EMPOWERMENT AND PLANNING FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

by

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis is to analyze the psychological dimensions of the concept of empowerment in planning for healthy communities, and evaluate the role of community planners in the practical application of this concept. A case study examines the use of a community-based organization (Collingwood Neighbourhood House - CNH) as a vehicle for empowering local citizens, and the role of the City of Vancouver and City planners in the development of the organization.

A substantive literature review was undertaken. This identifies that empowerment is a dynamic process of personal and collective control, leading towards the development of a multi-dimensional participatory competence. This competence can be effectively achieved through involvement in community-based organizations which nurture and promote graduating levels of community participation for citizens. Empowerment also implies raising the consciousness of an individual, and perhaps an organization in relation to the processes that act to perpetuate powerlessness.

The literature review also illustrates that contemporary democratic societies are elitist, and that planning processes within this paradigm can effectively retard the development of participatory competence. These planning processes also perpetuate the sense of powerlessness felt by many in democratic society by assuming that all citizens, at any given point in time, have the same degree of participatory competence. This approach sees those who do not
participate as either satisfied that their needs are being met through the decisions of others or lacking the capability to fully participate in community decision making, and that the 'democratic system' will operate more efficiently without their involvement beyond periodic voting.

It is concluded that the Collingwood Neighbourhood House can serve as a vehicle for empowering local citizens. It has developed policies and practices that provide members opportunities, at progressively greater levels of responsibility, to control the direction and activities of the organization, and in many respects the immediate community. The organization was established by local citizens, through the guidance of enlightened City planners; planners who recognized that the traditional planning processes initiated by the City perpetuated the denial of resources and the powerlessness of the community. The planning process initiated by the City cannot be described as empowering.

The implications of empowerment and planning for healthy communities are discussed in relation to both perceived and real control over one's environment, and the basic rights inherent in a participatory democracy. It is concluded that participation in community activities, and particularly community planning processes, is a reciprocal process of improved self esteem, and a sense of community. It is recommended that community-based organizations receive greater support and recognition by local government and the planning field as mechanisms for connecting individuals to their immediate neighbourhoods and to the larger community through learned competency in community decision making.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

"If you tell me I may forget,
if you show me I may remember,
if you involve me we will learn together."

Chief Dan George

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

The purpose of this paper is to analyze both the implications of the concept of empowerment in planning for healthy communities, and the role planners can play in the application of this concept. It is argued that participation in community decision-making processes has a psychological affect on citizens, in terms of the perceived ability to control one's life, and increasing the sense of community through connectedness with others. Strengthening community health requires an understanding by planners of the implications of empowering people through community participation.

The phenomenon of planning for healthy communities has attracted considerable interest, particularly since the mid 1980's. Much of the debate in this field in Canada began with the federal government report "A New Perspective on the Health of Canadians" (Lalonde, 1974), which established the notion that health is not only related to wellness, but is determined by factors such as environment, lifestyle, human biology and health care...
organizations. As Boothroyd and Eberle (1990) pointed out, the inclusion of environment and lifestyle signalled a shift from the traditional medical paradigm to a more holistic system-environment perspective.

Since Lalonde's report, the World Health Organization (WHO, 1978), and later the federal government (Epp, 1986), developed even broader frameworks for promoting health. The three basic principles of these latter frameworks are: strengthening community health services; coordinating healthy public policy; and, fostering public participation.

Emerging from this framework, empowerment and community health can be generally defined as the measure of two indicators: the sense of community emanating from the connectedness between individuals, and their immediate neighbourhood and the larger community; and, the degree of control individuals and the collective community have over decisions that affect them. The significance for planners of empowerment and planning for healthy communities, has traditionally been within the context of facilitating the democratic right of citizens to be consulted around public initiatives. However, since the planning profession has operated within the confines of more elitist rather than participatory forms of democracy, traditional planning initiatives cannot be seen as empowering.
Proactive community-directed strategies, such as reversing powerlessness, alienation, and a loss of a sense of control over one's life, can foster community health through improved self-esteem of individual citizens, and the fostering of a greater sense of community. Such strategies can also improve the effectiveness of community planning and decision-making processes through increased citizen involvement, greater self-reliance and improved problem-solving skills. To more fully appreciate the implications of improved self esteem and increased participatory competence for more effective planning, planners and planning agencies must better understand and more consistently apply the fundamental principles of empowerment.

Unfortunately, the term empowerment has been used so frequently in recent years as a panacea for curing a great many ills that its meaning for planners may be distorted, and its significance diluted. While a number of factors may contribute to misconceptions of the role of empowerment, this paper argues that the planning field typically lacks an understanding of the psychological need of individuals to exert control over their lives and decisions that affect them, while at the same time feeling connected to the larger community.

