups, and merchant associations mediate relationships in the post-disaster context, but may not be immediately recognized in their new roles, further exacerbating communication and coordination challenges. Those challenges create real consequences for disaster-affected communities, slowing the recovery process and resulting in prolonged suffering, misunderstandings, misdirected resources, and missed opportunities (e.g., Aldrich 2012; Barton 1969; Comfort et al. 2010b; White House 2006).

A third finding is that disasters often exacerbate existing inequalities in communities. As a result, some members of a community are at greater risk for experiencing harm and are less likely to have access to the resources needed to address the impacts of a disturbance than others in the same community (Browning et al. 2006; Morrow 2008). In addition, research has shown that differential distribution in resources across geographies within cities has had consequences for differences in recovery—and even survival—from disaster (Browning et al. 2006). Other studies have documented how gender, race, and class affect people's experiences before and after disasters, so that:

predisaster inequities express themselves when disasters occur, and patterns of mortality, morbidity, loss, displacement, and recovery are inextricably linked to the social contexts in which disasters occur. (Tierney 2007, p. 515)

In other words, vulnerable or marginalized populations often fare worse than others because enduring inequities in access to resources (i.e., funding, information, expertise) and the decision-makers who allocate them further disadvantage those groups in post-disaster environments.

To explain differences in outcomes, scholars point to the importance of neighborhood level factors, most notably the capacities of residents and community organizations to participate in response and recovery processes (e.g., Aldrich 2012; Boin et al. 2010; Vale 2006). Response is more effective when prior planning, including training and response exercises, has taken place and when responders have had prior experiences in disaster settings (Fischer 1998). Effective coordination requires that responders know which resources and expertise are embedded in the community and how to access them (Auf der Heide 1989).

More recent research has converged around a fourth finding: communities that navigate response and recovery most effectively are rich in social capital. Seen as one indicator of a community's resilience potential (Comfort et al. 2010a; Engle 2011; Johnson et al. 2015; Miller

2007; Norris et al. 2008), social capital can be defined as the resources (which may be financial, programmatic, technical, or political) embedded in, and accessible through, a social network (Lin and Erickson 2008). A social network consists of a set individuals or organizations tied to one another by a defined set of relations (e.g., neighbors, partners) or events (e.g., attending community meetings or participating in church services; Borgatti and Halgin nd).

Social capital facilitates self-organizing, collective, community-driven problem-solving, and encompasses a range of other resilience capacities (e.g., Aldrich 2012; Briggs 2004; Colton et al. 2008; Comfort et al. 2010b; Gultom 2016; Morrow 2008). Aldrich (2012, pp. 149–150) identifies three ways in which social capital can help communities recover from disaster: (1) by serving as informal support systems that foster mutual assistance, (2) by establishing trust-based relationships and collective problem-solving practices, and (3) by motivating residents to stay and work with their neighbors to navigate the challenges and participate in the process of rebuilding. From this perspective, it seems that tightly connected communities may fare better than loosely connected ones after a disaster (Aldrich 2012; Gilligan 2006).

Yet, it is widely recognized that social capital is unevenly distributed along many dimensions (e.g., wealth, demographics, geography) and that even in seemingly tight-knit communities, not everyone has an equal opportunity to access or mobilize it. The uneven distribution of social capital can lead to exclusion, unbalanced claims across groups, restrictions on freedom, and a disintegration of social norms (Portes 1998). The consequences of exclusion are of particular concern in a post-disaster environment and include increased severity of damage, longer recovery periods, and permanent displacement for outgroups, who tend to be members of vulnerable populations or marginalized groups (Aldrich 2012). They may be excluded intentionally, if a community blocks the placement of Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) trailers in the neighborhood, for

example, or unintentionally, if the needs of a relatively ‘invisible’ population (e.g., homebound seniors or people living with disabilities) are not accounted for during the recovery process.

Table 23.1 summarizes these four key research findings and the corresponding challenges for each phase of disaster management. In reality, these challenges overlap and interact with one another, often crossing through two or more phases of disaster management. The overarching coordination challenge rests in developing systems that enable community members and public agencies to engage diverse groups in planning throughout the four phases of disaster management, so that the community as a whole is empowered to lead its own recovery efforts. Strategies to build community resilience recognize that communities must be able to call on a range of public, private and nonprofit organizations whose participation is needed for effective recovery. More specific challenges related to coordination and communication include knowing who the formal and informal actors are, creating the infrastructure and protocols needed to guide response and recovery, and ensuring a broad swath of the community is included while still being flexible enough to accommodate emergent groups.

The challenges related to emergence include understanding the pre-disaster context and anticipating which groups are likely to emerge into new roles post-disaster. A subsequent challenge is to ensure that emergent groups work effectively with one another and formal response organizations, and do not exacerbate inequalities or foster conflict (Fritz 1961; Drabek and McEntire 2003; Stallings and Quarantelli 1985).

One overarching challenge related to the findings about the roles of inequality and social capital is to find ways to build social capital and strengthen networks in ways that maximize benefits for all and minimize negative consequences, especially for vulnerable and marginalized populations in post-disaster environments (Aldrich 2012; Morrow 2008). The essence of the social capital challenge is how to

assess existing social capital and how to build the ‘right kind’ to promote resilience. In the context of disaster recovery, for social capital to have value it must bring needed resources (e.g., potable water, sewage and electricity, or funds for reconstruction) and expertise (about how to assess damage or reach vulnerable populations, for example) to the community for the purposes of facilitating recovery. For example, identifying the gaps that pose a preparedness challenge related to the importance of social capital may open up the door for the recognition of persistent inequalities in the community. Similarly, the preparedness challenge for social capital is to engage community members in shared learning and decision-making; addressing that challenge may make it easier for communities to address the preparedness challenge related to inequality, which is to engage diverse community members in designing response and recovery protocols that address those inequalities (Miller 2007).

These findings suggest that communities should focus their mitigation and preparedness efforts on: (1) identifying effective community-level mediating organizations to facilitate communication and coordination, (2) promoting connectedness among community members and with those mediating organizations, (3) understanding the pre-disaster context, including how social capital is distributed and where inequalities persist, (4) developing protocols for post-disaster communication and coordination, and (5) developing plans to promote equitable response and recovery processes. These suggestions are at the heart of the community resilience approach and inform three strategies integral to its implementation.

23.3 The Community Resilience Approach to Disaster Management

Informed by this research, the community resilience approach has gained traction in recent years and is now popular in disaster management policy and planning circles worldwide. To understand why this approach has gained so

much traction, it is helpful to take a closer look at the concept and its relationship to three strategies integral to the approach.

23.3.1 The Concept of Resilience

The community resilience approach is explicit in its recognition of community members as key actors, not simply victims, who often respond first to the disasters affecting them. It taps into the intuitive appeal of the resilience concept, which invokes images of strength and power rather than weakness and helplessness. Resilience refers to an ability to bend, not break; to be flexible and adaptable when faced with a threat or in the aftermath of a disaster. A familiar concept with origins in the natural sciences, resilience is now represented broadly across academic disciplines, spanning the literature from ecology to psychology, to disaster management and community development, and beyond (Adger 2000; Gallopin 2006; Norris et al. 2008; Ungar 2011).

The community resilience approach to disaster management encompasses a broad definition of the term resilience,² meaning that it recognizes that resilience is best thought of as a matter of degree, something that can be measured along a spectrum from not resilient to extremely resilient, rather than as an all-or-nothing characteristic (Engle 2011; Norris et al. 2008; Ungar 2011). Even that broad definition has some noteworthy parameters. For one, community resilience is a collective concept, greater than the sum of the resilience of individuals in a given community. Individual resilience is concerned with personal characteristics like optimism, discipline, self-control, high self-esteem, problem solving skills, and realistic expectations of oneself and the environment (Visser et al. 2012). Community resilience is less concerned with individual

factors and instead focuses on community context, including the degree of social connectedness, quality of relations, presence of supportive community norms, community capacity to problem-solve, and characteristics of social networks (Aldrich 2012; Norris et al. 2008). Also, resilience is distinct from persistence, which is a rigid state that precludes adaptation and can lead to system collapse (Zellner et al. 2012).

Furthermore, resilience is not a static state, but a dynamic set of capacities, processes, and outcomes that inform one another in an iterative fashion over the long-term, accepting “surprise as an inevitable ... enduring resilience is a balancing act” (Comfort et al. 2010a, p. 273). As such, it easily maps onto the four phases of disaster management, so that community resilience can refer to a set of latent resilience capacities (in the mitigation and preparedness phases), processes and behaviors (in the preparedness and response phases), and outcomes (in the response and recovery phases). Resilience capacities facilitate adaptation and include technical competencies like familiarity with the Incident Command System or proficiency with geospatial software applications, communications skills, analytic capabilities to facilitate information gathering and assessment, leadership, and governance (Comfort et al. 2010a; Johnson et al. 2015; Norris et al. 2008; Smith and Wenger 2006).

Resilience-as-process refers to a community’s collective ability to use those capacities to effectively cooperate, coordinate, and communicate, as well as to engage in shared learning, decision-making, and problem-solving. It includes ways of doing things—behaviors, protocols, and mechanisms that facilitate those sorts of collective actions. By developing capacities and practicing behaviors, community members can translate resilience capacities into resilient outcomes (Boin et al. 2010).

Resilience-as-outcome can be defined as the demonstrated ability to bounce back or recover from disaster with minimal disturbance to the fabric of the community. As an outcome, a resilient community is one that does not undergo fundamental changes in structure, function, or

²The term resilience is complex, with many dimensions. Different disciplines focus on distinct types of resilience, so that the meaning for one discipline is sometimes contested by other disciplines. For more extensive discussions of the concept, see de Bruijne et al. (2010) and Norris et al. (2008), for example.

identity (Gallopín 2006); it neither collapses nor fundamentally transforms. In other words, while a resilient post-disaster community may welcome new community members, revitalize a down-trodden economic corridor, or spruce up a neighborhood park, it would simultaneously also retain long-term residents and local merchants, abide by established economic and recreational planning objectives, and maintain its commitment to green space, for example.

From this perspective, community resilience can be defined in terms of a community's collective ability to engage in cooperative, coordinated response and recovery activities, including problem and solution identification and priority setting, that facilitate the whole community's adaptation to immediate and long-term changes to its environment.

23.3.2 Three Strategies Integral to the Community Resilience Approach

The community resilience approach recognizes the limitations of *both* top-down and bottom-up approaches to disaster response and recovery. The limitations of top-down approaches are inherent in large bureaucratic structures and formal response protocols, which lack the flexibility to adapt and respond quickly to unforeseen events. Bottom-up approaches are variable, depending on the capacity of community members, and may not have the resources needed to sustain a robust recovery (Hawkins and Maurer 2010). Large bureaucratic structures and formal response protocols, though not sufficient, are needed to respond effectively to large-scale disasters, especially those that cross regional or national borders (Boin 2010; Boin et al. 2010; Comfort et al. 2010a; Rhinard and Sundelius 2010). The core concern for communities is to find ways to connect with those formal response systems and communicate the community's needs, priorities, and suggested solutions in the post-disaster environment.

The community resilience approach employs three concurrent strategies to address the

challenges communities face throughout the phases of disaster management: (1) identify and sustain mediating organizations equipped to facilitate coordination and communication while accommodating emergence, (2) enrich social capital by enhancing the resilience capacities of community members, and (3) promote connectedness by reconfiguring social networks to maximize inclusiveness among community members and ensure linkages with response actors from the local, state, and federal levels.

Identify and Sustain Mediating Organizations. To provide an infrastructure that can facilitate coordination and communication, and also accommodate emergence, communities should identify and sustain local organizations to serve as mediating organizations for disaster management. For example, Vale (2006, pp. 164–166) recommends building 'neighborhood resilience centers' to serve as networks of organizations that could serve as conduits of information, mechanisms to coordinate services, and clear entry points for those who want to provide resources—whether philanthropic, voluntary, or public. They should be connected with larger organizations outside of the community and be familiar with formal systems and protocols for disaster response (i.e., FEMA, the Red Cross, local departments of emergency management, Incident Command System) so that they can most effectively engage with them during the recovery process.

Mediating organizations provide space to convene individuals and organizations from across the community to participate in collective efforts to build resilience. In that space, community members can engage in ongoing communications and shared decision making among participating individuals and organizations. Having this infrastructure in place may help community members come together to develop protocols for communication, coordination, and shared decision-making before, during, and after disaster occurs. In addition, identifying community-based mediating organizations during times of calm can help ensure that those organizations are easy for emergent groups to identify during the response and recovery phases.

Those mediating organizations should have systems in place to facilitate the identification and accommodation of emergent groups, which will, in turn, improve coordination among response actors. In order to avoid the negative consequences of emergence, mediating organizations have to be inclusive in their membership, collaborative in their approaches to solving problems, and have—or know where to get—the expertise and resources needed to solve those problems.

Enrich Social Capital. The community resilience approach focuses on developing resilience capacities as a primary way to enrich community social capital. The idea is that as community members participate in community resilience initiatives, they learn about social inequalities, gain awareness of everyday behaviors that might shape a context of emergence post-disaster, and engage in ongoing communication and coordination activities (Gultom 2016). In addition, community members develop their capacities to understand why and how social capital matters for inequality, including how it is distributed throughout their communities. They also gain experience in participating in shared problem and solution identification, as well as priority setting with others in their community (Miller 2007). Parallel efforts might focus on developing connections between previously unconnected members of a community, with a goal of promoting norms of trust and reciprocity across those connections (Gultom 2016). Social capital may be transferred from the individual to the community level through norms of social trust or reciprocity, but absent those widespread norms, that transfer will be limited to a small group of tightly connected individuals.

The focus on social capital holds promise for addressing the persistent challenges related to equity concerns as well as coordination and communication, especially if efforts to build social capital are connected with community-identified mediating organizations. To live up to that promise, community resilience initiatives focus on supporting community members as they develop capacities likely to enhance community resilience, which range from

developing stronger self-governance, communications, and technical competencies, to having a more complete understanding of the network of response agencies likely to be involved in response and recovery, to understanding how they can help strengthen the community's disaster response network in ways that minimize inequality. The enriched social capital derived from those increased capacities will be activated through networks at the community level. In order to maximize the value of social capital that can be easily extracted for the purposes of disaster response and recovery, the networks may need to be reconfigured before (mitigation and preparedness phases) and after (response and recovery phases) disaster.

Reconfigure Social Networks. Social networks facilitate collective social action by mobilizing social capital (Aldrich 2012; Lin and Erickson 2008). How a network is configured has implications for the accessibility of the resources embedded in it (Borgatti et al. 2013; Lin and Erickson 2008). Network ties connect individuals and organizations in the network to one another; they have distinct characteristics that influence the network's structure. For example, ties can be rather persistent (e.g., kinship) or more transitory (e.g., attendance at meetings). A network may be densely or loosely connected through those ties, with implications for how resources flow through the network (Borgatti et al. 2013). In densely connected networks, members are connected to multiple others in the network whereas loosely connected networks have few ties between members. In addition, network ties can bond, bridge, or link, based on how similar or dissimilar the people connected through those ties are.

Bonding ties connect people or organizations who are similar to one another—they may share a common identity, background, or agenda. Bonding ties are usually strong and create homogeneous networks that convey redundant information (Granovetter 1973, 1983). In diverse communities, the presence of strong bonding ties will likely generate one or more homogeneous networks that form distinct in-groups and outgroups disconnected from one another and others in the community (Portes 1998). The presence of dense,

homogeneous networks with strong bonding ties may exacerbate inequalities in the aftermath of a disaster in at least two ways. First, if not connected to the resources needed for successful recovery, those networks may become isolated and excluded from the response and recovery processes (Aldrich and Meyer 2015; Hawkins and Maurer 2010). Second, in-group networks will likely dominate decision-making processes, generating solutions that benefit them, without concern for outgroups or individuals in the community who have only peripheral connections and may be members of vulnerable or marginalized populations (Aldrich 2012; Briggs 2008; Portes 1998).

Bridging ties connect individuals or organizations who are different from one another – they may have different religious traditions, speak different languages, or have divergent political views. Bridging ties are usually weak and create diverse networks that foster social trust, cohesion and norms of reciprocity (Putnam 2007). As follows, bridging ties can effectively transfer individual level social capital to the community level. Community resilience programs focus on establishing bridging ties, with an eye toward including a broad representation of individual and organizational actors from across the community to provide input.

Linking ties connect individuals to others who have relative power over them, due to institutionalized, formal, or structural divides (Szreter 2002). For example, linking ties may connect individuals and community organizations to formal response and recovery agencies at the state or federal level. Linking ties are generally weak, but provide access to information and other resources of greatest value. Bridging and linking ties expose network members to new information and perspectives and are more likely than bonding ties to generate a range of solutions to a single problem. Having linkages to formal response agencies from the public and nonprofit sectors is needed for effective response and recovery (Hawkins and Maurer 2010).

Mediating organizations provide an infrastructure through which to identify, initiate, and maintain bridging and linking ties. Bridging and linking ties tend to be lacking among vulnerable

populations and in marginalized communities (Aldrich 2012; Hawkins and Maurer 2010), so the community resilience approach focuses on developing those.

To address challenges related to understanding inequalities and mitigating their effects, community resilience initiatives first take stock of existing community social capital, including how it is distributed throughout the community network. With that information, they can identify priority needs and more effectively work to help ensure more equitable outcomes post-disaster. By developing bridging and linking ties communities can enrich and strengthen their disaster resilience networks. Purposefully promoting the development of specific types of social capital and network ties can improve communication flows, access to resources, and mobilization of those resources in the post-disaster environment.

23.4 Community Resilience in Practice: An Example from San Francisco

Since the mid-2000s, communities around the world have been developing their own community resilience initiatives. San Francisco's Empowered Communities Program (ECP) is one such initiative. This section provides examples from the ECP to illustrate how the three strategies integral to the community resilience approach can work in practice.

23.4.1 Overview of the Empowered Communities Program (ECP)

An initiative of the City and County of San Francisco, the ECP was founded in 2009³ and active in eight San Francisco Neighborhoods by

³An early iteration of the program was piloted in 2009, but it was not named until Fall 2012. The early iteration was based on the Broadmoor Project, a multi-year New Orleans-based recovery project led by Dr. Doug Ahlers that sent Harvard graduate students to New Orleans to identify strategies for recovery and redevelopment. For

2016 (ECP 2016). Rooted in the community resilience approach to disaster management, the ECP implements the three strategies integral to its approach during the mitigation and preparedness phases, with the goal of empowering communities to lead their own inclusive response and recovery efforts in conjunction with formal and informal actors in the post-disaster environment.

First, the ECP identifies neighborhood HUBs, or local networks of community-serving organizations, to serve as mediating organizations that facilitate the collective action and promote connectedness. Second, the ECP enriches social capital by engaging community members in a series of activities and collective decision-making processes that build their resilience capacities on an ongoing basis, so that those community members build trust in one another and with local response organizations, improving their abilities to work together and communicate effectively after a disaster. Third, the ECP reconfigures social networks by engaging a multitude of organizational partners—public agencies, universities, philanthropic organizations, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and corporations—to provide communities with a range of resources to help them achieve their goals during times of calm and whose help they need to recover in the wake of disaster (ECP 2016).

The following discussion provides more specific examples of how the ECP implements the three strategies integral to the community resilience approach concurrently to address nine mitigation and preparedness challenges communities often face (see Table 23.2). Those challenges are related to ensuring effective communication and coordination, accommodating emergence, minimizing the impacts of inequality, and understanding the implications of social capital and its distribution throughout the community (see Table 23.1). Though Table 23.2 presents each strategy separately, in practice they overlap, creating a multi-pronged approach to address those challenges.

23.4.2 The ECP Identifies & Sustains Mediating Organizations

The ECP helps communities identify and sustain neighborhood HUBs that advance the community's overall preparedness on a daily basis and provide essential support after a disaster (ECP nd). As Table 23.2 shows, HUBs help communities address at least six disaster management challenges: four related to communication and coordination (knowing who key actors are, establishing mechanisms to facilitate communication and coordination, engaging actors in ongoing activities, and establishing protocols to facilitate response), one related to emergence (creating space to discuss emergence potential), and one related to inequality (engaging diverse community members in designing response and recovery protocols).

HUB members include community serving organizations like local businesses, houses of worship, schools, and community centers, as well as individuals who live or work in the neighborhood. Some HUB members may be affiliated with official response organizations, but many are not. Establishing a HUB ensures that a community has an easily identifiable gateway to help connect community-based mediating organizations with one another and with more traditional response agencies [i.e., FEMA, local emergency management agencies, Red Cross] and the resources they bring.

Each neighborhood HUB is centered around a community anchor institution like a community center or neighborhood church that has the organizational and political capacity to convene others and keep them engaged. The HUBs facilitate communication and coordination by providing a space to convene and establish an infrastructure to support collective decision-making. Through the HUBs, community leaders establish a governance framework and communications strategy that guide outreach activities and aim to draw in a diverse mix of community members, facilitate collective action, and coordinate decision-making. To accommodate emergence, HUBs provide a space where community members can convene during the preparedness

more information see <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/programs/crisisleadership/projects>.

Table 23.2 How the ECP uses three integral strategies to promote community resilience

Strategy	Mitigation phase challenges	Preparedness phase challenges	Examples from San Francisco's empowered communities program
Identify and sustain mediating organizations	Know who key formal and informal response actors are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish mechanisms to facilitate communication and coordination • Engage formal and informal response actors from multiple levels in ongoing communication and coordination activities • Establish protocols for communication and coordination among formal and informal response actors during and after disaster event • Create spaces for community members to discuss emergence potential • Engage diverse community members in designing response and recovery protocols that take inequalities into account and minimize uneven response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each neighborhood HUB is centered around a community anchor institution that has the organizational and political capacity to convene others and keep them engaged • Neighborhood HUBs provide space to convene formal and informal actors so that they can engage in discussions about emergence potential and inequality issues • Through the HUB, ECP community leaders establish a governance framework and communications strategy to facilitate collective action and decision-making • Neighborhood HUBs provide an infrastructure to facilitate the development and implementation of communication, coordination, response, and recovery protocols
Enrich social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know who key formal and informal response actors are • Understand pre-disaster context and how it may change after disaster • Recognize inequalities and develop strategies to address them • Engage community members in shared learning experiences that facilitate collective problem identification, priority setting, and solution identification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage formal and informal response actors from multiple levels in ongoing communication and coordination activities during times of calm • Establish protocols for communication and coordination among formal and informal response actors during and after disaster event • Identify gaps between social capital existing in the community, who has access to it, and what is needed for effective response and recovery; Develop strategies to close those gaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ECP secures the commitment of community leaders reflective of the neighborhood's composition to steward the initiative • Community members participate in a series of exercises that help build their resilience capacities • ECP participants compile a community profile, map community assets, and conduct a risk/hazard assessment

(continued)

Table 23.2 (continued)

Strategy	Mitigation phase challenges	Preparedness phase challenges	Examples from San Francisco’s empowered communities program
<p>Reconfigure social networks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand pre-disaster context and how it may change after disaster • Recognize inequalities and develop strategies to address them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage formal and informal response actors from multiple levels in ongoing communication and coordination activities • Engage diverse community members in designing response and recovery protocols that take inequalities into account and minimize uneven response • Identify gaps between social capital existing in the community, who has access to it, and what is needed for effective response and recovery; Develop strategies to close those gaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community profile provides basic information about the community’s demographic, socioeconomic, and linguistic makeup. It is used to identify vulnerable populations and to ensure their needs are met in the response and recovery phases of disaster • Public and nonprofit agencies provide training, data, and other resources to help community members as they compile their community profile, map community assets, and conduct the risk/hazard assessment. By participating in these activities, community members build linking ties to participating partner agencies • By inviting a broad array of community members to participate, the ECP brings resources into the community and builds bridging ties at two levels —among community members and among formal response agencies and other key governmental agencies • Neighborhood provide a mechanism through which community members can convene in the immediate aftermath of a disaster to assess the situation • Neighborhood HUBs are designed to reconfigure to support the response and recovery processes after disaster strikes. The HUBs mobilize social capital, anticipate emergence, and implement and/or adapt response protocols as needed

phase and discuss how they may shift their roles and reconfigure the network to improve response after a disaster strikes (ECP 2016).

23.4.3 The ECP Enriches Social Capital

As Table 23.2 shows, by participating in the ECP and enriching their collective social capital, community members address at least seven disaster management challenges: three related to communication and coordination (knowing who key actors are, engaging actors in ongoing activities, and establishing protocols), one related to emergence (understanding the pre-disaster context and potential for change), one related to inequality (recognizing inequalities and developing strategies to address them), and two related to social capital (engaging community members in shared learning and identifying gaps in social capital and developing strategies to close gaps).

To enrich social capital, the ECP engages community leaders reflective of the neighborhood's composition (i.e., local merchants, clergy, residents, nonprofit staff, government officials) to steward its implementation and conduct continual outreach to a range of stakeholders from across the community. Community members participate in a series of exercises that help them develop their resilience capacities by enhancing their leadership and communications skills, as well as strengthening their technical competencies. Through their participation in the ECP, community members are introduced to strategies and technical resources that enable them to better understand their community's vulnerabilities and strengths by mapping assets, completing a risk/hazard assessment, and compiling a community profile.

The community profile provides basic information about the community's demographic, socioeconomic, and linguistic makeup and is used to identify vulnerable or marginalized populations, so that they can be included in the ECP initiative. Compiling the community profile helps participants learn important information about the community, including those who live

and work in it. ECP participants learn how to map their community's assets so that they are able to organize around their collective strengths and skills. Asset mapping involves identifying the community's collective internal resources as well as connections to political, programmatic, financial, and technical resources outside of the community. ECP participants also learn how to conduct a risk/hazard assessment. Conducting the assessment involves fusing community members' existing knowledge with other data to paint a full picture of the community's infrastructure. They use the risk/hazard assessment to determine the community's vulnerability to a range of disasters, including earthquakes, hurricanes, fires, sea level rise, heat waves, and much more. Community members then identify a shared set of goals and objectives to address those vulnerabilities.

23.4.4 The ECP Reconfigures Social Networks

As Table 23.2 shows, participating in the ECP helps communities address at least five disaster management challenges by strengthening and reconfiguring their social networks: one related to communication and coordination (engaging actors in ongoing activities), one related to emergence (understanding the pre-disaster context and potential for change), two related to inequality (recognizing inequalities and developing strategies to address them and engaging diverse members in designing protocols), and one related to social capital (identifying gaps in social capital and developing strategies to close gaps).

To reconfigure social networks, the ECP convenes a cross-sector network of partner agencies to join communities participating in the initiative. Public and nonprofit partner agencies provide training, data, and other resources to help community members as they compile their community profile, map community assets, and conduct the risk/hazard assessment. Partner agencies help community members learn more about how various threats are likely to impact the

community as a whole and vulnerable groups in particular. They offer expertise and resources to help community members develop their collective response and recovery protocols. By participating in these activities, community members build linking ties to participating partner agencies.

At the same time, the ECP develops bridging ties among partner agencies, by bringing them together to work with participating communities during times of calm so that those agencies will have established relationships that enhance trust and facilitate communication and coordination post-disaster. The ECP also develops bridging ties in the community by engaging a broad array of community members in the initiative.

The ECP also identifies neighborhood HUBs as mechanisms for convening community members in the immediate aftermath of a disaster to assess the situation and identify priorities. Neighborhood HUBs then reconfigure the local response network to support the response and recovery processes, channeling HUB members into priority roles, so that different groups provide critical services to the community, help coordinate support to vulnerable residents who are sheltering in place, or serve as conduits of information between response actors and other community members. In so doing, the HUBs anticipate emergency, mobilize social capital, and implement and/or adapt local response protocols as needed.

23.4.5 Summary

Community resilience can be defined in terms of a community's collective ability to engage in cooperative, coordinated response and recovery activities, including problem and solution identification and priority setting, that facilitate the whole community's adaptation to immediate and long-term changes to its environment. A response to documented inadequacies in traditional approaches, the community resilience approach to disaster management employs three main strategies identify and sustain mediating organizations, enrich social capital, and reconfigure

social networks to address challenges to effective disaster management.

The core concern for communities is to find ways to coordinate with formal response systems and communicate the whole community's needs, priorities, and suggested solutions in the post-disaster environment. The examples from the ECP show that using a multi-pronged approach to implement the strategies integral to the community resilience concurrently holds promise for addressing that core concern.

23.5 Conclusion: Implications for Practice and Research

In recent years, reflective practitioners and engaged scholars have made progress in developing a more robust understanding of the concept of community resilience and strategies integral to its implementation. Based on that work and in light of the examples from the ECP, this concluding section offers implications for those involved in implementing community resilience programs in practice to consider. It also identifies the need for additional research in four areas to help advance the field and inform practice in the future.

23.5.1 Implications for Practice

While it is clear that the community resilience approach holds promise for providing communities and formal response agencies a collaborative framework for disaster management, that promise rests in careful, community-specific implementation. At its essence, the community resilience approach reflects an awareness of how the social construction of disasters can affect outcomes so that some benefit while others suffer disproportionately. Participants in community resilience initiatives should pay particular attention to how threats to community resilience are identified and framed, so as not to point to fundamental deficiencies in the community or some part of it, but to identify systemic concerns to be addressed by the whole community. Community

members should be mindful to pay close attention to their own community context, including mapping assets, recognizing persistent inequalities, and identifying patterns of social capital distribution, so they do not unwittingly exclude segments of the community or develop response and recovery strategies that run counter to their interests. To do so effectively requires using an inclusive approach that accommodates diverse perspectives.

A great deal of the discussion around community resilience initiatives focuses on the role of social capital and sometimes explicitly includes a discussion of network characteristics. A closer examination of social capital reveals nuances that have to be considered in order to understand inequalities and formulate solutions that can minimize the amplifying effects of disaster on those inequalities. Similarly, many community resilience initiatives would benefit from incorporating a more nuanced understanding of network ties, as well as of the resources and resilience capacities embedded in those networks, into their work. Failing to understand the type of social capital or network structure needed facilitate effective response and recovery efforts will likely hamper efforts to extract embedded resources and use them for the collective good (Borgatti et al. 2013; Lin and Erickson 2008). Similarly, failing to understand network ties may result in exacerbating inequalities or weakening connections to formal response organizations (Gultom 2016).

While enriching social capital and reconfiguring social networks are two of the three strategies integral to the community resilience approach, the importance of the third—identifying and sustaining mediating structures—should not be overlooked. A fundamental overarching challenge for disaster management is effective communication and coordination; having established, trusted mediating organizations at the local level whose role it is to facilitate communication and coordination during the response and recovery phases can go a long way toward addressing those challenges.

In addition, because the three strategies overlap and work concurrently in practice, they

should be implemented simultaneously, so that identifying and establishing local mediating organizations becomes part of the process of mapping community social capital and understanding how it is distributed. Once a mediating organization, or network of organizations, is identified, it should be used as a platform to convene an increasingly broad swath of the community, to continue to map social capital and to understand how individuals and organizations in the community are connected to one another and to others outside of the community.

Community members should also keep in mind that building community resilience is a long-term endeavor that requires continuous effort and widespread community input. Initiatives should develop plans to sustain their work and navigate leadership transitions at the community level. One way to address the sustainability concerns is to identify a local mediating organization that has the capacity to remain engaged and engage others in the long-term.

23.5.2 Implications for Research

Despite its intuitive appeal, more research is needed to document whether the community resilience approach is effective across all four phases of disaster management. First, there is precious little data about the effectiveness of programs meant to build communities' resilience capacities, including whether those capacities actually enhance resilience post-disaster. Resilience capacities are a form of social capital and provide resources needed for effective community response and recovery. However, while a number of retrospective studies lend credibility to the premise that resilient communities have high levels of social capital (e.g., Aldrich 2012; Colton et al. 2008; Miller 2007; Morrow 2008), at present there is little evidence to indicate whether intentional efforts to build social capital, as with the community resilience approach, actually increase communities' resilience to disasters (Aldrich 2012; van Eeten et al. 2010). In addition, extant research relies on fairly 'generic' indicators of community-level social capital,

such as the number of voluntary organizations, volunteer rates, voting rates, attendance at local events like block parties or community meetings, and perceptions of trust or reciprocity (Aldrich 2012) with little regard for how those factors contribute to the kind of social capital that has a particular value in the aftermath of a disaster. Researchers should continue to look for better ways to identify resilience capacities and capture true indicators of those capacities.

Second, the field would benefit from studies that apply more robust social network analysis methods. Social network analytics could be used to increase understanding about how the structural characteristics of community resilience networks, as well as the social capital embedded in those networks, affect outcomes across all four phases of disaster management. Using social network analysis to examine how a network's structure and other characteristics facilitate or hinder access to resources embedded in a community's resilience network could be used to identify potential gaps in resilience networks and prescribe changes to close those gaps or improve access to resources.

Third, research could examine how the characteristics of mediating organizations affect the roles they play in the community resilience network, including how effectively they play those roles and how they are regarded by others in the community. That research should examine mediating organizations in the community context, to assess whether organizations with different characteristics perform better in some community contexts than others, for example.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, more work needs to examine community resilience initiatives across all four phases of disaster management in order to establish whether the work done in the mitigation and preparedness phases leads to more effective and inclusive response and recovery phases. That work should also examine questions related to sustainability of these initiatives, including those related to funding, organizational capacity, individual commitment.

In the meantime, engaged scholars and reflective practitioners should keep plodding along and continue to share what they learn along the way. Resilience is the outcome of a long-term process; the research that examines the effectiveness of policies and programs meant to support it must be a long-term project as well. As evidence is generated it can be used to improve resilience-building programs that target specific types of social capital development, embed networks with resources tailored to meet community needs, and promote network structures to help communities most effectively lead their own disaster recovery processes.

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Religious Congregations as Community Hubs and Sources of Social Bonding

24

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Abstract

This chapter views congregations as community organizations that enhance face-to-face supportive relationships for the people that belong to them. Using Tönnies' continuum, we claim that in the United States congregations increase the *Gemeinschaft* form of social connectedness. As formal associations in the local ecology, congregations provide member support and benefits that exceed most other community organizations. We will demonstrate that congregations are common in all American communities, and that they serve as a major source of mutual support and bonding social capital for their members in addition to caring for outsiders.

24.1 Introduction

A community can be viewed as a group of people who are connected by durable relationships that extend beyond immediate genealogical ties, and who usually define that relationship as important to their social identity and practice. [For a full

discussion on how communities are structured and perceived see Albert Hunter's work in Chap. 1 of this volume]. People's lives are embedded with communal ties to other people and organizations. Some connections are limited in scope and depth to a single context. For example, buying coffee in one's favorite coffee shop may produce repeated interactions with the local barista, but the relationship is limited to the coffee buying and exchanges of pleasantries regarding weather or sports. Relationships with neighbors or parents of children's schoolmates may be deeper and span over a variety of spheres from politics to vacationing. Congregations are one community organization in the United States where strong relationships are built. The expression and practice of religion can vary greatly from country to country, and so we limit our discussion and presentation of relevant data to religious congregations in the United States. Here, religious organizations have played a long and central role to the formation of community and the facilitation of community action.

Tönnies (1889/1955) proposed two foundational concepts of social groups within community life. First, there are relationships based on reciprocity, shared norms, and personal interaction known as *Gemeinschaft* (usually translated as "community"). Under *Gemeinschaft*, relationships between people are predicated on feelings of togetherness and on mutual bonds. Tönnies argued that traditional societies were

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typified by simple and direct face-to-face relations determined by *Wesenwille* (natural will)—i.e., natural and spontaneously arising emotions and expressions of sentiment. Second, there are relationships defined by more segmented, formal, larger scale, and task-oriented interactions that constitute *Gesellschaft* (usually translated as a “society” or “association”). *Gesellschaft* describes how people connect formally through provisional associations, instrumental for one’s aims and goals. *Gesellschaft* characterizes the social forms of modernity, mass communication, urbanism, and industrialization.

Clearly, the *Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft* dichotomy has limitations. The terms are meant to represent ideal types that do not occur in pure form in society. Furthermore, Tönnies’ framework may over-generalize differences between types of social relationships, and tends to suggest that all societies follow a similar evolutionary path, from traditional to modern (Bond 2013). However, the continuum is useful in conceptualizing human relationships in a given community (Cnaan and Rothman 2008). The theory offers a rationale for why people seek meaningful relationships and avoid anomie. While *Gemeinschaft* is often romanticized in the literature, it explains the quest of many people for true friendships (see Rebecca Adams chapter in this volume as well as Blieszner and Adams 1992). Tönnies’ dichotomy can be juxtaposed with Putnam’s ideas of the decline of social capital.

Putnam (1995) defined social capital as “features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit.” He suggested that face-to-face interactions between members of community/society are declining, leading to general mistrust and apathy towards the political process. In his core argument, Putnam suggested that people’s participation in social interactions and civic discussions was waning. Fewer meaningful face-to-face interactions take place in a given society; people volunteer less but more often pay membership fees to belong to organizations. The idea of social capital is similar to the traditional *Gemeinschaft*, and a decline in social capital can be associated

with the rise of *Gesellschaft*. It is our contention in this chapter that local religious congregations are one place in most American communities where *Gemeinschaft* and social capital are sustained.

Durkheim (1915/1965) defined religion, in contrast to faith, in the following manner:

A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them. (p. 62).

In other words, religion, unlike faith, cannot be practiced alone. To be able to act religiously, a person needs a community of followers to share the practices related to the relevant deity. Indeed, Johnstone (2007) argued that religion is first and foremost a group phenomenon. He noted that in Latin, the word *religare*, the source of the word religion, means “the concept of the group or fellowship” (p. 8). Similarly, Graham and Haidt (2010) argued that religion binds people together into cooperative communities organized around deities. They contended that religious practices and rituals required group settings such as churches or congregations.

Congregations are, therefore, an inherent part of religious expression and worship. In many world religions, the gathering with other believers is essential to religious practice. For example, in Orthodox Judaism, in order to have certain prayers, you need to have 10 men (a *minyan* or *minyan*). In Christianity, the weekly sharing of bread and wine is a central form of worship. Muslims are called to prayer with other faithfuls as a matter of daily routine. The act of congregating, and the social form of congregations, are not appendages to religion but vital organs of religion itself. In other words, religion is not meant to be experienced as individuals, but in communities. When individuals participate in congregations, it leads to stronger *Gemeinschaft* and social capital.

To that end, in the next section of this chapter we will demonstrate that religious congregations are the most frequent community organizations. That is, they are numerous and ubiquitous, so

that there is virtually no community without places of worship. In the following section, we will demonstrate that congregations bring together people with similar interests and background and, in turn, help them connect with like-minded people. We will assess the strengths and weaknesses of these types of memberships. This analysis will be followed by a section devoted to the levels of face-to-face interactions in congregations that are meaningful and produce significant friendships. Next, we will discuss how communities of care are formed around congregations and how anomie and isolation are combated by local religious congregations. We will conclude this chapter by discussing the importance of local religious congregations to enhancing sense of community, community pride, and community preservation.

24.2 The Ubiquity of Congregations

When one thinks about any community or neighborhood, a set of community institutions come to mind. They include schools, banks, gasoline stations, hair cutting salons, liquor stores, banks, and congregations. No matter which community is discussed, one would expect to find at least a few, if not all, of these institutions. Each of these institutions serve different needs to residents. If these institutions did not exist, the relevant community would be less attractive to potential residents and local residents would have to commute to consume the services offered by these institutions.

Our aim in this chapter is to give a general overview of the role of congregations in society without pointing out all of the variations. We look at the forest, so to speak, at the expense of recognizing the trees. Various studies have tried to assess the number of religious congregations in the United States. The estimates usually run between 320,000–400,000. This implies that there is one congregation per 772–965 residents. In comparison, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (2016), there were 98,328 public schools and 30,861 private schools

during the 2011–2012 school year. Schools are likely the second most frequent community institutions and their total number is about a third of the number of religious congregations. Compared to a popular fast-food chain, there were 14,267 operating McDonald's restaurants in the U.S. in 2013. In other words, there are at least 22 congregations for every McDonald's. Compared to another popular institution for meeting people and building relationships, in 2015, there were 63,862 registered bars, taverns, and night clubs (Statista 2016). Still, for every local watering hole, there are five to six religious congregations.

In his classic play "Our Town," playwright Wilder (1939), tasks his protagonist, the stage manager, with introducing the setting for the play to the audience. The narrator broadcasts the following description of the town's defining institutions:

Well, I'd better show you how our town lies. Up here is Main Street. Way back there is the railway station. Polish Town's across the tracks.

Over there is the Congregational Church; across the street's the Presbyterian. Methodist and Unitarian are over there. Baptist is down in the holla' by the river. Catholic Church is over beyond the tracks.

Here's the Town Hall and Post Office combined; jail's in the basement. Here's the grocery store and here's Mr. Morgan's drugstore. Most everybody in town manages to look into those two stores once a day.

Public School's over yonder. High School's still farther over. Quarter of nine mornings, noontimes, and three o'clock afternoons, the hull town can hear the yelling and screaming from those schoolyards.

Wilder intuited that there are some key community institutions in every town. These institutions include government offices, private business, and religious congregations. The congregations are detailed as to their specific denomination and the relevant membership. What Wilder suggested is that there cannot be a real town or community without houses of worship.

Orr (1998) found in four Los Angeles neighborhoods: "an average of 35 religious congregations and 12.5 religiously-affiliated nonprofit

corporations per square mile, far more than the number of gasoline stations, liquor stores, and supermarkets combined” (p. 3). In the Philadelphia Census of Congregations, Cnaan and Boddie (2001) found that in a city of about 133 square miles, there were 2120 congregations. This reported square mileage includes the large Fairmount Park, the train station, abandoned industrial parks, more than twenty universities, and two airports. That is, Philadelphia’s inhabited area is considerably smaller than its total area. Regardless, in the 133 square miles, there were about sixteen congregations per square urban mile. There is no other social organization as ubiquitous as the local religious congregation. This study also found that the largest distance one can walk from one congregation to another is 0.8 mile. Hernandez et al. (2008) found that “Kent County, Michigan was home to 720 religious congregations in 2007” (p. 1). The county residents amount to 636,369 which implies a congregation per 884 residents. Kent County’s 847 square miles include one small town, Grand Rapids, and many rural areas. In such non-urban areas there are, on average, 1.8 congregations per square mile.

Many community institutions and social services agencies are known to reside in or close to the center of the city or on major thoroughways. Congregations, on the other hand, tend to be dispersed and located in close proximity to where members live. Although many people drive to their congregation of choice and look for like-minded people, many people still attend congregations nearby. For example, Woolever and Bruce (2008) found that more than half (55%) of persons attending worship reported a commute of ten minutes or less. An additional 21% reported a commute of 11–15 min, while a total of 88% of worshippers reported a commute of 20 or less minutes. Few worshippers reported commutes of more than 20 min (8%) or more than 30 min (4%). Similarly, in the Philadelphia Census of Congregations, substantial proportions of members were reported to live within walking distance of their places of worship. That is, an average of 42.8% of members were described as

residing within a 10-block radius (or about one mile) of their congregation.

The above data corresponds to what every visitor to the United States observes. Wherever one turns, there is a religious congregation. Numerous and spread all over the country, some are small and unassuming, others are humongous and attract throngs of people. A community cannot be fully considered without noticing its places of worship. From small villages to center cities, the American landscape is planted with congregations.

Congregational buildings are not only physical structures. They are also symbols of the religious communities that they represent. Often, the most visible and well-kept buildings in many neighborhoods are places of worship. They are often large in size and crowned by an impressive steeple that can be seen from far distances. People use them as landmarks when giving directions. They often represent something of the history of the area. These edifices are like second homes to their congregants. Members feel affinity towards these buildings even if they are small and/or in need of repair. Congregants refer to these building as “our congregation.” Even those who leave their home towns and move away feel a connection towards “their” congregation. Numerous Americans go back to the congregational building in which they grew up if they can commute to it, or as a personal pilgrimage. Local congregants care for their building and support the cost of its maintenance. It is their home and their pride.

24.3 Congregations Bring Together Like-Minded People

Before the invention and mass production of cars in the early years of the 20th century, religious members were likely to be within walking or a carriage-ride distance of a congregation’s location. Since many people resided in the city’s center, on every few blocks there was a thriving congregation. Members of these communities would likely hear their own church bells or a call

to prayer, which helped to regulate daily life, seasons, and community events (Holifield 1994). The pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic parish model defined membership along geographic boundaries. Since the mid-20th century, few religious communities still prescribe proximity of congregants' homes as a part of membership, with the possible exceptions of Orthodox Judaic synagogues, Latter-day Saint wards, or traditional Amish communities. What is more common is the sentiment: "In the 20-min drive to our church, we pass by at least 10 other churches. There are plenty of other churches within a 15-min or less radius. Sometimes we wonder, are these churches 'not worthy' of our attendance?"

When people congregate on their own volition, more often than not they do so with other people of similar values, life experiences and ethnics backgrounds. The first and most obvious reason for selecting a congregation is denomination. If a person identifies with a particular denomination, he/she is likely to attend a congregation of that denomination. However, there is evidence that the importance of denominational distinction is waning in America (Putnam and Campbell 2010; Wuthnow 1988). Many people change denominations in their lifetime; there can be variation between congregations of the same denomination; and there can be similarity between congregations of different denominations. Uslander (2002) suggested that congregating with people who are similar to ourselves is the least costly as understanding differences is not needed and agreements are common. In their study of how religion shapes American politics, Putnam and Campbell (2010) described congregations as "echo-chambers" in which political ideas reverberate among like-minded individuals. While religious observance has been shown to correlate with conservative political views, many congregations, such as Black Protestant churches, have aligned strongly with liberal politics (Putnam and Campbell 2010). In either case, people of similar ideology tend to congregate together. Data from the Philadelphia Census of Congregations shows that members of congregations are likely to share

similar ethnicity and income levels (Cnaan 2006). While this may be a function of geography, the data shows that many people (even those of lesser income) are willing to travel out of their neighborhoods to attend church with people who may be more like themselves.

Racial and ethnic similarities serve as strong ties in the formation of *Gemeinschaft* through religious associations. The roots of racial segregation run deep in the history of religion in America and the pattern continues today. Cnaan (2006) found that even in the urban setting of Philadelphia, almost 90% of congregations still had membership where more than three-quarters were of the same race. Martinez and Dougherty (2013) reported that those who belonged to the majority race within a congregation felt a greater sense of belonging and exhibited deeper commitment. They used the concept of homophily, the love of those who are similar, to explain why race endures as a sifter for religious attendance. While there are some indicators that congregations are becoming more diverse, Putnam and Campbell concluded that "Religion and ethnicity continue to have a symbiotic relationship" (2010, p. 318).

Congregations are also safe homes to new immigrants who lack social networks in the U.S. These immigrant congregations are home to many Koreans, Chinese, Nigerians, Mexicans and other new immigrants. In these congregations, members can speak the home language, worship in their home style, support each other, and sustain their home language and culture. People feel more comfortable by aggregating with like-minded people and forming social relationships that extend to other spheres of life (Schwadel 2012). In a similar fashion, marginalized and rationally oppressed groups also tended to worship with people who shared their experiences. One such example are members of the LGBT community. While many congregations are open and affirming to GLBT members, many of them feel better supported in congregations composed of majority LGBT members, as in the case of the Metropolitan Community churches or the Ahava synagogues (Kane 2013; Shore-Goss et al. 2013).

While race, income, sexual orientation, and political views are examples of how people seek to build community with others who are like themselves, theological characteristics of congregations also affect the strength of the *Gemeinschaft* formed therein. A congregation's orthodoxy, used analogously with strictness of rules and expectations, correlates strongly with certain measures of community strength. Those who join stricter religious groups exhibit higher levels of commitment, as measured by donations of time and money (Iannaccone 1994; Olson and Perl 2005). The theory of free-riding is used to explain the effect, claiming that orthodox religions sift out those who are seeking to "free-ride," or enjoy the collective benefits of an organization without contributing. Stricter congregations require more of their members, and typically have closer monitoring of adherence to rules and contributions of time and money, which discourages those who are unwilling to meet the expectations. Those who remain in the congregation are more committed, resulting in greater participation and stronger *Gemeinschaft*.

24.4 Differences and Challenges

While there is strong evidence for congregations being places with high levels of homogeneity, congregations can also facilitate connecting people with differences. Although a congregation may have a majority ethnicity or political affiliation, there will always be members with different backgrounds and opinions. Furthermore, ethnicity, politics and other factors mentioned above fail to represent the full description of human characteristics and interests. Congregations can serve as places where people experience diversity and interact with people who are different from them in ways that they would not otherwise be able to.

One of the challenges of homogeneity within congregations can be a lack of bridging social capital. When membership is limited to people of the same background and orientation, linking to other groups and to other sources of society can be problematic. As mentioned earlier, strong

bonding can also lead to anti-bridging behavior such as forming cliques and fostering exclusivity. Affiliation to a congregation can hinder friendship with those in other congregations, or even create contention between members of different religious groups. Despite these challenges, in the next section we will discuss how members of congregations find meaningful relationships and form strong bonding social capital.

24.5 Congregations and Friendships

Active involvement with relatives and friends is an essential factor of daily life for the vast majority of people. Family and friendship support networks are important for coping with the ongoing stresses of daily life, for sharing emotions, coping with physical and mental health problems, and for receiving all types of needed support. While family members are often a fixed number, and the depth of relationships are contingent on proximity and personal histories, friendships are more fluid and can be enhanced. Religious congregations are one place where like-minded people can acquire new and meaningful friendships.

Children and young adults are adept at building friendships. However, there are very few places where adults can meet others who are of the same mindset and with whom they can easily become friends. Meeting the same people week after week in a faith-related context increases the likelihood that other members will be supportive rather than exploitative. It also increases the probability of finding other adults with whom one can become friends. Many traditional sources for building supportive relationships are becoming less amicable. The workplace is presently a more competitive environment and today's colleague may become tomorrow's adversary. A friendly colleague may be the one who stands in the way of advancement or the reason for being fired. Neighbors are often unknown and engaged in their own social networks. Fraternal organizations and local clubs are no longer attractive to most American adults

as a place for socializing. For the most part, in an alienating and mobile society, the religious congregation is a safe place to meet people who share values, worldviews, and political orientations. In congregations, people are less likely to abuse one another since they have to face one another regularly and since interactions are often the key to forming trust and mutual care. A network of close friendships can be built from members who are similar in age and life experiences.

24.6 Limitations of Friendships

While friendship, as a form of bonding social capital, is one benefit of congregations, the formation of and strength of those bonds is not always easily determined. There is not likely a conscious process in which someone thinks, “I am joining a church (or other place of worship) to find friends.” Such friendship arises organically and lays the foundation for much social capital in America. Yet, the appeal of bonding social capital may explain a small but significant phenomenon of “belonging without believing.” In some religious congregations, there are members who are not “very religious if at all.” These people attend regularly and at times volunteer and even assume leadership roles. These members recognize that congregations are hubs of social capital and gravitate toward a congregation for this reason. In a few Jewish Reform synagogues, there are members who barely know the religious tenets but come to the synagogue to be with their “brothers.” Similarly, in Korean churches in the U.S., there are active members who were not Christians in Korea, but wanted to join the Korean church for social gatherings, Korean classes for children, and camaraderie (Oh 1989).

The strength and nature of friendships from congregations can also vary. One may be friendly with a fellow congregant, readily exchange pleasantries, and even experience some level of social support, but the friendship does not necessarily extend beyond the place of worship. Theological doctrines may inspire religious

adherents to extend friendship or fellowship to others, as a matter of principle, but that friendship may be merely superficial. During many worship services, congregants are encouraged to exchange greetings, but rarely do such greetings lead to deeper social interaction after the services. Congregants may also offer “friendship” to strangers in community outreach or service-oriented programs, but again the relationship is limited to the moment.