The planning field also lacks a more explicit theoretical basis for incorporating empowerment into planning practice. It is from this premise of recognizing the value of empowerment for planning for
healthy communities that it seems appropriate for a closer examination of this concept and its validity for planners.

SCOPE AND AIM OF THE THESIS

Four questions emerge and form the basis of this thesis:
- How is empowerment defined and applied by various other professions?
- What is the relationship between empowerment, community participation, and planning for healthy communities?
- Do traditional public participation strategies, usually facilitated by planners, serve to empower citizens and communities?
- What mechanism can planners employ to empower others and provide more effective community participation?

The first two questions are explored in several ways, beginning with an extensive literature review of the dynamics of empowerment, drawing from the fields of human services, community development, and organizational behaviour. From this review, several guiding principles or themes are developed.

The thesis then examines the assumption that these principles of empowerment are effective and valid in any setting where decisions affecting individual citizens are made.
The role of citizen participation in planning is also explored through a literature review, including an examination of the concepts of empowerment and participation within democratic theory.

These questions are addressed further by examining the phenomenon of consciousness raising, which is considered as a precursor to empowerment. The additional hypothesis tested is that an integral dimension of empowerment is cognitive awareness - raised consciousness - of organizational and systemic processes and forces which effectively inhibit or nurture personal or collective power.

The third and fourth questions are analyzed through a case study of the establishment and development of the Collingwood Neighbourhood House (CNH). The CNH is a community-based organization operating within the Collingwood neighbourhood of the City of Vancouver. This organization emerged indirectly from a local area planning process initiated by the City. The case study examines the concept of employing a community-based organization as a mechanism for empowering local citizens, and analyzes the City's local area planning process. The case study research methods involve a review of historical and policy documents of both the City and the CNH, interviews with participants and affected local citizens, and an examination of the policies, procedures, and philosophy of the CNH.

The research is supplemented by the observations and experiences of this author, based on the following: resident of Collingwood
(1981-82); research on the socio-economic impact of Skytrain on the Collingwood community (Ahern and Rachwalski, 1983); and, board member, volunteer and paid staff of the CNH (1987-92).

ASSUMPTIONS

Some basic assumptions in this thesis include the belief that effective participation in decision making in one's community involves long term development of participatory skills, not afforded in traditional citizen participation initiatives. These types of initiatives are less likely to promote healthy communities. Another assumption is that emotional or mental health is predicated on the presence of real and perceived power and high self esteem. Inherent within this argument is the belief that systemic barriers exist within traditional western society and elitist forms of democracy, acting to undermine the goal of individual and community development, and that the process of empowerment involves consciousness-raising to this situation by all actors in the process.

A further assumption in this thesis is that planning for healthy communities requires an understanding by planners of the dynamics of empowerment as it relates to three dimensions of society: individual citizens; collective communities; and, organizations.
RATIONALE FOR EXAMINING EMPOWERMENT

An examination of empowerment provides an opportunity to fill a void that presently exists within planning literature, theory, and policies. While some planning authors, primarily in the area of community development, explore the basic principles associated with empowerment, rarely is this concept explicitly analyzed. The relationship between empowerment and planning can be better explained than past efforts.

DEFINITIONS

Several terms are used throughout this thesis. The most frequent is empowerment, which is given an extensive definition in the next chapter. Citizen participation is also frequently used. It is preferred over other related terms with presumed similar definitions, such as public participation, public consultation and public involvement.

Citizen is preferred because of the implied value placed on involvement of the person - even if it is through participation in an organization. The use of the term "public" seems more related to poorly defined concepts like the "general good", or the "public interest", which can be manipulated to serve the interests of those applying them.
The term participation also requires defining. Based on traditional planning processes, participation can simply imply being invited to a quasi-judicial hearing, where formal submissions are made to a large audience, usually by professionals and experts, by speaking into a microphone. This will be, of course, intimidating to most people, yet many planners may not view or have been trained not to view "participation" beyond such an environment. A significant dimension of empowerment involves the recognition that self esteem plays an important part in the ability of individuals to interact in meaningful ways with others.

Participation evolves from an individual's "connectedness" with others and the community as a whole, developed, in large part, through regular interaction on more personal levels. In other words, participation in this thesis means a sense of connection to others, and a degree of control over one's life, not just the act of "being there". Community-based organizations can be appropriate vehicles for providing such opportunities for participation.

Community-based is defined as local citizens directly involved in researching needs and developing follow up actions to address these identified needs. Other terms used in this thesis, and defined within the paper include: human services, community development and, organizational development (Chapter II); and, consciousness raising and conscientization (Chapter III).
In defining human services, community development and organizational development, several empowerment principles are constant: both real and perceived control over one's environment (and decisions which impact that environment) are necessary; the opportunity to participate in decision making at progressive levels should not only be allowed but consciously nurtured by planning organizations; and, improved self-esteem, as well as a greater sense of connectedness to others - often defined as a sense of community - is indicative that empowerment has taken place. These could be classified as necessary elements or indicators of healthy communities.