24.7 Belonging and Activities

Congregations can provide people with a sense of belonging. How strong this belonging is felt depends on various factors, like how similar someone is with the rest of the congregation. A sense of belonging also depends on the type of interpersonal interaction one has in the congregation. Whitehead (2010) found that “cell-based” structures, or small group interactions within congregations lead to increased commitment to the group and the congregation. These small groups provide structure for fellowship activities with certain purposes, like a scripture reading or discussing parenting skills. The close interactions that result from the cells in order to fulfill its purpose result in the additional benefit of making close friends. Other types of activities performed in congregations like praying and worshipping together facilitate supportive relationships. Schafer (2013) showed that adults involved in interpersonal prayer groups reported a greater sense of support, and consequently, higher levels of optimism.

Congregations often organize supplemental activities outside of regular worship meetings. These fellowship activities range from recreational sports teams, Bible study groups, employment support groups, and the like. They are sometimes organized formally as “cells,” or arise from voluntary sign-up sheets and word of mouth recruiting. Interacting through such extra-worship activity strengthens the bonding social capital found in congregations. It seems that “playing together” enhances “praying together”, and so on.

Perhaps the most common form of fellowship among congregants, an activity that everyone enjoys, is eating together. As mundane as coffee and donuts after worship may seem, these simple snacks facilitate the close interactions that form the glue of bonding social capital. Ellison et al. (2009) found that scheduled time for informal socializing before or after worship correlates with how much members anticipate support from their congregation. Congregations hold pot-luck meals, picnic outings, barbecues, and Thanksgiving feasts. Putnam and Campbell (2010, p. 193) highlight a German-style festival at a Lutheran church in Texas, serving traditional bratwurst and sauerkraut, as an example of ethno-centric fellowshiping through food. While the informal sharing of food and drink for fellowshiping is readily apparent, it is also important to remember the more subtle but common rituals in many world religions of sharing some form of food and drink, and the symbolic fellowship that those rituals represent.

Through face-to-face interactions in purposeful, supportive activities, members of congregations find and build lasting friendships. For example, the Jewish Federation of San Francisco surveyed synagogue members about their friends. "Almost half of the synagogue members reported that they had at least six close friends in their congregation and almost a third (30%) reported ten or more close friends. Only 12% said they had no close friends in the congregation" (Phillips 2011, p. 81). Making supportive friendships is more challenging today for adults, but congregations serve as a nexus for this important element of developing *Gemeinschaft*.

One of the drawbacks to strong bonding social capital in congregations is the potential for exclusivity. Friendships with like-minded people within congregations can create cliques that diminish relationship building with others. Exclusivity can also be felt generally by the surrounding community, thus diminishing the sense of *Gemeinschaft* more broadly. Another danger of strong social bonds within congregations is the potential for clergy to abuse their social status. Clergy and congregational leaders occupy positions of social influence, which can

be misused through abuse or manipulation. Sadly, such abuse is often perpetrated against children or other vulnerable populations.

In general, however, attending a congregation leads to strong friendships and positive outcomes in people's lives. Lim and Putnam (2010) found that religious people report higher levels of life satisfaction. They found that "religious people are more satisfied with their lives because they regularly attend religious services and build social networks in their congregations." Furthermore, they reported "little evidence that other private or subjective aspects of religiosity affect life satisfaction independent of attendance and congregational friendship" (p. 914). These authors conclude "we find that the friendship networks people build in their congregations mediate most of the effects of attendance on life satisfaction" (p. 927).

24.8 Congregations as Communities of Care

Regardless of how many close friends a person makes in a congregation, a member also gains access to a host of collective benefits. Aside from the spiritual, emotional or intellectual benefits that may be gained from worship services or educational programs, congregations can also provide a wide range of welfare services ranging from housing and health care to drug rehabilitation and day care. This section of the paper is primarily focused on these services that congregations provide. Support offered by congregations can be divided into those directed towards members (which are often informal) and those that are directed towards anyone who is in need (more often formal programs which are not exclusive to members). We will first discuss programs that are informal and directed mostly towards members and later will discuss more formal programs that are often serving non-members.

When a member of the congregation or his or her family members are in need, they are likely to share it with a clergy or other co-religionists in the congregations. Such topics

arise in private conversations, in fellowship meetings, in Bible classes, and as normal friendly conversations/gossip. The norm in most congregations is for the membership to pull its resources together and help. Cnaan (2006) reported that congregations provided “hospital visitation (34.7%), transportation for seniors (29.3%), visitation/buddy systems (25.4%), and sick/homebound visitation (21.8%)” on an “as needed” basis. Many congregations also support members with issues of substance addiction, finding jobs, resolving marital stress, coping with aging parents, and many more. Members know that such help is available when needed, and information is often kept confidential.

As part of the congregation, a member is connected to a network of supportive relationships that he/she may not even be aware of, and that can be enacted in times of need. Granovetter (1973) recognized the benefits of such networks and called it the “strength of weak ties.” When someone loses a job, through word of mouth, fellow congregants help by relaying other potential employment opportunities and often offer personal recommendations, based entirely on interactions from the congregation. When a child is born, meals are delivered by people who look familiar but are not close friends—yet. When a loved one passes away, condolences flow from strangers, but members of the same faith. These forms of social support pervade the daily lives of active members. Receiving this support leads to stronger feelings of “belonging,” building the strong ties of bonding social capital (Krause and Hayward 2012). While they may be hard to measure, such forms of *Gemeinschaft* should not be overlooked.

What is particularly interesting about religion is that while bonding social capital can be exclusive, participation in congregations is also known to lead to “bridging social capital,” or civic participation and volunteering in the larger community (Beyerlein and Hipp 2006; Putnam 2000; Sinha et al. 2011). In the most recent wave of the National Congregations Study, it was shown that 83% of all congregations, representing 92% of all religious attendees, provided some

form of social or human services to people outside of their congregation (Chaves and Eagle 2016). Clearly, religious congregations are not just about supporting the needs of their own members. Religious organizations are highly involved in service provision and are the prevailing source of social capital in society (Cnaan and Boddie 2001; Smidt 2003). When people come together to worship they also come together to serve others. Much has been written about the philosophical and theological underpinnings of the service culture in religious organizations. What is important to this chapter is the contribution this service makes in strengthening the *Gemeinschaft* community relationships that are in danger of degenerating in a society where *Gesellschaft* seems to prevail.

Trying to understand the types of services and extent of services that congregations provide their members and the greater community is a little bit like looking at a map of a major airline’s flight routes. The countless red lines arcing across the map, converging at major cities and extending to remote destinations, conveys the thoroughness but also the complexity of the airline’s transportation services. Now imagine trying to draw a map for the entire airline industry. This would be akin to trying to track all of the services that congregations provide people in communities all across the U.S. One congregation may provide services to babies and toddlers in the form of daycare while another congregation may provide space and support for 12-step groups. Each meets a unique need of a certain sub-group in the community. Each may seem modest and viewed as serving a limited number of clients. But when they are all viewed at once, a most complicated and rich network of meeting human needs is revealed.

Often the service is quite modest and serves a small group of local residents. It may meet the needs of some twenty or more community residents in programs, such as after school recreational programs and food pantries. Although the programs might be small, they make a world of difference for their beneficiaries. For working parents who know that their children are monitored and cared for by congregational volunteers

or paid staff after school it is a source of relief and encouragement. For poor people in the community who cannot pay for food, the food pantries are lifelines. The congregations pay the food bank and then send volunteers to bring back bulk quantities of food and supplies. The same or other volunteers unpack the supplies and repackage the products in individual bags. Within a day or two, a group of congregational volunteers distribute these bags to known needy people in the neighborhood. To the families that rely on these bags for nutrition and, perhaps, their main source of food, these activities are most meaningful. A host of other local studies show similar findings (cf. Ammerman 2001; Billingsley 1999; DiPietro and Behr 2002; Grettenberger and Hovmand 1997; Hill 1998; Hodgkinson et al. 1993; Jackson et al. 1997; Printz 1998; Silverman 2000).

Cnaan (2006) found that, on average, each congregation provides at least 2.5 different social programs and each congregation sponsored programs that served 39 congregational members as well as 63 community residents who were non-members. Put differently, congregations tend to serve others more than their members at a ratio of three to two. On average, 16 people from the congregation are involved in conducting a social program, and they are joined by nine non-member volunteers. The members who volunteer are typically those who participate in activities beyond simply attending religious services (Beyerlein and Hipp 2006). The non-members are often friends or colleagues of members who hear about a congregational program and wish to join the good work. This ability to recruit members and non-members as volunteers sets congregations apart from many social service organizations and highlights one of their strongest advantages as community organizations (Merino 2014). They are embedded in the community and can reach their members and the members' networks to recruit volunteers.

Congregations are often criticized by claiming that they provide social services to non-members as a ploy for proselytization and recruitment of new members. However, looking at the social programs offered by the congregations and the

membership, it is clear that this is not the norm. Most congregations, as we established above, prefer to be homogeneous in most aspects. Recruiting poor people or people with special needs is not the goal that most congregations aspire to. What is more likely is that providing help to needy people enhances social cohesion among members. Helping others almost always involves a "warm glow," that feeling of exhilaration that follows a good deed. When helping others is performed alongside others, such as fellow parishioners, the sense of satisfaction and fulfillment is enhanced. As such, the provision of care for others is important for members to actualize their faith, feel good about themselves, and share these experiences with people who are part of their social network.

Congregations cannot be expected to solve all the welfare and social needs of their communities. Yet, the overwhelming majority of congregations are engaged both in helping members and in helping others. When such behaviors are voluntarily replicated in so many community institutions, it is not random. Helping those in need is, in fact, a congregational norm. It is a norm not shared by other community institutions. Banks, schools, police, gas stations, or other such institutions are not expected to help people in need in this way. Religious congregations are the exception. When there is an awareness that a need exists that may be either related to one family or the community at large, religious congregations are often thought of as the place where help or solution can come from. This is what Payton and Moody (2008) called "responding to the human problematic." Members of congregations and clergy alike take social responsibility for granted as part of their organizational identity. It goes beyond theological teaching to care for one's neighbor.

Cnaan and his colleagues (2002) showed, in the U.S., a strong social norm exists for congregations to be highly involved in caring for others in need. This norm was found to be strong regardless of denominational affiliation, membership size, gender of clergy or a host of other possible mitigating variables. In almost all congregations, the notion that the membership

should help people in need is a social norm. It is so ingrained in our culture and so normative that most members and clergy are often unaware of it; they just do it.

24.9 Summary

It is our contention in this chapter that people are looking for meaningful interactions with others who share their worldview and other personal characteristics. It is clear that the ideal community of pure *Gemeinschaft* is impossible to achieve. But aspects of *Gemeinschaft*, such as those that are embedded in strong social networks, are feasible and, for many people, are realized through religious congregations. In communities throughout the United States, religious congregations are visibly planted. It is difficult to imagine the physical layout of any American community without the presence of countless congregations dotting the landscape, representing numerous denominations and religions.

Congregations tend to be homogenous. People gravitate to like-minded people. There are many ways that people connect with those who are similar to themselves. Sometimes people are drawn to gather with those of the same ethnicity or the same social strata. Often it is a worldview or political ideology that unites people. At other times, people look for others that share their uniqueness from sexual orientation or a country of origin. It is clear that the primary reason to join a religious congregation is to worship and express one's spirituality. However, when moving from personal spirituality to group experience, those with whom one is worshipping is important. In the U.S., people do not generally worship alone, but congregate with others for the purpose of expressing faith and spirituality. That said, the group in which faith and spirituality are expressed is not chosen randomly; it is a reflection of who the person is.

In the community context, congregations are essential in allowing people to hold meaningful face-to-face interactions. Both from the perspective of bonding social capital and from the

perspective of the illusive *Gemeinschaft*, people are searching for social relationships that are not superficial and that are trustworthy. In congregations, people meet the same like-minded people week-in and week-out. The frequent interactions reduce the chances of abuse and fraud. Members know that if someone is doing something unethical, the whole group will soon know about it and the abuser's reputation will suffer. This is not to say that all congregational relationships are pure and no one takes advantage of others. It is only to suggest that through repeated interactions in a congregational environment, trust is higher than in most other arenas and the likelihood of abuse is lower. Accordingly, the congregational setting allows for people to develop friendships and long-lasting relationships. The types of activities that happen in congregations inherently help to develop supportive social relationships. Praying together, serving together and sharing faith are all activities that reinforce friendships. These friends are often also neighbors who shop at the same stores and whose kids go to the same school. Another advantage of congregational-based friendships is that they provide children with other role models who subscribe to the same values and behaviors of their parents. Furthermore, when the congregation-related friends have children of the same age, all children are exposed to the same set of moral and behavioral expectations.

When congregations serve as home for a select group of residents or people who share certain relevant characteristics, they also become a source of support. Members often share their need for advice or help only to find out that one of their fellow congregants is able to meet their need. In most congregations, members are helped informally and formally. When a member or a relative of a member is hospitalized, it is common in many congregations to arrange on-going visitation until the sick person leaves the hospital. In many immigrant congregations, ESL (English as a Second Language) classes are offered to all. The assumption is that members are struggling with the language and that the congregational setting is less stressful than formal classes.

Congregations, however, also produce public goods in the form of social programs. The people who willingly congregate around faith in places of worship are not only socially and emotionally supported but are also engaged in enhancing the local quality of life. Congregations provide a host of small scale social programs and, frequently, major ones. They often collaborate with others to care for the needs of others in the community. They provide space for day care programs, for Scouts, for 12-step groups and for numerous community associations. They run services with volunteers and with their own paid staff, and they recruit local residents to provide social and human services.

When looking at all of the above, the emerging picture is that congregations are highly integrated in communities in the United States. In almost all geographical locations, there are congregations, and these congregations bond people together and guide them into mutual support and the production of public goods.

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Community-Based Action for Food Justice

25

Michele A. Kelley and Rachael D. Dombrowski

Abstract

One of the most important public health issues of the new century is food justice, which is a special case of environmental justice, food access and health equity. Food justice encompasses a range of issues from assuring the production and distribution of healthy food in ways that promote local consumption and protect natural resources and human labor. Further, it also is concerned with community self-determination in food access and honors cultural sensitivity and cultural renewal in terms of how food is made available, and which food products are offered. Food justice goes beyond food security to address health equity in that available foods meet current dietary guidelines and foster healthy eating over the life span. Given the persistence of health inequities and the national and global obesity epidemic, this concept has emerged as

highly salient for community health improvement, particularly in underserved, minority communities. This chapter will review the science and practice of community-based action to promote food justice, while examining the relationship between food justice and health equity. Two case studies will illustrate community-based responses to food justice, and highlight the social change processes therein. Discussion will show the relevance of food justice work to community-based health promotion initiatives. The chapter concludes with implications for building healthier communities and utilizing knowledge from food justice efforts, noting potential contributions from public health social scientists.

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25.1 Introduction

Access to healthy food is not only necessary for human health, but a basic human right (United Nations, Food and Agriculture Organization 2016). According to the United Nations (2016), the United States is not among the thirty countries that guarantee this right in its constitution. Furthermore, the U.S. lacks a comprehensive national food policy to assure access to quality, affordable healthy food (Union of Concerned Scientists 2016). As a result, our wealthy, developed county has significant population groups that bear preventable disease burdens, in

particular for overweight and obesity related diseases and risk factors (Meyer et al. 2013; Ogden et al. 2014). To combat gaps in health equity, communities are organizing with public health, food systems, and nutrition experts to address deficits in healthy food access through local action. This direct citizen-involvement with external supports can benefit community health in multiple ways. First, it can bring results that are locally relevant (Wallerstein et al. 2015). Communities can decide on the best options for increasing access to healthy food that builds on existing community assets and resources. Additionally, communities can build capacity for future health equity and social justice issues, as food justice requires multi-sector collaboration with a community development focus (Teig et al. 2009). Finally, action for food justice is grounded in health promotion principles which can increase health literacy and raise awareness about interconnected health issues, the importance of community self-determination in health matters, and basic human rights to health (Saldivar-Tanaka and Krasny 2004; Wallerstein et al. 2011).

In making the case for community action for food justice, this chapter is organized as follows. The background section reviews the concept of food justice and its emergence in recent public health debates. The public health significance of food justice is also reviewed from a health equity perspective. A food systems approach and attention to cultural sensitivity and rights is also considered here. The next section presents the notion of community-based action for healthy eating, reviews the processes of change strategies and considers why a community-building approach is important for food justice and health equity. Two case studies are then discussed, which demonstrate action on a specific urban neighborhood level; and then on a multi-neighborhood, county level. The chapter concludes with implications for building healthier communities and increasing food justice for all, noting potential contributions from public health social scientists.

25.2 Background

25.2.1 Food Justice

Food justice has emerged as an important concept that addresses not only the issue of human hunger and nutrition, but seeks to transform the entire food system from a social justice standpoint. Going beyond food security and food access, food justice aims to place the production, distribution and consumption of food under local control toward assuring that food will be healthful, high quality, accessible and culturally acceptable. According to Alkon and Norgaard, food justice links issues of community healthy food access to power, and goes beyond increasing knowledge to increasing political efficacy among activists (Alkon and Norgaard 2009). Food justice also is concerned with the impact of food production and distribution on land use and the environment, on human and animal health, and on local markets such as aligning with small business needs as well as the needs of residents (Agyeman and McEntee 2014; Meenar and Hoover 2012). Food justice is related but distinct from the concepts of food access and food security. Communities with limited healthy food access are often defined as areas, up to one square mile, with little to no availability of healthy, nutritious food (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service 2009). Food security is usually defined as communities having access to enough nutritious foods to sustain quality of life (United States Department of Agriculture 2016; Walker et al. 2010; Welch and Graham 1999). For purposes of this chapter, the authors prefer the term food justice as it encompasses a social justice perspective in critically appraising and taking action on the root causes of unhealthy eating.

There is a rich literature documenting the negative impact of current national policies and agricultural practices on availability of healthy foods, as well as the environmental and human health consequences of these practices (Story et al. 2008). These approaches to food production are

subsidized by the U.S. Government; and as such, current policies and market forces allow for the concentration of food production among large corporate entities, and a maldistribution of healthy foods in marginalized, poor communities (Agye-man and McEntee, 2014). This has resulted in over consumption of highly-processed, limited nutrient foods within these communities and evident inequities of diseases and conditions, such as diabetes and obesity (Powell et al. 2007a, b).

For its part, public health policy and practice has largely focused on improving population health outcomes through advancing health literacy and access to healthy foods, with some modest degree of success thus far (Khan et al. 2009). However, much more needs to be done on a food systems policy level, i.e., aligning federal and local policies that support sustainable production of healthy foods while minimizing environmental hazards, to truly improve food justice. While an analysis of the political and economic forces that result in healthy food deficits is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is important to bear in mind that the resultant health inequalities are clearly socially produced (Frieden 2010). Therefore, this chapter uses a social justice lens to place the nature of community healthy food access in a food justice framework as well as to characterize the human health impact from a health equity perspective. These concepts are important as local action on food justice for community health improvement is considered.

25.2.2 Food Systems, Force of History, and Culture

In the U.S., the predominant ethnocultural population groups who bear the greatest burden of health and social inequalities are Latinos and African-Americans (Meyer et al. 2013). These inequalities are also expressed in reduced access to healthy foods, as described in the next section. Among Latinos, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans constitute the predominant ethnocultural subgroups (Motel and Patten 2012). Like many

immigrants and migrants to the metropolitan, industrial north during the mid-twentieth century, a majority of these populations came with a rich knowledge of agriculture, land use for food, fishing and animal husbandry. African-Americans migrated north for many reasons, largely to escape the Jim Crow south and seek a better life through the growing industrial labor market (Wilkerson 2010). The history of slavery and forced agricultural labor also shaped the diet of this population, and they, like other groups, brought this knowledge of food with them to the North (Airhihenbuwa et al. 1996). Mexicans long experienced the forces of transnational economics, with recruitment by the growing agri-business sector for migrant farm workers and from other organized businesses for the service industry and the construction sector (Durand et al. 2016). Economic forces benefiting the U.S. agricultural industry and other business sectors, combined with a restricted opportunity structure for higher education, converged to influence the characteristics of the Mexican labor force, as well as population health disparities in the U.S. (Passel et al. 2012). Also, during the mid-twentieth century, Puerto Ricans who were made U.S. citizens by an act of Congress in 1917, migrated from the Caribbean island to New York, Chicago, and other U.S. metropolitan areas, due to governmental policies to promote citizenship, and to assure stability of a relationship with the territory, which was important to U.S. military objectives at the time (Ramos-Zayas 2003).

All of these populations endured many hardships in the transition from largely rural, agricultural communities and encountered institutional and interpersonal racism in their new urban localities. Racism in all its forms still persists of course, and today we see redlining by retailers, a practice that excludes poor communities from basic services and products such as supermarkets, which then create food deserts, or rather communities with little to no access to healthy foods and an abundance of unhealthy foods (fast food outlets and convenience stores) (Moore et al. 2008; Powell et al. 2007a, b; U.S.

Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service 2009). From a critical theory standpoint, these communities have, over time, become dispossessed of their rich knowledge of food production and nutrition (Feldner and Vighi 2015). Further, due to market forces, it can be seen that fast food franchises, small convenience stores, and liquor stores dominate urban neighborhood landscapes in African American and Latino communities (Alwitt and Donley 1997). As a result, African American and Latino communities have increased consumption of readily available, addictive, unhealthy foods and bear the burden of chronic diseases and conditions in the United States (Cullen et al. 2000; Cummins and Macintyre 2006).

25.2.3 Healthy Food Access and Health Equity

The U.S. government publishes national dietary guidelines which it updates periodically as required by federal law (United States Department of Agriculture 2016). The guidelines aim to assist health professionals and the public in consuming foods that support health and prevent disease. However, as with similar national frameworks, political agendas often overrule science and until most recently the dietary guidelines were confusing to the public and contradictory to health professionals' recommendations (Nestle 2013). Additionally, disparities in healthy eating are widespread. Overall, less than eighteen percent of the adult U.S. population had the recommended amount of fruit and vegetable intake, with Latino, Black and white populations all reporting mean scores below the targeted goals (Moore and Thompson 2015; Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2016). For fruit consumption, the public health target is to have a minimum of about 1 cup of fruit per 1000 calories consumed; and here Latinos age two and over have the highest mean score of about two-thirds of a cup. Whites and Black populations fare less well overall, with mean scores nearly equivalent:

around one-half of a cup per 1000 calories. Recommendations for vegetable intake are similar, i.e., 1 cup per 1000 calories consumed. Latinos age two and over have the highest mean scores with almost 0.8 cups per 1000 calories, followed by whites at 0.77 cups and Blacks at 0.66 (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2016).

These disparities in healthy food intake in combination with other factors result in over one-third of U.S. adults being obese, with risk for obesity-related conditions that include some of the leading causes of preventable death. For children and adolescents age 2–19 years, the obesity prevalence is around 17%, making a young generation at risk for adult disease and untimely death (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2015). When we consider the major health consequences and impact of unhealthy diets, we find that rates for cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and certain cancers are higher for persons with overweight and obesity. Further, complications and early death rates from these diseases are generally higher for Latinos and African-Americans (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2015). Health inequality in terms of years of potential life lost (untimely death) for these diseases and functional disability (measure of health condition impact) are higher for minority populations (Meyer et al. 2013), in part compounded by inequalities in access to primary and secondary level prevention and institutional racism in our healthcare system (Smedley et al. 2003).

The issues behind the widespread lack of healthy diets are multifaceted, but are clearly associated with income inequality and institutional racism. Food insecurity is a persistent and pervasive public health issue in the U.S. It is defined as “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life” (United States Department of Agriculture 2016). Measures in population health surveys include worry about food running out, going without food for a period of time, and inability to afford a balanced meal. National data indicate that 14.6% of the population experienced some level of food

insecurity in the past twelve months. Data on racial/ethnic disparities reveal that Asian and white groups had experienced food insecurity at levels of 7.4 and 10.6 percent respectively; while Latino and American Indian/Alaskan Native (AIAN) populations had rates of 23.7 versus 25.3. Black populations had the highest disparity at 26.1% (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2016).

Place-based factors also greatly influence access to healthy foods. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, community interventions to improve health equity must consider the availability, affordability and quality of healthy foods. Persons living in low income neighborhoods often do not have access to retail outlets that sell quality and affordable healthy foods, including lean proteins, whole grains and fruits and vegetables (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2010). Neighborhood racial composition and neighborhood poverty are independently associated with food store availability. In a national study, Bower and colleagues found that poor and Black communities had the most limited access to quality, nutritious food as measured by the presence of supermarkets (Bower et al. 2014). Although many urban neighborhoods have small retail food outlets (i.e. corner stores), poor communities are less likely to have stores that stock the recommended healthy foods. Horowitz and colleagues point out that this environmental disparity makes it difficult for lower income persons living with diabetes to have an adequate diet (Horowitz et al. 2004). In addition to a paucity of retail outlets that sell healthy foods, lower income communities also have increased density of fast-food restaurants, with limited options for healthy eating (Reidpath et al. 2002). In the public health literature, these communities are known as food deserts (Beaulac et al. 2009). There are promising strategies to begin to address these structural inequalities, and community-based action is an important aspect.

25.3 Community-Based Approaches to Enhance Healthy Eating

Addressing access to healthy foods, like any persistent health equity issue, requires strategies on multiple levels (Trickett 2009). Partnerships are needed between governmental public health, universities and community-based organizations (CBOs). Although it is a long enduring principle of public health ethics that community self-determination is a foundation for population health improvement, this principle is based on the notion that there is a governmental responsibility to offer oversight and support in attaining improvements in health. Public health professionals should work with localities to bring about change and take local culture, preferences and resources into account (World Health Organization 2010). In the U.S., this notion is particularly problematic as the idea of federal and local governmental food policies and funding for local action to address nutrition related gaps in health is contested. The extant literature and national news are replete with examples of our conflicted policy action for healthy eating. Consider for instance the long standing national-to-local political controversies over school nutrition programs and what constitutes healthy foods for children (Confessore 2014), despite strong scientific evidence that these programs improve not only general health but also behavior and academic achievement (Union of Concerned Scientists 2015). Additionally, disproportionate marketing of unhealthy foods towards low-income, communities of color, in particular children, continues to take place despite national and local studies showing its detrimental effects on health and exposure to low nutrient foods early in life (Cairns et al. 2013; Kelly et al. 2010). A few localities, such as San Francisco and New York, have implemented policies to help address these issues including banning toys in children's meals that do not meet a nutritional standard (San Francisco) (Otten et al. 2014) and eliminating "super-sized" sugary drink options in restaurants (New York) (Grynbaum 2012).

25.3.1 Children and Local Educational Food Policy and Action

The opportunities for healthy eating among the nation's children and youth present an excellent example of the importance of local policies and local action to address equity gaps. Further, because poor nutrition at early ages has impacts across the life course, intervening with children and youth is important to protect current and future health (Darnton-Hill et al. 2004). Public school districts that participate in federal nutrition programs are required to have wellness policies which encompass nutrition, if little else (Moag-Stahlberg et al. 2008). Because children and youth spend much of their time in schools, these settings serve as spaces to transform the food environment beyond assurances of some healthy meals (French et al. 2003). However, despite this, schools vary widely on policies to promote healthy eating (Finkelstein et al. 2008). For example, in Chicago Public Schools (CPS) all food served within the school day (including one half hour before and after school) must meet the district's nutritional standard to be served. This accounts for many unhealthy, highly processed foods (usually sold in school stores or a la carte) to be removed from the food environments of nearly 500,000 urban, low-income youth. While this is now the requirement for all school districts throughout the country, CPS implemented this policy in 2012 with the passage of their local school wellness policies (Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual, 2012). This exemplified the district's commitment to improving child nutrition and health long before it was mandated by the federal government.

In local school districts, the political landscape of policies are complex and multi-determined; but largely influenced by privilege and hegemony (Russakoff 2015). Yet some schools are adopting promising strategies such as gardening projects, e.g., growing fresh fruits and vegetables, which also contribute to scientific literacy, and can be a means to engage parents and the community at large (Blair 2009). Evidence to date indicates that the most effective

strategies however, are comprehensive in nature and involve intervening across multiple levels, including total school environments such as vending machines and snack food availability to collaborations with surrounding community businesses such as corner stores, often a source of before and after school food for youth (Kubike et al. 2003). Strategies such as community gardens and collaborations with local businesses can assist in supporting healthy eating behaviors from school to home (Sallis and Glanz 2006). In fact, the role of local businesses as partners in community health—beyond food security—is of current high interest to public health (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation 2015).

25.3.2 Multi-sector Partnerships and Action for Health Equity

Given the imperative for local action to improve community health, localities are organizing to address health gaps from lack of access to healthy foods. One of the most effective strategies for sustainable change are multi-sector community coalitions for health and/or partnerships with local health departments and higher education institutions (Butterfoss and Francisco 2004). In this manner, communities may leverage their social capital to bring in new expertise and resources, although the issue of power and community self-determination is a concern (Wallerstein and Duran 2010; Wallerstein et al. 2015). This manner of organizing is not concerned with just a single health issue, but with building sustainable change while increasing capacity to take on emerging community health threats. These community development strategies distinguish this method of organizing from the Alinsky method and others, which typically have outside expert organizers lead the community in a single issue of concern (Franklin 2014). Efforts are made to engage youth and intergenerational collaborations involve schools, community-based organizations and faith organizations as well as local businesses (Bozlak and Kelley 2010; Ndumbe-Eyoh and Moffatt 2013).

External partners can assist in bringing in and managing public and private funding, although efforts over time should lead to some community entities being the lead agency for grant awards (Becker et al. 2005). Because of the prevalence of cardiovascular disease and diabetes in underserved and minority communities, there are many organized community change efforts around increasing access to healthy foods and nutrition education (Levkoe 2006; Twiss et al. 2011). Several initiatives have the additional focus on increasing active living or physical activity (Brand et al. 2014).

One of the most effective approaches to community health improvement, including increasing healthy eating, is a “health in all policies” approach (Kickbusch 2013). This strategy requires multi-sector cooperation, and when combined with community education to increase nutrition and food literacy (Story et al. 2008), it is the most promising for sustainable long term change. Based upon an ecological approach to health, multi-sector local policy changes allow for the synergistic effects of community systems to provide consistent and reinforcing opportunities for healthy eating and/or healthy lifestyles (Hendriks et al. 2013).

Despite this growing consensus on the need to address the complexity of healthy eating, including increasing healthy food access, these complexities are not considered in most published studies. Factors that must be assessed include familial and community norms around healthy eating while also addressing community environments for access to healthy foods in acceptable ways (Brennan et al. 2011). The healthy eating intervention literature has many of the same limitations that other health behavior change literature has in that the focus is all too often limited to the individual, rather than the whole community and therefore social and environmental supports that could be developed and employed to assure sustainability and to garner synergistic effects are either not considered or reported (Braveman et al. 2011; Trickett et al. 2014). Additionally, many of the published

interventions do not report attention to local context or cultural norms or assets, compromising uptake and sustainability, and possibly doing harm (Trickett 2009; Trickett et al. 2014). One example of such an approach was utilized in East Los Angeles, where local researchers implemented a youth empowerment intervention coupled with improving healthy food access within local corner stores (Ortega et al. 2015). This example is elaborated upon in the discussion section in terms of future directions for changing the community food environment. As has been stated above, cultural sensitivity and attention to local resource development with community participation is central to authentic community-based participatory research as well as to food justice. To illustrate some of the inherent challenges in addressing food justice in local contexts, the following case studies represent two distinctive approaches to fostering healthy eating through community-based approaches.

Case Study 1: Puerto Rican Youth Action for Food Justice in Chicago

Currently, the Puerto Rican/Latino Humboldt Park community in the near northwest area of Chicago is designated as a food desert, having restricted access to healthy food sources such as grocery stores. Like other small areas with lack of healthy food access, the Latino Humboldt Park community has increased rates of nutrition related diseases such as diabetes and childhood overweight and obesity. To address this issue, community leadership engaged in external partnerships with a local medical center, university public health scientists and urban agriculture faculty to develop long term, sustainable solutions. The strategies included building a year-round rooftop school greenhouse, incorporating urban agriculture into education in a community wide educational reform effort; and fostering youth leadership for health promotion (Becker et al. 2005). With this community resource development approach, the community is going beyond the concept of food security

toward that of food justice. Food justice is more concerned with community-driven, sustainable, culturally tailored production and distribution of food in a given population (Levkoe 2006). Community-building is important to mobilize resources and increase community participation to more holistically deal with food security issues and to bring about cultural renewal in terms of reclaiming knowledge of food systems and nutrition that builds upon the experiences of community elders, who migrated from farming communities in Puerto Rico. The community building and change process in Humboldt Park, Chicago is illustrated in Fig. 25.1.

A local high school dedicated to addressing the educational needs of Puerto Rican youth through Freirean (Wallerstein et al. 2011) approaches that foster student empowerment and an ethos of social justice, has a rooftop green house where edible plants and herbs are grown and used in local restaurants as well as in school and community nutrition and healthy food access programs. An urban agriculture program was developed that allows students to obtain science and community service credits as they engage in

problem-based learning, addressing the real-world issues of food security from a food justice perspective (Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School 2016). The subjects of plant biology and human nutrition and health are integrated in the science curriculum. Students also learn about economics and structural racism and why there is disinvestment in their community from large grocery store chains, a common issue in poor communities (Alwitt and Donley 1997). The program is a collaboration with a cultural center that sponsors a local, culturally oriented farmers market featuring fresh produce and freshly prepared Puerto Rican foods. The market is named El Conuco Farmers Market, which means “from the land”, and recognizes the contributions of Puerto Ricans to production of coffee, fruits and vegetables and other agricultural products (Fig. 25.1).

The cultural center also sponsors a diabetes prevention and control program which has community cooking classes so that residents can learn to adapt family recipes to healthier versions (Puerto Rican Cultural Center 2016). From the school rooftop garden, native Puerto Rican spices such as recao (a long, leafy herb) and aji dulce,

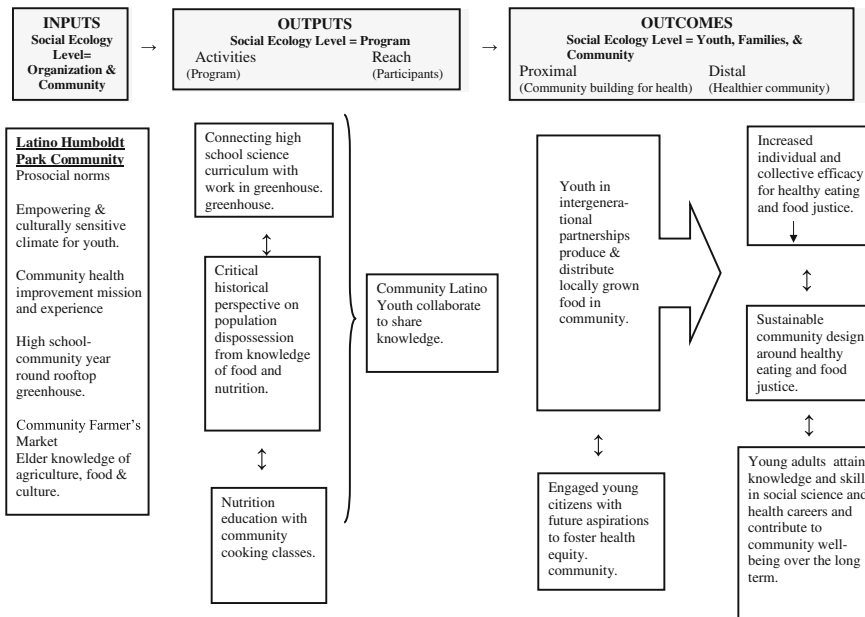


Fig. 25.1 Latino youth taking action for food justice

Puerto Rican sweet peppers, are sold in the market and also used to produce local foods, such as sofrito, which is used as a savory flavoring, and might be compared with pesto. Youth participate in the market and in the locally sponsored cooking classes, and sell foods prepared in part with regionally grown ingredients. The community also participates in a market basket program whereby fresh fruits and vegetables grown in the region, are distributed to residents via youth on bicycles. Additionally, the local business association has collaborated as restaurants have adapted heart healthy alternatives on their menus, including “grab and go” youth friendly after school foods like low-fat milk, water, fresh fruit and yogurt, and sandwiches made with freshly baked bread and healthy, fresh ingredients (Puerto Rican Cultural Center 2016).

From this comprehensive approach, it is evident that area youth engage in the food system with a food justice perspective in the following ways:

1. production of food in community gardens including a school-based rooftop green house;
2. distribution of produce through a local farmer’s market and market basket programs;
3. preparation of food in culturally tailored cooking classes using the locally produced food items;
4. relevant education through incorporation of lessons learned from a high school agricultural and science curriculum; and
5. increased food related health literacy (Cullen et al. 2015), learning to read food labels for healthier choices.

Youth also gain confidence and a sense of making a positive contribution to their community. They can develop future aspirations to become contributing members of their community and may pursue social science and health related careers because of these experiences. While these issues appear to be confined to community health improvement in specific areas such a cardiovascular and metabolic health; the community development approach can have

ripple effects that foster youth and community well-being (Fig. 25.1).

Case Study 2: The Healthy HotSpot Project to Increase Access to Healthy Food

Suburban Cook County Illinois (SCC) surrounding the City of Chicago, is home to over 2 million residents and includes over 120 municipalities. This region experienced a significant increase in low income African American and Latino residents in the 2010 census, as a lack of affordable housing in Chicago and worsening economic conditions forced many residents into particular suburban areas (Cook County Department of Public Health 2016; Ogura 2014). Public health data indicated that these population groups had considerable health disparities, in particular with obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease, and also lacked access to healthy foods (Cook County Department of Public Health 2016). The local health department partnered with community based organizations (CBOs) in several affected communities with the idea that they would in turn partner with the small corner stores in their communities and engage them in offering healthier foods as part of the Healthy HotSpot (HH) corner store pilot project. The goal was to increase the availability of healthy, high quality, affordable foods to residents and to promote these foods in the local diet for improved community health. In total, the project involved 21 out of approximately 200 corner stores in selected suburban communities and eight local CBOs who facilitated the intervention with store owners. The various components of the HH project and intended outcomes can be viewed in Fig. 25.2. Using corner stores to increase community access to healthy food is being carried out in several states, with some degree of success (Escaron 2013; Gittelsohn et al. 2012). These small businesses are accessible to community members who often lack transportation to supermarkets located some distance outside of their community. The HH intervention was based on the work of The Food Trust in Philadelphia (The Food Trust 2016), which conducts corner store healthy food access interventions across the country. The entire initiative including a limited

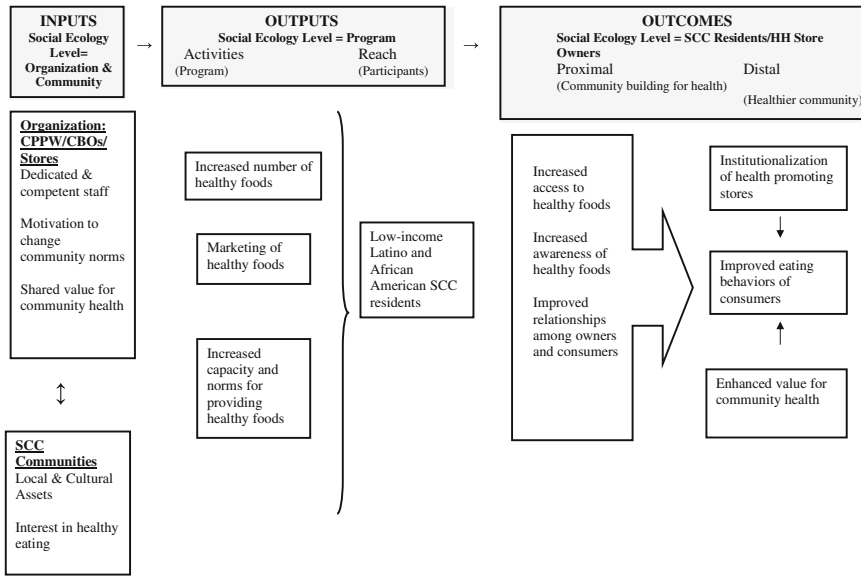


Fig. 25.2 Healthy hotspot logic model

evaluation was carried out over two and one-half years with federal funding (Jaskiewicz et al. 2013).

The intervention consisted of corner store owners adding recommended healthy foods from a variety of food categories (i.e., lean protein, whole grains, fruits and vegetables). Store owners’ participation was incentivized through the provision of stipends, new equipment, marketing materials, and community outreach activities (conducted by the partnering CBOs) to attract and retain customers—and to sustain intervention activities. The local CBOs were already involved in public health initiatives with the county health department, and served area minority populations living in poverty, largely African American and Latino communities in the county (Fig. 25.2). Project personnel included county public health officials as well as university-based public health practice scientists. Outreach methods to local CBOs for project management included email, telephone, and in-person meetings as needed. The CBOs also received training in project intervention, and provided feedback to the project staff based on their local knowledge, thereby shaping the intervention to increase uptake and

acceptability (Fig. 25.2). To increase local CBO capacity to assist the corner store owners over the course of the intervention and post intervention, trainings for CBO staff included: store point-of-purchase marketing; community member outreach; store follow-up and technical support; and holding in-store marketing events (Jaskiewicz et al. 2013).

During the initial phase which lasted for several weeks, stores were monitored for inclusion of new healthy food items. Specifically, these included 1 fresh fruit, 1 fresh vegetable, and 4 foods chosen from other recommended categories for healthy eating (i.e., low-fat dairy, lean proteins, canned or frozen fruits and vegetables, or whole grains). While local CBOs provided guidance, store owners were responsible for ordering and stocking the items. In the initial phase, 23 stores participated and received a modest payment for their efforts. Two stores did not continue to the second phase, also known as the conversion phase, as the owners were expected to incorporate these food items on a regular basis, and possibly add more healthy foods. In the conversion phase, owners who successfully incorporated the healthy food items in their inventory were invited to participate in

promotions to sell these foods, including in-store events to increase demand by consumers. Store owners also received new equipment (e.g., shelving, baskets and refrigeration), marketing materials, a plan for healthy product and equipment placement, and enhanced community outreach and engagement by the local CBOs, as mentioned above (Fig. 25.2). Each store was offered an additional small stipend after completing the conversion phase of the project and was allowed to keep the purchased equipment and resources for future use in the sale of healthy foods (Jaskiewicz et al. 2013).

The entire project was completed in under two years. It is interesting to note that in addition to the required fresh fruits and vegetables, owners then added whole grains as the next preferred healthy food, then low-fat dairy products were added, followed by canned or frozen fruits or vegetables in nine stores. The item that owners were least likely to add was lean protein. A process evaluation included store owners and CBO staff (Jaskiewicz et al. 2013). Questions dealt with project implementation and training, CBO recruitment of corner stores, and corner store and consumer perspectives on the increased availability of healthy foods in the stores. Additional questions are being developed to look at sustainability, as corner stores are small businesses that may have a short life-span for many reasons (Fig. 25.2). Also, characteristics of local businesses owners may affect the sustainability of the intervention such as whether or not the owner has a family member with diabetes, or the owner's sense of identity with or attachment to the community, or if the owner took on a social-enterprise identity (Peredo and McLean 2006) to become a force for the good of the community.

In viewing this study from a store owner perspective, engagement in food justice activities occurred in a number of ways. These included the following:

1. obtaining and distributing increased amounts and types of healthy foods to low-income consumers, often despite store profits;
2. engaging in a variety of local community events (i.e. with the local school) via the assistance of the local CBO;
3. providing consumers access to social services such as participating in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Women Infants and Children food program (WIC); and
4. providing on-site health education instruction, for the purposes of healthy food purchase and consumption by low-income consumers.

25.4 Discussion

Opportunities that foster meaningful participation and engage residents to exercise control over local conditions create empowerment, and enhance local resource development, collective knowledge and well-being. In the first case study with Puerto Rican youth activists, community members' perceptions of their community could become more positive due to collective, inter-generational work to improve healthy food access. In a paradigm of food justice, a new generation is becoming empowered to ask and address the complex issues related to community health and well-being, and to connect to more global issues of environmental and social justice. These opportunities to see community youth as assets and change agents is critical for sustainable community change, not just for food justice, but for any initiatives that address health equity. There is a significant extant literature of youth participatory action research (Camarota and Fine 2008) and youth engagement in community-based change for health improvement (Delgado and Zhou 2008). Involving youth in community-based food justice initiatives is a way to not only address healthy food access, but a means to build community across generations and encourage a new generation to become involved in the social sciences, public health, urban agriculture and other health related careers so that they may benefit their own families and communities currently and in the future. Many

community colleges and public universities are adopting undergraduate concentrations or majors in public health, which can link students with health professions and science careers, or simply provide them with basic knowledge and skills to become active throughout their lives in social justice oriented community health initiatives and policy (Petersen et al. 2013).

The logic models depicting key aspects of each of the case studies were descriptive. In terms of explaining how change occurs in a case studies such as these, it is likely that different theoretical perspectives can be employed. However, social cognitive theory (SCT) can be useful to explain the community change process insofar as how youth (the primary agents in the first case study) were affected. Social cognitive theory consists of several constructs and posits that individual behavior is dependent on personal factors such as having confidence in being able to do the behavior, having opportunities to observe and learn the behavior, and on environmental influences that support the behavior (Baranowski et al. 2002). In the youth case study, one major SCT construct includes the environment, which is the availability of adult allies and community based programs (Table 25.1). Behavioral capability involves youth participation across aspects of the community food system. Outcome expectancies would include the knowledge and skills that youth develop and their contributions to community health improvement. Observational learning relates to the process of acquiring knowledge and skills; while reinforcement refers to the positive feedback and affirmation that youth received from caring adults throughout the process. Self-efficacy refers to the confidence of youth to perform particular community actions to foster food justice, and reciprocal determination speaks to the relationship between community demand for healthy foods and youth interest in making a contribution to their community through this work.

The next stage of this work should involve university health career pipelines tied to educational and food justice initiatives with youth. Youth engaged community based work to promote health equity can also be applied to other

health equity priorities such as tobacco control and sexual health (Bozlak and Kelley 2010; Layzer et al. 2014). However, because of the need of all populations to access healthy foods to maintain health, food justice can be a starting point for community organizing for health improvement.

In the second case study, community-based organizations (CBOs) worked with local corner store owners to increase access to healthy food across several African-American and Latino communities. In many but not all cases, small businesses were instrumental in improving the variety and selection of fresh fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods, and in promoting their use through health marketing approaches. However, these small businesses worked with the support of local CBOs. These organizations had capacity challenges that HH project staff had to be sensitive to and help them overcome. They included the ability to adapt programs to community needs while still honoring program fidelity. In this instance, social cognitive theory can also be applied to better understand the change process with a focus on the corner store owners as the primary agents (Table 25.1). In this case study, the environment is the availability of high quality foods. Behavioral capacity is manifested in the stocking of healthy foods in the store. Outcome expectancies involves adopting a value for selling healthy foods (and sustaining the selling of such items). Observational learning involved project staff modeling the placement of healthy foods in the store; while reinforcement includes consumer appreciation (and patronage), as well as receiving equipment for store perishables. Self-efficacy is demonstrated as the store owner's confidence in their ability to sell healthy foods, and reciprocal determination is shown as the relationship between consumer demand and store owner stocking of healthy foods.

Future work with corner store interventions need to consider more holistic strategies including economic development, that would support the stores in the community, beyond increasing their ability to sell healthier foods. Toward this end, Ortega et al. (2015), implemented a multi-level approach in two Mexican communities in

Table 25.1 Social-cognitive theory constructs in two community food justice case studies ¹

SCT Constructs	Case Study	Examples of construct used in case study
Environment	Corner store	Availability of healthy, high quality food to purchase
	Youth action	Availability of adult allies and community-based programs.
Behavioral capability	Corner store	Ability to stock and sell healthy foods (store level)
	Youth action	Ability to participate in the local food system from production to distribution
Outcome expectancies	Corner store	Stores would see the value in selling healthy foods and would sustain their efforts
	Youth action	Youth would gain knowledge and skills for community food justice and would continue to contribute to community health improvement
Observational Learning	Corner store	Owners observed project staff modeling placement, pricing and rotation of healthy foods in their stores
	Youth action	Youth worked with adult allies who engaged them in active learning throughout the community food system
Reinforcement	Corner store	Consumers expressed appreciation for availability of healthy food items and patronized store; owners received equipment for storing fresh food and incentives
	Youth action	Youth received immediate, positive feedback from adult allies and community members for their efforts; and witnessed an increase in availability of healthy food options for the community
Self-efficacy	Corner stores	Owners expressed confidence in continuing the sale of healthy foods beyond the project period
	Youth action	This was not measured directly; however youth continued involvement in food production through school setting, with confidence
Reciprocal determination	Corner stores	Consumer demand influenced motivations of store owners to continue to sell healthy food; and store availability and promotion of these foods increased consumer demand
	Youth action	Community demand for healthy foods increased youth interest in making contributions to their community through health equity initiatives such as food justice

¹ Adapted from Table 8.4, Examples of Social-Cognitive Constructs in Gimme 5, p. 180, Chapter 8, How Individuals, Environments, and Health Behavior Interact: Social Cognitive Theory (Tom Baranowski, Cheryl L. Perry, and Guy S. Parcel); in Glanz, K., Rimer, B. K., & Viswanath, K. (Eds.). (2002). Third Edition. Health behavior and health education: theory, research, and practice. John Wiley & Sons

Los Angeles, designed to increase the business savvy of store owners, enhance the store appearance inside and out (e.g., paint), provide stores with trained youth conducting community health education about healthy eating, and engage key stakeholders in a community advisory board. The authors conclude with key messages suggesting the importance of engaged partnerships, involving persons with small

business knowledge to help the store owners, and the need to provide health education and media campaigns in the community. Community changes in terms of healthier eating were assumed to occur over the long term, and were not reported here.

Each of these case studies shows that community institutions can play a key role in identifying and engaging schools, businesses and

other institutions in cooperative networks that can address persistent health disparities. The ability to build on community assets such as CBOs and local businesses toward health improvement for vulnerable populations is based on social-ecological ideas that place-based factors matter, and multiple levels of ecology and interactions between them must be considered for sustainable community health improvement (Macintyre et al. 2002; Trickett and Beehler 2013). These are well known issues in community-based participatory research and in implementation science (Trickett 2011). Further, these community-based resources need to be supported and mobilized to facilitate individual-level behavioral changes, e.g., dietary patterns.

For both case studies, evaluations that involve community members are being utilized to capture process and outcomes (Wallerstein and Duran 2010). In projects such as these, social scientists can serve as “participant conceptualizers and praxis explicators” (Elias 1994, p. 293) in co-creating knowledge with the community. Likewise, community youth and store owners can be engaged to articulate the meaning of food justice and the effect that program participation had on themselves, their families, their business, and their community as co-investigators with researcher supports. Ethnographic methods such as Photovoice are accessible to youth and can document locally relevant or emic understanding about food justice across generations (Strack et al. 2004). As previously mentioned, what also could make each of these projects more effective in community building effects, is linking area youth to pipelines for health-related careers, and collaborating with CBOs and local store owners on healthy food access program development and implementation to ensure economic vitality and community development are at the forefront of public health intervention design.

In addition to utilizing existing public health measures of individual changes in diet, additional tools exist that can be used in community-based projects to ascertain changes in community food access such as restaurant and food retailer audits and market basket surveys, and community

mapping of healthy food sources (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2012). Academic partners can assist local community coalitions and initiatives with these evaluations using community-based participatory research approaches (Wallerstein and Duran 2010). Obtaining a more complete picture of community-level impact requires mixed methods approaches that capture process and outcome indicators, as well as proximal outcomes such as community resource development and distal outcomes that include individual dietary changes. However, funding timelines and resources are limited. The two case studies presented above were implemented with modest funding for short time periods—two to three years—making sustainability and even population dietary evaluations impossible. As such, they offer great insight into implementation strategies and logistics as well as community resource development.

As the goal of food justice is to go beyond the immediate health concern to enhance community well-being, considering the individual and collective dimensions of well-being as described by Evans and Prilleltensky is helpful. At the individual level, youth, small business owners, and community members experience a sense of solidarity and have opportunities to participate in prosocial activities that help their community. At the collective level, local community assets including social capital, a social asset, as well as tangible resources such as local businesses and farmers markets are appreciated and developed for taking action and for sustainability. These community-building efforts are essential and are just as important as the ultimate health status outcomes such as disease rates, morbidity and mortality.

25.5 Conclusion

Making healthy food choices the default option for marginalized populations requires complex strategies that alter the community food environment to leverage community assets for change, and draw upon a multi-disciplinary knowledge base. Each of the case studies

reviewed utilize multi-level approaches to capture change; in accord with existing evidence which stresses the need for approaches that go beyond increasing individual level knowledge about healthy eating (Story et al. 2008). Further, the case studies also use collaborative community-building approaches that can result in cultural renewal, knowledge-building, resource development and sustainability. Future research is needed to elaborate theories about community level change, not just in food justice initiatives, but across critical health equity issues.

Healthy eating is now part of the seven priorities of the National Prevention Strategy (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services 2012). Food justice can serve as a metaphor for other forms of structural violence and deprivation; in fact on a population level, food insecurity and other health disparities co-occur, and share root causes (Braveman and Gottlieb 2014). Food justice is about building the opportunity structure for healthy living. With their knowledge of social policy and community organization, public health social scientists are positioned to address food justice through collaborative local inquiry and social and environmental change efforts. As presented above, these efforts can have ripple effects across community systems, building local capacity for future action on health and other social justice initiatives, and contribute to community-well-being (Prilleltensky and Prilleltensky 2007).

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Improving Health in or of the Community?

26

Brandn Green and Kristal Jones

Abstract

Recognizing that community is both a geographic and social space, public health professionals have historically worked to improve health *within* the community as well as to improve the health *of* the community. Beginning with the first Healthy People report in 1979, community has been a central theme in public documents which outline the priorities of federal public health agencies. Over the course of four subsequent documents, the meaning of community has been fluid and evolving, and has incorporated the social determinants of health, the ecological model of influence, and broader concepts about the role of place in health outcomes. This chapter identifies the concept of community within each of these documents to provide a critical engagement with the concept of community in American public health over the past forty years. The chapter concludes that the concept of community has shifted from being the

geographic location of public health interventions to being the problem for public health interventions, a distinction reflected in the contrast between making a community healthy by improving health within it or making a healthy community by improving the health of the community. Understanding the different possible conceptualizations of community within public health that have existed in the recent past and present in American public health can help practitioners and those working with local organizations to better understand the range of goals and approaches taken by those working on public health issues within communities.

26.1 Introduction

Public health is fundamentally concerned with the promotion and protection of health while preventing and decreasing disease within the population. Actions to achieve these ends are diverse, and include educational campaigns, changes to local policy, and increasingly, actions to address social conditions (Abroms and Maibach 2008; Atkins and Frazier 2011; Navarro et al. 2006). Within this hive of activity, community has long been a central concept (Israel et al. 1998). Over time, community has been used to describe the physical locations in which public health actions are taken, and has also been

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used as a symbol that has structured funding opportunities and political strategies for encouraging specific types of health outcomes.

As both a physical space and symbol, the community has been the field of action where groups and organizations enact, resist or negotiate with the ideas of the US public health system, a system driven by the power and authority of federal, state and local government (Fine 2010). These ideas about how to improve public health are often implemented by local organizations with their own conceptualizations of community that might reflect or conflict with those being articulated by the government-led public health sector. Understanding the different possible conceptualizations of community within public health that have existed over time can help practitioners and those working with local organizations to better understand the range of goals and approaches taken by those working on public health issues within communities.

Public health in the United States is fundamentally a government responsibility, and government programs and policies have set both the financial and rhetorical framing of public health work over time (Green and Mercer 2001). Due to this responsibility structure, this chapter seeks to understand how community has been conceptualized and engaged with by the field of public health by examining the agenda-setting documents produced by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), sometimes in conjunction with national-level foundations that work in concert with the federal government. HHS has a mission to “enhance and protect the health and well-being of all Americans...by providing for effective health and human services and fostering advances in medicine, public health, and social services” (website, accessed 8/4/2016). To facilitate this action, HHS has regularly produced public planning documents in which they articulate public health objectives and pathways to improving health outcomes. Analysis of these reports and the implicit theories about community, health and action can help elucidate the public health ‘ideology’ about community. This chapter focuses on the ways that the meaning, role, and

responsibilities identified for communities in these reports have shifted over time.

Theories about health challenges and solutions can be organized by a distinction first made by McLeroy et al. (1988), who stated that there are theories of the problem, the intervention, and the context. In both research and publically funded programming, community has been incorporated into all three of these stages, and often without the articulation of a theory about why community would be a source of a problem, site of an intervention, or the most relevant context (Glanz and Bishop 2010). There is a fundamental commitment in public health to understanding the particular elements or exposures that generate a disease outcome (Baisch 2009). In contrast, the fundamental commitment in sociology is, as Tönnies wrote, “to study the sentiments and motives which draw people to each other, keep them together, and induce them to joint action” (Bessant 2012). The public health practitioner conceives of community by using the basic frames of problem, intervention, and context, more often than not with the goal of making the individuals within a community healthy (Trickett et al. 2011). In contrast, the sociologist conceives of community as a field of interaction, within which people engage in collective action, and where the health of the community as a social field will support the health of individuals within the community (Wallerstein et al. 2011).

Communities are the fields of action where public health objectives established by the federal government are implemented, and have therefore been a central and foundational concept in each document. To the sociologist, tasked with understanding the sentiments and motives that would elicit the type of coordination necessary to generate collective action, theories of community can be used to elucidate the relationship between the public health agency that acts on behalf of the state (at the state or federal level), and the non-profit and local organizations that are intending to act on behalf of their local constituencies and stakeholders. There is a political economy to the local public health context that structures the nature of community engagement with governmental actors and information

disseminated from government sources. By taking into account these dynamics, and by interpreting them through different theories of community, we hope to contribute to the ongoing conversations in both public health and sociology about theories of the effects of community and other higher-level systems impact individual health outcomes.

26.2 Methodology and Sources

The selection of HHS documents as the source material for this examination reflects the focus on understanding how community has been conceptualized by the extra-local actor in the public health system, in this case the federal government, to explore how implementation of these ideas may impact local non-profits and organizations engaging in public health work (see Stokols 1996 for an example of a similar methodology). The analysis focuses on identifying and describing the concepts of community which were embedded within federal planning documents that contributed to the public health agenda over the past 35 years in the United States. By clarifying these theories of community, we hope to provide language to students, researchers, and local public health leaders to more carefully and meaningfully use the concept of community in their work. And by focusing on documents from federal agencies, the analysis presented here can contribute to local organizations' ability to use these theories to leverage federal opportunities focused on community-level interventions.

We use the Healthy People reports of 1979, 2010, and 2020 as well as the Future of Public Health reports from 1988 and 2002 to trace the theories underlying the concept of "community" in US public health practice from 1980 to 2015. A key assumption of our approach was that publically available documents contain the necessary information one would need to complete a thorough analysis of the orientation of an entity as large as HHS. Obviously, HHS is a dynamic

and varied institution with a range of priorities, styles of community engagement, and theories of community change both in organizational forms and in the minds of individual actors within the agency. We accept this as a limitation of our project, and yet we see the foundational role, which is both rhetorical and financial, played by HHS in setting the public health agenda in the United States as justification for examining these reports as documents that helped to define the activities of specific eras of public health.

We are asserting the debatable position that the public documents produced through the surgeon general and by the taskforces that created the Healthy People reports, correspond to reliable and accurate sources for understanding how community has been conceived by those acting on behalf of US public health systems over the past 35 years. This is because although public health is a varied enterprise, composed of academic institutions, non-profits, and businesses, the primary self-definition within public health is that of the governmental bodies responsible for the health of the population (Green and Mercer 2001). The manner in which communities have been represented in these documents provides evidence, even if only partial, of how conceptualizations of community by the federal agencies guiding the practice of public health has developed over time, and how those conceptualizations relate implicitly to different theoretical descriptions of community within sociology.

The analysis of each report includes a basic introduction to the context and goals of the report, as were stated in the original report. These overviews are intended to provide the reader with some background on the framing of each report. Following the overview we present details about the concepts and models of community that are explicitly articulated in the report. Once the details have been presented, we provide a short overview of the theory of community that best explains the model of community within the report. Following the presentation of the reports, we synthesize the findings and reflect on how

these historical theories of community impacted and continue to exert influence on how communities are engaged in contemporary public health practice.

26.3 Analysis

26.3.1 Healthy People 1979 (US Public Health Service, 1979)

Report Background In an effort to build upon the gains in health status achieved since 1900, largely gains achieved through improvements in sanitation, housing, nutrition and immunization, the surgeon general and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare worked with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) to produce the first Healthy People report in 1979. The orientation of the document was to expand the role that prevention was playing in helping to decrease chronic disease deaths and toward lowering the costs of health care provision in the United States. Decreasing premature morbidity and mortality through adjustment of unhealthy behaviors was supported by the research, which in 1976 suggested that approximately 50% of U.S. mortality could be traced to unhealthy behavior or lifestyle (US Public Health Service 1979).

The central tenant of this document was that a major increase in funding from the federal government was necessary to develop a robust disease prevention and health promotion strategies across the country. The report was self-identified as “the first Surgeon General’s Report on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention” (p. 11) and centered entirely on the actions of the individual. The stated central theme was “the health of this Nation’s citizens can be significantly improved through actions individuals can take themselves, and through actions decision makers in the public and private sector can take to promote a safer environment for all Americans at home, at work and at play” (p. 12).

The report recommended elements of good health as being

- Elimination of cigarette smoking
- Reduction of alcohol misuse
- Moderate dietary changes to reduce intake of excess calories, fat, salt and sugar
- Moderate exercise
- Periodic screening for major disorders such as high blood pressure and certain cancers
- Adherence to speed laws and use of seat belts.

Concept of Community *Healthy People 1979* included the concept of community in multiple ways. Community was identified as the physical space in which services could be accessed by citizens and the physical space where exposure occurs and risks can exist. Examples given were hazardous physical environments like inadequate housing, occupational hazards, and dangerous consumer products. Government officials were tasked with the identification and remediation of these risks.

Community was also discussed as a potential partner in the implementation of prevention and health promotion programming and interventions. A few organizational actors were specifically identified toward achieving these goals, including voluntary agencies, media, and civic and religious programs. In these ways, non-profits and organizational actors were viewed as information dissemination pathways, as well as spaces in which the individuals within communities could be reached.

More abstractly, community was identified as a potential solution to racial and ethnic tensions through community action and improving cooperation and understanding. Socioeconomic characteristics of certain communities were identified as being shapers of health that “deserve continuing and serious attention” (p. 11–1). Specifically, the report notes that neighborhood-based success in decreasing stress and improving health can be achieved through social cohesion and sense of belonging.

Community Theory The role of social cohesion and the decrease of *anomie* discussed in the neighborhood section of the report reflected the classic sociological thinking Émile Durkheim expressed in *Suicide*. This basic concept is that stress is bad for an individual, and that stress is decreased through social cohesion and trust in neighborhood networks. The report did not provide suggestions for how trust can be built or how social cohesion can be improved.

The best way to understand the theory of community implicitly present in *Healthy People 1979* is that of community as a social system (Chaskin 1997). As a social system, community was presented as the physical and organizational space within which social interactions unfold and occur. The social system included many functional units that impact individuals' material, social and symbolic life (for a thorough review of contributions to theories of social systems see Chaskin 1997). Conceptualizing community as a set of entities that exist at multiple social levels and spatial scales reflected a now-common understanding of social processes as systems. The characterization of community as a social system in the *Healthy People 1979* report foreshadowed the shift toward social-ecological systems approaches in public health that identify causes and potential opportunities for intervention in communities. Health officials, from the point of view of this document, can leverage and utilize the social units and processes toward the end of increasing prevention and promotion through educational campaigns, remediation of physical harms, and policy adjustments to enable healthy behavior. There was a direct and explicit discussion of a few types of local organizations, but there was no reflection on the potential challenges that come along with local community processes and the presence of a local political economy that could, for example, lead to differential outcomes for individuals.

The relationship between individuals and the community referenced in *Healthy People 1979* also reflected the community-as-a-social-system

theory. The individual is the actor in this system that can choose to engage (or not) with the services provided by organizations toward the pursuit of better individual outcomes. Emphasis on infrastructure and community-level interventions that affect all individuals, such as fluorination of the water supply, were highlighted multiple times as important approaches for public health officials to continue to support, expand, and improve upon. Communities lack symbolic value, and were not presented in this report as having characteristics beyond the sum of the individuals within them. Associations and social organizations were presented as functional units that can implement and reinforce the message about individual choice and responsibility for keeping the community healthy.

26.3.2 The Future of Public Health 1988 (Institute of Medicine 1988)

Report Background This report reflects a historical moment in which role of public health was being reestablished and clarified through engagement with academic experts, government public health officials and philanthropic organizations. The non-governmental Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJ) and the U.S. Public Health Service worked with the Institute of Medicine to produce the report. The basic goal of the report was to articulate the role of public health and the expansions or improvements needed to the public health infrastructure to accomplish the basic goal of public health, stated as “assuring the conditions in which people can be healthy (p. 7).”

The committee studied the American public health system over a period of two years. This included examination of the demographic and epidemiological datasets available for public health practice, the budgets of federal and state agencies, statutes, and relevant governmental

policy. Interviews were completed with 350 people across six states. Five public meetings across five states were undertaken to provide the committee with insight into the entire public health system.

Two basic concepts framed the recommendations in the report: public health agencies were asked to “serve as stewards of the basic health care needs of entire populations, but at the same time avert impending disasters and provide personal health care to those rejected by the rest of the health system” (p. 2). The report identifies the core functions of public health agencies at all levels of government as being “assessment, policy development, and assurance (p. 7).” By focusing on public health systems, the report starts with government agencies and entities at multiple political scales, identifying that variation across states and communities in health department capacity has a major impact on the public health care provision for localities.

Concept of Community Complexity, and the need to manage risks to and within the population, was the central theme in this document. Community was presented as a space that could be at risk and in need of protection. The community was also conceptualized as a group of individuals that is engaged with the political processes, which in turn shaped the quality of the public health infrastructure and capacity of the work force. Emphasizing surveillance and data collection as one of the central tasks for public health agencies reinforced the perception that the community was a population of individuals at risk from exposure to other individuals and to the non-human elements of the community space within which the individual resides.

Community was also identified, as it was in the *Healthy People 1979*, as a resource that could be engaged with, led, and leveraged by public health officials for expanding the quality of care provision and reach of programming efforts. This was articulated as a resource mobilization effort, “public health officials taking leadership in organizing community support for actions

toward public health objectives (p. 122).” Finally, community was also used as a symbol of the ethical underpinnings of public health, as public health was juxtaposed with health care because the former has a central focus on community wide concerns, while the latter focuses on individual interests of particular groups. In this way, the community was the client or patient of the public health official and agencies. Monitoring the health status of the collective, making policy adjustments to improve individual health outcomes in the aggregate, and of being ever vigilant for the protection against risks formed the core of public health and the relationship government agencies with obligations for health had to the public.

Community Theory Ulrich Beck’s (1992) ‘Risk Society’ model can be extended to explain the theory of community underlying the first Future of Public Health report. Risk society, simply, is the idea that structural and technological changes have increased the complexity of causes of health problems and while at the same time new hazards have been added. This has shifted the central role of government bodies to providing protection from risk. Quoting from the report, “complexity, when added to the perceived potential vulnerability to new epidemics and environmental hazards of virtually the entire population, lead many observers to conclude that a governmental presence, perhaps an expanded presence, in health has never been more necessary” (p. v). Beck (1992) puts a finer point on the notion of risk and the demand for protection, highlighting the difference between ‘pre-industrial’ hazards, which are naturally occurring, and modern ‘risks,’ which are associated with exposure to the technological and organizational elements of modern society. The emphasis in *The Future of Public Health 1988* report on the types of risks that are the purview of public health, those that impact society, reflects the distinction made by Beck and others about community as the locus of both exposure and protection. The risk society transition parallels the epidemiologic transition in population

health, which emphasizes the shift toward man-made health challenges and outcomes in advanced societies (McKeown 2009).

When community is perceived of within the risk society framework as outlined by Beck, the value of the community comes from its ability to articulate and mobilize against the risks identified by the technical experts, in this case the public health officials. Throughout the report, community was referenced as either a cohesive social fact that was in need of protection, or as a political collective that could be mobilized to activate financial resources (be they governmental or private) to support actions intended to remedy the specific risk. Prevention continued to be present in this report, but it was secondary to the more fundamental need to identify and address already present risks. In *The Future of Public Health 1988* there began to be a shift toward community as a distinct level for both interventions and political action. And, with this shift, a recognition that each community has unique characteristics that could be addressed and activated to protect the health of individual community members.

26.3.3 The Future of the Public's Health in the 21st Century 2002 (Institute of Medicine 2002)

Report Background A broad coalition of federal agencies, including the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, the Health Resources and Services Administration, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the HHS Office of the Secretary, and Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion collaborated with the IOM to produce this report. In pulling together a broad and diverse group of health professionals and public health experts from academic and private institutions, federal agencies sought the creation of a “framework for assuring population health in the United States that would

be more inclusive than the 1988 report and that could be effectively communicated to and acted upon by diverse communities” (p. xii).

The committee met regularly over a 19-month period between January 2001 and July 2002. In addition, workshops were held with representatives from all levels of government, private companies, and researchers working in the field of public health. Multiple site visits were undertaken, as were data collection activities aimed at providing the committee with information on challenges to population health and health care delivery. One marked difference from the 1988 report was that the 2002 report explicitly dovetailed with and complemented the mission of their project with that of *Healthy People 2010*, which focused on community identification of health goals and outcomes.

In contrast to the position put forward in the 1970s, research completed in 1993 suggested that behavior and environmental factors were responsible for more than 70% of avoidable mortality (cited in *Future of Public Health 2002*). This and related findings shaped the logic of how the committee approached the creation of a framework for population health. The linkage to income inequality and differential exposure to risk, a minor theme in previous reports, was also articulated much more clearly and definitively than ever before. The committee wrote, “frequently, those who are most likely to be at social and economic disadvantage live in communities that are at higher risk of environmental contamination, face greater exposure to intentional and unintentional injuries, and are least likely to have access to good medical care” (p. 21).

The Future of the Public's Health in the 21st Century 2002 highlights large changes in the demands on the public health system and changes to the structure of that system since the 1988 report. Achieving a healthy public was being increasingly highlighted as requiring engagement with economic development, environmental remediation, and investment in social services. At the same time, the identified needs outstripped the resources of government and public health actors at all levels. Within these broad and

significant changes, the report focused on “the need for a policy focus on population health; the need for greater understanding and emphasis on the broad determinants of health; and the importance of strengthening the public health infrastructure, building partnerships, developing systems of accountability, emphasizing evidence, and enhancing communication” (p. xiv). The tone of risk and fear of the unknown that was ever-present in the 1988 report was largely absent, even with a recognition that there were still risks to populations. Instead, there was an implicit objective of identifying the complex goals and outcomes of health systems for and by communities, and a recognition that a dynamic understanding of community could help to illuminate opportunities and challenges within and across populations.

Concept of Community Reflecting the advances within the disciplines associated with public health, this report included a direct and robust statement about community and defined it in way that was absent from previous reports. Community was defined as “both a setting—the place where health is supported and protected by social connections and healthy social, built, economic and natural environments or risked and damaged by detrimental environments and social norms—and a potential partner in the public health system through its organizations, associations, and networks” (p. xv). The role of the community was enhanced and expanded due in part to a stated recognition that the government public health system is inadequate for “assuring the nation’s health” (p. 2). Stated reasons for this conclusion were that “public resources are finite; democratic societies define and limit the types of actions that can be undertaken by government and resource other social choices for private institutions; determinants that interact to create good or ill health derive from various sources and sectors; [and] there is a growing recognition that individuals, communities, and various social institutions can form powerful collaborative relationships to improve health that government alone cannot replicate” (p. 2).

Community was defined in this report as a place where individuals experience a range of social phenomena that have dynamic and ambiguous (not consistently positive or negative) impacts on health outcomes. Increasing social connectedness, for example, was stressed in this report as both an action taken by and an outcome of the organizations that comprise communities. In addition, community organizations were identified as being actors who can engage in activism to motivate policy change by mobilizing community symbols. Both of these views were present in previous reports; the new addition was that local organizations, as representative of the community, were envisioned as “managing or engaging in population-level health interventions” (p. 31). In previous reports, the community was a one-way recipient or transmitter of outside expertise. The community here, for the first time in this series of reports and thus in major government-directed public health strategies, was given the authority to identify their own needs need and to do public health work as experts.

In addition to having the opportunity to engage in the identification and remedy of problems, *The Future of the Public’s Health in the 21st Century 2002* also gave the community responsibility for helping to address the social conditions within which residents experience risks and health exposures in a manner that was much broader and more diverse than previous reports. Economic, social and physical risk factors in the local environment were identified as conditions that must be addressed, as geographic communities were faced with more exposure based on their localized challenges. The report also included a direct statement about how “many of the determinants of health are part of the broad economic and social context and, thus, beyond the direct control of administrators in public and private health care organizations” (p. 83). In other words, the systems within which health is experienced are multi-level and it is not the responsibility of any one organizational type to address challenges and impacts. Therefore, interventions must also take into account the multi-level nature of social life.

Community Theory In *The Future of the Public's Health in the 21st Century 2002*, the relationship between the community and public health, for the first time, was identified as a dialectic, in which community organizations and actors take actions that set the conditions within which public health officials work. The context of the community was identified as being dynamic, evolving, and outside of the purview of the government public health agencies. The move toward population health and away from framing health outcomes as the responsibilities of individuals was a major shift in the locus of power and responsibility, which has implications for the ways in which community as a concept was utilized throughout the report.

Conceptualizing community as an arbiter between large public goals and large private structures and interests reflects the tension inherent in social and economic theories of neoliberalism, which privilege freedom and lack of interference by the public sector in both personal and private sector affairs (Harvey 2006). The trends of neoliberalism, in which government actors and policies focused on ensuring freedom for individual action and minimizing limits on private economic actors, produced a devolution of authority to communities across a range of content areas, including in natural resource management, transportation infrastructure, education, and health (McCarthy and Prudham 2004; Mechanic and McAlpine 2012). The sociology of medicine literature brings together public health and political economy critiques of the neoliberal emphasis on individual responsibility and freedom in much the same way as the *The Future of the Public's Health in the 21st Century 2002*—by noting that there are many interventions and policies necessary to promote population health that are unrealistic at the community level (McKinlay 2012). In this report, however, the community was being given this new authority, with possible trade-offs for public health actors and community well-being.

The concept of community in *The Future of the Public's Health in the 21st Century 2002* reflected neoliberal theories of community as well as critical reflections on the impacts of

devolution of authority on community agency. In the dialectic inherent in neoliberalism, organizations acting with the community setting were recognized as having both a responsibility to address community-level structures and characteristics that impact health outcomes, and the authority to define and enact localized the population health goals. While the responsibility portion of this conceptualization for community actors can create undue burden, the authority portion helped to drive a focus on social determinants of health. As public health officials ceded some authority in this report to local non-profits and volunteer associations, who were being presented as partners and leaders, they also allowed for those community partners to identify shortcomings and differential impacts of the dominant public health and other structures (Wright and Perry 2010).

26.3.4 Healthy People 2010 & 2020 (US Health and Human Services 2000, 2010)

Report Background Initiated by the Office of the Secretary of HHS, *Healthy People 2010* and *Healthy People 2020* was a coordinated effort by public health officials to achieve the shared vision of “healthy people in healthy communities.” Both the 2010 and 2020 reports incorporated expertise from a broad cross-section of constituents, including federal agency experts, members of the Healthy People Consortium, and a large number of public comments. An innovation in the *Healthy People 2010* report, which was continued in the 2020 report, was the identification of health indicators that could be used by individual researchers and public health professionals, as well as by community leaders and members, to target and track the impact in the population brought about by actions taken to improve health.

In contrast to the 2010 and all previous reports, *Healthy People 2020* was designed to be web accessed, rather than print based. This change reflected broader changes to information

accessing mechanisms in the population. It also corresponded to a long-standing commitment by federal health agencies to make these planning documents accessible and useable to community leaders and individuals. The role of data in defining not only outcomes but also boundaries of need and action was made manifest in the 2020 web-based report. Data, which provides an evidence base for public health outcomes, also emerged as a central tenant for decision making and intervention selection within community settings.

Concept of Community Community took a central role in health practices with the *Healthy People 2010* report. “The underlying premise of Healthy People 2010 is that the health of the individual is almost inseparable from the health of the larger community and that the health of every community in every State and territory determines the overall health status of the Nation” (p. 3). It is therefore the case that caring about and working toward an individual’s health also requires engaging with community level systems and actors to support and expand conditions that promoted the health of the population. Connecting individual-level outcomes to population-level concerns is often the work of community organizations and associations. In the *Healthy People 2010* report, community became conceptualized as the community of limited liability (Chaskin 1997), where individuals identify and connect their personal goals (in this case, health) with community level change, and then participate in community level activities. This move has profound impacts on the strategies utilized to motivate action as well as the purview of public health messaging and intervention.

The role of health determinants tied to social conditions expanded greatly in both the *Healthy People 2010* and *Healthy People 2020* reports. In *Healthy People 2020*, health determinants were defined as “the range of personal, social, economic, and environmental factors that determine the health status of individuals or populations. They are embedded in our social and physical environments. Social determinants include

family, community, income, education, sex, race/ethnicity, geographic location, and access to health care, among others” (p. 7). With this focus, the *Healthy People 2020* report recognized that the broad health goals and objectives identified were unattainable by the public health system and the public (governmental) sector alone. There was a specific call for many sectors of our society—such as transportation, housing, agriculture, commerce, and education, in addition to medical care—to become broadly and deeply engaged in promoting health. This call reflected an expansion of health beyond the boundaries reflected in previous reports, and a move toward health becoming a symbolic concept that can reorient policy and shift social organization (Chinman et al. 2005).

Community Theory The community of limited liability concept is a theory of how self-interested individuals operating within organizations and governmental entities are willing to engage in actions for the good of the collective. The collective may be a firm or a community but the mechanism is the same within each setting. Organizations generate symbols, around which, individuals become attached and can in turn be mobilized to act and to be organized in accordance with the goals of the collective. These symbols produce attachment, which can in turn be leveraged to accomplish the given goal, in this case health. “Healthy Community” in the *Healthy People 2010* and *Healthy People 2020* reports has become a reified category around which social actors are being asked to orient. Community has been squarely moved from the physical backdrop in which prevention or decreasing exposure to risks can be enacted, to the realm of values, norms, and behaviors. It is the concept of community and of the belief that individuals want to be living in healthy communities, in part to support their own health, which orients the documents.

In making the transition found in the *Healthy People* reports, public health practice in the United States has begun to use the concept of community to leverage resources by presenting

health as a unifying value to which all activities can point and support. The symbolic value of a healthy community can make public health policies and infrastructure ranging from policies which place bans on soda cups over 72 oz, as in the case of Big Gulps in New York, to walking paths and greenways, more palatable to the voting public. In addition, private financing from foundations and businesses vested in the well-being of their employees can be motivated to participate as it gains them symbolic value in the community and provides them with economies of scale because of the contributions of many organizations. The inclusive language of healthy communities also reflected the critical arguments about the need to address structural inequality and social determinants of health. At the same time, responsibility for ‘making a healthy community’ can become increasingly diffuse as new systems, sectors and organizations were included in the concept of community actors.

26.4 Synthesis

The definitions of community in the five reports overviewed here reflect the evolution of how community has been conceptualized as an actor in public sector interventions. This evolution has had impacts on how local community level actors have engaged with and been engaged by the dominant government-led approaches to public health over time.

In the 1979 report, the evaluation of community was close to dichotomous—a community is working as it should be when it provides cohesion, connectedness and services to a geographically defined population. In 1979 public health practice, community could be a site of function or dysfunction, as well as a help or hindrance in achieving the goal of broad and standardized health outcomes. In this first report, community was not conceived of as particularly complex, dynamic or multiscale, and the relationship between healthy individuals and communities was one of aggregation, with the community being a sum total of the individuals who live within it. Interestingly, the *Healthy*

People 2010 and *2020* reports return to this final point, albeit with a more complete understanding of how individuals comprise a community, by incorporating the critical dialectic that sees two-way feedbacks between individuals and communities. In these most recent reports, the feedbacks between individual and community were often mediated through organizations and associations, which comprise the organizational units that are characteristic of a healthy community.

Inherent in health, and understanding how public health actions impact specific problems, is the temporal nature of health problem effects, as the pathways between antecedent and outcome are often winding, complicated, and slow to present. For example, lung cancer rates are directly connected to the smoking behaviors of populations 20–30 years previously (Trickett et al. 2011). The temporal nature of chronic disease transfer and delay of effects has rarely been integrated into neighborhood effects research or into rigorous research that evaluates the role of community level variables on individual level health outcomes. However, the focus on risk in the *The Future of Public Health 1988* report provides a theoretical argument for why community needs to be conceptualized as spanning both place and time, as a locus for exposure as well as for future material and political remediation. The identification of risk as it relates to the physical location of a community continued to provide a foundation for the theories of community presented in *The Future of the Public's Health in the 21st Century 2002*, where risk comes as well from the social and political location of a community.

As the conceptualizations of community throughout the reports become increasingly complex and interconnected with broader social structures, there is a growing emphasis on the agency and responsibility of communities to maintain health within their organizational and geographic boundaries. The social determinants of health and the increasing interest in the use of data, surveillance and identification of difference has also been mobilized by critical theories of community agency and responsibility, one that

reflects similar analyses and approaches in environmental justice (Brown 2013).

In the *Healthy People 1979* report, the goal of furthering public health can be achieved “not alone through increased medical care and greater health disparities—but through a renewed national commitment to efforts designed to prevent disease and promote health” (US Public Health Service 1979, p. 1–1). The focus is primarily on the prevention of disease through the control of individual risk factors, specifically highlighting the need to shift diet, smoking, exercise patterns, alcohol use and expand the use of antihypertensive medication. Community was present in this report as the backdrop for actions by public health officials in concert with community members. In contrast, the *Healthy People 2010* and *Healthy People 2020* reports presented a vision for improving public health that was much more expansive. “Over the years, it has become clear that individual health is closely linked to community health—the health of the community and environment in which individuals live, work and play. Likewise, community health is profoundly affected by the collective beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of everyone who lives in the community” (US Health and Human Services 2010, p. 3).

26.5 Conclusion

At first glance, an analysis of government documents from 1979 to 2015 may not be of relevance to students and leaders of community organizations, the two primary audiences for this edited volume. However, we were motivated by the idea that in the field of public health, federal agencies set priorities that all other actors in the public health universe must correspond to or align with. The financial incentives managed by federal agencies, ranging from grants to Medicaid reimbursements, structure the actions of public health agents within communities. Extracting and naming the theories of community embedded within these documents accomplishes two goals. One, it provides an overview of how a single term,

community, has evolved and changed within the field of public health. Government documents are one strategy for tracing this evolution, and a similar review could also be undertaken in the peer-reviewed literature, textbooks, or other primary sources for public health education and agenda setting. We suspect that any approach would have identified the same overarching conceptual evolution. Two, by teasing out each theory, and by naming them and associating them with developed schools of thought from sociology, this chapter attempted to provide students and practitioners with vocabulary to inform work within communities.

In a span of 35 years, achieving public health goals has moved from a framework of government protectionism from specific harms and promotion of individual responsibility to an effort to shape and influence the comprehensive social context within which individuals live. This transition has implications for the ways in which public health practitioners engage in their fundamental responsibility to protect the population from potential harm and to decrease health burdens. By being able to articulate and identify the theories of community that are being used within public health departments and by practitioners, one can more carefully and critically understand the assumptions about the context of an intervention. Hopefully, by understanding how the community is being theorized, practitioners and to be practitioners (students) can identify when they are doing work in the community or of the community.

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Abstract

Schools are ubiquitous in American society. Among their central functions is relating to and building the sense of community. Experiences in schools tend to have an intimate connection to people's identities and to social networks that persist throughout their lifetimes. School relationships shape community relationships. This chapter explores schools as a dimension of community life. The focus is different from what we usually see where schools and communities are interrelated by social scientists since the concern here is not with what makes schools and schooling more effective. Rather, the discussion talks about how schools relate to what community is and how schools help to build or undermine a sense of community. While the focus is not on how communities make schools more effective, much of the literature on community explores how schools are embedded in communities and how qualities of community relate to schooling. One of the most important themes involves the concept of social capital, which at the beginning was developed as a way to account for differences in school

success. That literature also shows us things about how schools and other community institutions interrelate, thereby telling us how communities are structured. The chapter explores the concept of "settings", how this relates to building a "sense of community" and how this, in turn, relates to the welfare of children. Children tend to be tied to and dependent on the community as a place, and as such their prosperity is related to the kinds of activities that are available in that place, the values and goal orientations that are developed in the setting, and the way schools are integrated with the setting. Finally, the chapter explores ways schools self-consciously build and are dependent upon local residents identifying with the local community. School sports have a strong role in the development of community identity. But the chapter discusses how schools as organizations depend on the local sense of community and actions schools take to encourage residents to feel that they are part of a community.

The two most ubiquitous institutions in America are schools and churches. It is not just that many of each exist in every town, neighborhood, and city. Central to the mission of both is an attempt to build social ties, a sense of community, and

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motivation for making communities better places. This chapter is about schools and at both the elementary and high school levels families meet each other, undertake joint, mutually supportive action, and form networks and friendship groups that endure, often for a lifetime.

Not all families have the time or inclination to become involved in their children's schools. Kozol (1991) argues that it is precisely this uneven parental commitment that should cause us to oppose arrangements that separate children from committed and motivated families from those whose parents are neglectful and uninformed about how to help their children achieve. Kozol was particularly arguing against charter schools and tracking arrangements in New York. He shares a widely held view that a primary obligation of schools is to help and support children from the poorest families and who suffer because their parents do not seem to know how to parent, or do not care to provide this loving assistance. Parents who do care and who are involved in their children's school lives end up advocating for all children and helping in simple activities like organizing baseball leagues children whose parents do not step up. Take those parents away and overworked and discouraged teachers are left to care for children who often are perceived as misbehaved, cognitively deficient, and dirty. The only chance those children have is for concerned, involved, altruistic parents to play a strong role helping to make the schools all children attend into true community institutions.

Small (2010) reinforces and quantifies Kozol's argument in his study of social capital in preschool programs. If there is a mixture in terms of social class, Small shows that when low-income parents participate in school governance processes, they make gains in personal social capital. The simple fact of participating in governance activities gives these parents both better knowledge about how to interact in middle class contexts but also helps them to develop cross-class social ties. A result is that over time these parents end up being more economically successful than low-income parents who are not involved.

Some theorists, especially those doing research on public health, argue that social capital can only be conceptualized as a community-level variable (Cattell 2011). If this is true we cannot speak, as Small does, of building individual-level social capital and usually we will not be able to build up social capital in a neighborhood or a community.

This runs counter to the analysis of Coleman (1988) who first popularized the concept of social capital and then used the idea to explain achievement differences in low-income schools. In particular, Coleman showed that poor children in Catholic schools perform better than similarly poor children attending public school. This happens, he argued, because Catholic schools are embedded in overlapping circles of voluntary social organizations like the church, parish organizations parents participate in, and parochial schools. One consequence is that many adults know the children in a variety of social contexts. Messages about working hard, being accountable, caring about peers, and being morally committed to values of the community are stated and reinforced as children move from one relationship to another with adults from outside their own family. This builds motivation related to school tasks. It also makes children feel supported by a generalized community feeling even if they are at times not very successful in their schooling work. Overlapping social networks build relationships of trust and also increase the legitimacy of the core social values of schooling. Coleman argued that there is a reciprocal relationship between social capital generated in the Catholic community and the way children become motivated to do well in school (Coleman et al. 1982; Coleman and Hoffer 1987).

A somewhat different argument is articulated by Coleman's colleague Bryk et al. (1993) who studied achievement in a Catholic girl's high school. Bryk argued that girls achieved not just because their school was embedded in an overlapping circle of social ties, but because the philosophy of education emphasized that community and mutual social support were core

values. Bryk argues that public schools, in contrast, emphasized individual, competitive achievement. This separates students socially. While this may benefit middle class children it denies low-income children of informal teaching and social support that come if they are embedded in a strong community and seek that community out because they accept certain values.

Children do not have to be in Catholic schools to benefit educationally from strong, supportive social capital networks. Meier (1995) demonstrates that such a community can be built in a communal school that includes families, even in the lowest income sections of American cities. Similarly, Milofsky and Elion (1988) talk about a similar, collectivist school in a small, rural city. These schools represent intentional innovations but one can find a similar dynamic developing in many elementary schools across community types—urban, suburban, and rural. Small children need the support of parents to do simple things like forming play groups or participating in youth sports or organizing scout troupes.

Parents come into the schools to help with projects like science fairs or local environmental projects. Through these activities parents come to know each other, families join together in social activities, and enduring friendships are built. Parents also come to know some educators as deeply altruistic individuals who make large impacts on their children. Years after their children have graduated from high school, we see parents continuing to help out at high school homecoming games because coaches and teachers made such deep impacts on their children both as caring, supportive adults and as people who laid the foundation for later success in adult life.

These successful outcomes are partially the result of intentional, strategic planning on the part of school system designers, even if that designing has been lost to the mists of history. In a study that predated his work on social capital by twenty years, Coleman (1981) explored the relationship between high school athletics and academic achievement. He found that these two systems of achievement, athletics and academics,

worked independently and somewhat in opposition to each other. He found that high IQ students in schools with weak sports cultures had higher school achievement than children with similar IQs in schools with strong sports cultures. His interpretation was that since all children want to be popular and successful, smart students would put their energy into athletics at strong sports schools and their learning would suffer.

One might take this as a criticism of sports in schools, but one of the reasons extra-curricular sports are more important in United States high schools than they are in many other countries has to do with the commitment to the common school in America. Following Kozol's logic, American schools are committed to educating all of the children, and especially those from low income and working class neighborhoods.

Adult rewards of school success may not flow to children from these neighborhoods even if they graduate successfully. An implicit motivation for working hard in schools is the likelihood of achieving adult success. Stinchcombe (1964) argues that low-income children know that the promise of adult success for those who succeed in school does not really apply to them, even if they have high IQs. He shows that high IQ, low-income students are the most likely to be rebellious. In Coleman's (1981) framework, a different motivator is the opportunity to be successful in athletics. Children who might be rebellious in school and who might drop out might, alternatively, be convinced to be compliant and hard working if they would be kicked off the football team if they did not have a proper attitude. This is just one of the ways schools developed to motivate working class children (Tyack et al. 1984).

27.1 Childhood and Settings

Sports are not just important for binding children to schools, youth sports also are a way that children are tied to communities as settings. Joining sports teams has long been one of the

important identity forming activities for boys (Fine 1987). Since the 1970s sports for girls and women have exploded in popularity so that a significant proportion of both genders are involved in sports teams nearly year around. That parents serve as coaches, drive children to games, and wait around while practices and competitions go on creates a chain of settings that bind parents and children together and also tie all of the families closely together.

One reality of childhood is that young people tend to be restricted to a particular geographic community space (Jenks 2005). This happens partly because institutions like schools or the Catholic Church or AYSO soccer teams create districts or boundaries that define where children will get services, and whose qualities shape learning and development opportunities. It also happens because the physical structure of neighborhoods shapes where and how children can spend time. The availability of parks and playgrounds has a big effect on whether or not children get exercise and also whether they are safe in the spaces where they play (Burdette and Whitaker 2005; Durkin et al. 1999). Hills, ravines, highways, industrial zones chop up the landscape, restricting children to their neighborhoods and shaping their ways of perceiving and interacting with the world.

Youth sports matter because they are one factor that shapes the community as a “setting” (Sarason 1972). Settings are social, physical, organizational, and cultural structures that include norms and values and that produce, or fail to produce, a generalized sense of community in a place (See Boyd and Newell, Chap. 2). Sarason in his writings (Cherniss 2012) usually focused on organizational and therapeutic settings and efforts to minimize “organizational craziness”.

An example comes from Stanton and Schwartz (1954) where they observed that psychotic patients became more disturbed when there was conflict among staff members. Staff members might not overtly express anger at others, but patients picked up on subtleties of their behavior. This might involve something like a staff member forgetting to place a patient’s

clothes in the appropriate place because the staff member was distracted by being angry. The patient then would be upset because his or her established patterns had been disrupted. Stanton and Schwartz (1954) called such a situation a “collective disturbance.” One might think the term refers to some sort of mob activity, but their point was simply that staff conflicts create minor acts of insensitivity that ramify through the system, upset patients, and gradually lead to more and more acting out.

A case from Sarason’s book, *The Psychoeducational Clinic* by McIntyre (1969) gives a parallel example as McIntyre describes the way a cognitively and behaviorally disabled child acted out in a regular school classroom. This was before the expansion of special education programs and the classroom teacher faced the challenge of finding appropriate teaching materials while also dealing with the child’s occasional tantrums. The school psychologist in the case visited the child and saw that while he was he was difficult in the classroom, his disabilities could be managed and he ought to be able to be maintained in a regular classroom if his teacher was thoughtful about his needs and attentive to the things that would lead him to be upset. However, the principal in this case faced some organizational challenges and on several occasions was critical of the student’s teacher. She was an insecure person and she worried that when there were disruptions in her classroom the principal would judge her negatively, perhaps leading to her being laid off when anticipated staffing reductions took place. This led her to be harsh towards the student because she worried that he would be a reason she received a negative evaluation. The result was that the student did not concentrate on his learning and also he had more frequent tantrums. Organizational challenges at the level of the principal, that involved his relationship with the superintendent in this small district, were being transferred down the system to the teacher and ultimately to the child who became increasingly difficult to manage in the classroom.

Examples like this one convinced Sarason that schools were sufficiently complex organizational

environments that they developed an organizational culture. Nearly any change in practice would be undermined and frustrated by unanticipated conflicts of interest and desires to preserve understandings about proper practices and desires to maintain the status quo. In order to introduce a change—he used the example of introducing the new math into the elementary school curriculum—one had to treat it as a disruption in the whole school culture, rather than as a specific technical innovation (Sarason 1972). He proposed the following law about schools: “The more things change, the more they remain the same.”

This line of thinking led Sarason (1972) to propose “settings” as a critical unit of analysis for understanding organizational and therapeutic interventions. Leaders were important for designing settings. It was important to create a sense of community, cohesion, and normative consensus. Most importantly as one imagined developing an intervention one had to think about how the change would be perceived by participants in terms of their personal and professional histories as well as in terms of their understanding of what their organization or program was fundamentally about. We might say, using Selznick’s (1957) language, that the “myth” of the organization had to be developed and integrated with programmatic initiatives.

This style of organizational innovation proved to be very difficult to implement and after a few years Sarason became discouraged with the settings idea. It turned out, however, that the concept was foundational for the field of community psychology as Cherniss (2012) tells us. Settings are the context in which community develops and in which feelings of a sense of community take root. While Sarason was most focused on professional contexts of practice it also became apparent that schools exist in a community context that is more or less supportive both of school activities and of children’s whole lives.

The social capital perspective of Coleman tells us this. It is not that Catholic schools are better than public schools at teaching low income children. Rather, Catholic schools are likely to exist in a matrix of community and institutional

structures that also embed the children. Public schools that serve middle class children are also likely to be embedded in a matrix of institutions that support learning. Middle class schools are foster the formation of parental networks that support school projects, friendship groups, and extra-curricular activities so that children are embedded in overlapping structures that heighten their motivation to be successful, conforming students in school.

For children not in the middle class, community settings are more variable as Furstenberg et al. (1999) show. Social scientists all know that there is a strong correlation between social class and educational achievement. But since all correlations represent only averages, we always should recognize that many cases do not fit the dominant pattern. It is particularly interesting to look at the deviant cases—in this case situations where low income children succeed in school. Many times success can be traced to particularly motivated, well organized parents who are able to keep their children focused on school success. In other cases where parents are not so effective, the key factor is whether or not children are involved in activities outside of school that are supervised by adults, that involve significant time commitments, and that give children a future orientation. A persistent finding in sociological studies of delinquency is that children who are not involved in structured after school activities are likely to be involved in aimless activities, to get in trouble with their friends, and to experience teen pregnancy (Agnew and Peterson 1989; Osgood et al 1996; Bernberg and Thorlindsson 2001; Osgood and Anderson 2004).

Communities vary in terms of how available are structured youth activities. Some of this has to do with local civic culture and how many adults are willing to be leaders in scouting, youth sports leagues, or mentoring programs. There also are variations in the way that local civic cultures are organized to support youth activities. In an informal survey of youth sports leagues in the area where the author lives, one town organized all sports leagues under the auspices of the public schools, another town organized youth sports leagues as town services (the town did not

participate in Little League because it had its own public youth baseball system); the rich town in the area had private clubs devoted to each sport; in another town, all adults participated and supported youth sports as a spontaneous movement; in another town the national Little League organized baseball as part of a regional network of teams, regardless of adult participation in a particular town; in another town the kids organized the leagues, with adults allowing groups of children to register their teams in a league. It is not the fault of a child or a family that he or she lands in one of these towns but the extent to which sports teams form a tightly integrated network with a strong normative core is likely to vary a lot from one town's model to another's.

We might think of community settings in ecological terms. That is, all organisms live in a physical, social, and organic space that provides opportunities and restrictions on getting resources and nurturance, dealing with competition and hostility, and having freedom to move to a new space if an old one is not supportive. The social ecology of childhood would imagine families and children as having been dropped down in a neighborhood of an urban area or a small town and then facing certain objective opportunities and challenges.

An approach more consistent with Sarason would ask what can be done in communities to be more supportive of positive development among children. One aspect is that there may be negative influences in a community and the elders or leaders may be more or less willing to challenge those influences or willing to take them on. Boehm and Itzhaky (2004), for example, describe intervening in a community where child sexual abuse was a known and tolerated problem. Older teenage boys were homosexually abusing younger boys. This had gone on for some years so the young boys would move into the role of the older abusers. This was an orthodox Jewish community in Israel and the adults and the Rabbi knew of the problem but the did not want to humiliate the older boys or stigmatize the community, so people would not act. The problem was deeply disturbing, so people in authority were uncomfortable about taking action.

The social workers who were brought into work on the problem succeeded in finding some adults who were willing to admit the problem existed and to work with the social workers on a solution. They then were able to bring in a high status, very respected Rabbi who succeeded in taking the community's rabbi under his wing. The rabbi overcame his reluctance to intervene. With this support in place, the social workers then were able to undertake counseling with the older abusers to get them to acknowledge the problem and go through therapeutic processes to change their behaviors and stay away from the younger boys. With this achieved, the community was able to establish a frank and open community atmosphere in which there was strong rejection of child sexual abuse and support for a positive normative context. The social workers, in short, were able to challenge a dangerous and destructive setting, deconstruct it, and replace it with a setting that was positive for children.

This section has argued that settings encompass and overlap between schools and communities. Children's lives are strongly affected by the places they live, which are shaped by the physical structure, the community network and the social institutions that are available, by the social class and racial/ethnic makeup of the place, and by the extent to which a symbolic community and sense of community have been created. The fewer social and community structures that are available in a place, the weaker socialization influences are likely to be on children. While we tend to treat community settings as naturally occurring, self-conscious efforts could be made to make them less dysfunctional and more supportive of children.

27.2 Schools and the Construction of Community

Schools are important institutions for creating a sense of community. I do not mean this in the sense of the previous section, where schools play an important role in constructing the community setting in which children live and find

nurturance. Rather, schools as an institution have hegemonic domination over the elementary and secondary educational sphere in the community serving as one of the network of institutions Warren (1967) called “community decision organizations” (CDO). In Warren’s terms schools are hegemonic in the sense that schools are legal agents supervising the requirement that students attend school and that they receive appropriate services. Schools have taxing authority, they must build buildings in locations that make education available to all children, and they provide non-mandated services, like adult education, that are meant to enhance the lives of residents. Controlling this legal and resource mobilization area, schools are relatively independent of other CDOs that have their own, parallel legal mandates and resource mobilization systems. The separation is so complete, that when we did a survey of institutional leaders in one small town, the school superintendent did not know the head of the local housing authority, the organizer of the local free clinic, the leaders of the local hospital, the head of the local United Way, or important faculty and administrators at the college. All of these other CDOs were located within the boundaries of the school district or immediately adjacent to it. Each of the CDOs is truly a silo (Green et al. 2014).

Yet, in a profound way the school district is identified with the town. We talk about communities as symbolic constructions and in many places there is no more powerful symbol of the town than the football team or the basketball team, both of which are organized through the public school system. The teams and the symbolic worlds they generate may be strong or weak. As Coleman (1981) showed us, schools with strong athletic cultures drag high IQ students away from focusing on strong academic achievement since like other young people they want to be successful within the symbolic universe of the school they attend. We also find that adults who have very little connection to the school still identify a great deal with the sports teams and their success. In many towns coaches and star players play an important role in the political life of the town and in aspects of the

local community that have little to do with education itself (Bissinger 2000).

Sports teams and coaches also tend to have enduring impacts on their students and as a consequence on their parents. If it is true that one function of athletics is to bind working class children and other students who are not likely to be beneficiaries of the mythology that schooling will lead to adult occupational success (Stinchcombe 1964; Jencks et al. 1972; Bowles and Gintis 1976; Rosenbaum 1976; Carr and Kefalas 2009), students from low-income backgrounds who experience athletics and then adult success may feel a special debt to high school coaches (Marx et al. 2005). You see this appreciation and loyalty if you attend a high school homecoming game and talk to parents, flipping hamburgers years after their sons and daughters have graduated from high school.

There is a dynamic of community cohesion in play here that is only partly related to the things children learn through education. If the football team wins, people in the community feel good about themselves and where they live. This is a benefit for the school district since it then is likely to be able to have its tax proposal passed and it also is likely to be able to raise money privately for its sports booster organization. It is no secret that schools try to boost their athletic success by hiring particularly capable coaches, trying to convince students who are good athletes to attend the school, and managing relations with the press. These are all high profile, easy to manipulate aspects of building sports to increase a school’s influence with its support community.