Finally, the area of Vancouver examined in the case study is known and referred to in supporting documents as both Joyce and Collingwood. For simplicity, the title of Collingwood will be used here.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

Chapter II contains an extensive review of empowerment from human services (social work and psychology), community development, and organizational development literature. The purpose is twofold: to present and analyze the many dynamics of empowerment so that the relationship between empowerment and planning can be better understood; and, to illustrate that empowerment is widely
recognized as a valid, equitable, and ethical response to the needs of citizens, workers, organizations and communities.

Chapter III provides a literature review and analysis of the phenomenon of consciousness raising, considered a mechanism for empowering, as well as an indicator that empowerment has indeed taken place. Chapter IV also contains a literature review and theoretical discussion of the role of citizen participation within democratic theory, expanding upon the psychological constructs of empowerment established in Chapter II.

Chapter V contains a case study of the establishment and ongoing development of the Collingwood Neighbourhood House in Vancouver. It examines the role of the City in this process, and the degree to which initiatives of the City and actions of individual planners served to empower the community and its citizens.

Chapter VI provides some broad conclusions, and discusses the potential of employing a community-based organization as a mechanism for empowering local communities and their citizens.
CHAPTER II

EMPOWERMENT

"Empowerment is the new way which liberates us so we can believe in self, can act, be part of group processes, both local and global, and build a better world."

Kent Gerecke

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents several perspectives on the concept of empowerment. The purpose is twofold: to present and analyze the many dynamics of empowerment so that the relationship between empowerment and planning can be better understood; and, to illustrate that empowerment is widely recognized as a valid, equitable, and ethical response to the needs of citizens, workers, organizations and communities.

Since planners should be concerned with the development of communities and their citizens it is argued that planning theory and planning curriculum should incorporate empowerment principles in order to provide a foundation for operationalizing empowerment in everyday planning practice.
DEFINING EMPOWERMENT

Julian Rappaport is considered a pioneer in empowerment research (Hegar and Hunzeker, 1988; Swift, 1984). He views empowerment as "a mechanism by which people, organizations, and communities gain mastery over their lives" (Rappaport, 1984, p. 3), and the conveyance of "both a psychological sense of personal control or influence and a concern with actual social influence, political power, and legal rights." (1987, p. 121) In this respect, empowerment is applicable to not only people but to neighbourhoods, organizations and communities. If individuals can exert control through groups, then the group itself (neighbourhood, organization, community) can also exert control, and as such have power and be empowered.

The broad spectrum of research and discussion on empowerment supporting Rappaport's assumption includes analysis from a personal development context, as a long-term process of adult learning and development (Clague, 1971; Kidd, 1971; Freire, 1978; and, Kieffer, 1984;), and an emotive sense of personal competency and self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1967; Pinderhughes, 1983; Hirayama and Cetingok, 1988; and, Zimmerman and Rappaport, 1988). Other perspectives include public participation and group dynamics within the context of organizational development (Guthrie, 1978; Katan, 1981; Stokes, 1981; Riger, 1984; Beck and Hillmar, 1986; Butterwick, 1987; and, Gruber and Trickett, 1987), and public
agency planning (Willmott, 1971; Anderson and Boothroyd, 1983; and, Forester, 1989), as well as within the context of collective empowerment of groups, neighbourhoods and small communities, under the banner of community development (Bregha, 1971; Compton, 1971; Deveaux and Deveaux, 1971; Katz, 1984; and Manson Willms and Gilbert, 1991).

However, through all of this literature the meaning of empowerment still remains ambiguous. Rappaport provides some additional clarity by noting,

"empowerment is easy to define in its absence: powerlessness, real or imagined; learned helplessness; alienation; loss of a sense of control over one's life. It is more difficult to define positively only because it takes on a different form in different people and contexts." (1984, p. 3)

This is supported by Kieffer's research on personal empowerment, in which he succinctly defines powerlessness and empowerment as follows:

"Powerlessness is a construction of continuous interaction between the person and his/her environment. It combines an attitude of self-blame, a sense of generalized distrust, a feeling of alienation from resources for social influence, an experience of disenfranchisement and economic vulnerability, and a sense of hopelessness in socio-political struggle. Empowerment is a necessarily long-term process of adult learning and development...the continuing construction of a multi-dimensional participatory competence." (1984, p.16)
On a more generalized level, Well and Kruzich present the notion that,

"empowerment connotes actualizing the latent powers that an individual or group possesses, or enabling them to use their capacities and power more effectively...In this sense the intent with clients is to enable them to influence their environment; with students, to enable them to become self-directed and autonomous learners; and with practitioners and organizations, to enable them to meet the goal of service provision." (1990, p. 1)

The argument presented here is that planning for healthy communities requires an understanding by planners of the dynamics of empowerment as it relates to three dimensions of society: individual citizens; communities; and, organizations. As such, this chapter will review empowerment literature along the following discipline categories: human services, specifically social work and psychology; community development; and, organizational development.