Most school districts do not have options to use these high profile ways of building their sports teams and instead depend on more laborious ways of building the community’s connection to the school. Schools may build community loyalty to the institution by offering services and facilities that are not directly connected to educational activities with children but that serve the community. The balance here is that if these efforts cost public dollars, thereby increasing tax charges, the public may not be sympathetic. In one district we worked with the superintendent raised private money to renovate

the football field, the track, and the baseball field so that he could make them available to the community for use without drawing on the school system budget. His hope was that community members would use these facilities without being involved with the school. By using the facilities people living locally might develop a stronger sense that the local area actually was a community, rather than a fragmented rural area, and that this would make them more willing to vote for a school tax increase. He was using a strategy that in other chapters (Chaps. 1, 7, 9, and 25) we have called the “community of limited liability” organizing strategy. Following their own organizational self-interest, leaders try to encourage residents of the local community to symbolically identify with the locale and as a result of that identification give support to the original organization (Milofsky and Green 2015).

Leaders of other CDOs are likely to view efforts like these as thinly disguised self-interested efforts. The head of the local women’s shelter saw the school district’s fund raising as little more than an effort to build a new football stadium without causing a tax-payer revolt. It is important in the CDO framework not to confuse the institutional efforts different hegemonic organizations make to build their enterprise with the community as a symbolic reality for residents. For the symbolic community to develop, there must be ritual, abstract, representative realities that lead residents to fuse membership in a community with their personal identities. That is different from the focus a CDO provides. When we assemble the CDOs into a collection of institutions, we legal, financial, and service providing entities that may be cold and disconnected from the meaning base of town or metropolitan area. From the CDO perspective, the community is defined in terms of a set of lead institutions rather than in terms of sentiments.

Schools perform a balancing act because in important ways they connect with the hearts of community residents. At the same time, they are self-interested organizations trying to maximize their self-interests.

27.3 Conclusion

In this chapter we have examined schools as one of the ubiquitous community institutions. Because schools deal directly with children, they are both operating on terrain that is immensely important in terms of the passions and concerns for families and also shaping the living space of young people who have little choice but to be controlled by the geographic space they live in.

The school is intimately connected to structures of inequality in society. Whether through the direct effects of instruction or indirect effects that come from credentializing and the advancement effects of old boy networks, schools play an important role in shaping adult opportunities. Middle class children may enjoy the benefits of social sponsorship. Low income and racially and ethnically oppressed groups often find that schools do not provide a pathway to adult success. Yet at the same time, some children do prosper and advance through the schools. One of the main reasons this happens is that they live in communities or participate in institutions like the Catholic Church that provides them with social support, encourages motivation, channels resources in their direction, and offers opportunities for social advancement (like special scholarship programs) that would not normally be available for children in their social situations.

Poor children, probably more than middle class ones, succeed in school to the extent that they are able to achieve intellectually and avoid pitfalls that come along with lacking strong and informed parental support or living in a community rich with civil society resources. These aspects of the setting of community life are unevenly distributed. Although they are thinly provided in most low-income communities, there are many places where informal civil resources are sufficiently available that poor children can find them, benefit from them, and prosper as they move into adulthood. Community settings are critically important to understand and develop if less advantaged children are to succeed through schooling.

While neighborhood settings often develop through the efforts of churches, voluntary organizations, and altruistic individuals there is also a larger agenda of community building in which schools are centrally involved. This happens partly because sports teams and other aspects of school activity have powerful symbolic meaning to community residents. These anchors of identification are among the things that lead to the symbolic creation of community. A symbolically meaningful community is one of the things that is likely to feed back to provide rich settings for children. If adults participate, children benefit.

While schools become a center of community sentiment just by being there and doing the things they do, they also self-consciously try to build communities in ways that foster their organizational fortunes. In this action, they are likely to compete with other CDOs. The other CDOs may not be able to claim resources the school system is trying to access. But they are not likely to be sympathetic if the school system tries to convince local residents to have a stronger feeling of identification with the community by drawing them into school system programs and activities. Other leaders are likely to see the school system's leaders in cynical terms and to feel that while they are trying to build their own organization that the schools are ignoring other issues that are important to residents, that shape their opportunities or affects things threatening to them, and that may do more to reinforce the status quo than to improve the overall quality of life in the community.

The schools may emphasize sports over gender equality and thereby annoy the women's center. The schools may encourage residents to drink soda and eat hamburgers at their sports events and thereby encourage obesity rather than healthy diet, thereby annoying health leaders. The schools may not develop a curriculum for poor and working class students emphasizes life skills like a proper understanding of budgeting or presenting oneself in the job market, and thereby annoy leaders of institutions like the housing authority that can only properly serve poor residents if they can manage a budget.

Communities may be symbolic constructions but they also are assemblages of fragmented service institutions that follow different agendas and different value orientations. There is no simple cohesion to be found on the institutional level. At the same time, school systems are powerful in terms of giving children and families the experience of community. They are ubiquitous and their institutional style is relatively constant across the culture and thus they are familiar to us all. They are a fundamental feature of the landscape of local communities.

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The Case for Functional Pedagogical Skills in School Psychology Training: An Empirical Investigation

28

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Abstract

In the last twenty years, the field of school psychology has changed much of its focus in service provision, from a reactive and individually-oriented intervention model to a proactive and systems-based prevention model. In the last decade, the field has also transformed its positions regarding the ways in which skills of future school psychologists should be assessed: current standards regarding adequate preparation require the demonstration of skills in a competency-based framework. One key competency, described in training standards as prevalent in all aspects of service provision, is consultation. This competency requires the consultant to be able to instruct adults, but teaching is not named specifically as a skill within the standards. The chapter begins with a brief review of relevant historical trends and an overview of consultative practice within the discipline of school psychology. The most recent standards for preparing future school psychologists are considered in light of a definition of teaching, to demonstrate that teaching is a tacitly assumed skill within many domains of prac-

tice. A review of relevant literature frames the present study, which qualitatively investigates nine school psychology professors' training priorities and practices relative to training students how to teach. Finally, implications of findings and recommendations for further inquiry are discussed.

28.1 Historical Trends in School Psychology and Statement of the Problem

In recent decades in school psychology, there has been a call for increased attention to external variables and the roles they play in the prevention, creation and maintenance of children's behaviors and outcomes (e.g., Ysseldyke et al. 2008). The change within the discipline from its traditional roots as a largely reactive field that focused on individual intervention to address problems, toward a largely proactive field that focused most of its attention on systemic prevention was described by Shapiro (2006) as a "critical shift" (p. 261). This change in paradigm came about when school psychology embraced a multi-tiered model of prevention and intervention that was adapted from the field of public health; see Fig. 28.1 (Reschly 2008). This shift has accordingly prompted some within the field to call for more integrative or creative approaches to professional research in order to best meet the

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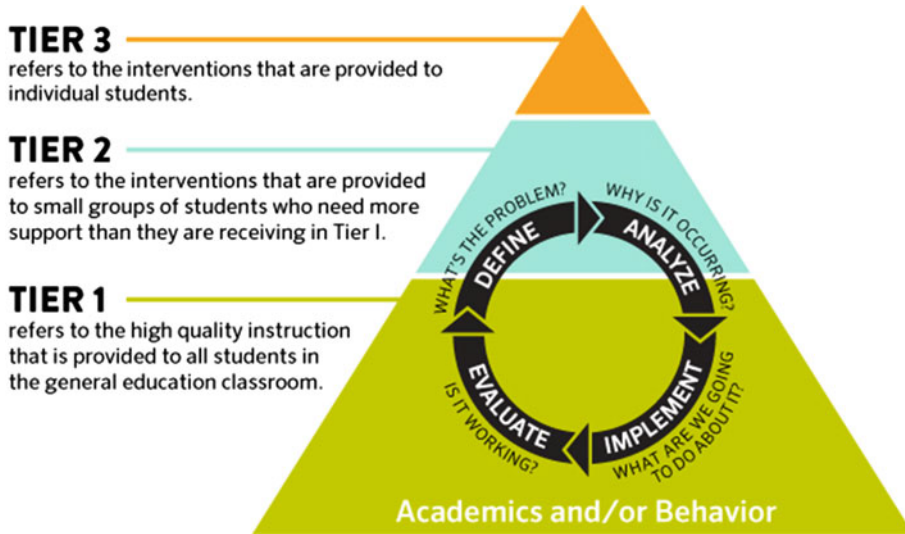


Fig. 28.1 The multi-tiered model for provision of school psychological services (from ncva.k12.com)

needs of children and families (e.g. Shapiro 2006).

In Tier I, all students can access preventative services in the regular curriculum; for 80–90% of students, this universal level of access is sufficient to address their needs. For students who do require more intensive interventions, the focus in Tier II (which serves 5–15% of students) is on catching problems as early as possible. Targeted instruction, ongoing assessment and progress monitoring avert the need for Tier III services for all but 1–5% of students. Tier III is the most intensive level of service provision (i.e., special education). Because of the adoption of the multi-tiered model, a far greater emphasis on providing training in consultation for future school psychologists has occurred (Phelps and Swerdlik 2011).

Within the last decade, major accrediting bodies significantly changed the ways in which a candidate's preparedness to function as a school psychologist was determined. Requirements for certification and accreditation of training programs had previously relied upon data such as completed course hours and test scores to document that future school psychologists were adequately prepared to practice. Concomitant to the increased emphasis on promoting beneficial,

measurable outcomes for children was the emergence of the competency-based approach to assessing the efficacy of school psychologists' practice. This 'culture of competence' was based in K-12 teacher evaluation methods, and espoused that observable and measurable demonstration of skills was the most authentic way to determine whether a future school psychologist could actually perform the tasks necessary to be effective in their practice (Daly et al. 2011; Morrison 2013; Phelps and Swerdlik 2011).

Between 2009 and 2011, the American Psychological Association (APA) and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) authored three documents that were intended to shift the field to a competency-based model of training. The first document, the Competency Benchmarks (APA 2011; Fouad et al. 2009), articulated competencies that were expected of all professional psychologists (school, clinical and counseling). The other two were documents developed by NASP that contained the Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists (2010b) and Standards for Credentialing of School Psychologists (2010c).

As might be expected, some disjunctures were present between the documents; one of the most

notable was that within the Competency Benchmarks document, teaching was named specifically as a competency that all professional psychologists should possess. In the NASP documents, teaching was not explicitly named as a core competency (Daly et al. 2011; Fenning et al. 2015). However, teaching was tacitly embedded within many of the competencies delineated in the two NASP documents. Trainers within the field of school psychology are currently attempting to sort out curricular priorities in light of competency-based assessment, and to functionally translate those priorities into demonstrable competencies. Therefore, the issue of whether teaching is a necessary skill within school psychology bears investigation.

Training affects what school psychology students learn and how they apply their knowledge. The knowledge and skills that school psychology graduates bring into K-12 schools, in turn, directly impact K-12 students and the school systems and communities for which improved outcomes are sought. For those who train future school psychologists, it is asserted in this chapter that pedagogy—defined by the educational psychologist Slavin (2015) as “the link between what a teacher wants students to learn and students’ actual learning” (p. 5)—is an important, largely overlooked component in preparing students for consultative practice within K-12 schools and their associated communities. The school psychologist’s ability to teach has the potential to positively affect teachers’ self-efficacy and skills (Carney and Nottis 2008), to increase the fidelity with which interventions are implemented (Begeny and Martens 2006), and to decrease special education referrals and placement (Rosenfield 2008). The emerging role responsibility of the school psychologist as teacher is an exciting and fundamental change factor in the field, and one way to understand how this shift in priorities manifests is through examination of the training activities of professors.

Broadly conceptualized, this investigation is seen as a necessary precursor to the development of a conceptual framework for training students to engage in consultative practice. School

psychology is one example of a profession in which consulting is a necessary skill; applications to training practices in fields such as social work and sociology are possible because these fields also train students as consultants. Social workers and sociologists also engage in activities such as providing professional development to colleagues who work in occupations adjacent to their own, in large institutions like school systems.

In this chapter, a case will be made for the saliency of teaching skills for those who engage in consultative practice, focusing specifically on the training of school psychologists as one example. Background information about consultation will be provided, and a description of the school psychologist’s typical consultative practice will be described. An analysis of NASP’s most recent training standards will be conducted in light of a definition of teaching, to demonstrate that teaching is a tacitly assumed activity within the standards. With this information in place, a brief review of relevant literature will be provided, which will lay the groundwork for a qualitative analysis of nine school psychology faculty members’ training practices. This investigation will examine whether and to what degree pedagogical skills are taught within consultation courses, and the priorities that these faculty members placed on providing training in pedagogy. Finally, implications of the findings regarding training practices will be discussed, and recommendations to further possible lines of future inquiry will be provided.

28.2 Why Training School Psychologists to Teach Is Important

The term ‘teaching’, at first glance, may seem rather transparent. However, this apparently straightforward term can actually be somewhat difficult to operationalize. At its most basic, teaching means “to communicate something to a person, by way of instruction, to show or make known to a person (how to do something)” (Oxford English Dictionary 2016). Slavin (2015)

stated, “effective teachers not only know their subjects but also can communicate their knowledge to students” (p. 4). But what, pragmatically, does that mean?

Anyone who has conducted a class will likely agree that teaching well is not easy. Effective teaching is often counterintuitive, and requires knowledge that is distinct from that which school psychology training has traditionally provided (see, e.g., Meyers 2002; Phillips 1990). Phillips (1990) discussed the importance of matching goals for instruction to the methods that are used, and the importance of what he termed, ‘strategic teaching’. The strategic teacher was described as one who teaches “not only content but also the strategies required by the content to make learning meaningful, integrated, and transferable” (p. 190). This idea is very similar to Slavin’s conceptualization of teaching as an intentional process. Slavin (2015) defines intentionality as “doing things for a reason, on purpose” (p. 6), and describes intentional teachers as those who understand that theory can only take a teacher so far. In actual teaching practice, it is very difficult to ensure that all students are meaningfully engaged with the material. Without careful reflection, and a good understanding of their students, teachers can lose track of their instructional objectives and whether the activities they are asking learners to engage in actually facilitate the outcomes they desire (Slavin 2015).

28.3 Consultation Practices and the School Psychologist’s Role

School psychologists are in unique positions in schools. Because they are employed by directors of special education, and they each serve several schools, they are not beholden to the same administrative oversight as teachers or other personnel that are under the principal’s evaluative purview. They are central to the functioning of the school because of federal compliance mandates, yet they are itinerant. Therefore, they have a perspective on the culture and operation of the school that those who function exclusively

within its walls do not. School psychologists have the final say as to whether it is appropriate to evaluate a child to determine whether special education services are warranted. They have specialized knowledge of ways to assess and facilitate children’s social-emotional, behavioral and academic functioning, as well as how to interpret federal and state education law.

Three main types of power, described by Kampwirth and Powers (2012), are important to understand if the role of the school psychologist is to be conceptualized fully. Referent power is that which comes from Person B seeing Person A as similar to themselves or as holding like values, with the result that person B is likely to comply with suggestions from person A. Legitimate power is that which comes from the belief of Person B that Person A has a legal or authoritative ability to control Person B. Expert power is that which results from the perception that Person A has knowledge or expertise that is not possessed by Person B.

Because of their training and position, then, school psychologists have legitimate and expert power (Kampwirth and Powers 2012), and yet they are also expected to function as putatively equal members of a multidisciplinary team. This creates some tension, because everyone knows who has the final say in eligibility determination meetings, yet the reality is seldom voiced.

The term ‘consultation’, within the professional literature in school psychology, assumes an exchange of information between two parties (e.g., Caplan 1970; Lambert 2004). Each person brings their own perspectives and knowledge to the exchange; these diverse perspectives collectively facilitate understanding and problem-solving. The most common form of consultation in K-12 schools is between the school psychologist and the classroom teacher, but consultation can also occur with a child’s family, administrator(s), groups of teachers, or other service providers. In any of these scenarios, both parties have specialized knowledge that is related but also, in many ways, quite distinct.

Successful collaborative consultation efforts rely upon the consultant’s ability to effectively enter and become a trusted member of a system

from which they are functionally separate. In other words, it is necessary for the school psychologist to gain referent power with teachers and administrators. The degree to which attaining referent power is possible depends upon many factors, school culture being one potent determinant (e.g. Sarason 1969, 1982; Milofsky 1989), and the ability to form relationships based upon trust and mutual respect being another (Kampwirth and Powers 2012).

Skill deficits are what necessitate consultative relationships (Caplan 1970). Triadic consultation is generally conducted on behalf of a third party, with the school psychologist occupying the role of the consultant (the person whose advice is sought). The consultee is the person seeking advice, and the client is the person who will benefit most directly from effective problem-solving. Here is a common scenario. A student (i.e., the client) is struggling with reading. The classroom teacher (i.e., the consultee) asks the school psychologist (i.e., the consultant) for help with an intervention. In this scenario, the school psychologist needs to be able to listen effectively to the teacher's description of the issue, gather some data that will be helpful in understanding the issue, and work with the teacher to select an intervention that will match the student's and the teacher's needs. At any point in the consultative process, the school psychologist may need to develop a teacher's skills for the problem-solving process to be successful. For example, if the school psychologist is asking the teacher to gather data so that it will be usable in decision-making, the school psychologist may need to teach the teacher how to go about gathering the data, and to ensure that once the teacher understands the agreed-upon procedures, they are consistently followed. Once the data are gathered, the school psychologist can show the teacher how to interpret them, and discuss their utility in decision-making. If the school psychologist teaches effectively, then the teacher can use the newly-acquired skills in working with the client (student) whose struggle originally prompted the consultation, as well as in future, analogous situations.

If a child's difficulties warrant the attention of the multidisciplinary team in the school, it is likely that those difficulties are multifaceted, and that issues relating to these difficulties are present to some degree in home, school, and perhaps community settings. School psychologists are uniquely positioned to work with families in their roles as consultants as well. Because of school psychologists' specialized knowledge and 'outsider/insider' perspective, activities such as teaching family members specific skills and strategies to meet their child's needs, and providing coaching and support to parents/primary caregivers as they learn the skills and vocabulary necessary to advocate for their child's best interests in multiple contexts, are common in family-oriented consultation activities.

In systems-level consultation, the consultant (again, the school psychologist) is called upon to address some need on a larger level. For example, an administrator has heard from the teaching staff that they want to learn more about behavioral strategies that would be helpful for students with autism spectrum disorders. In this instance, the school psychologist gathers more detailed information from the teachers regarding whether this is something they actually want to know more about, what they already know and what they want to know, and then they might go about crafting a series of inservices that are ideally tailored to the teachers' specific needs and concerns. Inservices are instructional occurrences, in which the consultant attempts to facilitate learning and skill development for whomever the inservice is designed (Joyce and Showers 1988, 2002).

School psychologists can also be instrumental in designing and providing systems-level parent education; the procedures described above can also be utilized in providing information and skills training to families. For example, there may be a sub-group of families who may all benefit from learning behavior management skills, and from having some ongoing support as they practice those skills at home. There may also be some instruction that could be provided at a more general level, based upon interest within the school, district, or community; however,

these more general instructional activities are typically geared towards information sharing rather than skill development (e.g. learning about how to catch warning signs of a suicide attempt, how to maintain open communication with your teenager, how to support LGBTQ youth, et cetera).

Of course, there are other ways in which systems-level consultation occurs in school settings. One example might be an analysis and alteration of a procedure that has largely come about by tradition. In my experience as a school psychologist, one of these systems-level procedural analyses occurred as a result of conversations with a fellow school psychologist. We were concerned about the high rates of referrals of students for possible evaluation due to behavioral issues, and shared our concerns with the director of special education and with the building principals. My colleague and I knew that the director of special education was under great pressure from the superintendent to reduce the numbers of students who received special education services because of emotional or behavioral disturbances. We developed a pre-referral consultative system that was designed to clearly identify and operationalize the problem of concern, support teachers as they selected an empirically validated intervention and method of data collection from a variety of options, ensure treatment integrity by providing ongoing check-ins with the teacher, and provide assistance in trouble-shooting and summation of data post-intervention. We each spent time 'selling' the process to the principals and guidance counselors, and provided training to all the teachers in the building in how to partner with their school psychologist when they were concerned about a child. Because of administrative buy-in, we were able to reach out to teachers, many of whom were grateful that we wanted to help before matters had gotten out of control. As a result of our procedures, referrals for possible evaluation decreased markedly, and we were able to spend much more time doing what we thought was most important: working to address needs before they became crises, therefore averting unnecessary referrals. The child-study meetings were reserved for cases that

truly required the attention of the entire team, principals were less bogged down by unnecessary paperwork, and teachers expressed great relief because they felt more supported and empowered in their classrooms.

Crisis prevention and management are also important parts of the school psychologist's role. When a traumatic event such as a school shooting or accident in the community or school occurs, the school psychologist must be able to communicate information clearly to children, families, school personnel and the larger community. The timely ascertainment of needs in the community and implementation of supports to address those needs is, at least in part, strongly dependent upon the school psychologist's consultative abilities. Bullying awareness and intervention programs are one example of crisis prevention programs. These programs are most efficacious when they become incorporated into the regular school culture, when they are implemented with integrity over time, and when they involve not only school personnel and students, but the community as a whole (e.g. Carney and Merrell 2001; Carney and Nottis 2008). Prevention efforts require ongoing communication with and training of students, school personnel and community members, to ensure implementation integrity and to maintain the prevention program as part of the school and community culture.

As with triadic consultation, the aspirational goal of systems-level consultation is that the learning can be applied across future situations as necessary, and, like any teaching endeavor, it requires both content and teaching expertise, as well as an understanding of the learners. From the examples provided above, it is relatively easy to conclude that consultation of any sort involves the school psychologist teaching other adults; this assertion is supported elsewhere within the consultation literature (e.g., Kratochwill and Pittman 2002; Rosenfield 2008).

The fact that school psychologists have the capacity for a unique institutional perspective, a specialized knowledge base, and various types of power does not guarantee that they can effectively communicate with, show, or make 'how to do something' known to another. The selection

and application of appropriate pedagogical strategies are crucial to facilitating learning, and these strategies relate both to instructional objectives and knowing one's audience (Slavin 2015). Shapiro (2006) questioned the new school psychologist's ability to function as an effective consultant, because of entry issues as well as the inherent complexity of issues in systems change efforts. Hasbrouck et al. (1999) stated that novice consultants were greatly disadvantaged because so much of their learning was by trial and error, and effective strategies tended to be identified mainly through experience.

Without pedagogical training, school psychologists are not as capable as they could be of teaching intentionally. They have to guess about what might work best in a given situation, pick up what they can by what is modeled for them, and rely on reflections of their own educational histories to try to teach others, which may not always result in the best or most enduring learning outcomes. Trainers may not be preparing future school psychologists to demonstrate their competence if the development of pedagogical skills continues to be neglected, and if the efficacy of training efforts to this end are not systematically examined (Anton-Lahart and Rosenfield 2004; Carney and Gerken 2007; Hazel et al. 2010; Truscott and Albritton 2011).

28.4 The (Mis)Match Between Competencies and Training

Despite the increasingly prominent role that consultation has taken in recent decades in school psychology, and the existing need for school psychologists to effectively teach others in their consultative practice, pedagogical training is not overtly discussed in NASP's (2010b) Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists (Daly et al. 2011). This document parses out the background knowledge that competent school psychologists are expected to have from the skills they employ to demonstrate this knowledge. Recall that the definition of teaching provided earlier in this chapter described the abilities to communicate, instruct, show, or make

known. According to the 2010 Standards, "school psychologists have a foundation in the knowledge bases for both psychology and education...and *the ability to explain important principles and concepts*" (p. 322; italics added). Consultation is named as one of two broad practices that are assumed to be present in all aspects of service delivery; this competency requires "effective communication" (p. 324). Further, there are eight domains that are described under these broad practices, and teaching activities are prominent parts of five of these eight domains. Instruction is assumed within two domains that are described as 'Student-Level Services', namely, 'Intervention and Instructional Support for Academic Skills', and 'Intervention and Mental Health Services'. In domains described as 'Systems-Level Services', instruction is referenced within 'School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning', 'Preventive and Responsive Services', and 'Family-School Collaboration Services'. As demonstrated by the congruence of the aforementioned definition of teaching and the 2010 NASP Standards, it seems the tacit expectation is that all graduates will actually possess, at minimum, a basic level of competence in pedagogy. In sum, the competencies reflect an emphasis on teaching as a necessary skill within consultation situations (i.e., those described as 'Student-Level Services' above), but more emphasis is placed on pedagogical skill in systems-level consultation activities, perhaps because systems-level consultation has the potential to reach the most people.

28.5 Brief Review of Relevant Literature for the Present Study

Over the period of several decades, Joyce and Showers (1988, 2002) developed a model that facilitated acquisition and transfer of skills through inservice training for classroom teachers. In the present study, the Joyce and Showers model was central to the analysis of professors' expectations of students when some inservice requirement was present in their courses. Joyce

and Showers' model contains five components that are intended to occur sequentially. The first, 'Presentation of Theory', is didactically-based, and its primary function is to provide awareness to learners. The second component, 'Modeling or Demonstration', occurs live or with some type of media, and demonstrates learners' abilities to understand concepts. The third and fourth components (providing opportunities for 'Practice under Simulated Conditions' in conjunction with 'Structured and Unstructured Feedback' regarding performance, respectively) are necessary as learners begin to try out new skills. Some combination of the first four components often occurs during most inservices. The final component is 'Coaching for Application'. This is the stage at which learners implement what they have learned in real life situations over an extended period of time with support. 'Coaching for Application' appears to be the component that is critical to generalizability; in other words, teachers' abilities to successfully apply what they have learned about in various situations (Joyce and Showers 1988). 'Coaching for Application' seems to be the most challenging of the components to implement in schools (Gravois et al. 2002; Rosenfield 2002); it is also the component in which pedagogical skills of the school psychologist are most important (Rosenfield 2008).

Prus and Waldron (2008) advocated for the use of a variety of methodologies in assessing future school psychologists' competencies. One recommendation was for "more systematic research within and across programs on factors related to successful graduate training outcomes and to preparing school psychologists" (p. 1954). In their comprehensive review, which included advantages and drawbacks of each assessment method, the authors discussed performance-based appraisals and simulations as two ways in which competencies might be evaluated.

Hazel et al. (2010) examined syllabi from 32 consultation courses in APA-approved programs. They stated, "Research investigating consultation training is quite thin, but suggests that students

are not receiving the preservice training necessary to become competent consultants" (p. 236). Only 17 of the 32 syllabi mentioned a field experience as part of the consultation course. They stated, "analysis of syllabi can offer both insight into what was scheduled to occur in the course as well as the priorities, beliefs, and values that the instructor wished to convey to the students" (pp. 236–237). Providing teacher inservices was described as one of several 'unique' assignments in training students to deliver school-wide programming; only 3 syllabi had an assignment of any sort dedicated to systems-level programming. The assignments that accounted for the largest portion of a student's grade, by far, were consultation case reports and exams. The authors concluded, "It appears that many professional psychology students are entering internships ill-prepared to provide broad, effective school-based consultation" (p. 240).

In their analysis of four competency documents that had recently been published by NASP and APA, Phelps and Swerdlik (2011) discussed the difficulties inherent in adoption of the competency-based standards. Some of the issues they identified related to discerning the importance of different competencies, translating the competencies to 'real world' settings, and "identification of the program elements that facilitate development of these competencies... and determination of applicant qualifications most predictive of future success" (p. 918).

Fenning et al. (2015) conducted a survey of school psychologists in an effort to better understand the degree to which various competencies were seen as important for school psychology, because "there are limited systematic data regarding the degree to which school psychology trainers and practitioners endorse competencies for practice, despite their prominence in the field" (p. 1037). This point was important because the Competencies Benchmarks were developed for all professional psychologists, and, in comparison to the NASP documents,

“competencies of applied assessment, intervention, and consultative skills differed substantively across the documents” (p. 1033). Of 119 respondents, 78% (n = 93) were university faculty and 22% (n = 26) were practitioners. Fenning et al. conducted a factor analysis of the items, which were developed using the NASP Standards and the Competencies Benchmarks and in consultation with the authors of those documents.

In their factor analysis, the first factor, namely ‘Teaching/Supervision’, accounted for almost 35% of the total variance in the data set and more than twice as much variance as the next two factors (‘Intervention’ and ‘Assessment’) combined (approximately 15%). Within the ‘Teaching/Supervision’ factor, many items relating to pedagogy and intentionality were clearly present as evidenced by the following sample: ‘self-examines one’s own personal history and culture and impact on work’; ‘applies understanding of typical and atypical development across life stages’; ‘utilizes instructional/teaching skills to enhance the learning and performance of others’; ‘provides mentoring/support to others’; and, ‘develops and provides continuing education’. Also within the ‘Teaching/Supervision’ factor were items that related to consultative practices, such as, ‘facilitates effective team functioning’; ‘utilizes consultant skills to support needs of clients’ families’; ‘utilizes consultant skills to support needs of the school system/community’; and, ‘partners with stakeholders, such as school personnel, families and the larger community’.

The authors recommended that future research should examine the fit of competencies to school psychology, “by using a wide variety of research methodologies to obtain perceptions of school psychology trainers and practitioners with respect to perceived training needs and how competencies might facilitate such efforts” (p. 1039). Fenning et al. concluded, “there are many unanswered questions with respect to the competency movement in school psychology” (p. 1039), indicating the need for future research.

28.6 The Intersection of Course Materials and Training Practices

28.6.1 Rationale and Purposes of the Study

In this chapter, it has been established that pedagogical skills are central to consultation in school psychology. It has been argued that specialized knowledge is insufficient to guarantee one’s ability to teach, and asserted that pedagogical skills are separate from content knowledge (Slavin 2015). Research has supported the idea that syllabi can be a useful way to understand priorities and values of the professor (Hazel et al. 2010). The need to translate competencies into training practices has been articulated (Phelps and Swerdlik 2011), and there is support for use of a variety of methods in assessing competencies (Fenning et al. 2015; Prus and Waldron 2008). Teaching has been identified, in survey research, as quite important to school psychology practice by both academicians and practitioners (Fenning et al. 2015). So, how, if at all, do school psychology trainers translate the pedagogical skills that are implicit within the NASP competencies into training practices? If there are discrepancies between stated goals for instruction and the instructional practices themselves, are trainers aware of this situation, and is it important to them?

In an effort to understand how trainers’ preparation practices aligned with competency-based assessment in their courses, the present study utilized syllabi and assignment materials, in conjunction with interviews of nine school psychology faculty, to ascertain whether and to what degree they provided training in pedagogy to their students, whether this training was viewed as a priority, and whether it was viewed as problematic when the faculty members were aware that pedagogy was not explicitly addressed. For faculty who had students complete an actual or mock inservice assignment within their consultation courses, Joyce and

Showers' (1988, 2002) model for teaching adults in inservices was used to evaluate the ways in which trainers prepared future school psychologists to teach others.

Use of the Joyce and Showers (1988, 2002) model in examining various course requirements revealed gaps between training practices and competencies, and also provided possible ways to address those gaps. For example, if the most troublesome aspect of the model (i.e., 'Coaching for Application') was an expected part of school psychology students' attempts to teach effectively, the activities associated with it could likely be accomplished to some degree over the duration of a course. Third, since consultation practice hinges upon applied skills, use of a theoretical model that was rooted in application seemed most congruent to developing ideas about how to better prepare students to engage in systems-level change efforts.

28.6.1.1 Focus of Inquiry and Research Question

It has been established that one aspect of school psychologists' systems-level consultative practice is teaching groups of people and supporting their learning over time. Accordingly, this study focused on professors' perspectives regarding whether, how and to what degree training preservice school psychology students to teach had a place in consultation preparation practices. This information was hypothesized to be useful in situating professors' priorities and concerns regarding such training practices and in generating ideas for future inquiry.

Through a qualitative analysis of interviews, course materials, and syllabi, the question that was investigated in the present study was, how, if at all, do professors train future school psychologists to teach teachers in their consultation courses?

28.6.2 Methodology

28.6.2.1 Participants and Procedure

Participants were recruited from a list of school psychology faculty who attended a conference

and expressed a specific interest in researching consultation issues. Some of the faculty attended the conference as early career researchers, and others were mentors. Both groups of participants had indicated consultation as an area of expertise, and the mentors were established scholars in consultation. A total of nine school psychology faculty who together taught 15 consultation courses were interviewed; the participants also provided syllabi and assignment descriptions from their courses. At the time data were collected, five of the nine participants (four females, one male) had between one and five and one-half years' experience teaching in school psychology programs. The remaining four participants (one female, three males) had between 21 and 30 years' experience teaching in school psychology programs. A summary of the demographic information is included in Table 28.1.

28.6.2.2 Terminology

To ensure clarity in interpretation, the term 'teach' is used in this investigation to describe the process by which teachers' knowledge and skills are developed by a preservice or practicing school psychologist. The term 'train' is used to describe the process by which knowledge and skills are developed by professors within the aspiring school psychologist's graduate program. These terms are admittedly semantically indistinct, but because two levels or types of instruction—that which occurs between professor and preservice school psychology student, and that which occurs between school psychology student and K-12 teacher—are referred to in this chapter, these distinctions are necessary for clarity.

28.6.2.3 Design

To research pedagogical issues, some authors have advocated the use of qualitative methodologies (e.g., Gutkin 2002). In this investigation, a case study approach was used to compare within and between professors' interview responses, syllabi, and course materials. A case study approach allows for multiple methods to be used and allows for discussion of themes, issues and implications (Johnson and Christensen

Table 28.1 Demographic information of participants

Professor and gender	Institution type	Geographical region ^a	Degree(s) granted in department	Teaching experience
1 (male)	Public	South	Ph.D. (terminal M.A.)	24 ½ years
2 (female)	Public	Southwest	Ph.D.	3 years
3 (female)	Public	Midwest	Ed.S. and Ph.D.	4 years
4 (female)	Private	Mid-Atlantic	Ed.S. and Ph.D.	5 years
5 (female)	Public	Southwest	Ph.D.	30 years
6 (female)	Private	Mid-Atlantic	C.A.G.S. and Ph.D.	5 ½ years
7 (male)	Public	Midwest	Ph.D. (terminal Ed.S.)	29 years
8 (male)	Public	Southwestern Canada	M.Ed., M.A., Ph.D.	1 year
9 (male)	Private	Mid-Atlantic	Ph.D.	21 years

^aFrom usinfo.state.gov

2008). To assess the congruence between course expectations and preparation practices, a coding system emerged from the data, and addressed the following aspects: (1) Theoretical orientation of the consultation course (instructional, mental health, triadic behavioral, problem-solving, organizational/systems, multiple models, or no course/embedded in other courses), and type(s) of courses taught (didactic or practicum); (2) The presence and type of training in systems-level consultation provided (in its own course, embedded in other consultation courses, embedded in other non-consultation coursework, or not addressed); (3) Whether there was an expectation for students to conduct a mock or actual inservice (offered as one option among several, mock inservice was conducted with peers, actual inservice to teachers, or inservice was designed but not necessarily delivered).

To assess the components of Joyce and Showers' (1988) model with the professors' training practices, each component ('Presentation of Theory', 'Modeling', 'Practice under Simulated Conditions', 'Structured Feedback', 'Unstructured Feedback', and 'Coaching for Application') was operationally defined within the interviews, and participants were asked to identify which of their assignments (if any) reflected each component. Syllabi and course materials were examined to provide further information about the presence and extent to

which each of these elements were involved (not present, assumed/implied, upon request, or overt).

Professors' stated priorities regarding the importance of training students to teach were compared to their documented training practices within their course materials. The structured interview protocol contained the following questions: (1) Is it important to provide training in teaching skills in consultation courses? (2) What priority does training students to do inservices have in your courses? (3) Do you provide specific training in teaching skills? and, (4) Do you provide feedback on your students' teaching skills? The presence or absence of the following criteria in course documents were examined: (1) Learning to teach was a stated goal in the syllabus; (2) The theory or practice of teaching was the subject of one or more readings; (3) An inservice requirement (and type, if applicable) was present.

Reliability was established by using the same structured interview protocol for each participant (e.g., Bogdan and Biklen 1992). Validity was established (a) by using triangulation with multiple forms of data; (b) through member checking with all nine participants prior to data analysis; and, (c) through an external audit in which the themes that were identified by the author were vetted with a second reader who was not involved in the study (e.g., Creswell 2008).

28.6.3 Results

Diversity of Course Requirements. In these data, variability was the rule rather than the exception. Three overarching themes emerged in the examination of professors’ perspectives and their course documents. The first theme centered on the diversity present in course expectations and preparation practices. The types of consultation training provided to students ranged between courses that were strictly didactic in nature to those that were mainly applied (i.e., practica). Most of the courses did not have a mock or actual inservice expectation; only two courses offered completing an inservice as an option, three required a mock inservice to be presented to their peers, and one course required delivery of an actual inservice to school personnel. Professors seemed to expect development of consultative skill in some cases, without providing materials and/or activities within their courses to foster its development.

Varying Program Priorities. The second theme that emerged from the interviews was the differing priorities professors placed on training students to teach. Overall, six of nine professors believed that training students to teach was important, and three of nine did not see this activity as a priority.

Disconnect Between Priorities and Practice.

The third theme emerged from the disparities between stated priorities and training practices. The six aforementioned teaching proponents all stated that they provided feedback on students’ teaching skills; five of them stated that they provided specific training in teaching skills, and four required students to give either a mock or an actual inservice. Overall, not all of those who thought it a good idea to provide training in teaching skills actually provided the training, and fewer yet required students to demonstrate their teaching skills using an inservice format. Learning to teach others was a stated goal in four syllabi, and readings related to teaching theory or practice were assigned in four courses. However, these two categories did not fully overlap (see Table 28.2). Years of teaching experience may have had an effect upon professors’ responses to the query of whether they provided training in teaching. Upon further examination, three of the four professors with 21–30 years’ experience stated they provided training in teaching, whereas two of five professors with 1–5 years’ experience stated they provided such training.

Looking within and between courses on the items in Table 28.2 shows that three of nine professors’ responses and syllabi (professors 1, 8 and 9) showed consistency across stated

Table 28.2 Professors’ informal (stated) versus formal (documented) priorities

PROFESSOR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9							
INFORMAL (STATED)																
1. Is it important to provide training in teaching skills in consultation courses?	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							
2. What priority does training students to do inservices have in your course(s)?	X	M	X	X	X	M	M	M	M							
3. Do you provide specific training in teaching skills?	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y							
4. Do you provide feedback on your students’ teaching skills?	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y							
FORMAL (DOCUMENTED)																
5. Learning to teach is a stated goal in the syllabus	D	P	D	P	P	D	L	D	D	L	D	D	D	D	P	
6. Teaching theory or practice is the subject of one or more readings	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N
7. Type of inservice expectation, if applicable	N	N	N	N	O	A	N	N	K	N	O	N	K	K	N	

Y Yes, N no, M moderate, X low, D didactically-based course, L didactic course with linked practicum, P practicum, O inservice is one option, A inservice delivered to teachers/school administrators, K mock inservice delivered in class

priorities, content, and training practices. The remaining six professors' responses and syllabi were less consistent. Some provided direct or didactically-based training in teaching but did not formally assess the development of pedagogical skills. Some said providing training in teaching skills was important, and that they provided training in teaching, but their syllabi contradicted what they stated in their interviews. Some said that training students to do inservices was at least a moderate priority, but provided no feedback in terms of students' teaching skills, nor was the development of teaching skills present in the syllabus in terms of assignments, readings or other requirements.

Stated priorities in training students to conduct inservices. When asked how they would prioritize training students to do inservices in their courses, none of the participants endorsed this as a high priority. Five of nine endorsed it as a moderate priority, and four of nine endorsed it as a low priority. Five themes emerged from the professors' responses regarding training students to do inservices: (1) the importance of students knowing their audience; (2) students' knowledge of teaching and ability to teach effectively; (3) students' knowledge of inservice theory as critical; (4) the importance of students' social perception and communication skills; and, (5) the development of students' specialized knowledge/skill sets.

The first theme, the importance of students knowing their audience, centered on the students' abilities to effectively incorporate the audience's perspectives and needs in the development and delivery of inservices. Specifically, professors commented that this was achieved through students' (a) effective prioritizing of ideas and content, and (b) listening and adjusting their presentation/delivery when necessary, based on the audience's characteristics (like prior knowledge, composition of the group, etc.) In terms of prioritizing ideas and content, Professor 8 stated,

I think part of it is knowledge about the topic. But one of the keys things that I stress is, what are the big ideas or key messages that you want to get across? To identify them, instead of presenting on

every single thing about it, what are the key things that they need to know.

In discussing adjustments based on one's audience, Professor 2 described the process in this way:

The consultant looks at their assumptions that they make in order to try and be more objective. I encourage them to make explicit, sort of like a verbal informed consent of what the consultee is really asking for, verifying, 'are you asking for more skills in how to provide this behavioral intervention?', 'are you looking for a way to help lessen your stress, or ways of looking at this?' Sort of to get permission in a way.

The second theme, students' knowledge of teaching and ability to teach effectively, focused more directly on the theoretical foundations and related skills that were viewed by professors as central to teaching. Several professors alluded to ideas such as students engaging the audience or eliciting their feedback and participation through discourse and/or materials, thereby demonstrating an understanding of how to teach in a way that was meaningful to the audience. Professor 9 summed up his preparation of future school psychologists relative to these ideas thusly:

I really think that work by George Noell and his colleagues pretty much should be... standard practice for inservice and teacher implementation and support. Fact of the matter would be to teach them [school psychology students] how to do it. They need to model. Show them how to do good behavior change. Model how to do it. Have them role-play. Do some in vivo practice. Do some teaching practice. Then provide performance feedback over a period of time until you see consistent performance. And that, I think, is pretty much what we need to be doing (brackets added).

The third theme focused on students' knowledge of inservice theory as important to doing inservices well. Several professors specifically referred to central tenets of Joyce and Showers' (1988) inservice theory in their discussion, though most did not cite this work directly. Recurrent ideas were: (a) that students should understand that there are limits to what can be accomplished didactically; and, (b) that students need to be able to provide ongoing

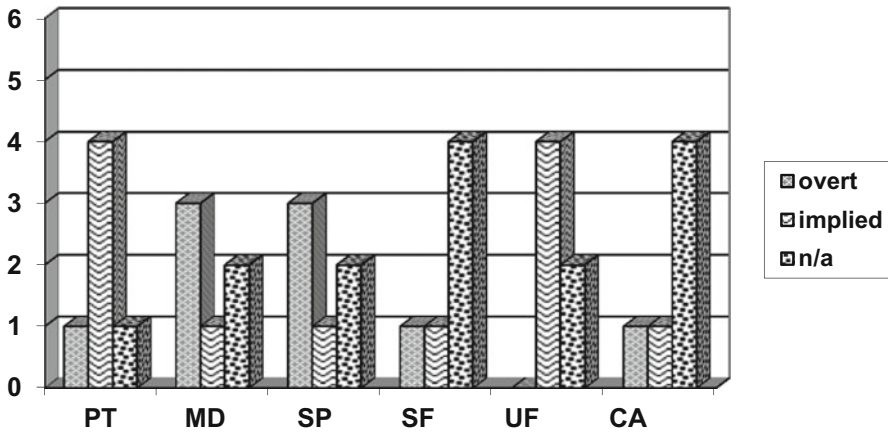


Fig. 28.2 Analysis of task expectations for the 6 courses that had conducting an inservice as a requirement or option, by Joyce and Showers’ (1988) components. PT

Presentation of theory, MD modeling or demonstration, SP simulated practice, SF structured feedback, UF unstructured feedback, CA coaching for application

support/coaching of teachers if teachers’ skills were to develop and generalize. Professor 1 summed up this idea in the following quote: “Just knowing the Joyce and Showers framework... if you could implement according to or roughly according to what they say, that is going to make you a much better presenter and skill-development person... Just knowing those components is helpful.”

The fourth theme, the importance of students’ social perception and communication skills, centered on their ability to develop and sustain a personal connection to their audience. Students’ personal attributes such as sensitivity, approachability and flexibility were discussed in this theme. Professor 6 offered the following perspective:

One of the things that we spend a lot of time on in the first consultation course is focusing on improving their social skills in delivering information. What we do is use the analogy of executive sales people who are selling a product. And they are simply selling knowledge. But they are doing it in a very deferential manner so that the information will be received well. That would be one of the key skills.

The fifth theme, the development of students’ specialized knowledge/skill sets, emerged as distinct from what may be viewed as the fundamental ‘people skills’ that were described in

theme four. Examples of theme five included the priority professor 1 placed upon students’, “understanding social power bases as a way to influence behavior”, the statement of professor 6 that, “the focus of the class is using referent power to introduce change”, and the importance that professor 5 placed on students, “having a theory about change processes in schools”. These perspectives all seem to reflect the importance of training students to develop various skills—including teaching skills—with the understanding that familiarity with a strong theoretical base in systems-level consultation remains necessary.

Congruence between stated priorities and inservice assignments. For the six courses that required students to prepare and/or do a mock or actual inservice, Joyce and Showers’ (1988) components were used to code responses. An expectation was coded as ‘implied’ if it was discussed by the professor but was not present in course materials. An expectation was coded as ‘overt’ if it was discussed in the interview and present in the course materials. Figure 28.1 presents a visual summary of this analysis, using Joyce and Showers’ (1988) components of effective inservices.

As Fig. 28.2 illustrates, of the courses in which an inservice assignment of some type was required, the expectations centered more on the

‘presentation’ aspects (PT, MD, and SP) and less on the ‘teaching’ or ‘support’ aspects (SF, UF and CA). Additionally, it was striking that of the six courses that had an inservice requirement, only two courses solicited audience perceptions of the inservices. For both of these courses, these perceptions were used formatively, but not summatively (i.e., the feedback had no bearing on students’ grades). The remaining four inservice assignments did not solicit audience perceptions.

Professor 5 touched on teacher perceptions of inservice activities and evaluative oversight:

Teachers... are very critical of inservice and there’s often an agenda that’s set that says that inservices change teacher behavior. So again it is that big question. How do you bring about changes in how teachers interact day to day in the classroom in terms of structure, how they relate to students, or whatever it is that you are trying to help them accomplish? I believe that is a much more complex proposition than our literature has recognized.

In analyzing the congruence of course components with the Joyce and Showers (1988) model, and in discussing the priorities professors placed on various activities, another theme emerged that seems to bear further investigation; this theme is what might be termed ‘implicit transferability’. This theme was present in two distinct contexts. First, there was the assumption that a professor’s modeling or discussion of good teaching was sufficient to prepare students to teach others. Second, implicit transferability was present in the assumption that students’ mastery of triadic consultation skills was sufficient to prepare them to effectively teach groups.

28.6.4 Discussion

28.6.4.1 Implications and Future Directions

This study provided some examples of the diversity of training practices occurring in the field of school psychology and raised more questions. It seems reasonable that the

differences across these training practices may have meaningful effects upon students’ skill and comfort in engaging in systems-level consultation upon graduation. It is unclear, for example, what the implications are of such variability. How can it be discerned in which instances such variability is deleterious, and those in which it is merely representative of a diversity of viable approaches?

Professors had differing priorities regarding the importance of training students to teach. In addition, their stated priorities did not always match their training practices. The data suggest that one professor’s consultation classes do not focus on training students to teach others at the group level. In six of nine cases, mixed messages were evident regarding the importance of training students to teach. Some training practices and stated intentions/priorities—at times even within courses—seemed to be in direct contradiction with one another. Only two professors’ training practices were entirely consistent with their stated positions regarding the importance of preparing students to effectively teach others. This finding echoed that of Anton-Lahart and Rosenfield (2004). In their comparison of syllabi and survey responses, they also found that the syllabi they received actually contained less field-based work than was indicated by survey respondents.

Professors’ responses to the query of whether they provided training in teaching varied by years of teaching experience. This variability may have occurred because ideas about what constituted ‘providing specific training in teaching’ differed across professors. It may be important to operationally define this concept in subsequent investigations. There also may have been differences according to the preparation practices and models the professors themselves were exposed to in their graduate programs. The different experiences that professors had in their own training may have had important impacts upon their priorities and practices; participants’ priorities and practices may have been distinct from those present in the program, the institution,

or national training standards. It may be that prior experience of the trainers was a salient factor in not only how they trained successive cohorts of students, but also whether and to what degree they viewed training in teaching as important.

In analyzing the congruence of course components with the Joyce and Showers (1988) model, the theme of implicit transferability emerged in two contexts. The first context in which this theme was present was in the assumption that modeling or discussion of good teaching was sufficient to prepare students to teach others. Modeling is necessary but insufficient on its own to teach new skills; an understanding of what constitutes good teaching cannot be internalized solely through vicarious experience (e.g. Joyce and Showers 1988; Phillips 1990; Slavin 2015). Additionally, one cannot be expected to acquire skills merely through being told what to do (e.g., Forman 2009; Joyce and Showers 2002; Knotek et al. 2009).

The second context in which implicit transferability emerged was in the assumption that students' mastery of triadic consultation skills was sufficient to prepare them to effectively teach groups. While it is true that several common principles of effective teaching appear across the literature, (see, e.g., American Psychological Association 1997; Knowles 1998; Phillips 1990; Slavin 2015), and that the principles of effective teaching hold up no matter what the context (e.g., the graduate school seminar, the school inservice, or the K-12 classroom), group dynamics are potent and different from dyadic interactions, and group dynamics can have significant effects on the efficacy of instruction. Though teaching in 1:1 and group contexts share some commonalities, the nature and extent to which best practices overlap under the two conditions should be up for debate. Until there is evidence to the contrary, it may be mistaken to assume that the methods used to teach 1:1 map exactly onto group instruction.

However it manifests, the assumption of implicit transferability may work at

cross-purposes in training future school psychologists to be, as one participant put it, "effective disseminators of scientific information". Future investigations could focus on (a) whether and to what degree these assumptions are present in individual courses and training programs on a larger scale; (b) the effects that these assumptions might have on training practices; and (c) their utility in assessing readiness for adopting competency-based curricular change in school psychology preparation programs.

The majority of courses that had conducting an inservice as an expectation relied most heavily on information-based 'Presentation of Theory', somewhat less on 'Modeling' and 'Practice under Simulated Conditions', and much less heavily on 'Feedback' and 'Coaching for Application'. This finding echoes the results in Hazel et al. (2010), in that the syllabi of consultation courses they reviewed based grades mostly on students' completion of consultation case reports and tests. In reference to Fig. 28.1, without audience feedback of some sort, it may be difficult to ascertain the effectiveness of an inservice. Without a formal mechanism of feedback (e.g. a score, grade or outcome), students may get the mistaken impression that the inservice activity is less important than those activities in a course that have bearing on a student's grade or assessed level of competence. Beyond the analysis of the six courses that actually contained the inservice component in some form, is the fact that only 6 of the 15 consultation courses reviewed in this study contained the inservice component, and none of the professors stated that this activity was a high priority for them. In sum, it appears that development of pedagogical skills is not being given much attention in these nine training programs. Should any of these practices or priorities change, and if so, how?

Faculty perceptions of their roles and curricular constraints point to the need for greater flexibility and creativity to be allowed in accreditation as school psychology programs attempt to align their training practices with the

competency-based approach (Morrison 2013; Ysseldyke et al. 2008). If specialized training is indeed as crucial as Fagan (2008) has suggested, where does training in teaching fit into an already burgeoning list of competencies? One question might be, ‘to what degree does training match the competencies that are expected to be demonstrated?’ Once the core knowledge base is identified, faculty may be able to re-configure curricula accordingly such that the pressure to cover everything somehow is mitigated (Daly et al. 2011; Hazel et al. 2010).

28.6.4.2 Limitations

The issues that have come to light within this exploratory study are meant to engender further questions and directions for inquiry that can be investigated on larger scales. This study focused on faculty who teach consultation courses because they were assumed to be the most likely to prepare students to engage in teaching activities such as conducting inservices. However, it was also true that at one professor’s university, consultation preparation was embedded entirely in other coursework. Therefore, it could be that teaching activities could occur in other types of courses that were not investigated herein. Because of the nature and scale of this study, the extent to which that is generally the case cannot be known.

As has been previously established, conducting inservices is a common aspect of systems-level consultative practice, but it is only one aspect. It seems important to investigate other activities that are also common in systems-level consultation (e.g., conducting needs assessments, gauging buy-in of key stakeholders, etc.), in an effort to better understand how well expectations of proficient practice map onto current training paradigms.

28.6.4.3 Summary

These preliminary data seem to lend credence to the hypothesis that future school psychologists may not be adequately prepared to engage in systems-level consultation activities. If the skill sets necessary to teach groups remain indistinct and underdeveloped relative to those necessary

for effective 1:1 consultation, and if pedagogical theory and practice remain on the sidelines in training curricula, it seems unlikely that competencies in this area will develop fully on their own. As is the standard for other domains of school psychological practice, an evidence-based understanding of why students are generally not engaging in much consultation of any type, let alone systems level consultation, once they become school psychologists seems necessary (Fagan 2008). Further investigation of professors’ beliefs and training practices seems warranted for all types of consultation courses, toward increased congruence between intents, practices and outcomes in the profession. In sum, these preliminary data seem to be aligned with the sentiment that empirical investigations of training practices and outcomes in consultation are long overdue, and notably absent (e.g. Alpert and Taufique 2002; Braden and Shah 2005; Fenning et al. 2015; Gutkin 2002; Hazel et al. 2010; Meyers 2002; Phillips 1990). Further, the paucity of research regarding competencies and benchmarks is causing a delay in the successful identification and measurement of the skills that school psychology has endorsed as vital (Daly et al. 2011; Rubin 2007).

The findings in recent literature regarding priorities for practice, and assertions within APA and NASP competency documents, strongly suggest that effectively preparing future cohorts of students for the array of challenges awaiting them includes training them how to teach. Further investigation of the status quo in training seems warranted to (a) better understand what consultation preparation looks like on a larger scale; (b) better understand factors that promote or hinder curricular adaptations; (c) develop ideas about how training practices may need to change, in light of an increasing emphasis on competency-based assessment of skills; and, (d) authentically match competencies to the ways they might be demonstrated.

28.6.4.4 Recommendations

To further research the issues raised in this chapter, a variety of methodologies might be useful, and many of these approaches are not as

widely employed in school psychology as they are in other fields. Braden and Shah (2005) have advocated for use of models such as action research, which is widely employed in the education field to study teaching methods. Meyers (2002) discussed that the ‘practitioner-researcher model’, which is based in action research, would be useful in assisting practitioners to improve their own practice and make contributions to the consultation knowledge base. From the articles reviewed for this chapter, it is evident that qualitative and mixed-method approaches are being used to investigate pedagogical questions. If trainers are going to, as Meyers (2002) put it, “dare to research their own practice” (p. 45), there must be continued and increasing support from editorial boards in the major journals in our discipline to grant an audience to these investigative efforts.

Rosenfield (2002) argued that preparation programs needed to provide access to advanced-level consultation opportunities for school psychology students. Because of the changing demands of the field, it is asserted here that future school psychologists also need opportunities to engage in a gradation of teaching experiences. Before they are asked to teach, however, future school psychologists should also have a discrete foundational knowledge of pedagogical strategies.

Meyers (2002) advocated preparing students to engage in practitioner-research in consultation. This preparation could also appropriately extend to other teaching opportunities that students have. Though preservice preparation activities in teaching would likely look somewhat different depending upon whether a future school psychologist aspired to be a practitioner or an academician, preparation of this sort, and study of the effects of such preparation on outcomes, seems necessary. Within the field of social work, Boehm and Cohen (2013) suggested that allowing future social workers to engage in authentic, meaningful projects that were matched to students’ competencies and that were manageable

within the constraints of the academic year could be a potent way to foster those students’ self-efficacy and commitment to community practice.

Phillips (1990), in recommending ways in which school psychology faculty could learn more about teaching, referred readers to Barnett (1988) and Schön (1983), and stated that these sources “would be a good foundation for school psychologist teachers who want to generate their own working hypotheses about teaching that better joins science and practice” (p. 193).

28.6.4.5 Conclusion

As the field of school psychology orients increasingly toward a competency-based approach to the assessment of school psychologists’ skills, incorporation of a foundational knowledge of pedagogical strategies and development of teaching competencies in triadic and systems-level consultative practice should be carefully considered as important aspects of training. If consultants such as school psychologists can be trained to teach adults effectively, it stands to reason that K-12 students, teachers, families and the community will be the beneficiaries of improvements in systems-level service provision.

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Part V
Methods

Community Approaches for Addressing Crime and Violence: Prevention, Intervention, and Restoration

29

Tracy M. Soska and Mary L. Ohmer

Abstract

Crime and violence have long been among the more pressing and recalcitrant community challenges especially with increasing inequality and growing disparities among communities. Given this context for exploring and understanding community-based approaches for crime prevention, in America, this chapter examines theories related to crime prevention, as well as community organizing and programmatic community-based approaches used to address crime and community violence at the local level. In discussing community intervention methods, strategies, and tactics that have been effective in crime prevention, violence intervention, and promoting collective efficacy and restorative justice, this chapter will provide brief case examples of projects and programs that have been undertaken at the community level. These examples provide lessons learned for community practitioners and leaders to undertake and replicate in similar efforts. We will also examine the evidence-base of such community approaches

and what applied research supports as best practice in the field.

29.1 Introduction

Safety remains a crucial community issue that resonates strongly in the current social and political climate. Although crime, both violent and non-violent as reported by the Federal Bureau of Investigation annual crime statistics, has been in continued decline since its peaks in the 1980s and 1990s (Crime in America 2016), the perception and fear of crime remains a pressing public concern (Gallup 2016). After a steady, modest reduction in crime, FBI reports for 2015 have indicated a slight rise in violent crime, particularly in some metropolitan counties (FBI 2016); however, non-violent, property crime continues to lessen across all categories (FBI 2016). Whether this recent, modest rise in violent crime is indicative of a longer trend to reverse the decades long decline in crime is uncertain at this point, but the perception or fear of crime is more palpable today (Gallup 2016) as it has often been in the past, except post 9/11 when terrorism and Iraq became a greater fear and later, in the wake of the Great Recession, when the economy was the biggest fear (Gallup 2016). While it is this perception or fear of crime that tends to prompt community outcry for action (Davis 2015), many American communities,

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especially poor and distressed communities and neighborhoods, are facing greater disparities and challenges around crime, particularly violent crime (Brooks 2008).

The reasons for declining crime include a range of hypotheses, from mass incarceration to policing to demographics to economics to social programs, among others (Roeder et al. 2015; Uggen and McElrath 2013). Yet, as Gallup polls acknowledge, most Americans (63%) again perceive crime as having gone up (Gallup 2016). Surprisingly, those polled were less likely to say crime was up in their own area (44%), which might be indicative of the strong influence that national media, especially social media, play in this perception of what we experience locally versus what we perceive nationally.

Of course, the issue of “non-reporting” of crime remains a concern, and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) estimate about 50% of violent crimes and 60% of non-violent crimes go unreported (2016). However, since 1973 the BJS has annually conducted the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) of household to get a clearer picture of actual crime. From a 1993 peak of 79.8 per 1000, the NCVS shows that the violent crime rate has declined to 20.1 per 1000 (BJS 2016). While the perception or fear of crime is somewhat removed from the actual realities of crime—long been in decline at both violent and non-violent levels—the fact that serious and violent crime in certain metropolitan areas is often more visible in the media, means that it remains a troubling community issue that seems to be reflected in the Gallup polls.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of crime in community is the disparity among communities, particularly those facing significant economic and racial disparities. As Wilkinson and Pickett emphasize in *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Make Societies Stronger* (2009), countries and states with greater economic inequality see greater rates of incarceration, crime, and violence, as well as lower levels of social trust. This disparity translates down to the local level where in many metropolitan areas crime, especially violent crime, has shown an increase where it is concentrated in neighborhoods of greatest

economic and racial disparities. Growing racial inequality and economic inequality has certainly been underscored in recent studies and literature (Buchanan 2013; Bangs and Davis 2015), and the troubling nature of police and community relations, particularly as underscored in the “Black Lives Matter Movement,” has implication for perceptions of crime and justice in America, as well as for our community response to these issues.

Our communities have enjoyed a productive partnership between community interests and the police at one level as evidence in long-standing community crime prevention efforts, including such social policies/programs as the U.S. Department of Justice’s long-running Weed and Seed program—over fifteen years—among other long-standing community and social programs that directly and indirectly address crime prevention. However, other social policies, such as mandatory sentencing and justice practice that have seen mass incarceration rates that are particularly racially skewed, have precipitated growing social unrest over inequalities in the criminal justice system and precipitated the need for restorative justice in communities and society at-large. Balancing community fears and perceptions at diverse levels should be critical in shaping community approaches in the future. Restoring community trust and police-community relations, the legitimacy of which have more and more been under intense scrutiny, presents another timely challenge in the wake of concerns with growing inequalities and, particularly, racial disparities.

This chapter examines the realities and perceptions of crime as a community issue, and explores the theories and practices of community-level crime prevention and restorative justice that appears at a crossroads in the growing debate of economic and racial disparities. It will present community-based crime prevention work with brief best practice cases examples and discuss the importance of comprehensive strategies and those community efforts that seek to build and strengthen collective efficacy in our communities to address issues such as crime.

29.2 Review of the Literature

The amount of literature relative to community-level crime intervention has periods of peaks and valleys somewhat corresponding to law and order administrations and social policies post Civil Rights and Protest era in the late 1970s through the Great Recession in 2007. It is helpful to understand crime in community from a historical and policy context, as well as from the theoretical perspectives drawing from the literature of criminology and that of social theorists that help in appreciating the concepts and constructs of community crime prevention and intervention.

29.2.1 Historical and Policy Context

Much of our modern response to crime and our community practice approaches to crime prevention grew out of the 1960s as a time of Civil Rights social change and War on Poverty social programming that witnessed a leap in progressive policies and program. It then morphed significantly and in short time through a series of increasingly conservative and regressive social policies and programs over the half century since. Community crime prevention policy and program, which have engaged local communities, flowed along this path beginning in 1968 with the *Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Street Act of 1968*, which appeared to follow in the wake of the Martin Luther King riots in many communities and the rise of “law and order” political candidates (a similar movement occurred in the late 1970s). This Act established the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) as a federal agency within the U. S. Department of Justice focused on state and local law enforcement as well as education, research, planning, and local crime prevention efforts, many engaging residents and emerging community-based and neighborhood organizations. LEAA was dissolved in 1979, and its functions were folded into the National Institute of Justice under the passage of the *Justice Improvement Act of 1979* that amended the

earlier Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Street Act of 1968. Where LEAA has helped to build a national crime control agenda based on goals and planning, its successor agency, the Office of Justice Assistance, Research, and Statistics and, then, with the *Justice Assistance Act of 1984*, the Office of Justice Programs, sought a greater emphasis on research and data, as well as enhanced and targeted policing initiatives along with police and community programs. The Bureau of Justice Statistics was indicative of this new focus on research, and the later Weed and Seed program that arose under the *1994 Crime Bill* and in the wake of the growing drug, notably “crack” cocaine, epidemic in many urban communities emphasized the enhanced police-community collaborations (U.S. Department of Justice and Office of Justice Programs 1996).

These key national policies, along with the important victim-witness assistance movement arising in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the Feminist Movement provide one major thread in addressing community crime. This victim-witness assistance also embraced the concept of restorative justice and saw state and national victim compensation and support programs along with other key initiatives—including legislation such as the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

The other major thread in addressing crime arose from the political arena in the form of “get tough” legislation on mandatory sentencing, “three strikes and you’re out” policies, and other targeted criminal justice enforcement that led to policies mass incarceration that seemingly were enforced toward racial bias and led to the demise of prison as rehabilitation. While not a focus of this chapter, the reality of mass incarceration without rehabilitation has an impact on the challenging social climate and movements like “Black Lives Matter” that subsequent policies, such as the 2008s Chance Act that is presently still being implemented in many states, are an important thread that weaves the fabric of crime in communities. Today, crime control and community prevention are addressed through a range of Office of Justice Programs agencies,

including: the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), and the Office for Victims of Crimes.

Over the same period many community-based organizations and non-profit social service agencies have also directly and indirectly addressed crime prevention in our communities. From neighborhood organizing to foster crime watches and block clubs to local efforts to remediate the environment of vacant and vandalized property to programs to address youth at-risk and support families in crisis, many community efforts parallel police and justice efforts in the community and, at some points, they collaborate to beneficial effect. This is particularly the case in efforts that seek to build collective efficacy of communities to address these concerns on their own and in partnership with law enforcement.

The historic context of our federal, state, and local efforts, while important to setting the policy background for larger justice and community crime prevention approaches, are more the political dimensions of this work and not the theoretical—the politics of criminal justice can sometimes seem as distinct from the realities of on the ground crime prevention as the perception of crime is from its realities. Several theoretical and related concepts underscore the literature and practice of community crime prevention and shape the discussions in this chapter.

29.2.2 Theoretical Frameworks for Community Crime Prevention

Many theories inform and contribute to the work of community crime prevention, intervention, and restoration, however, collective efficacy is perhaps the most essential community concept relative to working in community crime prevention, as well as in addressing other community issues beyond crime—although crime is often a catalyst for community dialogue and action. The level of community cohesion and the sense of

informal social control to maintain trusting relations and organization in a community is important to reducing and preventing violence and crime by maintaining social order and control as noted in social disorganization theory (Shaw and McKay 1969; Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson 2008). The density of social ties and social capital is impacted by community characteristics such as poverty and instability (Sampson 2008). Collective efficacy is both shaped by community conditions and a critical factor in fostering social capital toward collective action, and a community's ability to build bonds within and bridges across communities to institutions such as police and government is central to social capital and collective action (Putnam 1995). Trust relations and common interests and values are also essential variables in collective efficacy and building social capital toward collective action (Putnam 1995; Sampson 2008). Higher levels of inequality in society or a community can contribute to higher levels of poverty, as well as present a challenge for collective efficacy in that, as noted earlier, levels of trust are lower where greater inequality exists (Wilkinson and Pickett 2009).

Collective efficacy, which includes social cohesion and informal social control, grew out of Shaw and McKay's (1969) early research on social disorganization in Chicago, Illinois and was extended through the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (PHDCN) (Sampson et al. 1997). Figure 29.1 presents an overall theoretical model of collective efficacy and its relationship to violence, crime and disorder (Shaw and McKay 1969; Sampson 2008). Collective efficacy consists of two main concepts, social cohesion and informal social control, which are shaped by neighborhood characteristics such as concentrated poverty and residential instability, the density of social ties and social capital, and the presence of an organizational infrastructure supporting and regulating the behavior of youth (Sampson 2008; Sampson et al. 1997). Research demonstrates that collective efficacy leads to lower levels of community violence by reducing crime and violence and influences the health of residents

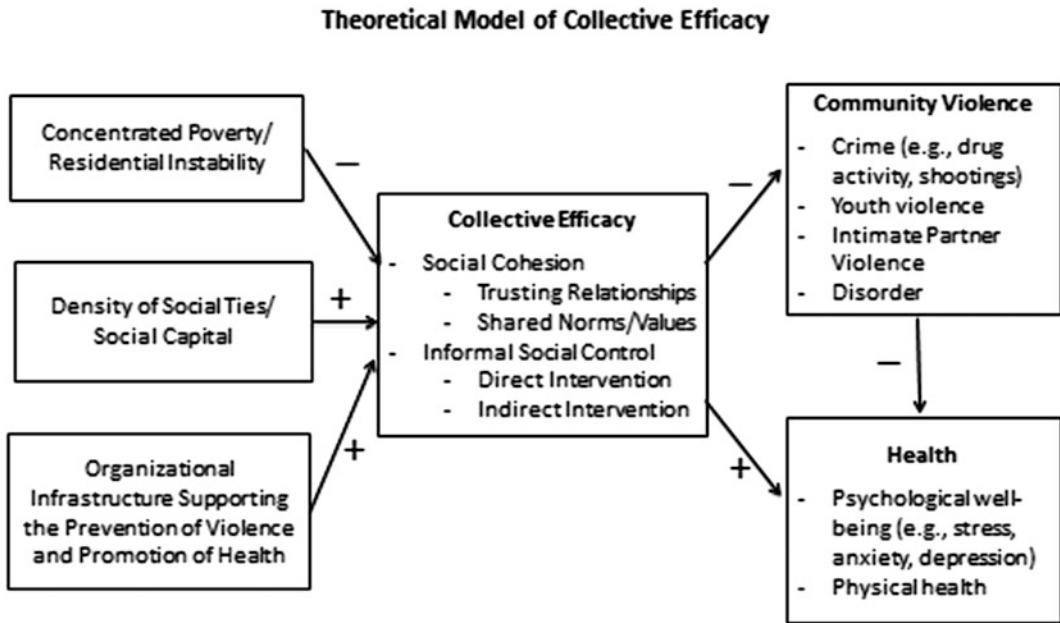


Fig. 29.1 Theoretical model of collective efficacy

both directly and indirectly (Kawachi and Berkman 2000; Sampson et al. 1997).

For collective efficacy to work, trusting relationships and mutual interests and values must exist among residents but, also, between residents and those external to the community, such as the police. Neighborhoods also need strong institutional capacity to achieve their goals and foster stability and control (Sampson and Graif 2009), including established neighborhood organizations with strong connections to residents and institutions like the police and government. Neighborhood level characteristics such as concentrated poverty, residential instability, the density of social ties and social capital, and the presence of organizations for youth, can all influence the level of social cohesion in a neighborhood (Peterson et al. 2000; Shaw and McKay 1969).

The other major component of collective efficacy is informal social control, which occurs when neighbors know each other and share norms and values, which make it more likely that they will intervene in neighborhood problems, including crime and violence (Sampson et al. 1997).

There are two forms of informal social control, indirect and direct intervention. Indirect intervention includes informal surveillance; for example, keeping an eye on a neighbor's children (Greenberg et al. 1982; Warner 2007). Direct intervention refers to residents actually interceding to confront behaviors that do not fit neighborhood social norms or values (Greenberg et al. 1982). For example, direct intervention can include residents inquiring about suspicious activities they witness and reprimanding people for behavior that falls outside neighborhood social norms and values (Greenberg et al. 1982). Informal social control is centered on residents' ability to directly intervene in neighborhood problems in respectful and non-punitive ways, and their strategies for engaging in positive relationships with the police and external resources (Sampson et al. 1997).

Collective efficacy has been shown to influence the occurrence of violence and violence-related behaviors and to lessen the negative impact of violence. The research suggests that collective efficacy exerts its effect in several important ways, including directly

influencing health behaviors and access to health related resources, and by affecting psychosocial processes like fear and anxiety (Kawachi and Berkman 2000; Ohmer et al. 2010). Collective efficacy is also associated negatively with intimate partner violence and intimate partner homicide (Browning 2002), adolescent dating violence, and adolescent suicide (Maimon et al. 2010). Sampson et al. (1997) found that collective efficacy was negatively associated with violence. Collective efficacy has been associated with decreased juvenile delinquency (Simons et al. 2005), unstructured socializing among peers (Maimon and Browning 2010), and children's antisocial behaviors (Odgers et al. 2009).

Trust is also a crucial dimension in the concept of legitimacy, especially as may concern police-community relations and how the role of police is perceived in the community. **Legitimacy theory** is concerned with the perception or assumptions of others' actions as appropriate within a socially constructed set of norms, values, and beliefs (Suchman 1995). Thus, how citizens feel that they are treated in terms of dignity, respect, and fairness may well determine how legitimate they see the function of police in their community, as well as how they may consider compliance with the law (Tyler and Fagan 2008). Collective efficacy as a factor in community crime prevention and intervention requires a trusting relationship with those assigned to maintain law and order, so police legitimacy is important to a community's ability to work collectively to address crime and safety. Reciprocally, how the police perceive the community and its residents also contributes to the sense of community legitimacy and the ability to collaborate on place-based efforts prevention and intervention efforts.

When Wilson and Kelling (1982) introduced the **"broken window" theory**, they underscored the importance of focusing on small signs of urban disorder, e.g. broken windows in abandoned buildings or graffiti on public spaces, as a means toward preventing more serious crimes and lawless behavior. This theory, which can be related to environmental or ecological approaches to crime prevention that looks to alter the

physical environment to reduce the opportunity for crime and improved public perceptions of safety. The broken window theory has been the topic of both public and social science debate (Sampson et al. 1997), but it remains a root concept in crime prevention for the police and communities. Most community crime prevention efforts place heavy emphasis on this tacit theory aimed at improving the local environment to promote law and order or, at least, to provide the community with a greater sense of order and safety that can reduce the perception of crime. The "broken window" theory applied to community interventions might call attention to abandoned buildings or vacant property (Spelman 1993) and encourage efforts to remove or repurpose that space, e.g., a community garden on property that was vacant, unsightly, and unhealthy. Presenting an orderly and inviting urban environment also underscore local community business improvement strategies in commercial district that enhances hospitality while maintaining a sense of order and control (Brooks 2008; Cook and MacDonald 2011). By maintaining and monitoring the community environment to prevent small infractions, such as vandalism, police and community members hope that a supportive environment will encourage order and lawful behavior rather than a norm of disrespect and disorder for one's community that might nurture more serious offenses. Mapping of problem areas is another way of identifying and monitoring environmental conditions or "hot spots" where crime is more likely or prevalent, which can then be useful in targeting police prevention and intervention efforts. These will be discussed as "environmental" or "place-based" approaches to crime prevention that are mainstays in policing and remediating crime, as well as in many effective interventions to engage community residents in addressing local crime and strengthening collective efficacy in the community.

Much of place-based crime prevention and intervention in communities, including policing activities, is also related to factors and **theories of opportunity and routine activities** within a community. Changes in routine activities, such

as family members at work and not at home and lack of guardians in the environment can promote the opportunity for convergence between offender and suitable targets (Cohen and Felson 1979). Guardians can be police on patrol and visible in the area, but there may also be other formal and informal observers, or guardians, whose presence increases the risk of criminals being seen. How the police and members of the community in formal and informal roles serve as guardians of public safety and function as deterrents of crime opportunities are the focus of this perspective (Eck and Wartell 1999). Community policing approaches that locate regular and sustained police presence in the community and around likely or available targets of crime, including gang and problem areas or “hot spots” that have been effective applications of these theories (Connell et al. 2008).

The concepts and theories discussed so far have addressed the dimensions of crime prevention and intervention at the community and environmental levels that significantly engage community members, community associations, and the police. A number of other theories related to crime and justice are also important to this examination of crime and community as these theories engage the social systems and institutions from criminal justice to education to human services. They are also important to explore relative to a larger comprehensive community approaches that connect these systems and institutions with community and police crime prevention and intervention efforts.

While we are not focused on the impact that mandatory and restrictive sentences policies have had on mass incarceration, especially for drug offenses, we recognize that retributive justice has had an impact on crime by removing many offenders from the community. Research has indicated that, while these punitive sentencing policies and the resulting extensive incarceration with little focus on rehabilitation may have had an initial impact of reducing crime in our communities, it is not likely the long term reason for the decline in crime (Roeder et al. 2015) as discussed earlier. However, one theory of justice is built on deep community roots and builds on

other concepts, such as collective efficacy and legitimacy, and that is restorative justice, which we will discuss in more detail later. At a conceptual level this **theory of restorative justice** focuses on repairing harm done to individuals and communities by criminal actions. Restorative justice embraces cooperative processes involving all stakeholders in a transgression, especially victims and offenders, but also others from families to community parties, hopefully in transforming relationships among people and within the community. It provides an alternative pathway for addressing wrongdoing and the impact of crime inclusive of community norms of fairness, rights and responsibility, proportionality, due process, and discretion (Gumz and Grant 2009).

A variety of community service programs aimed at supporting families and, especially, children and youth at-risk of delinquent and gang behaviors are rooted in **behavioral and relational theories of social control** that advance efforts to enhance prosocial bonding with social institutions, such as schools and positive peers as mitigating factors for delinquency and criminal behavior (Hirschi 1969). These approaches are influenced by differential association and reinforcement theory that says that like all behaviors, criminal behavior is learned through interaction with others (Sutherland 1947)—a factor as to why mass incarceration over the longer term will have a negative effect by exposing new inmates to antisocial influences of more serious offenders. Thus, social learning theory underscores that prosocial cognition can be learned if youth are exposed to appropriate positive messages and models whether in the family or through other relational settings and prosocial institutions (Burgess and Akers 1968; Matsueda 1988). Programs for family and early childhood intervention, peer support and mentoring, and school-based skill and learning enrichment programs embrace these theories of differential association/reinforcement and social learning.

Other social interventions seek to provide alternative opportunities and legitimate options as a counterbalance to delinquency and criminal behavior. Strain (Agnew 1992) and opportunity

theory note lack of legitimate, positive alternatives, such as education, which builds knowledge and skills that lead to employment opportunities (Sherman et al. 2006). Another aspect of these approaches that relates to earlier noted routine activity theory examines efforts to provide supervised prosocial and recreational activities for youth, which can also offer positive role modeling, but at the minimum provides a sense of guardianship that reduces the opportunity for negative activity or crime.

The approaches to crime and community to be discussed ahead rest on many of these concepts for a theory of change in impacting crime and criminal behavior. Some approaches rest on one or more theories of change in crime prevention or intervention, and other efforts and whole communities at times look at approaches and theories in a more comprehensive way that involves multiple strategies targeted collectively and in a coordinated manner. While these have had positive impact broadly on the community, they make it more difficult to assess the individual efficacy of any one strategy or theory of change. However, for those communities able to support and harness such a collaborative efforts, the literature of best practices acknowledges the positive results of such efforts (Sherman et al. 1998, 2002; Roeder et al. 2015).

29.3 Approaches to Community Crime Prevention and Intervention

From the literature of theories and concepts undergirding community crime prevention and intervention approaches, we will categorize and examine these approaches in three major categories: (1) Environmental—or physical space; (2) Community-based—or those that building civic engagement and collective efficacy and trust; (3) Social and behavior—or those concerned with individual, family, or small group prosocial behaviors and relationships within the community and with community institutions. Within these categories timely cases will be offered to exemplify best practices in specific

crime prevention and intervention approaches. We will also more extensively discuss comprehensive community building efforts across these categories and offer a crucial case for collective efficacy as central to core of addressing crime and justice, as well as other community health and safety issues.

29.3.1 Categories of Community Crime Prevention and Intervention

Environmental: These are efforts aimed at the improving, changing, or managing a given ecology or place that are attractors of or risk factor for crime. These are often the “broken windows” (Wilson and Kelling 1982) or targets of routine active or opportunity in the community (Cohen and Felson 1979) and many are fixed architectural or environmental designs or conditions that might be altered to reduce attraction of and risks for crime. Crime prevention or intervention in this category involves police and community and seeks to reduce or remove one or more of these conditions or factors or to provide enhanced guardianship in these places (Cohen and Felson 1979). By eliminating disorder or blocking opportunities in the environment, a community can bolster or restore order, security, and safety. Environmental or place-based approaches seem to work best when they engage many partners and targeted specific problems (Lum et al. 2011).

Community-Based: This category encompasses community and police-community efforts to address crime and public safety, as well as restorative justice approaches that seek to provide community level adjudication, mediation and victim assistance support as part of a wider community building effort to foster collective efficacy and community trust (Gumz and Grant 2009). We differentiate this category from those approaches that emphasize more prosocial behaviors, personal and family development, delinquency prevention, and other social and behavior initiatives, which we classify separately, but we recognize that many of these

efforts are conducted at the community-level. Approach for building civic engagement to promote collective efficacy (Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson 2008) and foster trust within the community and between police and the community and its residents are a major focus of efforts in this category. These approaches are concerned with legitimacy theory and the need to foster dignity, respect, and fairness (Fagan and Tyler 2004). They are also focused on routine activities and the ability to block or limit the connections of offenders and targets as well as to disrupt the potential for violence stemming from gangs or public safety triggers (Cohen and Felson 1979).

Social and Behavioral: Many approaches in this category address family, children, and, especially youth intervention and prevention of delinquency by promoting prosocial behavior and provide positive alternatives to risky behaviors. These can include early child development and family support efforts that look to enhance effective parenting and learning as well as engender family community engagement to build collective efficacy and promote social behavior in home and community. Others involve delinquency and gang involvement intervention by providing mentors, school-based programs to encourage retention and adherence in positive community institutions like schools; alternative opportunities for education and employment pathways to encourage choice of positive and productive lifestyles, and social and recreation activities for supervised and positive interaction, which may also include youth positive interaction with police to build legitimacy and trust (Fagan and Tyler 2004).

29.3.2 Environmental Approaches

Reducing the visible risk factors that attract crime or that promote a sense of disorder or disrespect for place or property is the main target of environmental approach to crime prevention. Small but focused interventions by residents, businesses, police, public agencies, and community-based organizations can address a neighborhoods “broken windows” and monitor

routine activities or the opportunities for crime (Perkins et al. 1992; Sherman et al. 2006).

Environmental approaches can include architectural or design improvements, such as better lighting or removal of physical barriers or landscaping that prevents monitoring or affords opportunities for crime (Taylor and Harrell 1996). Simply removing building features that provide cover or clearing shrubs and bushes in the landscape that afford similar risks and barriers can be offer significant prevention and risk management. The installation of improved lighting or even maintenance of existing lighting on homes, business, and in public areas are a known environmental deterrent to criminal activity (Welsh and Farrington 2008) and provide a greater sense of safety at night. Community development and business improvement groups often provide or can help marshal resources for community commercial districts (Brooks 2008) to address private and public place improvements that reduce risk factors and enhance guardianship of people and property in the environment. Fixed places in communities, i.e., shopping districts, homes, playgrounds and parks, streets and sidewalks, can be remediated in modest but powerful ways for targeted risk and harm reduction (Weisburd et al. 2006).

Police, residents, and business owners can and have made use of other technologies in efforts to bolster safety and better prevent or intervene in crime. Two technologies have been particularly notable in environmental crime prevention and safety. The first is surveillance cameras. Whether installed by the police on streets and public areas, on business, or even on private and public residential properties, such surveillance has proven an effect deterrent (LaVigne 2011; Welsh et al. 2010) Moreover, surveillance approaches have been shown not to significantly displace or diffuse crime to other areas (LaVigne 2011) and to help in identifying “hot spots” for more intensive patrol and interdiction. Another technology that research has called promising are gunshot detection systems or “shot spotters” (Choi 2014; Scharf et al. 2008). Studies have shown some effectiveness to decreasing response time depending on police staff levels and ability to

respond (Choi 2014), and this sound technology has been helpful in identifying “hot spots” for more intensive policing. Technology provides helpful environmental tools to prevent and reduce crime and promote a great sense of safety.

Police, community organizations, and business associations can and do provide resources for environmental safety, or they provide information as to how business, homeowners, and other residents can improve home security and safety. Targeting residential security is especially important for vulnerable residents and for residents and businesses in locales that have experienced spikes in property crime. In addition to home security, many at-risk neighborhoods may have properties with other safety risks for fire or gas-leaks that also can be remediated. The following case shares an example of on such long-stand home security and neighborhood safety program.

Case 1: Neighborhood Safety/Home Security Program

One of the longest, continuous community safety programs in the country, perhaps, was initiated in Pittsburgh in 1978 as the Homewood-Brushton Home Security Program through the then Pittsburgh Neighbor Alliance’s Communities Combating Crime Program with funding from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) and, later, through Pittsburgh’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). This initiative is now being carried out on the Pittsburgh Community Services, the City of Pittsburgh’s Community Action agency, as the Neighborhood Safety Program with its primary activities largely as originally established—installing security devices on doors and windows along with smoke detectors and, now, carbon monoxide detection devices as well (Pittsburgh Community Services 2016).

As currently configured, the Neighborhood Safety Program operates city-wide and serves low-income residents, the

elderly, and those with disabilities who might otherwise be able to secure their homes and improve home safety. While this program can be and is targeted to areas of high property crime as the need arises, the neighborhood safety organizing focus of its original design is now secondary to the physical security and safety hardware installation. At its outset, the then Home Security Program was targeted in neighborhoods (Homewood-Brushton) to both help in organizing block watch groups/clubs and installing security hardware in vulnerable homes. In moving from LEAA funding to CDBG support, this program was the first in the city to receive such funding to support community organizing to establish block watches/clubs (Soska 2016). Today, the Neighborhood Safety Programs coordinates with established community-based organizations and neighborhood groups to share information on neighborhood safety organizing tactics while installing security and safety devices in vulnerable homes (McEachern 2016). National studies of targeted place approaches, such as home safety/security interventions, have shown them to be effective strategies toward eliminate the opportunity for crime and enhancing the safety and security in homes and communities by reducing vulnerability to and risk factors for property crime (Lum et al. 2011).

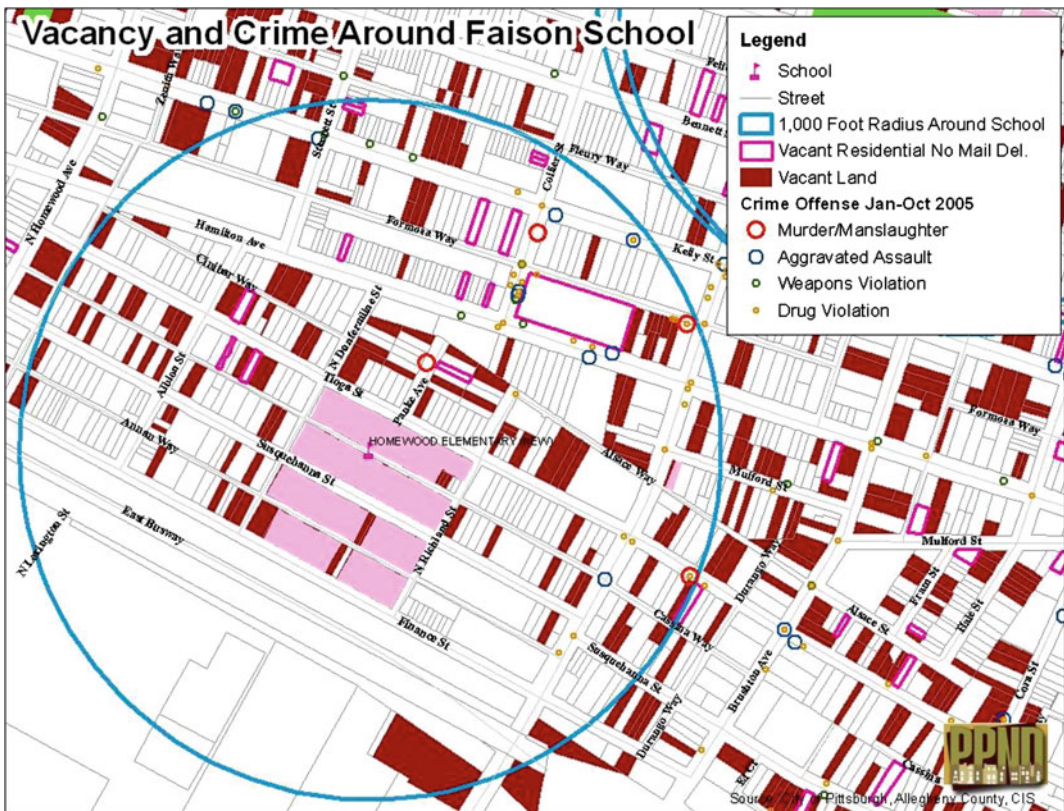
Identifying environmental risk factors for crime and safety is also important to developing effective strategies for community improvement. One tool that has come to be particularly helpful in this process of crime preventions and advancing public safety is mapping, i.e., the ability to create geographical maps that provide a picture of collective risks (U.S. Department of Justice 1999). Using geographical information systems (GIS) has becoming increasing important in planning, implementing, and monitoring environmental safety risk reductions. Such maps

can include vacant parcels and abandoned property, trouble business (businesses where problem behaviors or dangerous activities may be occurring or where crimes have been occurring), and other hazardous environmental conditions like trash, broken glass, used needles, and other materials might be visible. Communities and the police have used such maps to identify risks, target interventions, and monitor conditions. The following case addresses a unique application of community mapping to provide a “safe school zone” in community.

Case 2: Mapping Environmental Risk Factors

In the Homewood neighborhood of Pittsburgh, one of the most distressed locales with some of the most underperforming schools in the City and State, community

collaboration was undertaken to replicate the Harlem Children’s Zone on a more modest scale. The Homewood Children’s Village sought to address a range of community issues to improve life and education to make Homewood a place “where every child can succeed.” One issue this collaborative addressed was the concern with “safe school zones”—a notion that conditions in the neighborhood in relative proximity to a school—in this case 1000 feet—which sought to identify, monitor, and remediate environmental conditions to make this zone safe for children walking to and from local schools. The PNCIS was asked to develop GIS maps showing a 1000 foot radius around the neighborhood schools and the neighborhood-level data and crime



Map 29.1 Safe school zone—Homewood

incidents in those circles. In addition to incidents of reported crime, vacant lots, vacant houses, tax-leined properties (often ones that become vacant), among other conditions were mapped. This GIS map allow the community to understand the specific properties and conditions that posed safety risks to children so that could be monitored and remediated to make these zones safer for children going to local schools. Data-driven tools can be utilized for assessing and targeting areas for community revitalization and organizing efforts (Teixeira and Wallace 2013) (Map 29.1).

As with this Safe School Zone effort, the community is then able to use their mapping to develop targeted interventions on the identified problem areas. In looking at the hazards facing children in a promoting a safe school zone perimeter around a school, the community might work on a efforts to promote collective efficacy to reduce safety risks and prevent crime, such as:

- Conducting a volunteer community clean-up in the area to clear out trash and dangerous items;
- Clearing an overgrown vacant lot to provide visibility, orderliness, and a safe space for children walking by or through the area;
- Reclaiming a vacant lot for a community garden or community art or public space—even all three, as has been done in other communities;
- Having abandoned buildings/houses boarded-up or torn-down with municipal support or action;
- Identify absentee landlords of vacant or abandoned properties and have local government enforce code violations on these owners to make need repairs or for city to reclaim these properties if tax-delinquent.

All of these are environmental and place-based approaches, but other community engagement efforts, such as walking buses, i.e.,

elders walking large groups of children to and from school, might be organized. In any case, having safety risks mapped provides a mechanism to take action and then monitor the conditions and improvement over time, so this mapping serves as both an assessment and an evaluative tool. This discussion of place or environmental approaches to addressing crime and public safety, lead to the importance of community-based approaches that engage community members – individual citizens, families, community groups, service organizations, churches, businesses, and community leaders, involve community-level policing, and, hopefully, promote collaboration between community members and the police.

29.3.3 Community-Based Approaches

How community members and police respond to issues of crime and safety separately, as well as in partnership in a community is perhaps a vitally important consideration and one that is at a critical junction in our increasingly unequal and disparate communities. Traditional models of community crime watch and other safety patrols and activities that are teamed with community policing and target policing activities have been highly effective strategies in reducing crime and improve public perceptions of safety, but this strategies are not always effective in many of our most distressed communities, especially where trust and collective efficacy are weak. Even those targeted by intensive police and community programs, such as Weed and Seed, have been difficult to control and restore.

Community-based crime prevention involves many and diverse strategies that include both civic engagement and social/behavioral tactics aimed of promoting prosocial activities, legitimacy and trust in the police, and building strong bonds among community constituents and with community institutions. Significant to this effort is enhancing collective efficacy in mobilizing citizens to respond to crime and disorder issues, which require strategies to foster collective

identity, norms, values, and trust in order to take collective action. Mobilization efforts have also included neighborhood or block watches and patrols, police-community meetings and social/recreational activities, and reporting on code violations and conducting clean-ups or other campaigns to address signs of disorder like litter, graffiti, and problem behaviors in social places. Some of these activities are often targeted toward community youth at-risk and addressing opportunity choices as alternative to crime or problem behavior. Mobilization programs are especially predicated on strong community bonds and collective efficacy that is underscored by levels of trust within the community and between the community and police—communities where this is the case generally have lower rates of crime, fear of crime, and social disorder (Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson 2008). Unfortunately, research on community based approaches have been limited because of the many approaches and variables they entail; however, the general consensus sees such community-based crime prevention as useful, especially policing approaches at the community level (Holloway et al. 2008).

29.3.4 Facilitating Collective Efficacy: A Community-Based and Engaged Intervention

While the above theory and research provide a solid rationale for the development of collective efficacy and community-based strategies to prevent violence, research is limited on interventions facilitating residents' social cohesion and ability to directly intervene and prevent violence and improve community health and well-being. The intervention described below was developed to facilitate collective efficacy initially through a pilot training program with adults in a low-income neighborhood in Atlanta, Georgia (Ohmer et al. 2010). Following the success of the pilot program, the project was extended in another low-income neighborhood in the same city: engaging both youth and adults, facilitating extensive community

organizing prior to the training; and engaging youth and adult participants in developing a community-based violence prevention project (Ohmer and Owens 2013).

Case 3: Collective Efficacy in Atlanta

The following key strategies were used in the intervention: Consensus organizing was used to facilitate social capital, cohesion and trust among residents and between residents and external stakeholders based on mutual interests (Eichler 2007; Ohmer and DeMasi 2009). Residents identified and established community norms, values and characteristics that support pro-social behavior and trust (Beck et al. 2012), and restorative justice strategies were used to facilitate residents' ability to intervene in neighborhood problems because of its focus on healing, supporting, and empowering families and communities through non-punitive and peaceful strategies (Abramson and Beck 2011). A partnership was developed with a community-based organization to build community capacity to prevent violence and promote community well-being (Ohmer and Owens 2013). Key staff and community organizers are trained to conduct the intervention alongside the researchers, which builds their capacity to implement evidence-based interventions. Residents participating in the intervention also apply and share what they're learning with their neighbors and key community stakeholders.

The intervention consisted of three phases: (1) Mobilizing and engaging residents in disadvantaged communities around the importance of shared values regarding health and well-being and the impact of collective efficacy on preventing violence and negative health outcomes. (2) A six session training program that educates youth and adult residents about collective efficacy and engages them in identifying norms, values and

characteristics associated with violence and related health issues; teaches them how to build relationships with their neighbors based on mutual interests and values using consensus organizing; and builds their skills in intervening in community violence and health related problems using restorative justice principles, while at the same time engaging external resources (e.g., police and health professionals). (3) The development and implementation of community-based projects by participants and other community stakeholders focused on preventing violence and improving health and well-being.

Results from the first pilot project demonstrated that participants (all adults) increased their engagement in neighborhood organizations and were more likely to intervene in neighborhood problems, and more likely to use direct intervention, including approaching the individuals involved in the transgressions in a respectful manner (Ohmer et al. 2010). Participants also improved their norms and attitudes about intervening, feeling it was appropriate to intervene and their neighborhood was safer if residents intervened in problem behaviors.

The results from the second pilot intervention demonstrated that youth and adult participants increased their levels of bonding social capital and social cohesion in two areas after the training: their engagement and connections in their neighborhood as reflected by an increase in neighborhood activism and their level of trusting social relationships as reflected by an increase in reciprocal relationships with their neighbors (Ohmer 2016). While these behaviors increase from the beginning to the end of the project, the change was not significant from after the training to after the community project. The results demonstrated that after their participation

in the training, participants indicated that they were significantly more likely to intervene in neighborhood problems. Their likelihood to intervene also increased after their participation in the community project, but not significantly. Participants significantly improved their attitudes, norms and values about intervening from after the training to after the community project. In addition, *Photovoice* methods were used in the second project to help participants identify common community concerns they felt contributed to crime, including physical characteristics such as vacant lots, but also social relationships among neighbors and their willingness to work together to solve neighborhood problems (Ohmer and Owens 2013).

Participants recognized that these relationships were the basis for social support and trust, including being able to count on your neighbors when you needed them. The interaction of participants with one another and with their neighbors and local organizations also facilitated social ties. Through dialogue and discussion of their photographs and their community project, participants agreed that one of the most important outcomes were the relationships they built among one another and with other community members (e.g., bonding social capital), as well as the local police, the city council, and business, arts and environmental organizations (e.g., bridging social capital). Participants acknowledged the importance of identifying and coming to a common understanding of neighborhood problems, but also intervening in neighborhood problems. An important characteristic that participants felt alleviated crime was the willingness of their neighbors to work together on community projects. Participants also deliberately incorporated the two main components of

collective efficacy in their own community project. In fact, participants strongly felt that one of the main goals of their community project was to unify and build connections between more people in the neighborhood, illustrating the importance of social ties fundamental to collective efficacy. In addition, the project gave participants, as well as other neighborhood residents and community stakeholders, the opportunity to intervene to address community characteristics that they felt contributed to crime, such as vacant and abandoned lots. Youth and adult participants worked together to redevelop a visible vacant lot into a community art and garden space that was inviting to the whole neighborhood. Participants celebrated this new community space with the neighborhood through their community event, sharing what they learned about crime prevention and collective efficacy and stories about the importance of strong neighborhood social ties (Ohmer and Owens 2013, pp. 430–431).

While extensive research has demonstrated the power of collective efficacy in preventing crime, violence and negative health outcomes, limited research is available on interventions that translate the theory and research on collective efficacy into actionable strategies that communities can actually use. The above case demonstrates how community researchers can conduct community-based and engaged research in partnership with communities to address important social issues and improve their overall well-being. Collective efficacy holds very real implications for communities (Ohmer et al. 2010). Often, in areas where violence is a destructive force, communities have very limited resources to address the issue. The larger city that a neighborhood is located within may also have limited resources and uncertainty around which interventions are most appropriate. This often leads to cyclical and ineffective solutions for

neighborhoods. However, by providing this model as a tool, communities can work together with practitioners to become empowered to take practical steps to improve the area in which they live, work, and play (Ohmer et al. 2010).

29.3.5 Citizen Watch Crime Prevention Approaches

Since their rise in popularity in the 1970s, citizen watch programs are active in community throughout the country, especially in urban neighborhoods. By the turn of the 21st Century about 40% of residential areas had some type of neighborhood or block watch (Holloway et al. 2008). Organized by community-oriented police, by community-based organizations, or home-grown by local residents, neighborhood watches recruit residents for block or community meetings and surveillance activities around residences and public areas. Usually a block captain or co-captains coordinate activities and these leaders are liaisons with local police (Holloway et al. 2008).

In some communities, especially in larger commercial/residential neighborhoods and even more suburban communities, citizen patrols are another iteration of neighborhood watch. Sometimes those patrolling can be identified in this role by certain dress, such as red beret and jackets of the well-known and somewhat controversial (for staging crime interventions and victim rescues to call attention to their efforts) Guardian Angels started by Curtis Silva in New York City in response to the growing crime problem there in the 1970s. This nonprofit citizen patrol organization has spread to cities across the country and even internationally. While such street and neighborhood crime prevention patrols are also seen as effective visible deterrents providing community guardianship, they have, at times, been labeled as vigilantes (Kelling and Coles 1996). In the wake of tragic incidents like the killing of Travon Martin by resident patrol volunteer, George Zimmerman, such neighborhood patrols present issues for police in the official community patrol functions.

While citizen patrols have been helpful in reducing crime in high traffic and commercial areas, as have police “beat patrols,” some commercial corridors and business association also organize to maintain order and hospitality in their business district and invest in private patrols, and other environmental design improvements for safety and surveillance as noted earlier. Some business corridors have even formed Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), through special contributory methods—sometimes a local tax or a voluntary membership fee—to enhance business corridor safety and order that can both reduce crime and the perception of safety in a locale (Brook 2008; Cook and MacDonald 2011), which make the area more hospitable and, of course, profitable.

These resident crime prevention approaches work through residents watching for and reporting suspicious activities to the police (Bennett 2008). Citizen watch program have been shown to reduce crime—16% decrease in watch communities compared to control neighborhoods (Holloway et al. 2008); however, the effectiveness of program are uneven across communities. Unfortunately, those areas with highest crime and other issues of social distress are the hardest to organize and less effective because residents don’t know or mistrust their neighbors and often are reluctant to take leadership in such watch activities, which makes sustainability a concern (Hollway 2008). Where established, however, citizen watch programs—often identified on streets by signs indicating the area is patrolled by block watch—can affect the behavior of potential offenders if they are aware of such surveillance as they provide guardianship and reduce opportunity for crime. Neighborhood watch programs can also be combined with other home security, safety device, or property identification activities, as noted in our earlier case in Pittsburgh, and they provide an important vehicle for police-community relations, as well as information to the police that can aid evidenced-based, targeted police investigation and interdiction. Perhaps most importantly, such citizen watches help build community cohesion, not just to prevent and control crime, but in foster collective

efficacy to organize around and address other issue that may or may not be related to crime in the community and which can empower that community to collective action.

29.3.6 Policing in Communities— Community Oriented Policing and Evidence-Based Policing

Residents are the first line of informal control in any community, and while the police do not really have the resources to replace that informal social control, they must support and work with them (Wilson and Kelling 1982). Often the police see vehicle patrol as effective as foot or “beat” patrol; however, car officers might see as much as foot officers, but the experience of citizen encounters with police is very different. Wilson and Kelling (1982) in developing their “broken window” theory, place a heavy emphasis on the importance of police-community interaction in building legitimacy and trust of police and in reinforcing the informal social control of the community. They argue the shift from maintaining order—the watchman or guardian role that the community, as discussed above, can share in—to enforcing the laws has limited officers ability to fully interact the community, which can even reduce legitimacy and trust (Wilson and Kelling 1982). Given social challenges with racial disparities and inequalities, these differing roles can lead to serious issues of police-community disagreement and conflict, which weakens social order and provides opportunity for crime, as well as police misconduct and worse. Police and community members need to see themselves as partners in a collaboration to maintain informal control and respond to public safety issues at all levels.

Thus, successful community crime prevention is dependent on effective policing, and police must balance reactive and proactive strategies in addressing crime and public safety and must attend to communal needs as well as address individual calls for service. Both traditions of policing are important (Wilson and Kelling

1982), and police are essential for order maintenance, a job that most urban communities cannot do on their own. If police focus only on individual crime, they will lose sight of communal losses that erode the fabric of the community and its ability to bond within the community to take action and bridge with external institutions, like the police, to work collaboratively on community issues such as crime (Putnam 1995).

Police administrators have two effective strategies in addressing crime in community, a proactive one that involves community policing and a reactive one that provides for targeted interdiction for law enforcement. While we will address an important aspect of modern police law enforcement that represents a movement toward evidence-based policing, a discussion on community oriented policing seems in order. Community oriented policing is more than the diverse range of community activities or programs for engagement, education, and support; rather, it is a strategy centering on citizen engagement in the planning, implementation and assessment of law-enforcement and crime prevention efforts in a city, community, or neighborhood (Gill et al. 2014). Since 1994 this policing strategy has been supported by the Office of Community Oriented Policing—now, Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)—within the U.S. Department of Justice. COPS sees community oriented policing as a philosophy, which offers an alternative to traditional, reactive policing approaches. However, community policing looks differently from community to community as it is integral to each community and police department. Likewise, the outcomes of programs and activities vary greatly, and across the country, community policing is uneven and in need of greater research (Gill et al. 2014).