Throughout each category, several empowerment themes are constant: both real and perceived control over one's environment (and decisions which impact that environment) is necessary; the opportunity to participate in decision making at progressive levels should not only be allowed but consciously nurtured by planning organizations; and, improved self-esteem, as well as a greater sense of connectedness to others - often defined as a sense of community - is indicative that empowerment has taken place. These themes could be classified as necessary dimensions or indicators of healthy communities.
Reisch and Wencur (1986) refer to empowerment as the "Holy Grail" for many social workers in the 1980's. Social work literature, while emerging from both case studies of various client interventions and theoretical discussions of empowerment-based practice, emphasizes the development of personal power for "clients". Within this context, power is viewed as control over one's environment, with empowerment conceptualized as providing clients with the ability and capacity to adapt and cope constructively with the forces that undermine and hinder coping (Pinderhughes, 1983; Hirayama and Cetingok, 1988).

For example, Hirayama and Cetingok, in analyzing their research on intervention with Asian immigrants, emphasize the concept of power as the ability or capacity for adaptation. Coping, a function of adaptation, is the expression of one's power over the environment in order to control, organize, and integrate oneself and the environment for survival, security, and equilibrium. They argue that, "one's sense of power is closely related to positive self-concept, self-esteem, sense of dignity, and sense of well-being as a human being." (1988, p. 42)
Many factors contribute to a sense of powerlessness, most importantly the loss of social support networks, status, roots and the "connectedness" found in an individuals' native community. These are elements necessary to provide a "goodness of fit" (Germain, 1979; Pinderhughes, 1983) within society.

Hirayama and Cetingok's analysis concludes that if empowerment is to be a goal of social work, practice should emphasize increasing the coping and adaptational abilities of client/citizens, thereby "increasing their capacity for "connectedness" with other social systems by strengthening their ability to create relationships" (1988, p. 44). Since their research indicates that many cultures emphasize family and community loyalty, solidarity, and cooperation, Hirayama and Cetingok not only advocate empowering new immigrants, but that it may be more appropriate to emphasize empowerment of the family or community as a whole rather than to simply focus on individuals. It is at the community level where planners can be most effective.

From this perspective, for social workers to empower they may need to supply clients with power resources, such as (1) knowledge or information about where and how to secure needed resources (employment, money, health services), (2) knowledge about political, civil and legal systems, (3) a set of attitudes and behaviours or interpersonal skills that are effective in dealing with social systems or organizations, and (4) clients' support.
systems; that is, building networks of friends and acquaintances within and outside of one's own ethnic community (Hirayama and Centingok, 1988).

The model described by Hirayama and Centingok is interventionist, based on the client/helper relationship. Problems emerging from this model include perpetuation of the "clients" dependency on others for power, based on the perspective that power is a scarce resource supplied or given by the worker. This model also accepts, or fails to explicitly address, that societal and systemic structures and processes often impede the individuals attempts for personal development and growth. This can be categorized as the absence of raised consciousness around these systemic impediments, and demonstrates the need to include social action and change within the empowerment equation.

From a healthy community's perspective, an empowerment model based on helping others to simply adapt to environments coopts the powerless into believing that healthy communities are symbolized by passive acceptance of the dominant culture, rather than a healthy community being one which allows for and accepts that individual citizens will have divergent opinions and interests. The notion of empowering others through the development of adaptation skills is particularly disturbing when the dominant culture in western and traditional democratic societies is paternalistic and perpetuates powerlessness.
Hegar and Hunzeker (1988), in their theoretical discussion of empowerment-based practice within the child welfare system, identify that this system operates within the "paternalistic tradition" of state intervention. They conclude that not only are public agency clientele disproportionately from disempowered groups, they can become further disempowered by the system during the course of investigations, apprehension of their children, termination of parental rights, etc.. They and others (Pinderhughes, 1983; Bowen, 1978) argue that workers can empower clients by teaching and modelling skills in the use of power and overcoming organizational barriers. However, this fails to recognize that "teaching" and "modelling" is also paternalistic, and does not necessarily result in learning and the discovery and development of skills and abilities.

In her discussion of empowerment for both client and worker, Pinderhughes (1983) does advocate that knowledge of the dynamics of how power and powerlessness operate in human systems is imperative, and that practice should be based upon this knowledge. By integrating this "social systems" approach, she begins to differentiate empowerment as more than control or the capacity to exert power, by adding the dimension of consciousness raising.

Consciousness raising, she argues, is an empowerment strategy that educates clients not only about power dynamics, but also how the systems in which they live perpetuate powerlessness. The powerless
can recognize and understand processes within systems that undermine their ability to function effectively as individuals, families, and communities. Cycles of powerlessness are perpetuated as the systems which create this phenomenon also act to undermine the very skills that are so necessary for coping. Pinderhughes adds that,

"the failure of the larger system to provide necessary support creates powerlessness in communities. And the more powerless a community due to denial of resources and nutritive supplies, the more the families within it are hindered from meeting the needs of their members and from organizing to improve the community so that it can provide them with more support." (p. 332)

Consciousness raising is seen as an essential component of the empowerment process for both client and worker, since the workers themselves are part of the system within which change must occur. Without such a consciousness raising experience, the community worker is susceptible to becoming part of the "benevolent, over-sympathetic segment of society that improves its functioning at the expense of the pitiful." (Bowen, 1978, p. 444) Therefore, workers must be conscious about the extent to which their efforts help clients maintain the disempowering "social system equilibrium" that victimizes them. (Pinderhughes, 1983)

Within this framework, empowerment provides the ability and capacity to cope constructively with the forces that undermine and hinder coping: the achievement of some reasonable control over destiny. Achieving this also requires the helper, in a social-
change role, influencing the external social system through various means, including power, pressure, negotiation, or working jointly with the extra-familial systems to link up with the existing support systems or build new ones. Pinderhughes adds, this may include influencing existing support systems or building new ones, such as self-help and action groups.

Staples views the concept of empowerment as including both process and product dimensions. Essential to this notion is effective action on behalf of self (whether individually or collectively), operationalized as "the ongoing capacity of individuals or groups to act on their own behalf to achieve a greater measure of control over their lives and destinies." (1990, p. 30)

Empowerment is then inextricably linked to both the ability and opportunity to make decisions and act on one's own behalf. Individual empowerment evolves through personal development, involving both growth of skills and abilities - and the opportunities to exert them - as well as a more positive self-definition. There is an increased sense of personal dignity, self-respect, and self-esteem as those who become empowered feel better about themselves. As self-confidence is developed, strengthened personal abilities allow for greater action on behalf of oneself.
Central to Staple's argument is the belief, or world view, that the ability to redefine oneself and to act effectively on one's own behalf is not only the essence of empowerment, it is a basic human need. She concludes that,

"(T)he person who lacks power and control over his or her own life has been stripped of a fundamental element of one's humanity. This transcends even the loss of dignity - it is the loss of self. The individual who becomes more empowered has become more human in the fullest sense of the word." (1990, p. 32)

Moreau (1990) argues that empowerment of oppressed clients requires a "structural approach", comprising two inter-related roles for social workers: to explore with clients the sociopolitical and economic forces that perpetuate their powerlessness, in order to collectivize rather than personalize and individualize their source and solution; and, to change client consciousness in order to reverse the process of self-disempowerment or of internalized oppression. This latter role is deemed necessary because the oppressive social order may seriously impair a client's capacities to accurately construe reality.

Once again, empowerment through intervention and "changing" the client assumes that power and enlightenment can be given from one to another. Friere (1976) illustrates the contradiction in this notion through his concept of "conscientization", the belief that authentic knowledge is when an individual becomes the subject of their world rather than the object. While Moreau's first role,
exploring with clients the socio-political forces that perpetuate powerlessness, can provide individuals with a theoretical basis for action, it is only through action, and subsequent reflection, that consciousness is changed, conscientization takes place, and one's world transformed. In this context critical consciousness is not changed through the actions of others, but rather transformed through one's own actions and reflections on the theory behind the action. (Conscientization is explored further in Chapter III.)

SOCIAL WORK REVIEW

Themes or schools of thought emerging from the social work literature include the need for worker intervention with societal structures and support systems, and, raising the consciousness of both workers and clients around the forces that perpetuate powerlessness and oppression. While these themes are echoed throughout the remainder of this chapter by other authors and disciplines, the social work literature illustrates a reliance on the clinical or medical approach to working with individuals and groups. This is evident in the consistent references to "changing" the client, the need to "intervene" in the clients world, the workers "giving" or "sharing" of power with clients, and "teaching" clients how to act more powerfully.
These concepts are more consistent with ideologies of paternalism (Hegar and Hunzeker, 1988), the notion of power being a scarce commodity (Katz, 1984), and the needs model of people in difficulty seen as children (Rappaport, 1981). From an empowerment perspective, these concepts also place too great an emphasis on the worker as 'expert' who, despite the best intentions, can create expectations and structures whereby an initial reliance on their knowledge endures (Katz, 1984).