At its most basic, community oriented policing (COP) focuses on: partnering with community, transforming police organizations, and using problem-solving tactics. COP recognizes that police are not really able to solve public safety problems without the involvement of key community constituencies, from government agencies, to community member, to businesses, to nonprofits, and even the media. These

partnerships seek to foster solution through collaborative problem solving, and they also seek to build public trust or legitimacy in the eyes of the community. This policing approach should also help transform the police organization to work proactively to prevent and deter crime and reduce fear of crime, as well as reactively to investigate and interdict crime. From an institutional perspective community policing partners and problem-solve in areas of hiring and training, including authority and reward systems, as well as use of technology and issue of resource deployment (U.S. Department of Justice 2016). This approach seems an important, yet daunting challenge for police departments in collaborating with communities.

Engaging the community and partnering to both understand the conditions that undergird and contribute to public safety issues and creatively problem solve to proactively address these underlying issues is a cornerstone of community oriented policing. Not that this policing model espouses solving root causes of social problems, as that would be beyond the scope of police agencies, but this approach should target immediate concerns and factors that are solvable and which limit criminal opportunity, empower guardianship, and ameliorate problem behaviors that present public safety risks, promote disorder and fear, or weaken informal social control. All of these contribute to crime, and the public has a role in shaping how police function in their community and on how public safety problems are prioritized (Gill et al. 2014).

In a meta-analysis of studies on community policing, Gill et al. (2014) have shown that community policing has a positive effect on citizen satisfaction and on trust in the police, as well as on perceptions of disorder, but not on reported crime or fear, which as we have discussed can be disabling in some very distressed and high crime communities. Community policing was shown to reduce crime in the range of 5–10%. Given the current racial tensions and mistrust in police-community relations, the strong satisfaction and trust engendered through community policing might make this a priority to revisit in many communities that are severely challenged today.

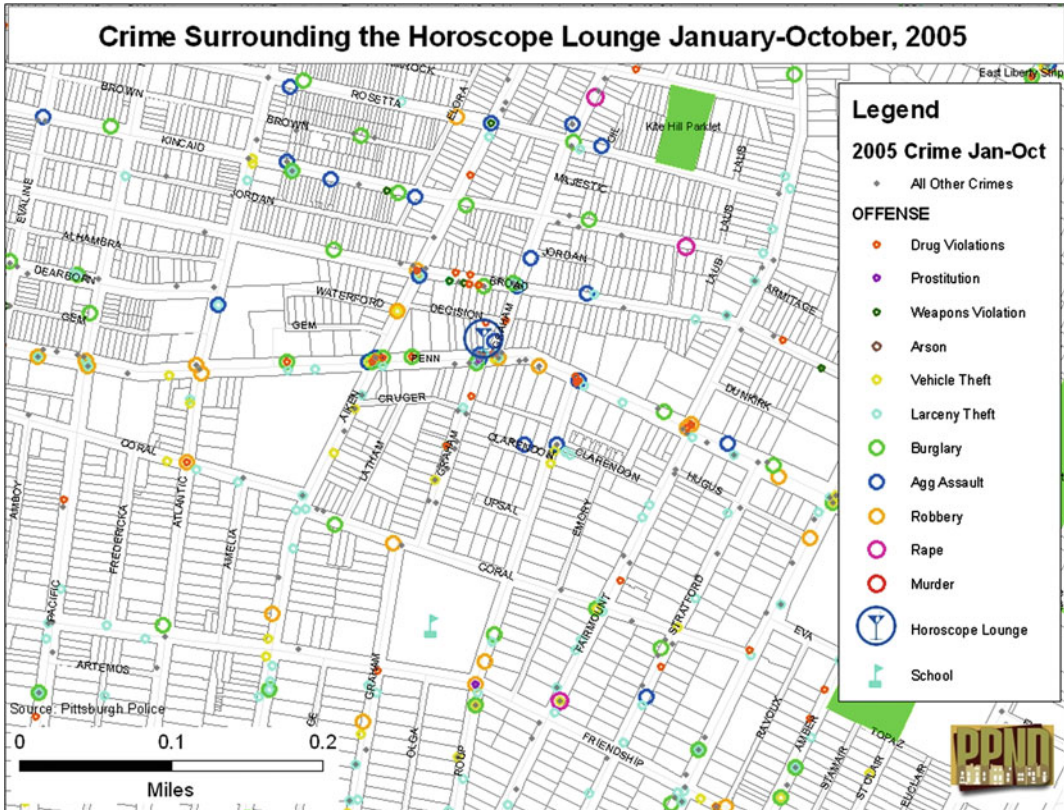
In examining the factors that have led to the decline of crime over the past two decades, Roeder and colleagues (2015) advanced one theory over the many others that were discussed earlier, and this might best be described as evidenced-based policing. Specifically they frame this approach as use of COMPSTAT or COMParative STATistics or a similar type system, which is a strategically managed policing system that connects robust data collection with effective targeting and rapid deployment for reactive and proactive crime interdiction and prevention respectively. This approach began in New York City in the 1990s, and with its success there, spread to police departments across the country with crime reductions ranging from 5 to 15% (Roeder 2015). A similar data-driven approach is now at work in Chicago where rising murder rates in certain neighborhoods are demanding intervention. In working from an evidence base of data on crime and other community issues, police administrators can be more strategic in employing key tactics of community policing to provide deterrence, hot spot interdiction where appropriate to address serious crimes and violence, and other methods like “stop and frisk”—the latter somewhat problematic given concerns with racial profiling. By including intensive follow-up and assessment of prevention and intervention tactics, police departments can establish a culture of evidence-based policing that has demonstrated recurring, incremental reductions in crime (Roeder 2015). By collecting, mapping, and analyzing crimes and related factors in locale, police can more effectively work to interdict criminal activities and proactively work with and engage the community to deter crime.

As discussed in environmental approaches to crime prevention and public safety, the use of geographic information mapping (GIS) can be an effective tool in identifying and addressing crime issues in a community. Mapping can provide a mechanism for tracking incidences of crime and their location within a community that might be helpful in also identifying underlying or related factors that contribute to opportunity for criminal activity, and it may also offer data for better targeting police patrols and/or preventive actions,

including removing targets of high public safety risk, e.g., problem businesses. It can also be helpful in targeting community improvement interventions that help revitalize a neighborhood in the wake of serious crime issues. The following case example of the Horoscope Lounge, a problem bar in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is presented on the use of community mapping to eliminate serious risk factors and promote community development.

Case 4: Community Mapping for Crime Prevention and Community Revitalization

The Horoscope Lounge at the juncture of the Garfield, Friendship, and Bloomfield neighborhoods in Pittsburgh was a long-time “problem bar”. Besides being the site of many incidents and police calls to the location, residents of the surrounding neighborhoods often related anecdotal reports of violence and crime near and around the Horoscope lounge, which were responded to on a case-by-case basis. Moreover, criminal activity in this area was interfering with efforts to establish a new arts-based community revitalization initiative. While the police, residents, and the city through Council and Mayor’s Office calls and reports, were familiar and concerned with this problem bar, efforts to close it were predicated on case-by-case reports. The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, a local community development corporation, asked the University Center for Social and Urban Research at the University of Pittsburgh for help in mapping crime around the Horoscope Lounge in order to aggregate incidents over a period of time. Through the Pittsburgh Neighborhood/Community Information System mapping capacity, a GIS map (see Map 29.2) was prepared for the community group for use at neighborhood meeting with the Mayor and Pittsburgh Police officials. The GIS map showed crime incidents reported in and around the Horoscope Lounge over the most recent



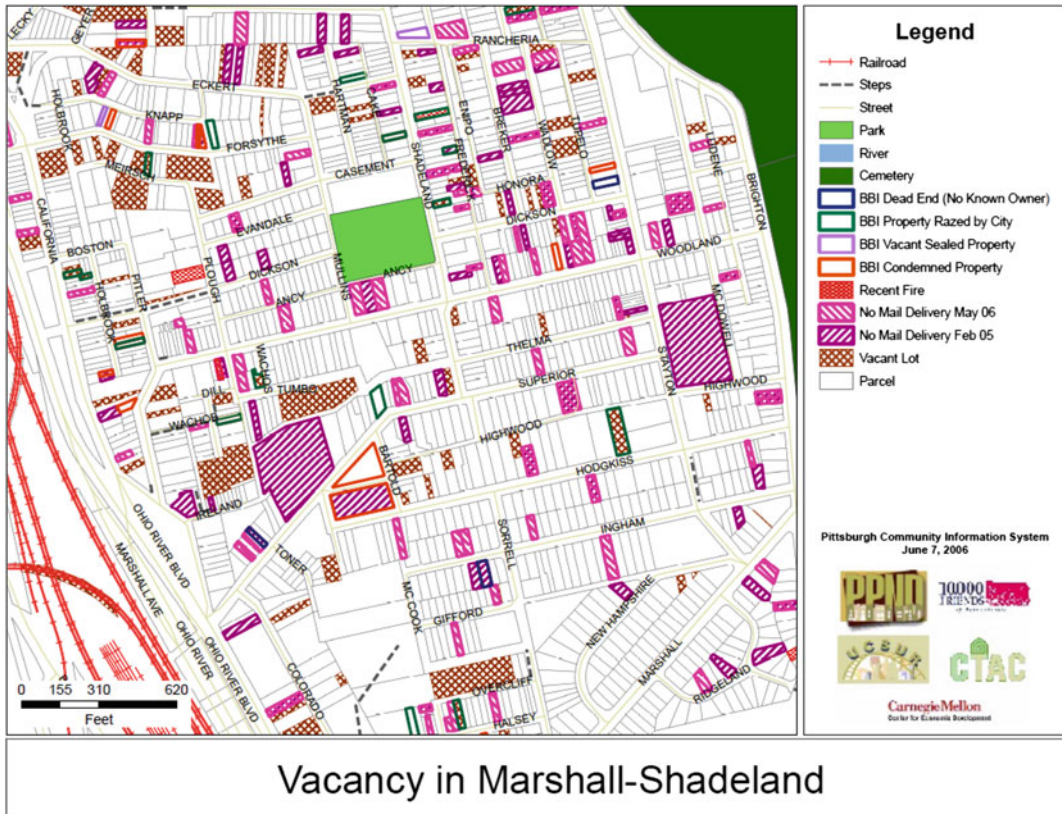
Map 29.2 Crime map around Horoscope Lounge in Garfield

two year period for which data was available. Given the extensive number of incidents and the geographic relation to the Horoscope Lounge that was clearly visible through mapping, the Mayor’s office moved to have this problem bar pad-locked, and it never reopened—much to the relief of the neighborhoods’ residents. In subsequent years, the Penn Avenue Arts Initiative flourished along this commercial and residential corridor. The GIS map served to irrefutably illustrate the aggregated incidents of crime and their geographic proximity to this establishment, as opposed to anecdotal and case-by-case report, which proved a much strong case for closure.

As we have seen with community mapping for safe school environment, the issue of nuisance property is also an important one for identifying relationship to criminal activities in the community. In the Marshall-Shadel and neighborhood of Pittsburgh, community mapping was used to identify vacant property (see Map 29.3) that could be overlaid with crime in the area to underscore targets for neighborhood revitalization or police patrols.

29.3.7 Community Restoration

One final consideration in community-based approach to crime and justice in community that might also have implications for the challenges facing police-community relations and



Map 29.3 Vacant properties (this map and commentary could be deleted for space if needed)

police legitimacy and trust may be found in restorative justice approaches that have paralleled the rise of community crime prevention programs nationally and internationally over the past 40 years. It grew out of the victim rights movement and the movement for diversionary justice programs. We might also explore restorative justice relative to community restoration.

As a theory of justice, restorative justice prioritizes repairing the harm caused by criminal behavior by collaborative engagement of all stakeholders. Beyond addressing reparation of harm, restorative justice can also transform people, relationships, and communities, particularly compared to the traditional relationships among citizens, communities, and government in response to crime and justice. It is not an adversarial process as is common in the formal justice system, and its aim is to resolve conflict using voluntary, informal processes (Bazemore

and Umbreit 2001). Rather than a focus on procedural fairness, restorative justice looks to satisfaction among parties and is guided by those interests in reaching consensus on justice. It also considers due process that everyone is informed on the process and that justice is administered without discrimination. Finally, it gives consideration to the rights of victims and balances those against the rights of accused parties. Restorative justice has several familiar programs or methods to repair harm (Bergseth and Bouffard 2007; Gumz and Grant 2009), including:

- *Victim-offender mediation* in which victims meet offender to discuss the crime and its aftermath, and then address what is need to make the situation right.
- *Circles* are derived from tribal methods of mediating disputes and differences and involve more than victim and offender, and

may include family, community, government representatives.

- *Conferencing*, often family group conferencing involving juveniles, uses facilitated discussion among those most affected by a crime—victim, offender, family, friends—to discuss harm done and accountability necessary to redress the crime.
- *Victim-offender panels* aim at helping offenders understand the impact of their crimes on victims and the community, by using victims and family and friends of victims who share similar experience but are not the actual parties to the offense, e.g., in a drunk-driving class for DUI offenders.
- *Community reparative boards* consist of trained citizens who meet with generally non-violent and minor juvenile offenders under court order to participate and who determine sanction and monitor compliance to the court.
- *Victim assistance* programs support victims to recovery and help them in the criminal justice process and with compensation or other resources.
- *Ex-offender assistance* programs assist offenders while incarcerated and in their release so that they may honor their commitments to redress the harm they have caused and restore the community trust.

Several of these restorative justice practices also make use of other important reparative methods for making amends: (1) *Restitution*, in which offenders provide monetary payment but may also involve in-kind services as repayment to victims; (2) *Community service*, in which offenders must complete unpaid work in the community to address the harm, directly or indirectly caused to the community; and (3) *Victim compensation funds*, in which government or an unrelated party provide monetary payments depending on the offense—many states do have such funds, but these funds and the other two methods are not solely in the province of restorative justice programs and may be used in traditional justice systems (Bergseth and Bouffard 2007).

Case 5: Red Hook Community Justice Center

Although not primarily a restorative justice model, the Red Hook Community Justice Center (Red Hook), established in 2000 in the distressed Red Hook neighborhood of Brooklyn, is more a city-sanctioned community court that embraces restorative justice principles and programs in combining both traditional and alternative criminal and juvenile justice approaches. In many respects Red Hook represents a more comprehensive community-based approach to justice, which is the other side of the law and order coin. More than delivering justice, Red Hook looks to address neighborhood problems, and it also adjudicates neighborhood cases that might otherwise go to Civil, Family, and Criminal courts. It is a national model for such community-based justice and one that has undergone extensive evaluation and continues to be a focus for research (Lee et al. 2013). Red Hook is administered by the Center for Justice Innovation (www.courtinnovation.org/project/red-hook-community-justice-center).

In addition to its city court function, Red Hook also addresses juvenile delinquency matters, hears landlord-tenant disputes as a housing court, and conducts a range of youth and community programs for residents of the community. This community courthouse is staffed by clinical professionals using trauma and evidenced informed approaches to assess and refer for services in its community base, including: short and long-term therapy, drug treatment, and employment and training for youth and offenders in re-entry (Lee et al. 2013). Red Hook also works with youth on strengths-based programs that incorporate art, peer education and mediation, mentoring, and more. Recently, Red Hook implemented a Peacemaking program using circle restorative justice practices to address youth delinquency and

minor community offenses. This community courthouse provides a hub for both conventional justice and alternative programs that help reduce fear and improve public trust. Although it strives to be a comprehensive community approach to neighborhood justice, Red Hook, lacks a strong connection with the police in the neighborhood, although some office work with youth and other programs individually.

Given this restorative justice thread, it might be valuable to explore this approach for working with challenging police-community relations, especially in the wake of community violence. Using restorative justice in addressing and reducing community violence is discussed in our “case for collective efficacy.” In briefly examining the Red Hook community-based justice model, we see how social and behavioral approaches can integrate with community and police crime prevention efforts to make a case for comprehensive community building strategies.

29.3.8 Social and Behavioral Approaches to Crime Prevention and Intervention—The Case for Comprehensive Community Building Strategies

While the more traditional community crime prevention efforts entail environmental, citizen/community engagement, and police interdiction and community preventative strategies, more comprehensive initiatives also focus on social and behavioral approaches that work with family, children, and, especially youth promoting prosocial behaviors and opportunities, as well as providing positive alternatives to at-risk behaviors. Exemplar cities, such as Seattle, have collectively evaluated their community crime prevention efforts as a comprehensive

strategy addressing a range of place, community-based, and social/behavior approaches that was part of a national research study (Gill et al. 2012). Some of these efforts are closely tied with community policing and other law enforcement and justice initiatives, such as the well-known but little studied Weed and Seed program. We would like to provide a brief overview of some key social and behavioral programs; these are varied and far ranging in methods and outcomes that are concerned with reducing at-risk behaviors that may lead to crime, providing family and community support to those at-risk to enhance success, and connecting individuals, families, and, especially youth with positive opportunities and alternatives to crime. We will also discuss and offer a case example on comprehensive community strategies.

While not a complete slate of social and behavioral approaches tied to crime prevention, the following are some of the major categories of programs that include a myriad of activities and modalities:

- *Family-based and early childhood intervention* programs seek to support sound social and psychological development by offering positive life skills training, family support services, and early childhood education and enrichment that may help remediate environmental factors and family issues that can be risk factors for later delinquency and criminal behaviors in keeping with social control theory (Hirschi 1969). These programs also focus on building stronger bonds with and within positive social institutions, such as family, schools, and positive peers. Pre and post-natal care, life skills, effective parenting training, early childhood education and school-readiness, family support centers, and modalities like multi-systemic therapy that address person/family in their social environment are just some of the activities in this area.
- *School-based* programs work to build positive ties with this important social institution in fostering social control and providing prosocial alternatives that keep youth

supervised and engaged in constructive learning activities. Tutoring, mentoring, and other academic support and enrichment activities, positive peer support, and recreational and occupational activities provide a framework for community members and even the police to interact with youth in a positive setting that teaches prosocial behavior and builds human and social capital (Putnam 1995) as a ladder for life and career. School retention as opposed to dropping out of school is a major factor in reducing delinquency and later criminal behavior.

- *Community and recreational* programs are those that offer alternatives and supervised activities for youth in community settings through public, nonprofit, and faith-based organizations and resources. These programs are also often opportunities for police engagement in the community and, especially with children and youth who need to build positive experience with police and for the police to build presence and positive relations with the communities in which they protect and serve.
- *Workforce development* programs, which provide skills and knowledge for specific career pathways and ladders for success, offer jobs and income opportunities as deterrents to delinquent and criminal behavior (Sherman et al. 2006) as well as directly and indirectly address deeper underlying problems such as poverty. These programs offer economic support that can be especially helpful for those in disadvantaged communities, and they also provide positive goal orientation, financial security, and self-esteem. In some communities workforce programs target ex-offenders to aid in positive transition back into the community, as well as an alternative to returning to criminal behavior for economic return
- *Treatment* programs along with *corrections* programs aim to remediate problem behaviors and conditions, such as substance abuse and mental illness, which can lead to the juvenile and criminal justice systems and recidivism. While incarceration is not a pathway for

treatment and rehabilitation, at least in recent times, corrections and treatment programs can help those in re-entry

- *Victim assistance*, which we addressed briefly earlier, supports those who are at-risk of harm or who have been victimized by domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. They can also provide rehabilitation and treatment to abusers to prevent future victimization, and they provide immediate shelter, services, and treatment, including trauma-informed care that reduces harm and helps alleviate some of the short and longer-term impacts of victimization.
- *Secondary intervention and prevention* programs address environmental and behavioral challenges, such as housing for homelessness and harm reduction for substance abuse, which can lead to both criminal behavior and victimization. These programs indirectly support crime prevention and can be important pathways to other programs that offer opportunities/alternatives and prosocial behavior.

These social and behavioral approaches are critical in fostering prosocial behavior and social control that are cornerstones in crime prevention. While they can be effective on individual and family levels, we must also look at how these connect to community and police efforts as part of a more comprehensive strategy to prevent crime and restore community. A number of national models have proven very effective in advancing this comprehensive community building strategy (Stone 1996), especially in target geographies. One of the more famous exemplars of comprehensive community building for educational and life success has been the Harlem Children's Zone (www.hcz.org), which has targeted its efforts in an expanding area of Harlem. By building a program of educational success from early childhood to college and overlaying that with a pipeline of coordinated social services for families and children and an agenda for community restoration and building, the Harlem Children's Zone has inspired replication in many cities, as well as a significant

federal program, the Promise Neighborhood Initiative. Similar place-based initiatives are now being pursued by larger foundations, and are now reflected in the major federal place-based program, the Choice Neighborhood Initiative. Although these are not identified as primarily crime prevention programs, they address the deeper and underlying social and community issues that foment delinquency and criminal or at-risk behaviors.

One recent major federal police-community initiative did, for a time, seek a more comprehensive approach to reducing crime and promoting public safety, the Weed and Seed Program.

Case 6: Police-Community Approaches —Weed and Seed

The U.S. Department of Justice's Weed and Seed program was developed to demonstrate an innovative and comprehensive approach to law enforcement and community revitalization, and to prevent and control violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity in target areas. The program, initiated in 1991, attempts to weed out violent crime, gang activity, and drug use and trafficking in target areas, and then seed the target area by restoring the neighborhood through social and economic revitalization. Weed and Seed has three objectives: (1) develop a comprehensive, multiagency strategy to control and prevent violent crime, drug trafficking, and drug-related crime in target neighborhoods; (2) coordinate and integrate existing and new initiatives to concentrate resources and maximize their impact on reducing and preventing violent crime, drug trafficking, and gang activity; and (3) mobilize community residents in the target areas to assist law enforcement in identifying and removing violent offenders and drug traffickers from the community and to assist other human service agencies in identifying and responding to service needs of the

target area (U.S. Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation 2016). To achieve these goals, Weed and Seed integrates law enforcement, community policing, prevention, interdiction, treatment, and neighborhood restoration efforts.

The Weed and Seed program was implemented in more than 150 communities across the country in its earliest iterations, and over 200 before it was ended in 2010. Evaluations of Weed and Seed programs showed programs varied greatly in their impact and success from community to community (Dunworth et al. 1999), and while many efforts have been sustained at the local level, the program's funding has been eliminated. Critics noted that, especially in its earliest iterations, the program was long on the Weeding and short on Seeding; some even labeling it a neo-liberal approach (Garfield 2010). Some critiques noted that the Seed approaches did little to address the underlying economic conditions and poverty in the community, and the community revitalization efforts were limited (Garfield 2010). However, the funding, which at its peak averaged \$250,000 for each community in the program (U.S. Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation 2016) could hardly be expected to make much inroad on recalcitrant issues such as poverty and community revitalization. Weed and Seed programs did attempt to pursue more comprehensive community building strategies, and the Seed portion of the program was significantly focused on social and behavioral approaches to crime prevention. Overall, Weed and Seed attempted to coordinate community policing—as previously discussed—with community-based citizen engagement approaches and social/behavioral efforts that target limited geographies in the cities that participated in this long-running program.

29.4 Conclusions

We have attempted to examine a broad range of community crime prevention and public safety efforts that continue to have relevance today in the context of challenging police-community relations and the possible beginnings of a rise in violent crime, at least in distressed urban communities facing growing inequalities and racial disparities. However, the issue of community violence, whether gangs or general disorder and violent crime remains a crisis in many communities; as we explore community and youth violence, we do so through the lens of a critical theory of collective efficacy.

It is hard not to look at the literature and theories of communities and crime and explore the approaches to community crime without noticing the ebb and flow of efforts and study, albeit limited, of crime and crime prevention in communities. As we experience a political climate with yet another call for “law and order” that harkens to early such crises and responses to the 1960s/70s urban and political unrest and the again in the 1980s/90s, we see that the options seem to rely on either militarized police or, hopefully, a more measure approach that address the foundation of informal social control to be found in collective efficacy and building social trust. Perhaps, a more restorative approach to community and a more community approach to policing might afford the opportunity to begin to address the deeper issue and underlying forces that lead to communities of distress and disorder that give rise to violence and foster crime. In many ways, the literature and this examinations begs the issue of history repeating itself, as well as the recognition that the challenge that have long been with us as still with us, despite our incremental progress.

From this examination of what has worked in community crime prevention and intervention, three critical concerns must be considered for addressing crime in communities

- The issue of rising inequality and racial disparities and the fact that all social problems from crime to health to poor education to lack trust are greater in more unequal societies (Wilkinson and Pinkett 2009);
- The weakness of crime prevention interventions in high crime areas due to lack of trust among residents, and the need to rebuild or restore trust among residents;
- The crisis of trust between police and communities, especially communities of color—the restoration of trust and collaboration between citizens and the police.

These concerns present us with opportunities for more meaningful and timely study on the connection of crime and community, as well as the theories and approaches that help us understand our modest successes and the work yet to be done in our communities.

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Abstract

There is increasing pressure from funding agencies and higher levels of government for communities and social service agencies to carry out needs assessments. Generally needs assessments are assigned the task of discerning the primary needs a community faces as part of efforts by social service agencies or government offices to set priorities in terms of which services they should provide. This chapter discusses dilemmas and inherent problems that frequently accompany the needs assessment process. A primary problem is that those asking for needs assessments tend to seek quantitative descriptions of community problems and needs and presentations of data that make each need seem discrete rather than intertwined. Related to this quantification is a desire to view problems and possible solutions

using a deductive explanatory models that assumes there are clear-cut causes and effects. Not supported are qualitative research approaches that present problems as intertwined and causes as complex and difficult to tease apart even though such an approach may be more realistic and theoretically meaningful. Needs assessments also present ethical problems since those commissioning studies may have an institutional interest in certain findings coming out of research. Researchers face the problem of presenting “accurate” descriptions of problems that sponsors do not want to hear about.

As increased emphasis is placed on data driven decision making in nearly every industry, the need for high quality community needs assessments has increased. Nonprofits must justify the need for, and effectiveness of, their overall organization and specific programs in order to obtain funding, and accurate and nuanced data are critical for both baseline and monitoring studies. However, many nonprofits do not have the internal resources necessary to collect, analyze, or interpret these data. Hospitals must regularly assess the extent to which they are effectively serving the needs of the communities around them to remain eligible for government funding and these studies are labor intensive, costly, and potential sources of conflict. Policy-makers must be attentive to public perceptions of

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community need, as speaking to these perceptions wins elections, but the critical differences between perception of need and objective needs get lost in many studies. As the need for accurate information on community need increases, we must grapple with the significant challenges involved in conducting these assessments well, interpreting the data effectively, and working with decision-makers who need to understand the data and appropriate uses for it if they are to utilize it effectively. As part of the Bloomsburg University Center for Community Research and Consulting, the authors have been involved in many large and small community needs assessments, and have become familiar with typical patterns, pitfalls, and opportunities. This chapter outlines five unique dilemmas associated with community needs assessments, illustrates these dilemmas with case studies, and proposes solutions to assist researchers, organizations, and policymakers in successfully utilizing community needs assessments to support their efforts.

The first two methodological dilemmas associated with community needs assessments that we will discuss are grounded in fundamental contradictions between the methods of inquiry most valued by powerful institutions, such as funding sources and legislative bodies, and a research process that accurately addresses the broad questions surrounding what a community's true needs are. The first of these dilemmas stems from the fact that many decision makers define data as exclusively numeric. However, the fine-grained understanding of community and context necessary to accurately understand community patterns and interpret quantitative data often requires at least some qualitative methodological work.

The second dilemma is closely related to the first in that the quantitative research model valued by many institutions typically follows a deductive logic including a research design that begins with theoretical assertions that are tested statistically. However, such a model assumes that we know enough about the community and its needs to test the right hypotheses and draw reasonable conclusions from these findings. Given the nuance involved in understanding how

individuals and communities define, perceive, experience, and respond to need, it often makes sense to follow a more inductive logic that begins with developing an understanding of the community and issues and uses qualitative methods to identify patterns and develop a theoretical model of what the community needs are. Once a theory that accounts for the community context being studied is developed, the hypothesized patterns can be tested statistically through quantitative research. Adding this inductive phase to community needs assessments can seem needlessly expensive and time consuming to stakeholders who have been trained to expect statistical analysis to tell the whole story accurately.

A third dilemma, or more accurately set of dilemmas, involves definitions. Community needs are multilayered, interconnected, and social constructed. If a study focused on social service needs identifies drug use as a problem within the community, it can remain quite unclear whether the community needs more drug treatment facilities, more generalist mental health facilities, more police, more prevention initiatives, more jobs, or something else entirely. Stakeholders often hope that a community needs assessment will provide them with an accurate diagnosis of all that ails their community, coupled with a prescription for the appropriate treatments to resolve the problems, and a treatment schedule that will allow them to identify where they should begin and end. It is therefore important to carefully define the scope of the study. This includes not just geography and timeframe, but also issues such as whether you will look at both perceptions and experiences and whose perceptions and experiences must be included. It is also important to be clear regarding whether you are assessing the prevalence of a condition, the costs of the condition, the causes of the condition, the relative merits of various interventions, or all of the above.

These definitional dilemmas can be diminished or exacerbated by creating research teams that involve collaboration between researchers and other stakeholders. Collaboration is a fourth dilemma that represents opportunities to utilize

the expertise of community leaders, community members, and/or outside organizations to help design a study that meets the needs of all parties, speaks in a palatable way to relevant constituencies, and places the findings within community and organizational contexts that maximize their utility. However, collaboration can also lead to disputes over study priorities, challenges related to differing institutional norms, budget rules, and calendars, and differences in professional norms across stakeholders.

Finally, community needs assessments present unique ethical dilemmas. The challenges of remaining objective can be particularly great when the outcome of the study could impact funding for organizations within our own communities. There can be significant pressure from collaborators to design a biased methodology, to schedule the release of a report at a moment that could be opportune for some stakeholder, or to use language that will have special appeal to some constituencies. This public focus on the research methodology and outcomes often differs from the norms of academic presentation and peer reviewed publication that researchers are typically trained for in graduate programs, and those conducting community needs assessments must be prepared to deal with these unique pressures.

30.1 Literature Review

Research on community needs assessments confirms the significant and wide ranging data needs of program designers and directors (Witkin 1984), community organizations (Hanson et al. 2012), charitable organizations (Buchanan 2016), educators (Miller and Minkin 2016), government agencies (Hardy et al. 2015), policymakers (Tutuncu and Lieberman 2016), and healthcare systems (Santilli et al. 2016).

When stressing the need for data, many decision makers actually mean that they want to see quantitative data. Bourgeault (2012) outlines

the unique challenges of obtaining funding for qualitative research. Daniels et al. (2016) detail the challenges of publishing qualitative research that is too often perceived by prestigious journals as exploratory work rather than fully articulated findings. Albert et al. (2008) studied biomedical researchers' perceptions of qualitative research and found that most were either ambivalent or unreceptive to these findings. Having collaborated with social science researchers increased biomedical researchers' acceptance for social science research.

Barnham (2015) suggests that we often think of quantitative data as being able to tell us what is happening and qualitative data being able to tell us why it is happening. The emphasis on efficiently and cost effectively enumerating problems found in much assessment research reflects this emphasis on 'what' as opposed to 'why', and thus on quantitative research. However, many researchers question whether the most effective approach to understanding challenges within a community is to begin with counting problems or needs without attention to context and meaning. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) famously proposed an assets based approach to community development that acknowledged the blind spots created by looking only at a community's weaknesses and proposed a methodology that includes understanding the assets as well as the needs within a community and generally developing a more nuanced understanding of how the community sees and uses its resources. Watkins and Cavale (2014) stress the importance of recognizing that questions of what constitutes a need and how we define need shape all aspects of our data collection and findings. Wright et al. (1998) note the extent to which definitions of what constitutes a need differ across professional groups. Altschuld et al. (2014) propose a hybrid model that incorporates needs, assets, what the needs are, and why they exist into community assessments.

Finifer et al. (2005) caution against the common assessment practice of collecting a single cross-sectional sample noting that this risks missing important input not only from more disadvantaged subgroups of the population, but

also from other stakeholders, such as service providers, who may be able to shine light on “hidden” issues, such as challenges to implementing certain solutions. These authors stress the importance of using both quantitative and qualitative methods, as certain issues that may not be uncovered by one method may arise in the other.

Most researchers advocate for assessments that involve some level of collaboration with community groups. Chavis and Florin (1990), define community involvement as “a process of voluntary cooperation and self-help/mutual aid among residents of a locale aimed at the improved physical, social, and economic conditions which includes citizen action, voluntary participation, cooperation and collaborative problem solving, empowerment, and a focus on community-wide outcomes.” Jagosh et al. (2012, 2015) offer thorough analysis of academic-community partnerships and the ways in which they can enhance community based research through project design, implementation, interpretation, dissemination, and on into action based on the findings and future collaborations between research partners. Santilli et al. (2016) employed a community engaged approach that involved employing trained community members to collect data in their neighborhoods, which resulted in high response rates and data validity as well as valuable new skills for the community members who worked as interviewers.

While championing the benefits of collaborative research, scholars also detail the many challenges inherent to this work. Some are frustrating but relatively straightforward challenges related to inflexible hiring practices and schedules in large bureaucracies (Santilli et al. 2016). Others are more complex, such as the discussions of conflict between stakeholders as having the potential to destroy or build team synergy depending on how conflict is managed (Jagosh et al. 2012).

A challenge of academic-community partnership not adequately addressed in the literature is the assumption that communities and/or service providers have access to researchers competent enough to measure, analyze, and interpret

community data. It can be extremely difficult for community members to identify and contact appropriate research partners and many scholars embedded in institutions of higher education are reluctant to get involved in these projects due to the challenging nature of the work coupled with promotion and tenure systems that often do not acknowledge the importance of community based research.

The challenge of what it is most important or appropriate to assess is a hotly contested one in the literature. Finifer et al. (2005) note that dependence on intuition and “common knowledge” may lead researchers and service providers to identify needs that are not truly representative of the broader community and argue that the use of empirical research to identify the needs of a community (which can be agreed on by all stakeholders-service providers, decision-makers, and the target population) as well as offer solutions, presents an opportunity for community needs assessments to be more cost-efficient and effective.

Next, while traditional needs assessments normally focus only on *identifying* needs, Finifer et al. (2005) suggest an “action-oriented approach” in order to *address* a community’s needs. Essentially this would entail the effective dissemination of findings as well as suggested solutions to the local community and organizations who provide services to the community. While the method(s) of dissemination would have to take into account the preferences of the target population(s) (see Colby et al. 2011), one cannot ignore the growing prevalence of the internet as an opportunity to effectively share findings and suggestions with the largest audience (see Chavkin and Chavkin 2008 for best practices in online dissemination). The inclusion of an implementation plan, constructed with the input of all stakeholders, would help to ensure that needs are not just simply identified, but are also satisfactorily addressed.

Finally, a collaborative approach in which all pertinent parties are represented is essential to a successful execution of a community needs assessment. Combining the various perspectives and resources of all stakeholders significantly

supports the three components of the assessment process model (assessment, dissemination, and implementation). All too often, researchers are left to their own devices when conducting a community needs assessment. This isolation is exacerbated when the researchers are not themselves members of the target community. Input from community members and service providers may open up the perspective of researchers while the skills those researchers possess (measuring differences; analyzing data) could help communities determine the effectiveness of their responses to community needs. This collaboration among shareholders also ensures a common understanding of a community's needs as well as shared expectations of all groups in response to those needs. This knowledge could very well prevent confusion, ambiguity, and frustration during the implementation phase.

30.2 Five Unique Dilemmas Associated with Community Needs Assessments

All research involves complex decisions, but community needs assessments are particularly high stakes, involve a wide range of stakeholders, and blur the lines between science and activism in ways that insert political pressure, organizational turf, communication challenges, and condensed timelines into an already complex process. Here we will discuss five unique dilemmas associated with community needs assessments, examples of how these dilemmas often manifest themselves, and tips for managing them well.

30.2.1 Preference for Quantitative Data

The first of these dilemmas stems from the fact that many decision makers, including organizations asking for assessment data as a means of evaluating programs, funding sources seeking evidence to assist with their allocations process, and legislators attempting to determine which

data should drive policy, often narrowly define scientific data as quantitative data. It is therefore no surprise that many groups only consider collecting quantitative data when conducting a needs assessment. As the old saying goes, "If you only have a hammer, everything starts to look like a nail." By limiting the acceptable tools for assessing community need, we limit the questions we can ask.

When approached with requests for community needs assessments the authors have almost always been asked to provide clients with counts of how many people experience certain problems and perhaps a comparison of these numbers across time, geography, or demographic groups. Once we have these counts, we are often asked to guess at why the patterns we uncover exist. For example, if we find that there is more childhood obesity in town A than in town B, we are asked to explain what can be done to help the children in town A achieve better health. Of course we can use academic literature to identify generally successful ways to decrease childhood obesity, but if we're really interested in understanding the children in town A, at least some qualitative follow-up to determine what characteristics of town A are leading to obesity. Without more a more fine-grained understanding of community and context it is very difficult to interpret quantitative data well.

Some alarming patterns associated with this preference for quantitative data are methodologically unsophisticated efforts to quantify variables, efforts to use quantitative data in ways that are not scientifically sound, and the possibility of decision makers acting on weak or even false data simply because they are impressively numeric.

We witnessed an example of all three of these patterns when asked to assist a small rural library. The library was asked by their funding source to provide county-wide data on childhood literacy including high school graduation rates and standardized test scores, data on the outcomes of children in the library's youth reading program, and an analysis of the connections between the two. The library's service area was a fairly small town of roughly 10,000 people

within a county whose population was close to 100,000. The youth reading program had existed for 3 years and served between 20 and 35 children per year with many of the children participating all 3 years. Most of the participating children were between the ages of 5 and 12. So the library was essentially being asked to demonstrate how their intensive work with a very small group of young people, none of whom were in high school yet, was having an impact on county-wide standardized test scores and rates of high school graduation.

The library's hard working, motivated, and highly skilled staff did not include any professional researchers. The staff's first response was to become overwhelmed and simply hope the request would eventually go away. This actually worked for a few years, but the funding source eventually reached to a regional university to find researchers to help the library with their task, and informed the library that continued funding was contingent on their providing the requested data. When we met with the library to learn about the questions they needed answered and the directions they had been given, it became clear that our job was going to be as much about educating all involved about the strengths and limitations of data as conducting research.

Our team met with the library staff to learn about their reading program, the records they had been keeping on the young participants, and their ability and willingness to begin collecting new data. What we found was a great deal of enthusiasm in the reading program, ample anecdotal evidence of the program's effectiveness, and a great deal of cynicism about the value of collecting data. Part of the cynicism was grounded in the staff's well-founded doubts that their tiny reading program was influencing county-wide educational outcomes and fear that collecting data would result in them losing funding. Our next step was to schedule a meeting with the funding agency and library where we could all discuss the research plan we proposed.

At the meeting we explained to all involved the limitations of the statistics they had planned to use including the challenges of looking at county-wide data when assessing the educational

needs of such a small geographically distinct part of the county, the fact that a program with such a small number of participants would be unlikely to significantly change county or even school district scores or rates regardless of how effective it was, and the fact that even assuming the program would affect graduation rates, it would take years of labor intensive and costly tracking to collect accurate data on these outcomes.

In this case we were fortunate to have both a funding agency and library staff who listened carefully to our concerns and very quickly agreed to an alternate plan that involved using school district data to establish a case for the need for a reading program, the collection of simple qualitative and quantitative data from program participants and their parents as well as staff, and an effort to track as many program participants as possible to determine long-term outcomes. We also discussed the limitations of the very tiny samples we would have in the first few years and the fact that more complex statistical analysis would have to wait until enough unique children had passed through the program to provide a viable sample. With the new plan the library felt that their program was being fairly evaluated and that their staff could reasonably carry out what was asked of them. The funding source had some immediate qualitative data on the program to show their board and present to their allocations team, the promise of further analysis in the future, and a written statement from experts to justify their support of the new plan.

It is unlikely that there will be a sudden shift that makes qualitative research seem more scientific in the eyes of decision makers. However, researchers can be advocates for improved needs assessments by taking the opportunity to explain the limitations of and appropriate uses of quantitative data as well as the science of qualitative research whenever possible, especially to those who have the power to change policies within organizations who use data. As an intermediate step, we have found that advocating for mixed methods studies that produce the quantitative data that many community groups need but also some qualitative data that adds helpful context and nuance produces higher quality reports that

are more useful to all involved while still satisfying funding agencies, assessment requirements, and those who will only trust numeric findings.

30.2.2 Preference for a Deductive Approach

The second dilemma is closely related to the first in that the quantitative research model valued by many institutions typically follows a deductive logic including a research design that begins with theoretical assertions that are tested statistically. However, the typical process of community needs assessments follows a more inductive logic where we are looking at a specific setting and trying to use information about that setting to draw conclusions about the patterns we see there. Again, because statistical analysis is seen as the most valuable tool in our kit, we pull out that tool and begin using it in earnest even though the questions we initially need to answer might be better addressed with a different tool. Given the nuance involved in understanding how individuals and communities define, perceive, experience, and respond to need, it often makes sense to follow a more inductive logic that begins with developing an understanding of the community using qualitative methods to identify patterns and develop a theoretical model of what the community needs are. Once a theory that accounts for the community context being studied is developed, the hypothesized patterns can be tested statistically through quantitative research. However, adding this inductive phase to community needs assessments can seem needlessly expensive and time consuming to stakeholders who have been trained to expect statistical analysis to tell the whole story accurately.

Our team conducted a social service needs assessment for a rural county composed of 4 fairly demographically distinct regions. The original project was to collect counts of the type of needs residents of the county experienced or perceived other to experience in order to assist with social service planning and delivery and to provide data to support grant applications. This initially straightforward seeming task became

more interesting as the data showed dramatic differences in reported perceptions of need in the different regions of the county that were simply not supported by existing data on the prevalence of these issues. For example, one area of the county was characterized by significantly higher levels of concern about crime, drug and alcohol abuse, and teen pregnancy compared to the rest of the county, yet data on actual trends in these problems showed this area to have equal or even lower rates than their neighbors.

When the report on the assessment came out, representatives from this particularly anxious area of the county approached the research team asking us to look further into the patterns we found. We have since completed multiple qualitative and quantitative studies in this area and found a great deal of information that explains the unusual patterns in our initial data. One layer to this pattern is disproportionately negative emphasis in news coverage surrounding this community. There was only one print newspaper available in the region, and this paper had this specific area of the county to frame as dysfunctional, impoverished, and crime riddled. Qualitative analysis of newspaper coverage confirmed disproportionately negative coverage and interviews with community members confirmed the impact of this coverage and regional stereotypes about the community.

Perhaps most importantly, adding this more nuanced information about why there is so much concern about certain issues in this area allowed service providers to better use the quantitative data to inform service delivery. This community has since utilized internal means of communication and social media to spread information about the many strengths and triumphs of the area and effectively increased community pride, collaboration, and resources.

In many cases close collaboration with community members can offer a foundation for theory development prior to theory testing through quantitative methods. However, it can be too easy for research teams with or without community collaboration, to get right down to the business of writing survey questions rather than taking the time to really think through what is

already known about the community and how that might shape the questions that need to be asked. In other cases, reviews of published information about the community can help build this foundation. In an ideal world, where funding and time were not scarce, community needs assessments could work as part of a research cycle with alternating inductive and deductive phases each building on the previous and creating a foundation for the next. Whatever a specific project's resources allow, explicitly thinking about theory development as part of the assessment process can help remind researchers to include at least some form of theory development in their process.

30.2.3 Issues of Definition and Scope

While the idea of creating a list of community needs with frequency data for each can initially look straightforward, needs are multilayered, interconnected, and socially constructed. If we find that a community has a high rate of homelessness, this could mean there is not enough available housing, there are not enough jobs, there are unmet healthcare needs, a recent disaster impacted the area, or this is an area that is particularly appealing to homeless individuals due to the weather. If we find that a community has a low rate of homelessness, it could mean that the community is in good financial condition and has adequate housing, or that not many people have met this community's definition of homeless, or that our measures of homelessness are not working in this community. Thus, if our needs assessment asked how many homeless individuals live in the area, we only have something useful to say if we are truly certain that our measures of the frequency of the pattern were properly calibrated and executed for this community, and even so we cannot say a lot about how to solve the problem. If we specifically find that the homeless have not been able to find jobs that pay enough to provide housing, we still do not know whether the need is available jobs, job skills, transportation, or motivation. The list of potential solutions remains long. People in

different parts of a community often have different needs, needs sometimes change quickly, and sometimes it is a matrix of needs that matters more than any individual need.

Sometimes, a community cannot agree on what constitutes a need in the first place. Is a community that lacks an abortion provider missing an important healthcare option or idyllic in that its abortion rate is low? Does a high rate of methamphetamine arrests mean that there is an alarming drug problem or that the police are extremely effective in policing the use of this drug?

Unfortunately, there is not a simple answer to this complex set of problems. Instead we offer a caution that it is critical to begin a needs assessment with these issues in mind and to clearly define what constitutes a need, who determines what is or is not considered a need in this study, exactly what needs will be assessed, the depth with which you will assess each need, the definitions you will use for each need, and the limitations all of the above decisions will impose on your conclusions. Consumers of needs assessments often hope that an assessment will provide them with a clear strategy to identify, explain, and solve the problems in their community. More realistically, an assessment can typically offer some insight into some aspects of how some problems impact some groups within an area and serve as part of an ongoing process where each effort to assess needs helps us refine our efforts and guide the next set of questions we ask. The fact that a particular need does not appear urgent in one study could have as much to do with the definition of need as with patterns in the community.

An area our team has studied over the course of several years and multiple projects is rural homelessness. We began the work knowing that one of the challenges of working with the rural homeless was that the rural homeless tend to be physically hidden by rural geography, and therefore rural people often believe homelessness not to be a problem in their community in the same way it is in urban areas. Rural homeless often sleep in temporary shelters in the woods or fields where they are not visible to passersby.

This creates a lack of interest in assessing community needs surrounding homelessness in these areas and makes acquiring funds for homelessness programs and even serving the group well more difficult.

Initially, assessing rates of homelessness in rural areas compared to urban areas in order to help determine the true frequency and nature of the problem seemed like a straightforward task. We committed to providing legislators and service providers with analysis only to find that there were conflicting definitions of what characteristics were necessary to define an individual or group as homeless. There were wide differences in the definition of homeless across the many social service groups that serve the homeless and even across state and federal agencies tasked with tracking the population. The result was that formal estimates from existing data sources might range from an estimated 5 homeless in an area to 350 homeless in that same area for the same timeframe. This makes it very difficult to draw conclusions about the needs within the community using existing data, and hard to gather new data from existing organizations because their own definitions of who is included in the populations of homeless is shaped by the specific definitions used by their group.

One critical definitional struggle surrounds a group known as couch surfers. These are individuals or groups who do not have a place of their own to live, so they stay for short periods of time with different friends or relatives. They might sleep in their sister's spare room for a few weeks, then sleep on a friend's couch for a while, then stay with another relative. Many definitions of homeless do not include this group because they technically have a place to stay, even if that place is temporary and not part of a long-term solution. In rural areas, the focus of our research, evidence suggests that this is the most common form of homelessness. This challenge means that most large data sets do not include this very common form of rural housing insecurity, and most state and federal data sets suggest that there are relatively few homeless in rural areas while direct service providers report large numbers of requests for housing assistance from these couch

surfing individuals. Thus, when decisions are made about funding to address homelessness, programs are designed to assist the homeless, and further assessments are conducted to help increase understanding of the mechanisms that lead to or prevent homelessness, the most common form of rural homelessness is not even discussed.

We have worked to address this issue by working to raise awareness among key decision makers including legislators, state and federal agencies, and social service providers that these definitional issues make it difficult for them to truly understand the community needs they are tasked with addressing and that the only way to collect data that can truly be useful is to collect data that accurately reflects community needs. There are currently significant efforts to improve data collection on homelessness in the state of Pennsylvania.

A more immediate solution for those conducting community needs assessments is to be very careful in learning what definitions were used in the collection of any existing data one plans to use, to carefully research the definitions already being used by others before beginning one's own project, and to very carefully explain definitions and their significance when discussing research findings with others. Given the emphasis on quantitative data, glut of such data, and lack of skills in interpreting and critiquing these data, people are often all too happy to hear that a given phenomenon is increasing or decreasing and act on that data. It is up to responsible researchers to draw people's awareness to the fact that these simple trends almost never tell the whole story for all members of a population, in all locations, at all times. Understanding what definition of need was used, what unit of analysis was studied, and what temporal dimensions were considered are all absolutely necessary to understanding the patterns found in a data set.

It is also important to include clear statements of the definitions used and the scope of the project in plans for and reports on needs assessments. As individuals and groups seek the data they need to obtain funding, keep a program

viable, or answer to a constituency, it can be all too easy and tempting to utilize whatever data they can find. Being extremely clear as to the limits of what population, area, and concepts were involved in a project is critical to making our work usable to others in the most transparent ways possible. It is a basic tenant of research that we must be careful about assuming that our findings are generalizable from one population or setting to others without evidence, so we must communicate this understanding to those who consume community needs assessments.

30.2.4 Opportunities and Challenges Associated with Collaboration

As discussed above, many researchers stress the value of collaboration when conducting community needs assessments. Collaboration offers the opportunity to avoid several of the challenges discussed above. Close collaboration offer the opportunity to build rapport between groups who collect and use data and researchers, which can improve understandings of the relative value and utility of qualitative and quantitative data in different settings, increase opportunities to include community leaders in data analysis that can supplement quantitative findings with more nuanced commentary from informants who have a deep understanding of the community, and can overcome some of the definitional confusion discussed above by actively involving multiple stakeholders in the process of defining the scope and concepts of interest. Collaboration can also increase community trust and therefore participation in a study.

However, collaboration also presents multiple challenges that researchers must be prepared to address. Community members often have their own investment in certain parts of the community and certain community issues, and can therefore introduce bias. The scientific expectation of objectivity can even be troubling to some community groups who see certain ideals as self-evident. On one occasion our team was conducting a door-to-door study of a community

and was directed by some community partners to skip a certain row of houses in our data collection effort because the residents in that section did not attend community meetings, had frequent contact with law enforcement, and did not usually stay in the community for long. Our team felt it important that all community members be included in the study. Our partners seemed bothered by what they perceived as our lack of faith in their insider knowledge of how their community worked. They also raised concerns that surveying in this area of the community could present a safety issue for our interviewers due to higher crime rates in this area. Our team persisted and it became clear that the residents of this section of the neighborhood were younger and lower income than the typical neighborhood residents and represented a distinct perspective on the community.

Similarly, community leaders often have perceptions of the community shaped by their experience within it that can make them extremely valuable partners but also introduce community pressures that researchers are more immune to. When involving the leaders of nonprofits, elected officials, or religious leaders, researchers can find that these individuals must be cognizant of how their community will perceive any research questions. We have encountered community partners who were wary of survey questions surrounding race, sexuality, and income for fear that community members would think that they personally were being intrusive by being involved with a study that asked such personal questions.

Part of the pressure on community leaders to be concerned about public opinion during a needs assessment stems from the fact that local media are often interested in the process and outcomes of community needs assessments. Academic researchers typically receive no training on how to manage the press or deal with a public relations crisis. This is an area where it is also very important to have clear understandings before a project begins that dictate what will be released to the media, when, and by whom. We recommend consulting with public relations professionals about this process, particularly

when the assessment is drawing a lot of public interest, has significant implications for the community, or involves controversial issues. Our team has worked on projects where an institutional partner asked that their public relations team be involved with any discussions with the press, and in some cases the advice of these professionals has been critical in maintaining control of the appropriate release of project methodology and findings.