PSYCHOLOGY

The broad field of psychology analyzes empowerment from an emotional-development perspective based primarily on research of social interaction between individuals and others, often within a group context. Coopersmith (1967) presents one of the more comprehensive and in-depth psychological explorations of how personal competence and self-esteem are developed. He posits there are four major bases of esteem: competence, significance, virtue, and power. "That is, persons come to evaluate themselves according to how proficient they are at performing tasks, how well they meet ethical or religious standards, how loved and accepted they are by others, and how much power they exert." (p. 262)

His research indicated that individuals with high self-esteem feel capable of coping with adversity, and competent enough to achieve
success, while "the individual with low self-esteem feels helpless, vulnerable, and inadequate." (Coopersmith, 1967, p. 261) He draws a strong correlation between self-esteem and empowerment, since those who have greater self-esteem are more actively involved in decisions affecting their own life, and in civic activities affecting their immediate neighbourhood and larger community. In other words, higher self-esteem is associated with control over one's life in general.

COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY

A substantive body of knowledge and research explicitly on empowerment can be found within Community Psychology literature. Community Psychology by definition is concerned with the relationship and interface between individual and organizational processes (Keys and Frank, 1987; Moos, 1984; Newbrough, 1973). While much of the literature analyzes field research and case studies, there is considerable discussion (Rappaport, 1981, 1987; Kieffer, 1984; Hess, 1984) of a theory of empowerment being the most suitable theory for Community Psychology, replacing the ideology of prevention in mental health.

Rappaport proclaims that, "the aim of our community of (Community Psychology) scientists is to develop a theory of empowerment." , adding that,
"(T)he hallmark of a Community Psychology world view, developed in the context of the community of Community Psychologists, toward which we direct our symbolic generalizations, our models, and our exemplars, or concrete problem solutions, at every level of analysis, from the individual to the community, and into which all our data (as well as data we adapt from others) can ultimately fit, is empowerment."(1987, p. 131)

Wolff's "activist" perspective further qualifies the relationship between empowerment and Community Psychology by establishing that "empowerment is not the solution to all our problems, but when we take a careful look at what the origins of what the problems are, we often see that a key component of a system of interventions needs to include empowerment." (1987, p. 167) Echoing Pinderhughes social work perspective, Wolff adds that what distinguishes empowerment from the more traditional definition of prevention is the emphasis on the community, in addition to the individual and family.

Rappaport reinforces this assertion by observing that empowerment is not only an individual psychological phenomenon, it is also organizational, political, sociological, economic, and spiritual. He adds that community psychologists "are as much concerned with empowered organizations, neighbourhoods, and communities as we are with empowered individuals." (1987, p. 130)

Returning to Rappaport's views presented earlier, empowerment is both "a mechanism by which people, organizations, and communities gain mastery over their lives" (1984, p. 3), and the conveyance of
"both a psychological sense of personal control or influence and a concern with actual social influence, political power, and legal rights." (1987, p. 121) In this respect, empowerment is applicable to not only people but to neighbourhoods, organizations and communities. If individuals can exert control through groups, then the group itself (neighbourhood, organization, community) can also exert control, and as such, have power and be empowered.

He adds that, "to understand the meaning of empowerment one must know something about more than individuals; one must also know what, or who, one has authority over. There is built into the term a quality of the relationship between a person and his or her community, environment, or something outside one's self." (1987, p. 130; original italics).

EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The Community Psychology literature does not explicitly define how a community, neighbourhood or organization can be empowered, particularly in the same context as an individual can be empowered. Evidence provided through case studies reveals that the notion of "learned helplessness" for individuals (perceived lack of power over situations) can be applied to groups and communities, where learned helplessness is exhibited through apathy and alienation (Seligman, Greer and Maier, 1968; Rappaport, 1977; Serrano-Garcia, 1984).
Implicit within the literature is the notion that organizations and communities may be empowered by altering imbalances in resources - i.e., wealth and decision making power (Ryan, 1981) - achieved, in part, through access to and possession of available resources (Rappaport, 1981).

The lack or absence of power at the community level is also related to the absence of a psychological sense of community (Sarason, 1974). Therefore, the goal of empowering communities and community-based organizations may be achieved both through developing a greater sense of community, and by directing resources to community organizations.

Empowering the individual and the community becomes a reciprocal relationship, where the individual is empowered through opportunities to participate or connect with others in the community, participation which can be provided and nurtured through community-based organizations. A greater personal sense of community can emerge for individuals who are encouraged to interact or participate with others and share decision making.