We have found that frank conversations about the scientific method, objectivity, research ethics, and public relations at the very beginning of a collaboration can be extremely useful in preventing challenges. Having had a frank discussion of these professional norms, it is then easier to refer back to them and remind partners that researchers are often held to standards that can seem to others as excessively rigid. This deflects any conflict away from the specific relationship between collaborators and toward a basic pre-agreed upon set of standards external to this relationship. For example, we have worked with many service providers who spend their days with complete access to client files full of very personal data and are required to ask for, access, and use these data to determine eligibility for services. It can be very hard for them to understand that researchers would be seen as coercive if they required an informant to disclose personal information in order to receive services. A brief discussion of Institutional Review Boards and their requirements often helps collaborators understand some aspects of the research process as beyond that individual researcher's control.

Perhaps some of the largest challenges involved in collaboration across institutions are the differing institutional norms, budget rules, and calendars. These seem like small and surface level challenges, but they can have a dramatic impact on projects if not attended to well. Particularly when the cultures of the institutions differ significantly, it can be very important to be attentive to these differences and address them quickly. In one of our early projects, we found that the professional researchers on the team were inclined to spend hours discussing the relative merits of different sampling strategies.

After several long meetings, one of our community partners noted this pattern and that she did not understand or have much interest in these discussions, was waiting for the more practical aspects of the work, and was feeling stressed because she was missing other important work to sit in long meetings where she did not feel she could contribute. This created an opening for a group discussion in which several other collaborators shared similar feelings and we agreed to form subgroups to focus on some of the more technical aspects of the work and bring condensed versions of these discussions back to the main group for discussion. This decision was met with great relief by several members of the group and resulted in more lively and enthusiastic meetings as members felt they had permission to engage where they felt most useful.

In more practical terms, we have found that schedules and budgets can be hurdles but can be addressed well if addressed early. One common issue is that all partners are able to access different pools of funding and different pools of funding each come with different rules. For example, state universities often have fairly restrictive rules surrounding the purchase of food while other agencies might not. Discussing these rules early so that budgetary decisions can be made in such a way as to avoid excessive bureaucracy and delays creates much better working relationships. Similarly, the academic calendar can be quite foreign to those who do not live by it. We have found it very important to let community partners know that there are certain times of year where both faculty and students become unavailable. The fact that most university research teams are not productive during midterms, finals, and periods where the school is closed can be unavoidable, and research partners who understand this in advance are better able to budget their own time.

The specific culture of the Center for Community Research and Consulting, with which both authors have been employed, is one that encourages the involvement of undergraduate students in all aspects of the research process. This is an excellent way to train undergraduate students as researchers and professionals, but it

also means that some tasks take longer than they would in a traditional research setting because students are still learning skills, some conversations take longer as faculty use them as opportunities to explain an idea in greater detail for the students' benefit, or that some meetings might be slightly less professional as students learn professional norms. Again, our most successful partnerships are those where our community partners understand these norms and this process and have a clear understanding of what they can expect from the faculty and students, how concerns should be addressed, and how this unique setting will impact the study.

The value of close collaboration between community members and researchers far outweighs the costs. Many of the challenges of collaboration become easier to manage as rapport and trust develop between collaborators. The authors have found that they often work with the same groups on many projects over a period of years in part because the mutual understandings developed through collaboration help us all see the value of our shared efforts and new ways in which our skill sets and knowledge can combine to serve our communities. Beginning projects with clear discussions of norms and expectations, maintaining clear and frank communication, and managing conflict promptly and professionally helps build these relationships in positive ways.

30.2.5 Ethical Challenges

Finally, community needs assessments present unique ethical dilemmas. The challenges of remaining objective can be particularly great when the outcome of the study could impact our own communities. We have frequently been involved in studies that resulted in funding agencies changing the resources they allocated to community groups. In a positive sense, this situation can create pressure to be particularly meticulous in designing and executing a study that accurately identifies the community's needs as the direct costs and benefits of the work will be seen by the researchers. However, sometimes the outcomes of an excellent study result in a

funding cut for some local group. A researcher who knows that they will need to face those whose livelihoods and passions are impacted by the research at the grocery store, across board room tables, and at PTA meetings must be prepared to deal with these interactions in a professional way. When you live in the community you work in, you are faced with representing your research even when you are not currently playing the role of researcher. It can be awkward to be cornered at a dinner party and quizzed about the findings of a recent study and how it might impact local legislation. It can be difficult to be caught off guard with questions about your work at the grocery store or gym. It is important to be cognizant that people who ask you seemingly casual questions about a project might report what you said in a more formal meeting, so even when unprepared to have a discussion, what you say will often be treated as a more formal statement. Our advice is to become comfortable refraining from comment when you are not prepared by noting that you do not wish to comment without your report to refer to.

Similarly, there can be significant pressure from collaborators to design a biased methodology, to schedule the release of a report at a moment that could be opportune for some stakeholder, or to use language that will have special appeal to some constituencies. This is another area where it is important to establish understandings before the project begins as to who has control of the content of the final report and who the report will be released to. Establishing these understandings clearly and in written format can be extremely helpful should a conflict occur within the team. In one study our team was involved in, our findings suggested that residents of the region were not at all concerned about contracting sexually transmitted diseases. A community partner, who happened to be very involved with an organization whose mission was to prevent the spread of STDs, was extremely upset by these findings. He was certain that funding to the organization would be cut due to these findings. He began by demanding that we cut these findings from the report and then begged that we cut them. We were unwilling to

remove the findings but did offer to help him locate data on rates of STD transmission in the area so that he could formulate an argument that the low rates of concern but moderate prevalence of STDs suggests a need to programming to raise awareness of STDs. This method of acknowledging the community partner's concerns and offering to help them find an appropriate way to deal with them can be very effective.

There are however, many dilemmas where the ethical issues are less clear. For example, some studies could be advantageous or damaging to certain individuals or parties during an election cycle. Being asked to present research as a particular time and place so as to support a political agenda can be a personal decision but has implications for who will hear the findings and who will take them seriously. Some researchers are very comfortable using their research for advocacy while others prefer to hand the findings off to others whose job is advocacy. It is important to be cognizant of the impact taking on an advocacy role has on the public's perception of you as an unbiased researcher.

Finally, most academic researchers have been trained to write for and speak to other scholars. Community needs assessments often draw researchers into situations where they must both write for and speak with professionals outside their discipline and those whose training is not primarily in research. Many community needs assessments are released to the general public. This raises the issues of how best to present findings. In some cases, writing and speaking in the ways that are normative to our disciplines actually reduces how accessible our work is to groups within the communities we study.

As with managing the challenges of collaboration, prior planning, frank discussions with all partners involved in a project, and written statements of expectations are helpful in avoiding these challenges. Working closely with an institutional review board is essential. In some cases, institutional review boards do not wish to review projects that are unlikely to produce publishable findings or do not feel qualified to evaluate some aspects of projects that are more tied to collaborative partnerships between researchers than the

relationship between researchers and research participants. In these cases it is often useful to seek out other scholars with experience in community needs assessments in order to have them review your plans. Once you have identified a clear ethical plan, discussing it with the research team and storing a written account of the agreement can provide a useful reference if problems should emerge.

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Abstract

Community studies has a long history of employing participant observation strategies in the study of social issues. This chapter opens with an accounting of that history and then provides practical guidance on the use of participant observation as a data collection strategy. Relative advantages and challenges of participant observation are considered. Approaches for planning participant observation, for data collection in the field and for the analysis of participant observation data are detailed. The aim is not to suggest that every study of a social issue be a participant observation study, but rather to provide a road map of how the integration of participant observation might benefit the study of social issues.

31.1 Introduction

Social issues have long been a focus of community studies. Early in the 20th century, scholars linked to the Chicago School of Sociology tackled community concerns like race relations (Park and Thompson 1939), immigration (Wirth 1928), and urban decay (Park and Burgess 1925/1967). The ethnic enclaves and slums of rapidly urbanizing Chicago were the field sites for these studies. Participant observation that called for active engagement of the researcher in the community was a primary data collection strategy (Fine 2015). Deep engagement, a somewhat radical reaction to the disengaged “arm chair” approaches popular in the day, was deemed necessary to produce the kind of rich data needed to fully understand complex issues (Lutters and Ackerman 1996). Robert Park, a leader in the Chicago School, was quoted as encouraging young scholars to:

Go and sit in the lounges of the luxury hotels and on the doorsteps of the flophouses; sit on the Gold Coast settees and on the slum shakedown; sit in the Orchestra Hall and in the Star and Garter Burlesque. In short go and get the seat of your pants dirty in real research. (Unpublished quote by Robert Parks recorded by Howard Becker in McKinney 1966: 71).

Only then, through participating in and observing the social worlds surrounding an issue, could a full understanding emerge. Such an

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understanding was necessary if social science was to contribute to the relevant policy debates of the day (Lutters and Ackerman 1996).

That kind of grounded approach to the study of social issues carried forward through mid-century with the “Second” Chicago School and then beyond. Participant observation was fundamental to now classic community studies from that era including: Whyte’s *Street Corner Society* (1943), Vidich and Bensman’s *Small Town in Mass Society* (1958), and Gans’, *The Levittowners* (1963). By the 1970s, the idea that intense and engaged observation in a setting could yield potent empirical and theoretical insights on a social issue was widely accepted (DeWalt and DeWalt 2010). In the decades to follow the use of participant observation spread to such fields as education, policy studies and even marketing (Fine 2015).

In contemporary community studies, the focus of participant observation has broadened to account for larger social injustices like racial inequality and poverty alongside local culture and group dynamics (Fine 2015). Using participant observation as a primary field study method, recent community studies have linked discourses about poverty that circulate in wider society to moral values and practices in small town life (Sherman 2009), tied the racial injustices fueling the mass incarceration of Black men in the US to family and neighborhood life (Goffman 2014), and connected the fall out of extreme poverty and exploitation to capitalist entrepreneurial solutions to the provision of housing (Desmond 2016; Salamon and MacTavish 2017).

For close to a century then, the field of community studies has worked to afford a holistic, ecological perspective on social issues. As Silverman and Patterson (2014) point out, that kind of perspective to the study of social issues seems particularly compelling today given the following:

- Theories of **globalization** tell us that people and places are increasingly linked across geographic space. Understanding social issues demands accounting for the dynamics of these interdependencies in ways that take into

account how particularities of the local context shape and are shaped by the global context.

- The current emphasis on **devolution** promotes local solutions to complex social problems. Yet the development, implementation and evaluation of effective local solutions needs to be grounded in empirical, context-specific evidence. A context sensitive approach to the study of social issues can contribute to that body of evidence.
- **Accountability**, particularly for research funded with public dollars, increasingly necessitates that research contribute to the solution of real world problems beyond the academy. Research situated in a local place and produced in the context of relationships can provide a strong platform for the meaningful application of findings.
- Finally, **ethical concerns** about the moral responsibilities among researchers and communities press for more socially just and collaborative approaches to the production of knowledge (Lassiter 2005). Research conducted in collaboration with community partners that responds to local concerns and incorporates local knowledge can provide a response this call for more ethical and less extractive or exploitive approaches.

These and other contemporary forces make a more grounded perspective particularly appropriate to the study of social issues especially as they relate to local communities, institutions, and organizations (Silverman and Patterson 2014). Participant observation as a data collection strategy makes that kind of perspective possible.

This chapter is a practical guide to using participant observation as a data collection strategy to study a social issue. The chapter begins by offering a brief definition of participant observation and discussing relative advantages and challenges of this strategy. Specific techniques related to pre-data collection, data collection and post-data collection are then detailed. The aim is not to suggest that participant observation is the only way to study of a social issue, but rather to include it on a menu of methodological options.

31.2 Defining Participant Observation

Participant observation is one among many strategies nestled under the umbrella of qualitative field research. As a “style of data collection” (Fine 2015: 1), participant observation is a central tool within ethnography. As the name infers, it involves *participation* through active engagement of the researcher in the study context, and *observation* while in that role of participant (Angrosino 2008). While observation is primary, participation in a setting calls for a researcher to employ a range of additional techniques including informal and formal interviewing and collecting and analyzing archival and visual material (Bernard 2012). Participant observation can provide the context for more quantitative approaches like surveys and questionnaires by either setting the stage for the development of instruments or as follow up. While seldom used as a sole strategy, the information gathered through participating and observing is deemed as important to the scientific analysis of a social phenomenon as is the information gathered through other approaches (DeWalt and DeWalt 2010; Fine 2015).

Participant observation overlaps with, but is distinct from, other qualitative approaches (Fine 2015). As a data collection strategy, participant observation involves considerable conversation. Yet, unlike straight up interview studies, the observational aspect allows a researcher to compare what people say to what they actually do. The participation aspect also stands in contrast to other naturalistic observation strategies that downplay engagement. While participant observation might sometime include passive or fly-on-the-wall approaches, the stance in contemporary participant observation is most often oriented toward immersion as a participant in order to observe and learn through direct experience (Angrosino and dePerez 2000).

31.2.1 Advantages

The major advantage of participant observation lies in the rich, complex understanding that

emerges from close study over time. That closeness allows a researcher to learn what life is like inside a group or organization. Interrelationships and patterns within often taken-for-granted aspects of social life appear in sharp relief when an outsider, or someone with a fresh perspective, is closely engaged in group life or organizational operations. Further, a kind of tacit and embodied understanding emerges when a researcher “feels” what is like to participate in daily life that stands in contrast to more explicit and intellectualized understandings (DeWalt and DeWalt 2010).

Beyond those advantages, participant observation strategies can help a researcher to ask the right questions in the right way and to access hard to reach populations or topics. By understanding local social processes, a researcher can craft a research focus that is responsive to local concerns. Further, close contact allows researchers insights into how to ask questions in locally and/or culturally appropriate ways. Relationships formed in the field can open access to otherwise hard to reach study populations or topics. Appropriate steps to build trust can help overcome past negative experiences that cause a community to be reluctant to let researchers in. Understanding local social norms about gender, race/ethnicity, and age can help a researcher act strategically as they approach a population or sensitive topic (Schensul and LeCompte 2012).

31.2.2 Challenges

Time involved in doing participant observation is a major drawback (Fine 2015). Most ethnographic or field research approaches have a standard expectation that the researcher engages in the community for at least the better part of one year. Few student researchers, no matter how passionate they are about studying a social issue, have that kind of time. Strategies for careful planning before entering the field (described below) can help expedite the time needed to collect and analyze quality observational data.

Additional potential challenges come in documenting observations and in the subjective nature of observations. Participating while observing can

make it tough to record data. Initial notes, often take the form of jottings recorded on scrap of paper or a cell phone, or simply committed to memory must be fleshed out into the full field notes that constitute the main data source of participant observation. Personal discipline and diligence are required to make this happen in a timely fashion. Delays mean that data is lost as details are forgotten. Further, a good deal of subjectivity is potentially introduced in participant observation as every observation is filtered through the interpretive frame of the researcher. Personal experiences, value systems, and standpoints all shape what a researcher selects to observe and the interpretation of that observation (Schensul and LeCompte 2012). Reflexivity or the practice of constantly questioning how one's assumptions are shaping the research process helps maintain a check on subjectivity. Suggestions for managing the challenges are offered later in this chapter.

31.3 Doing Participant Observation

Like any other research approach, a prime objective in participant observation is to collect data that will answer a research question. However, it also is important that what is unique about participant observation is that the value of the data rests on its richness of detail and not just how it answers a research question. In working toward the objective of answering a research question, participant observation generally flows through three stages: a planning and preparation phase that happens before formal data collection begins, a data collection phase and a formal analysis phase that happens after data collection is essentially complete. While aspects of these phases are germane to a range of research approaches, the strategies described below are those more specific to participant observation.

31.3.1 Planning and Preparation Phase

Participant observation demands that researcher gain entry into often private spaces in order to

access intimate information about daily life. To do so a researcher must move from being a stranger to being accepted within the group. Traditionally within community studies, that transition happens as a researcher spends months or even years in a community. Specific strategies and techniques employed before data collection begins can help smooth that transition and work to position a researcher well for data collection.

Start where you already are. A participant observation study begins with selecting an issue and locating a study site. Blackstone (2012) recommends initiating this step by *starting where you already are*. Some of the most engaging community studies have emerged when researchers focused on an issue present in their immediate surroundings. A summer internship in a public housing project (MacLeod 1987/2009), a class assignment on urban poverty (Venkatesh 2008), and chance encounters in a neighborhood (Dunier 1999) all sparked interest in issues that then became the foundation for community studies. At other times, the issue, in essence chooses the site. An interest in issues related to fracking led to a study site in the Marcellus shale fields of Pennsylvania (Wilber 2012). Concerns about the fall out of environmental policy on timber dependent communities led to a year-long residence in "Golden Valley" California (Sherman 2009).

In considering study sites, access should be a paramount consideration. A range of factors can shape access. Language barriers, social norms about age and gender roles, along with practical matters like the need for a visa and the requirement for elaborate, formal permissions can significantly deter access and/or delay field study. The goodness-of-fit, then, between a researcher's personal characteristics and a study site is important to consider. Angrosino (2008), thus, recommends starting site selection with an inventory of skills, competencies, dispositions, and values and considering how these might mesh with various sites. A study site where, for example, social norms about gender roles limit women's rights might be a challenge for a researcher with a strong feminist orientation. After all, Angrosino asserts, the role during field

work is that of researcher, not social reformer. Picking a site with minimal obstacles helps ensure access.

Pragmatic factors like the current affairs within the community and the level of resources (e.g. time and interest) that an organization or community can commit to the research endeavor are also important to consider. If a community experiences a major event like a flood or a wild fire, it might not be the best time for field research focused on a less critical topic. In contrast, that community at that time might be an ideal place to study emergency response to natural disaster.

Once a feasible research site has been identified, spend some time becoming familiar with that place or becoming familiar with it in new ways. Drive around or ride the public transportation to get an overview of the lay of the land. Taking note of the location and condition of housing, commercial areas, and key institutions like churches, banks or schools. From there, walk around town to gain a more nuanced, closer range view. What kinds of businesses are present or absent? Who are the clientele in various establishments and who is perhaps missing? Consider how people interact with or avoid each other on the street and in the shops. Step into a store or strike up a conversation on a street corner. Small talk about the weather or an upcoming event posted on a flier can help ease a researcher into the flow of local life. If a specific community organization or institution is the focus, spend some time in that context as well. Schedule an initial informational tour in the office. While there, note the layout and use of space, the items and information on the walls, who is there and the kinds of interactions happening.

Maintain a heightened sense of awareness to the surroundings during these initial (and later) encounters. Actively engaging all of the senses noting sights, smells, sounds, taste and feel will add richness during these early observations and provide clues about social life important to effectively entering the community or organization as a field study site.

Forge key connections. The use of a key informant, that is someone well versed and well

connected in the local setting, is a common strategy in community studies. A key informant can help to translate the community to the research by providing insider perspectives and connections. A key informant can also help to translate the researcher to the community. William Foote Whyte, in his 1930s classic study of a Boston neighborhood, for example engaged “Doc” as a key informant. As an upper-class graduate student at Harvard, Whyte had struggled to gain entry in his working class study site. Doc acted as a gatekeeper connecting Whyte through their personal contacts and vouching for his trustworthiness. In more applied or collaborative work, partner organizations or agencies play this key role. Existing networks of agencies or organization often allow quicker and more diverse contacts in a site than might otherwise be possible.

Working through relationships, whether with a key informant or organization, can have drawbacks, however. A key informant can introduce bias as they steer a researcher toward personal contacts or a particular sector of a community that may or may not be representative. For good or bad, a key informant’s reputation likely rubs off on a researcher in ways that may limit access in the field. Angrosino (2008) cautions against getting *captured* by the first welcoming individual. Carefully select key informants who are well respected and liked, make use of multiple key informants, and diligently seek broader contacts to overcome these challenges.

Use of an advisory group over a single key informant or organization can help overcome these challenges as well. Before forming an advisory group be clear about the purpose and scope for that group. Will they provide advice on research strategies, help with recruitment and/or provide insights on emerging findings? Select group members well suited for those purposes. That may mean selecting advisory group members who represent particular perspectives or areas of expertise or who have connections to specific sectors of the community. The diversity of those perspectives is one advantage of using an advisory group over a single key informant.

Reducing the dangers of being seen as aligned with one faction over another is an added benefit. Effective use of an advisory group hinges on clear and frequent communication and the selection of individuals who are willing to *teach* the researcher.

Determine data needs. The flexible nature of participant observation is one of its advantages. A researcher can enter a site wide open to the possibilities of discovering new issues, new directions, and new research questions. Yet that openness can soon feel overwhelming. It is also a strategy sometimes referred to as “going on a fishing trip.” Going fishing does not always lead to landing a fish. Better, Johnson (2017) recommends, data collection be a bit more decisive from the outset about specifically what events and activities will be useful to observe in order to gather the information relevant to the study’s research questions. For some projects, a theoretical framework or a conceptual model rooted in the current scientific literature will guide the choice of observations. For example, in the first edition of this *Handbook*, Salamon (2008) provides a comprehensive accounting of what to look for in order to fully account for a community. The categories of physical, economic, social and natural capital reflect a community capitals theoretical framework often considered central in community studies. Documenting those aspects of community would then demand specific observations. Other efforts might take on a strategy of shadowing participants for a day or so observing them across the contexts that define their life.

Bernard (2012) suggests creating a data checklist. That checklist can serve as a guide for what observations need to be completed and a record of which team member completed each observation and when. A checklist can also provide a good deal of accountability during the data collection phase ensuring that various observations and activities are scheduled and completed. Data needs naturally change during the course of a study or project and the checklist can be periodically revised.

Build rapport and establish trust. Rapport, simply defined as a friendly relationship, can take

time to build. It involves establishing a sense of trust for the researcher within a community so that members feel confident in sharing sensitive information. DeWalt and DeWalt (2010) emphasize that rapport exists when informants share common goals with the researcher and agree to help the researcher access information. Rapport-building starts with showing respect and empathy, being truthful, and evidencing a clear commitment to the wellbeing of the community, organization, or group (Kawulich 2005). Active listening, a sincere interest in understanding, dress, demeanor and personal conduct should from the start convey recognition and respect for local norms and expectations. Honest disclosure of the researcher role is also important to building rapport. While there is a careful balance in participant observation between full disclosure and staying discrete enough not to interrupt daily life, there is seldom (if ever) a need to maintain a fully covert stance. Most university institutional review boards (IRBs) do not permit that in research involving human subjects. Give some thought ahead of time to how to best introduce researchers and the study.

Authentic assurances of confidentiality are also critical to establishing trust (Angrosino 2008). Participant observation asks individuals and groups to reveal often intimate aspects of their lives. The researcher then collects those intimacies as data. Ethical treatment of the that information is paramount. That ethical treatment begins with taking time to make clear within the research team the purpose of a study, the kind of information that will be collected, and how that information will be stored, managed and used. In studies involving participant observation in private spaces (e.g. homes), it is particularly important to be clear as a researcher about what will count as data. Consideration of these factors before data is collected helps ensure the ethics of later processes.

Asking elders and community leaders for formal permission to study in a community or group is another display of respect. This is of course required if a study involves entry into private spaces like a land-lease mobile home park, a country club or in institutions where entry

is restricted like a public school. Even if research activities are only planned in public spaces, it is prudent to ask some kind of formal permission to study. A press announcement in the local paper, mention of the study in the city hall newsletter and pulpit announcements on Sunday can help establish the legitimacy of the researchers and get the word out about the study or project. Efforts to gain formal permission or endorsement for the study are particularly important in communities where prior research efforts have been exploitive or unwelcome (Lassiter 2005). Spend some time learning about local processes for gaining permission before entering a site. In this case, it is probably better to follow the expected protocol than to have to ask for forgiveness and potentially lose field access.

Finally, Angrosino (2008) suggest that “making every effort to be helpful” can serve as a means for establishing rapport and trust. Gauge the debt-to-benefit ratio by asking whether the burden of a researcher’s presence outweighs the benefits of the potential findings or visa-versa. If the study falls on the burden side, strategize around how to better contribute. Building in hours to volunteer at the local food bank or share an expertise with an after-school program can evidence a commitment to the well being of the community or group. It is equally important to be explicit about the parameters of the study and field staff engagement. If time in the community is limited, do not overpromise. Community-based work often comes with a penchant for wanting to affect change, but stirring things up and then leaving after a year with no institutionalized supports to continue such efforts is unethical.

Observations and encounters during these initial stages should be recorded. Jottings on a map, notes in a field journal, or photos and sketches can capture details and provide a framework for developing full field note accounts. Memos can summarize early impressions providing a backdrop against which to contrast what is later learned (Emerson et al. 2011). Initial observations and encounters in place often help to tighten the focus of a research project.

31.3.2 Data Collection Phase

With the focus of a study or project defined, a basic familiarity achieved, key connections forged, a data plan in place and the foundations of trust and rapport established, a project is well positioned to move into the data collection phase. In this phase, participating, observing and documenting become paramount activities. Specific strategies around blending in as a participant, capturing detail in the field and producing a written record help ensure that this phase results in the kind of rich, thick data needed for rigorous participant observation study.

Blend in. Effectively, as a participant observer, you want to try and blend into the scene while observing. Just as a researcher is observing and taking notes, others in the study site are watching the researcher. The idea is “to behave appropriately enough to be accepted as a participant at some level” (DeWalt and DeWalt 2010: 49). Give some thought to how dress and demeanor will impact blending in across each study contexts. Professional dress, for example might be appropriate for observing at a school board meeting, when helping out with a neighborhood clean-up, grungier attire is expected. Johnson (2017) recommends as well that early on in a project it’s a good idea to keep political views and opinions more private. Later, after relationships have developed and the researcher’s place in the group is more solidified, revealing personal aspects is less likely to shut down conversations.

Johnson (2017) also recommends giving thought to the level of researcher engagement anticipated during each observation. A researcher’s role can vary from passive to more active depending on the context. While a classroom observation might demand a more passive approach defined by sitting in the back of the room, other settings might demand more active engagement. While younger children might be enthusiastic about a researcher’s overt presence in their school, teens are often more hesitant to be identified as the subject of a study. Clarifying the level of expected engagement and the researcher’s role can help avoid confusion in the field. It

also helps professionals and participants understand how or whether to introduce researchers. Skipping this step can lead to awkward situations.

Blending into a community or organization can also be smoothed by taking part in the activities of daily life in the study site: shop for groceries, wash a load of clothes in the local laundromat, walk in the park, attend a Sunday church service, stop in at the local café, read the local paper, listen to radio, visit the library. The intent here is to do as the locals do; to become a participant engaging in casual conversations and watching for clues about social norms, rules of interaction and language use that will aid efforts to merge into the crowd.

Mistakes or a faux pas in efforts to blend in are almost inevitable. A wealth of field research stories chronicle blunders that inevitably caused a researcher to stand out more than fit into a situation (c.f. DeWalt and DeWalt 2010). These moments should be taken in stride as they can provide a rich opportunity for deeper learning about behavior and meaning.

Observe. While a researcher might take on a more passive role in terms of participation, observing is never passive. Actively observing means attending to details, looking for interactions, counting things, listening carefully, noting non-verbal cues, and diligently trying to see things through new eyes (DeWalt and DeWalt 2010). This kind of observing is in contrast to how most of us move through our day-to-day lives. Learning to observe this way is a skill and as a skill it can be learned and developed. Janesick (2015) offers useful exercises for developing observational skills. These exercises begin with observing and documenting a still life. The task is to capture and record as much detail as possible in 5 min of observing. From there, she encourages taking on increasingly complex settings—a familiar physical space, a familiar person, a busy location, a stranger and finally a full scene. Always, she recommends beginning with the wide view, moving into the details, and then moving back out. Practicing these skills in daily life can also help.

There are tricks to seeing while experiencing and remembering details. Chunking out an observation, taking keen note of what happens upon entering the setting, midway through the observation, and just before leaving the field setting can help draw attention to details. Working out from a specific incident in the field can likewise help embed details to memory by creating a mental stream of the observation. Likewise, constructing a mental running recording of the conversation can aid with capturing and remembering actual dialogue. Counting things—people, events, chairs in the room—rather than just noting *few* or *several* can help cement details to memory. Diligently trying to see the space, the people, the interactions through a fresh perspective keeps observations of more mundane activities rich in detail. For a new field researcher, initial observations, particularly of complex events, can feel overwhelming. With practice and time, active observing become habit.

In addition to attending to detail, it is important to balance observations. Unusual events or characters easily capture researcher attention and in that way introduce bias (DeWalt and DeWalt 2010). Day-to-day activities encountered by just participating in the context are as important to capture as the more formal or seemingly monumental events. Plan for observations that attend to the core experiences of daily life within the group.

Actively observing is exhausting. As a field researcher, it is important to know the limits of how much one can endure at a time so as not to lose data. As a standard rule, 3 h are needed to write up field notes for every hour of observation. Given 24 h in a day, and the need to sleep, 4 h of field research in a day seems the maximum. Some researcher alternate between days in the field and days writing up observations. Other strategies include staying in a hotel near the study site but away from the disruptions of home. Whatever the approach, planning around limitations is critical to making a study feasible.

Finally, Angrosino (2008) lists a number of personal qualities necessary to be effective at participant observation. Included are: a keen

awareness of the mundane, a good memory, a cultivated naïveté, and excellent writing skills. DeWalt and DeWalt (2010) add *patience* to that list reflecting anthropologist Margaret Mead's insistence that a good field researcher needs a tolerance for poor conditions, a capacity to resist impulses like interrupting, and an ability to avoid attachment to particular factions or groups. Considering personal capacities in terms of these qualities and strategizing to address the areas of challenge can make for a more productive and positive field study experience.

Document. Data resulting from participant observation strategies are largely textual. That makes it necessary to record a written account of field experiences and observations. Like with visual observations, that written account needs to attend to details about the physical setting, the appearance, behaviors and interactions of people, and the frequency and duration of events and activities.

Initially, written accounts take the form of *jottings* written discreetly during or immediately following an observation. These contemporaneously recorded notes provide an essential foundation for the more comprehensive field note account that are written later (Emerson et al. 2011). It is necessary, then, that jottings capture sufficient detail to function as a resource. Concrete sensory details about facial expressions, gestures, sights or sounds can function as mnemonic devices triggering memories later (Emerson et al. 2011). Use of shorthand, abbreviations and acronyms can speed note taking. Sketches and diagrams recording the physical arrangement of objects or people are often more efficient in the field than a narrative description. Key phrases written down from a dialogue can later help trigger the memory to a full exchange. Of course modern technology and the ubiquitous presence of cell phones with cameras and digital recording capacity have introduced new means for capturing details. Pictures of a scene or details dictated into a phone can certainly function alongside jottings as initial efforts to document observations. Video and audio recordings that involve people, while tempting, usually require more complex permissions.

Some field situations afford ample opportunity to record notes while other situations require a researcher to be quite nimble. Taking notes while observing in a city council meeting is fairly easy compared to recording the activity of a family meal. Field researchers devise all sorts of strategies for recording notes in the field. Most carry some kind of note book at all times. Cell phones with note taking features can also serve that purpose. Taking a "bathroom break" is a commonly used means for grabbing a few minutes to jot notes. Regardless of the means, findings a few moments to step away and write/record some details is usually necessary. Creativity and some forethoughts generally provides such moments.

Other researchers adopt a note taking role where overtly jotting notes in the field becomes just something they do (Emerson et al. 2011). Explaining a commitment to accurately recording events and interactions can validate this practice. Students, in particular, are given tolerance and accommodation for note taking in real time. Emerson et al. (2011), however, emphasize that writing while observing introduces some level of distraction for both the researcher and the group members making for another tradeoff of field research that has to be negotiated.

Regardless of how they are captured, these early recordings have to be extended into full field notes. Emerson and colleagues (2011: 86) provide a definitive guide to the art of writing field notes that "create a detailed, accurate and comprehensible account of what has been experienced." Toward that end, they offer the following guidelines:

- **Record field notes immediately after leaving the field.** The timing of writing up field notes is crucial. Memories fade quickly with time and lost detail means lost data. As a general rule, field notes should be recorded within 24 h of an observation. Preschedule blocks of time for writing field notes to coincide with field observations. There is typically a certain amount of ambivalence toward writing notes that scheduled time can help overcome.

- **Avoid “talking out” field notes.** Participating and observing fills a researcher with a set of experiences that it is nature to want to share, if only for the emotional release. Talking out an experience provides that release and reduces the urge to details things in writing. Save that release for the written page.
- **Go into “writing mode”.** The intention is to get a spontaneous and detailed account down on paper. Leave the editing for later. Recall in order to write, not to analyze or reflect. Some researcher write by working chronologically, others start with the high point of an observation and work out from there.
- **Establish a standard format for notes.** Add headers that record the time, date, location, and duration of the observation and the name of the field researcher. Standard sections can describe arriving in the field, sequential events, and then exiting. Page numbers and systematic file names prove critical to organization as the amount of written data accrues.
- **Write for an audience.** If a real audience for the field notes is absent, imagine one. Writing with the notion that someone else will read the notes encourages the inclusion of more detail.
- **Stick to what was observed and experienced.** In participant observation, experiences are always filtered through the frame of the researcher. In that way no observation or set of field notes is considered objective. Still, there is need to try and limit the instinct to move toward interpretation too soon. Johnson (2017) suggests including a descriptive and a reflective section in field notes. The descriptive portion is as accurate an account as possible. The reflective portion allows space for researcher comments.

Additional guidance on how to write field notes can be found in Dewalt and DeWalt (2010).

In addition to documenting observations, it is critical in participant observation approaches to document the evolution of conceptual and

practical aspects of field study. Emerson et al. (2011) and Johnson (2017) both recommend regularly producing reflective memos that chronical experiences in the field including research reactions to events and explore early conceptual thinking. Later, in the analysis phase, these early memos provide critical means for working back through the progression of field study to understand how methods and assumptions might have evolved over time.

Additional data. The strategies described above hold promise for helping develop a grounded or situated understanding of a social issue. Yet they leave a researcher open to the fallacy presented in the parable of the blind men and the elephant. In that story, each blind man, upon his encounter with a specific aspect of the elephant, asserts an understanding of the beast likening it to a wall, a snake, a fan and so on. The moral of the story, of course, is that each man’s understanding, rooted in their limited, localized encounter, is mistaken in understanding an elephant in full. Understanding a social issue in full often requires taking a broader view.

Community ethnographers have a long tradition of not stopping at the “tracks” or the edge of town, but rather working to locate a situated understanding of a social issue within wider extra-local and historical contexts (Buroway 1998). Strategies that move the research “off the block” and lend attention to external factors like governmental regimes or structural racism and classism help to connect micro-level processes to relevant macro-level social and economic contexts (Dunier 1999). Making use of archival materials and extending the place of the research by following phenomenon are strategies used to make those connections.

Use of archival materials. Tapping into the often rich, historical context of a social issue can extend a study beyond the immediate. Traditional strategies used in ethnography include systematically reviewing back issues of the newspaper, examining archived minutes from public meetings, and employing Census data to track demographic and economic shifts within a place over time. Each of these can enrich the understanding of a social issue by adding historical

context. Knowing, for example, that a study site had doubled in population, grown poorer or richer or more diverse over recent decades are essential pieces of information to understanding context. Historic records archived at city hall can be similarly useful. Similarly, historic photographs can provide another source of data beyond interviews and observations and even the memories of local residents. As these and others records have become digitized, access has become easier. One catch when using historical data is the need to contextualize it. Dollars, for example incomes and housing costs, need to be standardized to a constant year. Easy to use inflation conversion tools are accessible online.

Extending the case with theory. For sociologist Buroway (1998), a central task of understanding any issue involves locating the everyday within extra-local and historical contexts. Through what he terms an “extended case method”, he lends particular attention to how the local is simultaneously shaped by and shapes macro-level external forces. Academic theory serves as his starting point. In an iterative process that moves back and forth between theory and field study, he extends the micro-world of his case study from describing a localized situation to identifying social process and then to delineating the wider forces that impress themselves on everyday life. By vertically integrating indigenous narratives with academic theory he considers the local as simultaneously shaped by and shaping those macro-level external forces. He begins with a theory but seeks to refute that theory by drawing on his case studies asking what does this case tell me about theory? The intention is to causally connect cases rather than to reduce each case to an instance of general law. Each case works in its connection to others making it possible to extract the general from the unique and build theory.

Extending the place. Ethnographer Dunier (1999) employs a strategy he terms an “extended place method.” About his field research for Sidewalk (1999: 344), a study of street vendors Greenwich Village, he explains, “For me to understand the sidewalk, that place could only be a starting point.” Dunier encourages field

researchers to *follow the data* and to *study up for completeness*. In the case of Sidewalk, following the data meant pursuing confirmation of many of the background stories his participants shared. Studying up for completeness entailed interviews at city hall to gain a perspective on the reasoning behind the policies and practices he observed to shape life on the sidewalk.

Marcus (1995) encourages a multi-sited approach to ethnography arguing that such an approach is needed to understand the kind of interdependencies strengthened by processes of globalization. Collins’ work in *Threads* (2003) provides a strong example of this approach to extend ethnography’s view. To trace the transnational economics of the apparel industry, she studies in four study sites tracing relationships from the US to Mexico and from corporate headquarters to the factory floor.

31.4 Formal Analysis Phase

While analysis is ongoing in participant observation studies, there comes a point, late in the data collection process, after a sufficiently large amount of data have been generated, when more formal and systematic analysis needs to be undertaken. A range of approaches exist to guide this process. Included are “radically *inductive*” approaches through which conceptual and thematic categories are grounded in and emerge from the data as well as *deductive* approaches wherein theoretical and conceptual categories selected a priori are used to guide the analysis (Johnson 2017: 122). While inductive and deductive approaches might seem disparate, researchers often use a combination of the two, particularly if the project has multiple goals (e.g. both applied and theoretical). Regardless of the orientation, analysis of the primarily textual data that derives from participant observation proceeds through a series of distinct practices (Emerson et al. 2011). The practices begin with a close reading and proceed through stages of coding, interpretation, conceptual development and finally dissemination of findings.

Close reading and initial coding. The first of these involves a close reading of the entire

corpus of field data. Each piece of data is read and reread in order to become familiar with the whole. This “analytically motivated reading” is intended to open up the opportunity to “reinterpret the import and significance of events” experienced and recorded sometimes months earlier (Emerson et al. 2011: 145). In collaborative research, this re-immersion in the data is a shared experience in which all team members simultaneously read through the full set of data.

That close reading is followed by initial coding efforts. A code is a single word or short phrase used to symbolically label or categorize a segment of data. Codes may derive in situ from a close reading of the data (inductive approach) or a researcher might draw on a particular theoretical or conceptual framework to generate a list of codes that are then applied to the data (deductive approach). More inductive approaches are often termed **open coding** in contrast to the **closed coding** used in deductive approaches (Johnson 2017). Open coding provides the opportunity to ground initial analysis in the perspectives and experiences of community members. Codes are often in vivo or derived from participants’ own words. In that way, open coding avoids the bias of looking for and finding what was assumed to be in the data. Still, drafting a set of initial codes that mesh with a study’s research questions and conceptual framework provides a useful starting point, particularly in more descriptive or applied efforts.

When using an open coding approach, Emerson et al. (2011: 177) suggest beginning by asking questions of the data: “What are people doing? What are they trying to accomplish? How do members talk about, characterize and understand what is going on? What assumptions are they making?” The answers to these questions can then help reveal codes. Emerson et al. (2011) also encourage that priority be given to *process* rather than *cause* during early phases of analysis. Attending to process and sticking to what is present in the data prevents moving toward premature interpretation.

Discovering patterns. The next step of analysis involves moving from what Shensul and LeCompte (2012) term *item level* analysis where

the focus has been on breaking the data down into small parts, toward what they term *pattern level* analysis in order to identify categories of items or codes. The move is from the specific to the more general as connections are made between codes, analytic categories, theoretical dimensions and/or issues. This step often demands some effort to clean up codes. This can entail renaming, reducing, merging codes into umbrella categories. This step is also an ideal time to seek out falsification or the “deviant voice” that might counter emerging theoretical or conceptual notions (Saldana 2014).

Novice researchers sometimes report a sense of getting lost during early states of the coding process. As a remedy, Emerson et al. (2011) encourage the use of written memos throughout analysis. Initial memos, in particular, provide an opportunity to name and explore specific analytic issues and patterns that cross cut incidents in the data (check Emerson for cite). These early analytic commentaries can assist with reflexivity and aid in the exploration of emerging ideas. Combined, initial coding and memoing provide a chance for the researcher to, “step back from data identify, develop, modify broader analytic themes and arguments” (Emerson et al. 2011: 157). Reflective memos focused on how a researcher’s disciplinary background, personal experiences, and interests might be shaping early interpretations of the data can help keep assumptions in check (Johnson 2017). These memos allow a researcher to ponder why they might be seeing the data the way that they are and to consider alternative explanations.

Identifying themes. Next, is a step that Saldana terms “theming the data” (Saldana 2014) by adding “is” or “means” to a major code or central concept in order to develop themes. Johnson (2017: 125) provides the example of “definition of community” as a code. By itself this code is not a theme but by adding “is” as in “definition of community *is* informed by sense of involvement in community” it becomes a theme. As part of a second cycle of coding, a researcher now returns to the data to recode the data using these larger patterns or themes. This step supports moving analysis toward what Shensul and

LeCompte (2012) term a *structural level* wherein the central task is finding broader relationships. When these broader relationships have to do with identifying and describing if, when, and why something happens, a practice termed **axial coding** can be useful (Johnson 2017). Applying the analogy of a wheel, the researcher uses initial codes as the axis, and then works to identify the spokes by following out the conditions, causes and consequences related to that code.

During this step, a research is likely to identify more themes than are manageable for one study of one report (Emerson et al. 2011). It thus becomes critical to select themes that are most salient to the purposes of the study. In applied work, in particular, this likely means giving priority to what seems significant to participants. It can also mean prioritizing the themes of focus into those that need to be pursued now (perhaps because of the impending need for action) and those that can wait (perhaps those having more to do with conceptual understandings). Themes can sometimes be winnowed down by considering how they link to each other. In this way, some themes invariably fall out as subthemes.

Memoing can again prove useful. While initial memoing was primarily exploratory, later memoing typically includes firmer asserts made through summative and data supported statements (Saldana 2014). These more Integrative memos work to tie various codes and bits of data together and help push analytical choices as decisions are made about how to link together incidents or themes and how to connect these to constructs (Emerson et al. 2011). Taking a step back to consider how themes and incidents relate to larger constructs and working to “explicate contextual and background information” are critical to constructing a wider understanding of key ideas (Emerson et al. 2011: 162).

Collaborative analysis. At this stage, it is worth noting that all too often, even when community members are included as partners in the data collection process, they are excluded during analysis and interpretation. Practices like “member checking” might ask participants to respond to study findings but these typically occur after analysis. Increasingly, within

community-based work there is a call for more inclusive and reciprocal approaches to analysis as well as data collection. Lassiter (2005), in particular, presses researchers to employ practices of co-interpretation by engaging principal consultants (a term used in place of informants or participants) as co-intellectuals during analysis. Acknowledging the challenges that necessarily arise, Lassiter and others (Johnson 2017; Saldana 2014) argue for the powerful, humanizing benefits that occur through finding ways to “reconcile differing visions, agendas, and expectations” during analysis (Lassiter 2005: 137). In collaborative analysis, efforts go beyond seeking approval of findings. Community partners are engaged in the collective coding of data. This collaborative team comes together often to check-in and compare coding schemes and engage in authentic, genuine conversations about what is emerging from the data in an effort to reach, not consensus, but what Saldana (2014) terms “interpretive convergence”.

Analyzing additional data. Visual data collected during participant observation can often be analyzed with strategies similar to those described above. Computer-based coding software (e.g. Nvivo, Atlas-ti, MaxQDA) now commonly offers options for handling and coding visual data. For other forms of data, such as newspapers or websites, content analysis approaches wherein *counts* of predetermines constructs may prove useful. Descriptive analysis of census and other demographic data and trends over time can provide important background context within which to situate other field study findings. Triangulation of the use of multiple forms of data works to enhance the strength and credibility of findings.

31.5 Disseminating Findings

Whether class assignment, a funded research study, or a project-based service learning project, as a study nears completion, researchers must find some way to share findings. It is at this stage that a researcher can wonder “which way from here?” (Stoeker 2013). In no small way, the

purpose of the study will shape the kinds of written products and methods used for disseminating findings by guiding ideas around what will be presented, to whom, and in what format. If the research has been done as a class assignment, guidelines and structure around the written report and/or presentation of findings are likely in place. Outside of that, Johnson (2017) describes a range of possibilities reminding us that projects should include multiple means of broadcasting findings.

Community or organizational forums can provide a powerful means for reporting findings back to the community. Often held as a culminating event, these presentations should aim to make findings “accessible to a broad audience and connected to conditions and features within the community” (Johnson 2017: 140). A good deal of advanced planning is needed around the selection of venues, event timing and format, and appropriate publicity to get the word out. Details like childcare, food, and transportation are also critical to consider in order to expand engagement. Johnson (2017) emphasizes as well how a community forum should move beyond seeking the rubberstamp approval of findings by remaining open to negative feedback and encouraging dialogue for deeper understanding and movement toward next steps.

Traditional academic papers and presentations provide another means for sharing findings. Here the emphasis shifts to adding to the body of knowledge and inciting further research (Emerson et al. 2011). The presentation of findings likewise shifts as the audience is now individuals and groups further removed from direct experience of community. Selecting an appropriate journal or professional conference is key to ensuring uptake of the knowledge produced in any study.

Policy reports can provide another avenue for dissemination of findings. Again, thoughtful planning upfront about how best to engage in local or national policy debates is needed. This often begins with judiciously selecting from among the findings those most appropriate for policy change. Johnson (2017) encourages researchers to frame the problem, include a

compelling ‘hook’, and consider target audience when preparing a policy report. Collaboration with a policy-oriented organization can help.

Websites and blogs allow researchers to share information in a wider variety of formats (e.g. photos and video clips). These newer modes of dissemination can also provide additional and important spaces for interaction through enabling the comments feature.

Johnson (2017) also describes how the translation of research to action might flow as community-based organizations use findings to develop programs, initiatives and campaigns for change. Findings can augment an organization’s report to funders helping to bolster the case for additional funding. Findings can also help refine services or press for new services within a community. On a wider level, study efforts might provide a foundation strengthening or expanding university-community partnerships or encouraging grassroots movements through campaigns aimed at raising awareness of an issue and collectively advocating for change. Media and social media campaigns, posters, post cards, public service announcements and further engage the community and press for the uptake of study findings.

31.6 Conclusion

In closing, the aim here was to provide practical guidance around the use of participant observation as a data collection strategy. That strategy of close engagement, so central to community studies, seems useful in the study of social issues today. Globalization, devolution, increasing accountability and ethical concerns about research all press for a focus on social issues that takes context into account. Adequate planning, as laid out in this chapter can work to position a study to attend to context and work to expedite field time. Judicious efforts once in the field to blend in, observe and document day-to-day interactions can produce the kind of rich data needed for through participant observation. Finally, rigorous analysis phase, whether done alone or collaboratively, can lead to the

discovery of powerful and novel insights into understanding complex social issues. Sharing those insights through a range of avenues can contribute to knowledge in the field and also move toward meaningful action. It would seem then that Park's prompting "to go and get the seat of your pants dirty in real research" might be as applicable today as it was nearly a century ago.

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Qualitative Methods: Tools for Understanding and Engaging Communities

32

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and Jesse M. Golinkoff

Abstract

Understanding community needs and establishing research priorities must occur through respectful and effective collaborations between communities, local organizations, and researchers. Qualitative inquiry can serve as a bridge between researchers and communities, allowing for group goal identification and priority setting. Qualitative techniques can transform the traditional participant-researcher relationship into a rich partnership steered by empowered representatives of a community. These approaches can also inform program planning through formative process evaluation and ongoing community engagement. Additionally, qualitative methods serve as a foundation for Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) or Action Research. Qualitative data collection methods vary widely but frequently involve interviews, observations, or focus groups. Less common, but more interactive and creative approaches, such

as intercept interviews, freelisting, walking interviews, photo elicitation interviews, photovoice, and nominal group technique can enhance a researcher's ability to collaborate with a community and create lasting and effective partnerships. Each approach presents unique implementation, recruitment, and ethical challenges, all of which will be discussed in this chapter. Since the advent of the internet, communities are no longer necessarily defined by geographically proximate group members, so this chapter will briefly discuss in-person, telephone, and online approaches to community identification, partnership building, and data collection. This chapter will also discuss the researcher's responsibility to the community in all phases of the research process. We will address data collection, organization, and analysis, including effective ways to work with community members to plan a dissemination strategy. Such strategies may include traditional reports, presentations, exhibits, or websites. Timely reporting of research findings back to the community and the role and value of traditional academic dissemination approaches will also be addressed.

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32.1 Introduction

In the 19th and early half of the 20th century, researchers strongly favored data that were numerical (quantitative) in nature. Social science mirrored the physical sciences and rested on positivism, which supported research conducted to test theories and hypotheses but was rarely exploratory. Objectivity and distance from data were considered key to effective and reliable inquiry. However, numbers did not always tell the whole story. In the mid-20th century, qualitative research, which stems from the fields of sociology, anthropology, and psychology began to gain attention, but tension quickly arose between quantitative and qualitative researchers (Denzin and Lincoln 2011). Qualitative researchers argued that quantitative methods alone neglected the lived experience of those under study, while quantitative researchers argued that qualitative methods lacked the rigor and distance from the researcher needed to maintain objectivity.

Today, after years of debate, both quantitative and qualitative methods are widely accepted as valid methods of scientific inquiry and are commonly employed to make sense of the world. Quantitative and qualitative research approaches are complementary and augmentative, and can be used concurrently (in mixed methods studies) or sequentially. Qualitative approaches can be used to generate hypotheses or following quantitative data collection and analysis to explore the deeper meaning of numerical findings (Creswell and Clark 2011).

Qualitative methods are important tools for academic researchers but can also be accessible to those leading community organizations or movements. That is, one does not need to be in academe to use qualitative methods to better understand the needs, priorities, or challenges faced by a community. Importantly, there are advantages and disadvantages to each qualitative data collection approach, making them appropriate or effective in certain contexts but not in others. We will discuss which data collection approaches are appropriate for which types of inquiry. At the end of the chapter we will share a

table that will allow for easy comparison of the approaches.

As a group, qualitative researchers have moved away from calling those we engage in research as “subjects,” opting for a more respectful and equitable term, “participant” (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009). However, some researchers argue that both terms degrade the role of those we engage and opt for a term that truly embodies the collaborative nature of this work, referring to those with whom we directly engage (e.g. through interviews or group activities) as “collaborators.” The term collaborator helps break down common power-related barriers between interviewers and interviewees, and recognizes that those with whom we engage are the only experts of their lived experience; not the researcher(s). Only together can you explore an issue effectively. Moving forward, we will use the term “collaborator” in lieu of “subject” or “participant.”

In many research studies, the relationship between researchers and collaborators ends when data collection is complete. However, in qualitative work there is often a need to reconnect with collaborators or community representatives to help make sense of the data that has been collected. When possible, some qualitative researchers employ a process called “member checking.” Member checking is a dynamic process wherein the research team asks the collaborators to aid in data analysis and interpretation. This step allows the researcher to check in with the community to ensure that their perspectives and opinions have not been misunderstood or misrepresented during the research process. This step can also help solidify the researcher-collaborator relationship (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Morse and Richards 2002). Member checking is extremely important when working with vulnerable groups (e.g. victims of violence, people with low literacy or people who are struggling with housing instability), as it gives study collaborators a power and authority to control their story before it is shared in the literature or other public venues. Collaborators can and should be allowed to redact quotes, images, or video footage as needed and as they deem

appropriate (Bugos et al. 2014; Israel and Hay 2006; Sanjari et al. 2014). In the next section we will address qualitative data collection approaches.