Organizations which act to empower individuals by nurturing participation in the actions of the organization will, themselves, be empowered through the emergence of the psychological sense of community, developed amongst the citizenry. It follows, then, that empowered organizations or communities, as with empowered
individuals, must have a strong sense of ability, as well as real opportunity to influence outside persons or organizations - e.g., planning agencies, local politicians - whose decisions may impact the community.

From this, an empowered organization can be defined as having the ability to control decisions that affect the organization itself, and its collective membership. Beyond this ability is the raised awareness of the systemic or institutional barriers which may act to constrain this control.

Government policies and practices (such as direct funding and support from staff) which afford community-based organizations these opportunities and nurture these abilities can provide the basic resources necessary to empower organizations, and, in turn, the individuals, and communities which the organizations are a part of. The substantial difference between empowered individuals and community-based organizations is the reality that opportunities and abilities to effectively exert control outside of the immediate neighbourhood or community may only be achieved by the organization. Reasons behind this may include the practical aspect of strength in numbers, and the philosophical issue that the organization, and not the individual will be seen by outsiders as representative of the collective interests of the community.
The literature provides a framework for defining indicators of empowerment for individuals. These indicators include high self esteem, a strong sense of control over decisions, a strong connectedness with others (sense of community), and a raised awareness (consciousness) of the forces that perpetuate powerlessness and undermine one's efforts to move beyond the state of powerlessness. When an individual is empowered they develop a strong commitment to both their own personal development and interests, as well as to the development of others. In other words, someone cannot be seen as empowered unless their relationships with others are based on the notion that power is renewable and expandable (synergistic), and not a scarce resource to be competed for. This model of interaction with others can, in turn, empower others.

Following this model, organizations, neighbourhoods and communities can empower others by interacting with and relating individuals to the organization in a manner that recognizes differences inherent within dynamic communities.

Both Wolff (1987) and Rappaport (1987) emphasize the importance of an "ecological theory" to understanding the longitudinal development of empowerment in both people and in settings. Wolff refers to this as an ecological belief system of human behaviour in which behaviour is a function of both the organism and the environment. (The social work concept "goodness-of-fit" discussed
above, is an ecological/environmental theory articulated by Germain (1979). When environments are supportive and nutritive, people flourish as their goodness-of-fit with the environment facilitates personal growth and development, and the realization of their potential. Rappaport (1981) proposes this theory as an antidote to the "one sidedness" of person-centred, intervention programs, since the ecological approach can provide a much broader range of contextual understanding. This approach also emphasizes the role relationships between people, policy, programs and professionals.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT

Zimmerman and Rappaport researched the relationship between perceived control and citizen participation in an effort to better understand what they term "psychological empowerment". This phenomenon is described as "the connection between a sense of personal competence, and a desire for, and a willingness to take action in the public domain." (1988, p. 725) In this context, they define empowerment as a multilevel construct that links individual strengths and competencies, natural helping systems, and proactive behaviours to matters of social policy and social change, with psychological empowerment as the expression of this construct at the level of individual persons.
Zimmerman and Rappaport examined the relationship between empowerment and citizen participation in three studies (they broadly define citizen participation as involvement in any organized activity in which the individual participates without pay in order to achieve a common goal). The first study was designed to identify four types of citizen participants and their concomitant level of psychological empowerment, using hypothetical scenarios offering individuals an opportunity to exert control and influence, measuring the extent to which they feel their actions will be related to outcomes (locus of control). Eleven dependent psychometric measures relevant to psychological empowerment were developed, representing personality, cognitive, and motivational aspects of empowerment.

Cognitive aspects of control were seen as self-efficacy or the belief that one has the skills and ability to achieve goals, and political-efficacy, the belief that it is possible to influence the political process and community decision making. Motivational variables of psychological empowerment used were the desire for control, and civic duty or the belief that one ought to participate in the political process as a responsibility to others. The second and third studies followed the same method as the first, except that naturalistic behaviours of participants, rather than hypothetical scenarios, were examined.
Their findings suggest that psychological empowerment is related to actual participation in one's community, and that empowerment is not only a self-perception of competence and control, but includes a concern for the common good and a sense of connectedness to others (goodness of fit). The results of this research supports the hypothesis that greater participation in community activities and organizations is both a vehicle for and a significant indicator of psychological empowerment, and, as such, community health. They also conclude that empowerment might be expected to develop more in organizations that encourage participation in decision making, and that more hierarchical, rigidly delineated organizations may be less likely to promote the development of psychological empowerment.

The latter conclusion illustrates the potential dilemma faced when planners work with community organizations and individual citizens while operating within a hierarchical organizational culture. Planners feeling powerless within their own organization may have difficulty empowering others, since they may become coerced into adapting to a dis-empowering culture.