32.2 Qualitative Data Collection Approaches

32.2.1 Observation

Participant observation, a method borrowed from ethnographers, can yield important insights into the lived experiences of communities—insights that would be difficult to gain as an outsider or through other research methods. Observation can be useful as an initial exploration of a domain or community and can help researchers begin to understand what questions to ask in interviews or focus groups (Cohen and Crabtree 2006; Crabtree and Miller 1992; Musante and DeWalt 2010; Savage 2000). Additionally, observation can yield important insights even when done by a member of the observed community. Observation by a community member can allow them to step back from an experience or setting they know well and gain an important or different perspective.

The most critical aspect of observation is maintaining objectivity, that is, refraining from assuming anything about people or behaviors beyond what can actually be seen. For example, an observer taking notes on an adult man and woman sitting next to each other and taking care of a child should not assume the individuals are a couple or that either adult is the guardian of that child. However, some assumptions or inferences are safe to make, for example if an observer witnesses a woman using a fork to spear a piece of lettuce from a bowl and place it in her mouth, the observer could assume that woman was eating a salad.

Observation can take multiple forms, depending on the observer's role and the nature or stage of the project. Generally, an observer acts as either a *nonparticipant observer* or a *participant observer*. As a nonparticipant observer, one gathers data (to be explained shortly) in

a completely inconspicuous way and avoids any interaction with those they are observing. For example, an observer may want to blend into a space such that they act as a “fly on the wall,” seeing activities and behaviors as if they were not present (this is often challenging). As a participant observer, one gathers data while engaging, to various degrees, with those they are observing. In participant observation, the observer can take on one of three roles: (1) passive participant; (2) participant observer; and (3) a complete participant observer (Bogdewic 1992; DeWalt et al. 1998; Jorgensen 1998).

A participant observer may want to partake in activities or group conversations with participants to gain understanding of a situation or so they do not bring attention to themselves by not participating. Alternatively, observers may be called upon to engage casually, socially, or professionally with participants or stakeholders—but if discussion moves to the research topic, the observer must disclose their role and purpose.

Data collection in observation. Observers are charged with taking detailed and objective notes, known as field notes, about what they see and hear. This can be done on a data collection form created specifically for the project, in a field notebook, or on a phone, tablet, or computer. Care should be taken to choose a note taking approach that enables the observer to blend into the setting if that is the goal. For example, using a laptop to take notes in a coffee shop full of students working on computers makes sense, but using a laptop to take notes in a rural village, where few community members own computers, will draw unwanted attention to the observer. Field notes should describe the observed situation as completely and objectively as possible (Fig. 32.1). This is challenging when there is a lot to observe, so it is wise to plan a pre-observation visit to sites that are unfamiliar and to create a list of observation priorities. Thinking about the busy coffee shop full of students, the observer, in consultation with other members of the research team, may decide they want to focus on interactions between patrons and baristas. Depending on the setting and the research goal, the observer may need to engage



DATE: 2/1/17	OBSERVER: RF	Page: 1
LOCATION CODE: ED10		
START TIME: 8:00am	END TIME: 10:00 am	
<p>8:00 – Emergency Department (ED) waiting room. 10 rows of seats, 6 seats in each row. All seats filled. 4 people in wheel chairs (WC). All WC's on right side near window. Several conversations taking place. Most in English. 1 group is speaking Spanish and a second group is speaking a language not known to note taker.</p> <p>8:10 – 1 ED staff enter, calls out 3 names, and turns and goes through door on left. No one in waiting room responds.</p> <p>8:12- Adult male, appears to be companion to patient, approaches desk to explain that no-one heard the names called by the staff. Desk attendant responds [I cannot hear response], and leaves station and returns 2-3 minutes later. Adult male returns to seat. [I notice that he is glancing at me taking notes.]</p> <p>8:15 – ED staff member returns, with second staff member -reads 3 names for a list, waits for all 3 patients to approach her. 2 patients approach alone, the 3rd is accompanied by female adult companion, she refers to the patient as “Mommy”.</p> <p>8:18 – 2 men dressed a police officers enter ED. Sit near a male in a wheelchair. Long conversation begins – unable to hear detail.</p> <p>8:30 – 2 men (police?) leave.</p> <p>8:35 – ED staff member enters room – with clipboard. Starts in far right corner and speaks to each group of people in ED. She seems to be taking a census of the ED. She appears to identify who is the patient and who is there as an escort or support.</p>		

Fig. 32.1 Short-hand jottings taken in the field are meant to record as much detail as necessary and can be filled out later in more formal and descriptive prose

in casual conversation or otherwise need to interact with people in the setting (FHI 2005). These interactions should be recorded in the field notes (Brinkmann and Kvale 2014; Musante and DeWalt 2010; Tolley et al. 2016). Typically, in the field, the observer records the details of the scene, the events and any interactions that occur in shorthand “jottings.” These are later converted into more formal field notes written in prose and containing detailed descriptions and parenthetical asides and commentaries (Emerson et al. 2011).

Ethical considerations with observation.

There are important ethical issues to be considered when conducting a qualitative observation. First, and most importantly, the research team

must decide how much they wish to disclose about their research mission and agenda with those they are observing. The observer must strike a balance between disrupting normal activity in a setting and infringing on the privacy and rights of those they are observing. This balance begins when the observer decides if they need to be an undercover nonparticipant observer to gather rich and meaningful data or if they can be a known participant observer to those they observe.

The researcher must have a reasonable justification if they wish to conduct a covert non-participant observation. Discussing the approach with the research team, community members,

and institutional ethics committees are important steps in considering this decision. Ideally, when an observation occurs in a public location, observers are discreet enough to make meaningful observations without disrupting the activities or compromising the privacy of those they observe (Iphofen 2016; Sanjari et al. 2014). The same is true for observations carried out in less public settings, for example in the waiting room of an emergency department or the produce section of the grocery store. The member of the research team should connect with relevant gatekeepers (hospital administrators or grocery store managers in these examples), community leaders, or other representatives, and share their research plan and purpose before they conduct any formal data collection activities. There is rarely justification for misleading those being observed in a qualitative observation, so the researcher must be prepared to respond honestly if someone asks them directly about their purpose or presence in a setting (Iphofen 2016; Sanjari et al. 2014). Researchers should discuss both research ethics and etiquette before data collection begins.

Observation can lead to conversations with community members, and observers are generally advised to disclose the purpose of their presence if the conversation is related in any way to the research mission. The research team must have plans in place for protecting participant confidentiality in the context of field observation. This is generally done by avoiding detailed physical descriptions of those being observed and omitting any names that are overheard (Cohen and Crabtree 2006; Iphofen 2016; Sanjari et al. 2014). Depending on the nature of the observation and the setting, it may also be advisable to avoid detailed descriptions such as addresses or location names (for example, when describing an observation conducted at the Clark Park Farmer's Market in West Philadelphia, one might say the observation took place at an urban farmer's market in one of Philadelphia's parks).

Tips for effective observation. Preparation is critical. If you plan to conduct an observation, you should visit the site, if possible, before the formal observation. Be sure to follow the

following steps: (1) define your mission (i.e. what do you need to observe?); (2) define the observer role and posture; (3) connect with community members, representatives, or gatekeepers if needed; (4) tailor your data collection approach to the site; (5) create a data collection tool tailored to the mission of your observation; and (6) reflect and iterate upon the data collection tool as needed (Fig. 32.1).

32.2.2 Interviews

When we think of a traditional qualitative interview, we imagine the collaborator and the interviewer seated at a table. The collaborator responds to well-worded questions, often reflecting on an experience and drawing from memory while the interviewer is following their story, probing, and asking for clarification as needed. Often, this approach yields valuable insight that adds to an overall understanding of an experience, but there are times when the traditional individual interview falls short of painting a complete picture of the collaborator's experience (Collier 1957; Harper 2002; Skinner and Gormley 2016; Wang and Burris 1997; Wang 1999).

For example, in work done to shed light on the challenges faced by inner city families trying to shop for healthy food to feed their children, a research team opted to conduct "walking" or "tag-along" interviews with consumers while they shopped (Frasso 2015). In work done by True and colleagues (2015), exploring the experiences of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, visual methods, namely photo elicitation and photovoice approaches were employed (True et al. 2015). These approaches can change the dynamic of the interview and often yield richer data by offering the collaborator different ways to prepare for and engage with the interviewer during the interview process. Importantly, alternative interview approaches can alter the often troubling power dynamic between researcher and collaborator. These approaches can bring the researcher to physical (e.g. walking interviews) or imaged spaces

(e.g. photo elicitation interviews) of the collaborator. These approaches allow the collaborators to curate their own stories and share a multi-dimensional view of their communities, homes, and lives.

Individual interviews. Qualitative interviews, or in-depth interviews, are a popular data collection approach and allow researchers an opportunity to appreciate the lived experience of individuals, community representatives, and those with a unique perspective on a social issue, phenomena, or problem. Interviews are often employed to help explain quantitative observations, generate hypotheses, put a face to an issue, or empower marginalized individuals by amplifying their voices.

Researchers conducting qualitative interviews must begin by appreciating that in the context of an interview, they are the student and the interviewee (collaborator) is the teacher. The collaborator has been selected because they possess an important, unique, or frontline perspective on the topic or experience under study. The researcher's role is to learn everything the collaborator is willing to share about the topic under study.

Data collection in interviews. When conducting an interview, the researcher engages with the collaborator through a series of predetermined interview questions, otherwise known as an *interview guide*. The use of the term "guide" is important here, as it signifies that it is the gateway to conversation around the topic of interest, but the researcher can, and should, let the collaborator steer the conversation. However, the interview will need to, on occasion, help the interviewee remain focused on the topic under exploration. The qualitative interview guide is typically made up of questions that are open-ended, neutral, and non-leading. An important rule of thumb is to avoid interview questions that can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no," or questions that can be answered with one or two words. Qualitative interview guides typically contain questions that begin with "tell me about a time when..." or "please explain how you felt when..." or "would you please describe..." (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009).

The interview guide can vary in structure based on the mission of the study and the interviewer's experience and comfort level. Interviews generally take one of three forms: structured, unstructured, or semi-structured. Structured interviews require the interviewer to closely follow a guide to ensure consistency in questioning approaches between collaborators. Unstructured interviews give the interviewer a list of topics to discuss, but the interviewer has flexibility to tailor the order and types of questions they ask about each topic. Semi-structured interviews include specific questions but the interviewer can, and should, adapt some or all the questions for each collaborator.

The interviewer should establish a space to create rapport with the collaborator, being thoughtful at all times to maintain professional boundaries and conscious of the nearly unavoidable power imbalance in the interviewer-collaborator relationship. The interview should feel conversational, but not like a truly reciprocal conversation. The interviewer must be an active listener and ask tailored follow-up questions and probe as needed. The interviewer must remember that the collaborator should be the one sharing details, facts, and perspectives; their job is to create an opportunity for that to happen. The interviewer should be doing far more listening than talking. It is important the interviewer is ready to be in their listening role as it is often impossible to predict where open-ended questions will lead. Importantly, the interviewer must be flexible and responsive while keeping the conversation somewhat restricted to the research mission (the level of flexibility depends on the type of interview).

The interviewer must also reflect on their own training and interpersonal communication habits before they begin an interview. For example, if the interviewer is a clinical social worker by training, they can use some of those skills to build rapport with the collaborator. However, they must be careful not to let the research interview turn into a clinical encounter, as that is not the mission (Padgett 2017). It raises ethical

concerns as the interviewer is not likely in a position to provide therapeutic support. It is suggested that interviewers set time aside after each interview to review and assess their performance in that interview. They should listen to and reflect on the interview's audio recording, taking note of any leading questions, the use of affirmative or disapproving language, and especially their tone, as tone can be leading even in the presence of well-worded interview questions. Review and reflection is a critical step in data collection, as it affords the interviewer an opportunity to improve their interview skills and thereby the quality of data collected. Even seasoned interviewers learn from review and reflection, as each study requires unique questioning and probing.

Interviews can be conducted face-to-face, over the phone, or via an online video conferencing platform (e.g. Skype or BlueJeans). Generally, interviews involve one interviewer and one collaborator. Here we will focus on face-to-face interviews. The location, timing, and language (e.g. English vs. Cantonese) of the interview need to be decided upon in the planning stage of the study, and whenever possible, should reflect collaborator preferences. If interviewer safety is an issue, the research team may opt to have a second member of the team attend the interviews (FHI 2005; Tolley et al. 2016).

Ideally, research interviews should be audio recorded and transcribed verbatim with the collaborator's explicit permission. The resultant transcripts and any notes taken during the interview are data. If recording is not possible, or the collaborator is not comfortable with being recorded even after being assured the transcripts will be stripped of any and all identifying information, the researcher should consider their alternatives: conducting the interview and taking as many notes as possible during and after the meeting, or not going forward with the interview. The interviewer should not pressure the collaborator to consent to participation or audio recording, and should remind the collaborator that participation is completely voluntary if they seem at all reluctant.

There are a variety of approaches to data analysis to be discussed later in this chapter, however at this point it is important to note that verbatim transcription of an interview is far preferable to hand-written notes. Note taking can distract both the interviewer and the collaborator. It is virtually impossible to take notes with the same level of detail afforded by an audio recording. Importantly, high quality recording equipment is more accessible than ever before; smartphones, laptops, and tablets often have the capacity to capture high quality audio files. It is also important to remember that audio transcription can be expensive and time-consuming; something to be considered in the planning phase of a study.

Walking or "tag-along" interviews. Walking interviews allow researchers to engage collaborators while they are traversing a space or engaging in an activity that is important to the research question. Walking interviews are considered a hybrid of participant observation and in-depth qualitative interviewing. This method can empower the collaborator to take control over how they share their space or experience with the interviewer. Walking interviews take place with both the interviewer and collaborator in transit or in action. The interviewer uses an interview guide, but it is loosely structured and leaves room for the interviewer to use situations encountered along the way or actions the collaborator is taking as probes during the interview experience (Jones et al. 2008).

While there are challenges related to privacy (these conversations may take place in public settings) and distractions that may interfere with audio recording (e.g. background noise, traffic, or other people), walking interviews can provide valuable data, as they eliminate some of the challenges associated with recall bias. Recording devices like lapel microphones and lanyards can improve the quality of the interview recording (Fig. 32.2). Walking interviews have been used in health research to explore important dynamic experiences including food access (Chrisinger 2016; Frasso 2014, 2015), living with a mobility impairment (Butler and Derrett 2014), and the

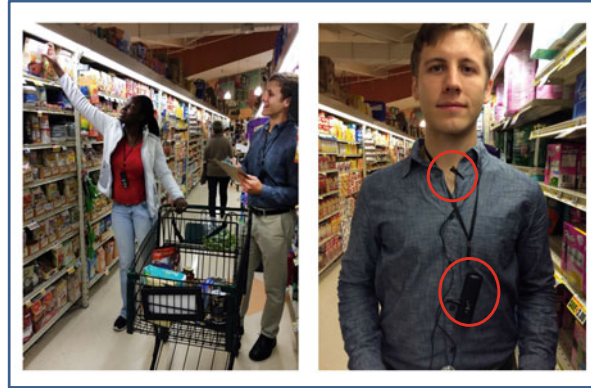


Fig. 32.2 Lapel and lanyard microphones allow the interviewers to keep their hand free during walk-along interviews. Since neither the collaborator nor interviewer

are distracted by holding recording devices, the devices are less conspicuous and tend to “disappear” into the background

pedestrian experience in urban settings (Miaux et al. 2010).

Photo elicitation, photovoice, and Point of View interviews. Photo elicitation, photovoice and Point of View (PoV) interviews are all visual methods used to enhance the interview experience and dissemination opportunities. Visual methods are increasing in popularity, especially in the developed world, where access to phones with cameras is nearly ubiquitous.

We will begin with a discussion of photo elicitation, described first in 1957 by John Collier. Briefly, in photo elicitation, the researcher uses images to guide a research interview. The images can be preexisting (e.g. from a family album or newspaper) or generated for the purpose of the study. Commonly, when the latter is employed, the researcher asks the collaborator to think about the experience or topic under study over the course of a set period of time (e.g. one week). The collaborator is instructed to take pictures when they see something that makes them think of or face the issue under study, or when they think an image will help them explain the experience or feeling in question (Harper 2002). After the allotted time has passed, the interviewer and collaborator meet to discuss the photos taken. The photos become the anchor for the research interview. This approach has three

main benefits: (1) taking or selecting photographs in preparation for the interview helps *prime and prepare* the collaborator to have a rich conversation; (2) having photographs as a focal point during the interview alleviates some of the awkwardness that is common when two strangers sit down to discuss something important and often personal; and (3) the resultant photos, with the collaborator’s permission, can serve as an important addition to traditional dissemination formats and strategies. For example, participant-generated images have been shared with participant quotes in online or traditional exhibits, embedded in reports to stakeholders, and used in academic articles. Here we share quotations and images generated from a project that explored a college community’s perceptions of pressure and another that explored the impact of gentrification on a community (Fig. 32.3).

Collier compared photo elicitation interviews with traditional interviews and noted that photo elicitation led to longer and more comprehensive responses to interview questions and that the images kept the collaborator and interviewer engaged over the course of the interview (1957). Collier explained that the use of photos prevents repetition associated with conventional interviews, and the data (i.e. transcripts of interviews) obtained with photographs “was precise and at

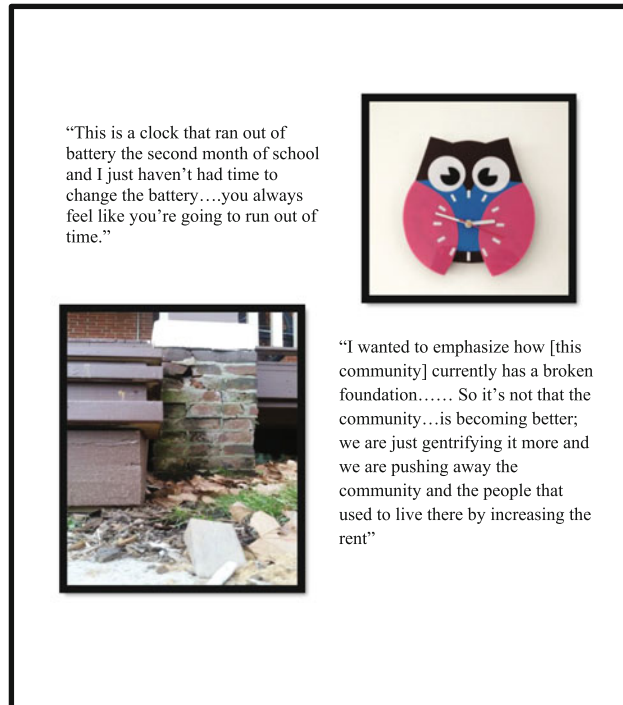


Fig. 32.3 Excerpts from transcripts can be shared with collaborator-generated photos that were used to guide the interview in publications or exhibits. The photos not only

facilitate the conversation between the researcher and collaborator they can be used to engage the audience with the study findings

times even encyclopedic; the control interviews were less structured, rambling, and freer in association” (1957). While images can be treated and analyzed as data in photo elicitation and photovoice studies, it is far more common just to use the images as tools to facilitate conversation and enrich dissemination.

Visual methods often lead to the use of images in the dissemination phase of a study. Images become part of exhibits, online content, stakeholder reports, and can be embedded in traditional research articles (Bugos et al. 2014; Catalani and Minkler 2010; Frasso 2016; True et al. 2015; Wang 1999). Many collaborators have noted that knowing the images they shared with the research team will be used to help share their story is rewarding (Bugos et al. 2014). When employing photo elicitation, many researchers use, or adapt, the SHOWeD interview questions developed by Wang et al. in 2004. On the day of the interview, the researcher

can ask the participant to choose a photo to begin the interview, then following the mnemonic SHOWeD, they ask the following (or variations of the following) questions: (1) What do you **See** here? (2) What’s really **Happening** here? (3) How does this relate to **Our** lives? (4) Why does this situation **Exist**? (5) What can we **Do** about it?

Photovoice, first described in 1997, is a form of community-based or participatory action research that empowers collaborators to be social change agents. In photovoice projects, the collaborator’s role goes beyond the provision of data or member checking. In photovoice, the collaborators are often involved in the analysis, summarization, and dissemination of the project. While the terms are often used interchangeably, the term photovoice is generally reserved for projects that employ photo elicitation but ask the collaborators to stay engaged beyond the data collection phase.

In Philadelphia, Dr. Jennifer True and colleagues conducted a photovoice project with veterans who then helped curate a traveling exhibit of their photos paired with excerpts from their interviews and participated in speaking engagements (“From War To Home,” n.d.). Additionally, Dr. Marianna Chilton and colleagues employed this approach in work conducted to explore the challenges faced by families trying to feed their children in Philadelphia. Her work, entitled “Witnesses to Hunger,” is a moving and powerful exploration of this experience. Collaborators shared their stories through photos and traveled with the resultant exhibit to Washington, DC and other locations (“Witnesses to Hunger,” 2011). Online exhibits of the aforementioned work can be found at www.va.gov/fromwartohome and www.centerforhungerfreecommunities.org/our-projects/witnesses-hunger, respectfully.

Point of View (PoV) interviewing is also an elicitation technique that relies on video recording. This approach, like photo elicitation, will likely become more common as most smart phones have video functionality. PoV interviews rest on the idea that the researcher or the collaborator will record a first person perspective on an issue or experience. For example, a PoV collaborator might be asked to wear a “go-pro” camera or digital video glasses for a period of time. Like photo elicitation, PoV does not rely as heavily on the collaborator’s memory and it can allow the collaborator to make “visible the unverbalizable” (Skinner and Gormley 2016).

Freelisting interviews. Freelisting is an efficient and effective interview approach that involves asking a collaborator to generate a list of words or terms in response to a question. For example, one could ask a collaborator to “list all the words that come to mind when you think about your health” or “list all the words that come to mind when you think about helping your community.”

Freelisting allows researchers to explore common understandings of a domain in a particular context or setting in a short amount of time. It can be done sequentially or prior to more in-depth data collection approaches to inform a

focus group guide or a survey. Additionally, freelisting can be used to assess community priorities or goals and can be used to compare and contrast priorities or understandings held by unique sets of stakeholders (“Freelisting,” 2016; Lincoln and Guba 1985; Weller and Romney 1988). Freelisting has been used to explore the experience of loneliness in older adults (Barg et al. 2006), to explore barriers to safe teen driving (Barg et al. 2009) and to explore shared decision making in the context of ADHD (Fiks et al. 2011). Keddem et al. (2015) used freelisting to examine the experiences of people with asthma in an urban community in order to create maps of community-level factors affecting asthma control. Unlike traditional interviews or focus group approaches, freelist interviewers require little training or experience to collect data.

Data collection in freelisting. The first step in freelisting data collection is determining whose perspective to explore and where and how you can connect and engage that group. Freelisting interviews can be scheduled like traditional interviews or focus groups, but also work well as an intercept interview approach. A researcher can invite collaborators to respond to freelisting questions on the spot, for example on the main green of a busy campus or in the lobby of an emergency room. Data collection takes between three and 15 minutes depending on the number of questions being asked. The researcher can audio record the responses, write them down, or ask the collaborator to write them down. If there are no literacy barriers and the topic is sensitive or private, the collaborator may feel more comfortable writing themselves. Freelisting can also be adapted for online data collection.

Freelisting is an important tool when trying to ensure that researchers and communities are on the same page. For example, if a researcher wanted to understand how students define or experience academic or social pressure, freelisting could help shed light on the lexicon employed. The researcher would begin with a brief explanation to the collaborator, stating the purpose of the interview and obtain consent. The researcher might begin with questions like

“Please list all the words that come to mind when you think about pressure?” or “List all the things that students do to cope with pressure?”

Freelisting collaborators do not always give one-word responses, in fact, despite instructions to do so, they often share phrases or sentences. These types of responses can still be used in the analysis. After data collection is complete, the research team must meet to “clean” the data; they need to review all the lists in order to standardize word forms and combine synonyms. For example, “stressed” and “stress” would be collapsed into one term and phrases such as “Blue Cross” and “private insurance” would be collapsed into one term: “insurance” (Borgatti 1999).

After freelisting data are cleaned, the resultant lists are formatted and imported into Anthropac (Analytic Technologies, Kentucky), a free software program that facilitates freelisting analysis. Anthropac is used to calculate frequency, rank, and a salience score (Smith’s *S*) for each term provided by respondents (Borgatti 1996). Salience characterizes terms that are representative, or prototypes of a particular domain of interest, accounting for both the frequency (i.e. the number of times a word comes up across all respondents) and rank (i.e. the order the word appears on each person’s list) (Borgatti 1999; Winkelman et al. 2006). Importantly, rank and frequency are related in freelisting data. In 1950, Bousfield and Barclay documented that the number of times an item is listed across respondents is correlated to where the term ranks and how important the term is to “daily life” (Bousfield and Barclay 1950). In summary, more salient terms appear at the beginning of individual lists, and in higher frequency across all respondents’ lists than less salient terms.

In order to interpret the salience scores associated with each item on the list, it is helpful to visualize salience in descending order using a scree plot. A scree plot is a graph that displays an index value in descending order in relation to its rank order. Typically, a scree plot has a steep curve. Displaying freelisting data in this way helps to elucidate the items that are most salient (Fig. 32.4).

Ethical considerations for interviews. When done well, in-depth interviews can be rewarding for both the interviewer and collaborator. Collaborators often appreciate the opportunity to be heard, and are happy to share their experience, perspective, and recommendations with researchers, community leaders, and those with the capacity to help communities move towards change. However, a qualitative interview is not risk free. Often researchers explore experiences that are painful or difficult for collaborators to recant, and, as in all research, care must be taken to ensure that the risks associated with participation do not outweigh the benefits of what can be done with the information that is learned.

Additionally, the interviewer has the responsibility of handling, sharing, and disseminating what is learned from the interview in a way that respects the collaborator’s privacy and the sacrifice they made (their time at best) or the retraumatization (at worst) associated with telling their story (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009). The qualitative interview often affords the researcher a very personal view into the lives of collaborators, and with this insight comes an important set of responsibilities. First, the research team must have a plan in place to seek explicit collaborator consent and address issues related to confidentiality early in the study design as this can dictate data collection choices. Second, the researchers must enter the relationship with a clear and transparent agenda. Finally, the research team must be thoughtful and prepare for possible retraumatization secondary to sharing an emotionally-laden experience.

Before data collection begins the research team must create a data storage and utilization plan that addresses the explicit use of verbatim quotations or, in the case of visual methods, the use of images shared by collaborators. If appropriate, the study should be reviewed and approved by community representatives and associated Institutional Review Boards (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Morse and Richards 2002). The research team must become familiar with their host institutions’ ethical processes and be thoughtful when collaborating across entities

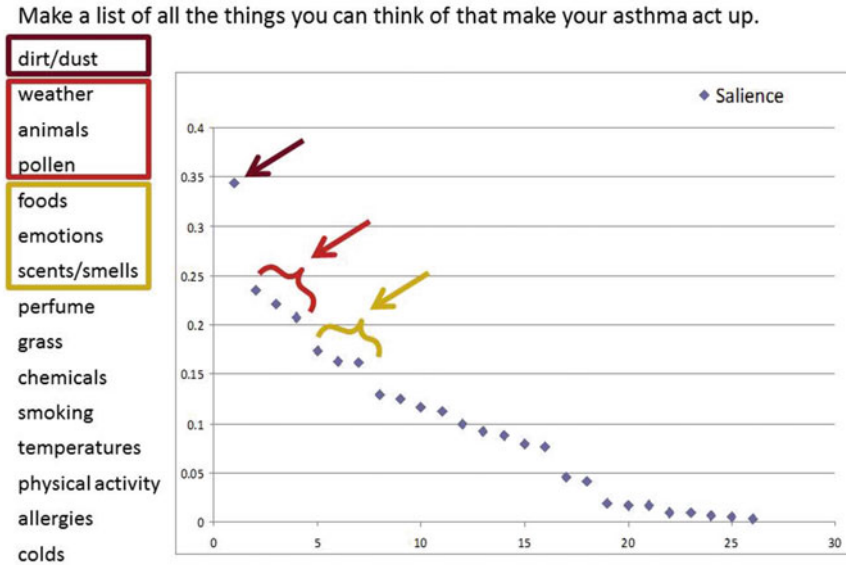


Fig. 32.4 In their study of West Philadelphia residents, Keddem et al. (2015) interviewed people with asthma. Collaborators' responses were used to inform maps of neighborhood-level factors affecting asthma control. At the beginning of the interview, collaborators were asked to make a list of all the things they could think of that

make their asthma act up. The graph above displays the results in a scree plot showing salient responses. The most salient response was "dirt/dust." In this case, there were two other tiers of salient responses, "weather, animals, pollen" and "foods, emotions, and scents/smells."

(including schools, prisons, non-profit organizations, and hospital or government agencies) that might have their own set of rules that govern research and quality improvement projects.

Both walking interviews and visual approaches present unique ethical challenges. For example, walking interviews often bring data collection into the public sphere where bystanders can see a collaborator while they are partaking in a study. The use of collaborator-generated photographs or videos in public exhibits or journal articles can also lead to confidentiality challenges, as images of spaces, places, possessions, and people have the potential to lead to public identification of interviewees. Collaborators must be told in advance that these approaches may make it impossible to keep their participation in a study private. In the case of photo elicitation, collaborators should be given an opportunity to approve or disapprove use of images beyond the interview phase of a study (Bugos et al. 2014; Catalani and Minkler 2010; Wang 1999).

Tips for conducting effective interviews. Developing an effective interview guide and asking good questions is often be the most challenging part of qualitative interviews. When starting an interview, warm up with a little conversation—a friendly greeting and explanation of the project. Establish your "cultural ignorance," after all, you are the learner. Consider reminding the collaborator that they are the expert and that is why you want to speak with them about the topic under study. Always listen closely and express interest in what the collaborator tells you. Remember, the interview is a conversation, not a strict question and answer exchange. While it can be extremely difficult, try to remain neutral; don't approve or disapprove of the collaborator's responses, rather encourage the collaborator to give as many details as possible. Let the collaborator's answers determine the direction of the interview (keeping with the topics of interest). As much as is possible, allow people to answer in their own terms, voicing their own views, values, priorities, goals, and experiences. Leading

questions tend to suggest a particular answer or imply that one answer is expected or more correct, which does not allow for the full breadth of potential collaborator responses.

It takes experience, patience, and skill to probe productively. But it is extremely useful for stimulating further discussion around a topic and to engage the collaborator so they share more information. Three types of effective probing include: (1) the silent probe (i.e. say nothing until the collaborator elaborates on their own); (2) the echo probe (i.e. repeating what the collaborator just said and adding “and then what happens,” for example); and (3) the uh-huh probe (i.e. a neutral response to signify you have heard what was said, but gives the collaborator a chance to say more). Other fairly universal and neutral probes include, “can you describe...” or “tell me more about...” or “what do you mean by...” It is suggested that the research team have a probes prepared in advance.

32.2.3 Group Approaches

Focus groups. A focus group is a group interview. Similar to individual interviews, focus groups are a commonly employed qualitative data collection method. Focus groups are used in a variety of fields, including social science and marketing. While consensus building is occasionally the goal, most focus groups are designed to collect an array of perspectives from multiple collaborators.

During a focus group, several people (ideally between 8 and 10) are asked a series of questions about a topic or experience. Questions are designed to encourage an interactive group conversation where group members speak freely to other group members. Focus groups help researchers learn more about the social norms and priorities of a community. Like individual interviews, the quality of the focus group rests on the quality of the questions being asked. However, focus groups are more challenging to conduct than interviews. First, there are more logistical issues to consider. Bringing a group of

people together at the same time in a place that is conducive to group conversation can be tricky. Additionally, you need at least two individuals from the research team to conduct a focus group: a moderator and a note taker/recording technician. The focus group moderator needs to be a capable interviewer and skilled in managing group conversation. A successful moderator will likely be able to facilitate a rich conversation between collaborators and will be able to leverage their expertise and experience to help inform useful probes to move the conversation along in a rewarding way. Note, however, that even the most skillful moderator can encounter a group that is hard to manage. Sadly, some groups work better than others and even very careful preparation does not guarantee fruitful conversation.

Not every topic is appropriate for a focus group. Generally speaking, the researcher should choose a focus group over other interview approaches when they are seeking a group perspective or when they are less familiar with the topic under study. A focus group or two early in a study can teach or familiarize the research team with the community perspective on an issue. This can then inform the development of a more effective interview guide or survey questions. However, focus groups are not ideal for some sensitive topics and should be avoided if collaborator confidentiality is a priority. While the research team can work to keep participation in a study confidential, there is little, if anything, the team can actually do if the collaborators of a focus group disclose the participation of other collaborators (Krueger and Casey 2014; Morgan 1997).

Data collection for focus groups. Focus groups can be conducted in person, over the phone, or in a virtual setting. Assuming there are no geographic challenges to bringing a group together, the in-person approach is favorable. When conducting a focus group, the moderator engages with collaborators through a series of predetermined focus group questions: *the focus group guide*. As discussed earlier in the interview section of this chapter, these questions are designed to guide or start a conversation around

the topic of interest. The focus group guide must be made up of questions that are open-ended, neutral, and non-leading. Questions need to be designed to be asked of a group and not targeted individuals, for example, a focus group moderator may ask the following question: “*We are trying to understand the challenges people face in your neighborhood. Would someone be willing to begin our conversation on that topic?*”

The moderator needs to be an active listener and ask tailored follow-up questions and probes but also needs to be sure that all collaborators have the time and space to share their thoughts. The moderator should begin the focus group by setting some ground rules. First, they should ask collaborators to speak one at a time, remind them that there are no right or wrong answers, and that while they are free to disagree with statements made by collaborators, there is not time, nor is it a goal, to debate those responses. As stated above, and perhaps even more importantly in the group context, the moderator should avoid seeking specific answers to questions and needs to be flexible and responsive while keeping the conversation somewhat restricted to the research mission.

The focus group guide can vary in structure based on the mission of the study and the moderator’s experience and comfort level. Guides can be structured, unstructured, or semi-structured. Ideally, focus groups should be audio recorded and transcribed verbatim with the explicit permission of all collaborators. A research team member should act as a note taker who will monitor the recording equipment and capture as much details about the group dynamics and the general tone of the conversation. While the unit of analysis for a focus group is the group itself, not the individual collaborators, based on the nature of the study, the note taker may need to capture enough information (e.g. the first few words spoken by each collaborator) to allow for the research team to sort responses at the individual level (Morgan 1997).

Nominal Group Technique. Nominal (meaning in name only) group technique (NGT) is a variation of a focus group wherein the goal is to reach consensus. Using NGT, the

researcher gathers information by asking individuals to respond to questions, and then asking each individual to prioritize the ideas or suggestions of all group members. The process neutralizes some of the issues that can arise when trying to help a group set priorities or goals. Additionally, this data collection approach can be employed when the research team anticipates conflict or tension that could interfere with the mission of a focus group. NGT, by design, prevents one person or a small group of people from dominating the conversation by encouraging all group members to participate (Delbecq et al. 1986; Islam and Abdullah 2012; “Nominal Group Technique,” 1984; CDC 2006).

Data collection for nominal group technique: NGT works best with no more than 20 individuals. At least two researchers are needed to facilitate the process. The CDC (2006) has laid out the **Four Step Process to Conduct NGT:**

1. **Generating Ideas:** The moderator presents the question or problem to the group in written form and reads the question to the group. The moderator directs everyone to write ideas in brief phrases or statements and to work silently and independently. Each person silently generates ideas and writes them down.
2. **Recording Ideas:** Group members engage in a round-robin feedback session to concisely record each idea (without debate at this point). The moderator writes an idea from a group member on a flip chart that is visible to the entire group, and proceeds to ask for another idea from the next group member, and so on.

There is no need to repeat ideas; however, if group members believe that an idea provides a different emphasis or variation, feel free to include it. Proceed until all members’ ideas have been documented.

3. **Discussing Ideas:** Each recorded idea is then discussed to determine clarity and importance. For each idea, the moderator asks, “Are there any questions or comments group members would like to make about the item?” This step provides an opportunity for members to express their understanding of the logic and the relative importance of the item. The creator of the idea need not feel obliged to clarify or explain the item; any member of the group can play that role.

4. **Voting on Ideas:** Individuals vote privately to prioritize the ideas. The votes are tallied to identify the ideas that are rated highest by the group as a whole. The moderator establishes what criteria are used to prioritize the ideas. To start, each group member selects the five most important items from the group list and writes one idea on each index card. Next, each member ranks the five ideas selected, with the most important receiving a rank of 5, and the least important receiving a rank of 1. After members rank their responses in order of priority, the moderator creates a tally sheet on the flip chart with numbers down the left-hand side of the chart, which correspond to the ideas from the round-robin. The moderator collects all the cards from the participants and asks one group member to read the idea number and number of points allocated to each one, while the moderator records and then adds the scores on the tally sheet. The ideas that are the most highly rated by the group are the most favored group actions or ideas in response to the question posed by the moderator.

Ethical challenges for group data collection approaches. Group data collection approaches, like individual approaches, can prove to be a rewarding experience for the collaborator. Collaborators often appreciate an opportunity to be heard and a chance to work with others who share a similar experience or are concerned about the same issues or community. However, focus groups and nominal groups often explore challenging issues that can become problematic in a group setting. Before data collection begins, the research team must be sure that the risks associated with participation do not outweigh the benefits. Additionally, researchers must address challenges to privacy that are unique to a group method. If the research team believes that information shared in a group setting might prove to be sensitive in nature, harmful to an individual's reputation, or has the potential to put an individual in danger, group methods should not be used (Morgan 1997). The research team must provide the collaborators an opportunity to opt out of participation in group data collection activities. This means acknowledging that there might be some peer pressure on group members to stay engaged even when they would rather not.

Analogous to individual qualitative data collection methods, the study should be reviewed and

approved by community representatives and associated Institutional Review Boards (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Morse and Richards 2002). The research team must become familiar with their host institutions' ethical processes and be thoughtful when collaborating across entities (including schools, prisons, non-profit organizations, and hospital or government agencies) that might each have their own sets of rules that govern research and quality improvement projects.

32.2.4 General Thoughts

Many researchers struggle when trying to decide which qualitative data collection approach to employ and how to recruit collaborators. First, we suggest researchers consider potential ethical barriers (e.g. the need for confidentiality) inherent in any given approach. Second, we suggest researchers consider the collaborators' comfort and preferences (e.g. sensitive nature of the topic under study). Third, we suggest researchers consider practical issues related to the study or research team (e.g. time, resources, skill). Finally, we suggest researchers engage community members in the methodology decision making process as there may be cultural nuances that make certain approaches more appealing or appropriate than others in certain contexts. Below is a table comparing and contrasting the data collection approaches discussed in the chapter (Table 32.1) and another table with exemplar papers wherein each approach was employed (Table 32.2).

Collaborator recruitment and selection is complex and the approach may vary based on which data collection approach is chosen. Qualitative work does not lend itself to random sampling and because the work is so time consuming, researchers rarely have the resources to conduct large-scale studies. Sample sizes are generally small and collaborators are identified and invited to participate based on non-probability sampling (most often convenience or snowball sampling). In a group setting, care must also be taken to consider power dynamics. For example, if you are exploring

Table 32.1 Data Collection Approaches and Related Considerations

Data generation approach	Data collection medium	Best fit for	Strengths	Weaknesses	Ethical concerns	Time	Skills	Collaborator's (participant's) role
Observation	Field notes	Understanding the context in which participants live, work, or play. Understanding social norms and behaviors. Informing later phases of research.	Covers events in real time, researcher can be "fly on the wall"	Time consuming, difficult to remain objective	People or individuals may not know they are being observed for research purposes	Can be time-intensive	Must be objective, be able to blend in and take detailed notes	None—participant often does not know they are being observed
In-depth interviews	Audio recordings	Focusing on sensitive topics, learning one person's experience	Produces rich data, sheds light on individuals' perspectives, beliefs, behaviors, motivations	Takes time to become a skilled interviewer, transcription is time-consuming/expensive	Collaborators must give informed consent to participate—this may require reading the consent form aloud to eliminate potential literacy barriers	30–120 min	Objectivity, patience, adaptability, ability to build rapport with collaborator	One-on-one discussion with researcher
Photo-elicitation	Audio recordings	Generating rich textual data and visual accompaniments	Visual material guides/prompts discussion, collaborators have thought about interview topic before interview, visual artifacts can become part of	Dissemination of collaborators' photographs can jeopardize their anonymity, more time consuming than traditional interviews	Collaborators need to be trained in ethical photography practices if taking original photographs	Extended	Objectivity, patience, adaptability, ability to build rapport with collaborator	One-on-one discussion with researcher, guided by photographs. Collaborator may be asked to take or bring photographs

(continued)

Table 32.1 (continued)

Data generation approach	Data collection medium	Best fit for	Strengths	Weaknesses	Ethical concerns	Time	Skills	Collaborator's (participant's) role
Walking interviews	Audio recordings	Real-time explanations of behavior or thoughts	Does not rely on memory as questions are asked as events are occurring, in real time	More logistically difficult than traditional interviews, collaborators can be distracted by environment	Collaborator anonymity may be hard to maintain in a public space	30–60 min	Ability to walk in addition to in-depth interview skills	Perform a task or series of tasks as they normally would, answering researcher's questions as they go
Freelisting	Pen and paper	Taking the temperature of a domain, figuring out what is important or salient to a group about a given topic	Very fast, easy analysis, can inform interviews or focus groups	Information gathered is shallow – other methods are needed to delve deeper into salient topics	None	Quick	Ability to engage with a stranger to collect a list of terms or phrases	Very brief engagement with researcher to list terms or phrases
Focus groups	Audio recordings	Discovering group or community norms or a range of perspectives within a community	Group setting and dynamics can stimulate real conversation and illuminate collaborators' perspectives, a lot of data generated in short time frame	Not appropriate for sensitive topics, must be mindful of group dynamics and diversity, sometimes difficult to navigate many personalities and maintain a healthy group dynamic	Collaborators can't be anonymous because of presence of other collaborators, and confidentiality is only maintained if all	60–120 min	Ability to moderate a group —foster a positive environment, establish ground rules, manage strong or difficult personalities, and redirect conversation if it	Group conversation about a topic

(continued)

Table 32.1 (continued)

Data generation approach	Data collection medium	Best fit for	Strengths	Weaknesses	Ethical concerns	Time	Skills	Collaborator's (participant's) role
Nominal group technique	Pen and paper	Determining consensus with a group about a topic for further exploration	Fast, equitable, generates many ideas	Minimizes discussion, process is strict	collaborators abide by rules None	Quick	strays from the intended topic Must know how to facilitate the group activity, avoid confrontational behavior	Provide ideas or topics based on the researcher's question

Table 32.2 Data collection approaches and exemplar peer reviewed papers

Method	Exemplar and reference paper
Observation	Anderman, L. H., Andrzejewski, C. E., & Allen, J. (2011). How do teachers support students' motivation and learning in their classrooms? <i>Teachers College Record</i> , 113(5), 969–1003 Holmes, S. M. (2013). "Is it worth risking your life?": Ethnography, risk and death on the US–Mexico border. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> , 99, 153–161
In-depth interviews	Scott, S. D., Hirschinger, L. E., Cox, K. R., McCoig, M., Brandt, J., & Hall, L. W. (2009). The natural history of recovery for the healthcare provider "second victim" after adverse patient events. <i>Quality and Safety in Health Care</i> , 18(5), 325–330 Schrack, B., Sibitz, I., Unger, A., & Amering, M. (2010). How patients with schizophrenia use the internet: Qualitative study. <i>Journal of Medical Internet Research</i> , 12(5), e70 Aysola, J., Werner, R. M., & Shea, J. A. (2014, April). Asking the patient about patient-centered medical homes. In <i>Journal of General Internal Medicine</i> (Vol. 29, pp. S27–S27). 233 Spring St, New York, NY 10013 USA: Springer Kangovi, S., Barg, F. K., Carter, T., Long, J. A., Shannon, R., & Grande, D. (2013). Understanding why patients of low socioeconomic status prefer hospitals over ambulatory care. <i>Health Affairs</i> , 32(7), 1196–1203 Zafar, H. M., Bugos, E. K., Langlotz, C. P., & Frasso, R. (2016). "Chasing a ghost": factors that influence primary care physicians to follow up on incidental imaging findings. <i>Radiology</i> , 281(2), 567–573
Photo-elicitation	True, G., Rigg, K. K., & Butler, A. (2015). Understanding barriers to mental health care for recent war veterans through photovoice. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i> , 25(10), 1443–1455. Bugos, E., Frasso, R., FitzGerald, E., True, G., Adachi-Mejia, A. M., & Cannuscio, C. (2014). Peer reviewed: Practical guidance and ethical considerations for studies using photo-elicitation interviews. <i>Preventing Chronic Disease</i> , 11 Harper, D. (2002). Talking about pictures: A case for photo elicitation. <i>Visual Studies</i> , 17(1), 13–26 Padgett, D. K., Smith, B. T., Derejko, K. S., Henwood, B. F., & Tiderington, E. (2013). A picture is worth...? Photo elicitation interviewing with formerly homeless adults. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i> , 23(11), 1435–1444
Walking interviews	Mitchell, L., Burton, E., & Raman, S. (2004). Dementia-friendly cities: designing intelligible neighbourhoods for life. <i>Journal of Urban Design</i> , 9(1), 89–101 Chrisinger, B. W. (2015). If you build it, will they come, and what will they eat? Investigating supermarket development in food deserts Carpiano, R. M. (2009). Come take a walk with me: The "Go-Along" interview as a novel method for studying the implications of place for health and well-being. <i>Health & Place</i> , 15(1), 263–272 Jones, P., Bunce, G., Evans, J., Gibbs, H., & Hein, J. R. (2008). Exploring space and place with walking interviews. <i>Journal of Research Practice</i> , 4(2), 2
Freelisting	Fiks, A. G., Gafen, A., Hughes, C. C., Hunter, K. F., & Barg, F. K. (2011). Using freelisting to understand shared decision making in ADHD: parents' and pediatricians' perspectives. <i>Patient Education and Counseling</i> , 84(2), 236–244 Barg, F. K., Keddem, S., Ginsburg, K. R., & Winston, F. K. (2009). Teen perceptions of good drivers and safe drivers: implications for reaching adolescents. <i>Injury Prevention</i> , 15(1), 24–29 Keddem, S., Barg, F. K., Glanz, K., Jackson, T., Green, S., & George, M. (2015). Mapping the urban asthma experience: Using qualitative GIS to understand contextual factors affecting asthma control. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> , 140, 9–17
Focus groups	Kondo, M. C., Gross-Davis, C. A., May, K., Davis, L. O., Johnson, T., Mallard, M., ... & Branas, C. C. (2014). Place-based stressors associated with industry and air pollution. <i>Health & Place</i> , 28, 31–37 Davitt, J. K., Bourjolly, J., & Frasso, R. (2015). Understanding inequities in home health care outcomes: Staff views on agency and system factors. <i>Research in Gerontological Nursing</i>

(continued)

Table 32.2 (continued)

Method	Exemplar and reference paper
	Dichter, M. E., Cerulli, C., Kothari, C. L., Barg, F. K., & Rhodes, K. V. (2011). Engaging With Criminal Prosecution: The Victim's Perspective. <i>Women & Criminal Justice</i> , 21(1), 21–37 Underwood, C., Skinner, J., Osman, N., & Schwandt, H. (2011). Structural determinants of adolescent girls' vulnerability to HIV: views from community members in Botswana, Malawi, and Mozambique. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i> , 73(2), 343–350
Nominal group technique	Drennan, V., Walters, K., Lenihan, P., Cohen, S., Myerson, S., & Iliffe, S. (2007). Priorities in identifying unmet need in older people attending general practice: A nominal group technique study. <i>Family Practice</i> , 24(5), 454–460 Bissell, P., Ward, P. R., & Noyce, P. R. (2000). Appropriateness measurement: application to advice-giving in community pharmacies. <i>Social science & medicine</i> , 51(3), 343–359

issues related to mental health in prisons, it would not be advisable to invite both prisoners and guards to participate in the same focus group, even though each group would have a front-line perspective on how mental health impacts life in prison.

In qualitative work, sample size should ideally be determined by saturation, that is, the research team should only stop collecting data when they stop learning new information. To appropriately assess saturation, data collection and analysis must co-occur. That having been said, most research teams and others employing these approaches do not have the unlimited resources it would take to collect data without an end goal in sight (Guest et al. 2006). Thus sample size is often an educated guess, informed and restricted by several factors including: access to study collaborators, prior studies and literature, research aims and objectives, available time and resources, and publishability.

32.2.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis varies slightly based on the format of the data collected. For example, most qualitative data collection approaches discussed here result in a set of transcripts to be coded and

analyzed, but freelisting interviews and NGT do not (analysis was discussed briefly in the respective sections above). Transcripts are unique and making sense of that data is a complex process. In an academic setting, data collection can lead to theory generation and more research. In a community setting, the goal of data collection is often to create information to inform action or feed advocacy efforts. Just as approaches of qualitative data collection vary widely, so do approaches to analysis. While modifications of grounded theory or a phenomenologic approach are often cited in the applied research setting, researchers are usually conducting thematic analyses.

Briefly, there are two primary approaches to thematic analysis: *Confirmatory (hypothesis driven)* and the more common *Exploratory (content driven)* (Guest et al. 2012). The exploratory approach is data (or collaborator) driven. That is the interviewees' voices drive the approach. The research team reads and re-reads transcripts and generates a codebook. The codes are developed in two ways: a priori (informed by the literature or the interview guide) and/or through line-by-line reading of a subsample of interview transcripts. Each code is given an explicit definition to ensure coding accuracy and allow for an assessment of intercoder reliability (Burla et al.

2008; Guest et al. 2012; MacQueen et al. 1998). Software (such as Atlas.ti, NVivo, and MaxQDA) can and should be used if available to facilitate analysis.

32.2.6 Dissemination and Reporting Back to the Community

It is imperative that early on in the research process, research teams consider how they will share and make their findings useful to the community with which they are collaborating. Traditionally, research dissemination focuses on peer reviewed literature, but that can take a great deal of time (sometimes there are years between data collection and manuscript publication). Community and organization members should feel empowered to discuss and negotiate how and when the research community will share findings with relevant stakeholders. Researchers should prioritize reporting findings to the community over academic publications. Accessible reports with clear and concise executive summaries are often preferred, but can be augmented or replaced with oral presentations, exhibits, and posters. The dissemination format should be approved by the community representatives and shared with all collaborators (Denzin and Lincoln 2011).

In sum, qualitative research methods provide a unique opportunity to capture the lived experiences of people, groups, and communities, and can provide voices to those who are marginalized and disadvantaged. There are many types of qualitative methods to employ, including observations, in-depth interviews, photo elicitation, walking interviews, freelist, focus groups, and nominal group technique. Each method has inherent strengths and weaknesses. Researchers must weigh these options when choosing their method and be prepared to address potential ethical issues that may arise. Qualitative inquiry can be rewarding and informative for both the researcher and the collaborator. The process and the data it produce help craft narratives that strengthen our ability to understand individuals and communities.

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