Conversely, Gruber and Trickett's research of participative decision-making within an alternative public school (1987) provided a different result from Zimmerman and Rappaport, suggesting no clear correspondence between the availability of empowerment structures around decision making and the psychological sense of
empowerment. Gruber and Trickett concluded that although more careful attention to contextually based inequalities would improve the prospects for empowerment, there is a "fundamental paradox" in the idea of people empowering others because the very institutional structure that puts one group in a position to empower also works to undermine the act of empowerment.

Such an analysis fails to recognize the role consciousness raising can play for both worker and client in anticipating and minimizing the countervailing effects of such a paradox. Nonetheless, Gruber and Trickett make an important and useful distinction between actual control and the psychological sense of control described above. This is supported by Serrano-Garcia's (1984) case study on empowerment in Puerto Rico, which analyses empowerment within a colonial context.

The contribution of Community Psychology to the study and understanding of empowerment can be summarized in the following outline of 11 assumptions, presuppositions, and hypotheses built into the discipline's ecological theory.

1. Empowerment is a multilevel construct, therefore research should be concerned with the study of and relationships within and between levels of analysis - individuals, groups, organizations, and other settings, communities, and social policies.

2. The radiating impact of one level of analysis on the others is assumed to be important. Empowerment theory assumes that understanding persons, settings, or policies requires multiple measures from differing points of view and different levels of analysis.
3. The historical context in which a person, a program, or a policy operates has an important influence on the outcomes of the program. Failure to consider this results in a lack of understanding of a program's place in the community before and after its existence.

4. The cultural context matters. Both individuals and settings bring with them a variety of "cultures", and the match or mismatch between them will impact the empowerment process.

5. Longitudinal research, or the study of people, organizations, and policies over time, is seen to be at least desirable, and perhaps necessary. If empowerment operates as expected, longitudinal research is necessary in order to understand it. It may be that as much can be learned from the study of one setting, or a few people over time, as from the study of large numbers of individuals.

6. Empowerment theory is self-consciously a world view theory. That is to say, those who hold this view do so because they admit to certain assumptions based on their values, goals, attitudes, beliefs, and intentions. In this instance this is understood to mean making what is implicit, explicit. There are at least two implications of this assumption:

(a) The people of concern are to be treated as collaborators; and at the same time, the researcher may be thought of as a participant, legitimately involved with the people she is studying. The researcher in this way may be more like an anthropologist/action researcher than a laboratory scientist.

(b) The choice of our language is seen to be very important as to what it communicates, and metacommunicates, not only to other researchers and policy makers but also to those being studied. This is a crucial point to the theory of empowerment, since the terms used to describe work with people changes the way people think about themselves, either impeding or enhancing comprehension of their own ability for self and mutual help.

7. It is assumed that the conditions of participation in a setting will have an impact on the empowerment of the members. Settings with more opportunities for participation are more likely to be empowering settings, with the results varying based on the history and culture of both the person(s) and the setting.

8. Other things being equal, an organization that holds an empowerment ideology will be better at finding and developing resources than one with a helper-helpee ideology, where resources will be seen as relatively scarce, and dependant on professionals.
9. Locally developed solutions are more empowering than single solutions applied in a general way, and applied in the form of prepackaged interventions.

10. The size of the setting matters. Settings that are small enough to provide meaningful roles for all members, yet large enough to obtain resources, are hypothesized as more likely to create the conditions that lead to empowerment.

11. Empowerment is not a scarce resource which gets used-up, but rather, once adopted as an ideology, empowerment tends to expand resources. (Zimmerman and Rappaport, 1988)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Examining empowerment within this context is aided by a discussion of the definition of 'community development'.

COMMUNITY

Community has been described in a number of terms, including a group of people perceiving common needs and problems, that acquire a sense of identity focused around these problems and that a common set of objectives grow out of these (Roberts, 1979); a symbol for relationships in which the experiences of social solidarity, mutual openness of character, and common search for the truth are dominant (Cochran, 1982); or simply as a geographical area where people live (Kaul, 1985). Meanwhile, Morris and Hess (1975) view concrete geographical areas as neighbourhoods and community as an abstract unity based on something other than geography.
The idea and study of community has been a central interest in the field of sociology. For instance Tonnies, writing in late nineteenth century Germany, defined community in several terms, including the degree of attachment to a specific location, through his variation on the "eternal theme of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft" (Tonnies, 1957, x). A place community or locality is based upon a common habitat or ownership of adjacent (or nearby) properties, e.g., neighbourhoods, villages, towns or cities. A nonplace community or mind community is characterized by cooperation and coordinated action for a common goal, without reference to place, e.g., religious orders and professions.

Tonnies also described community as being held together by two sorts of bonds. A gemeinschaft community is characterized by implicit bonds that relate all community members to each other, based upon common values and beliefs, mutual interdependence, respect, and a shared sense of status hierarchy. Cultural traditions and complementary social expectations, rather than formalized written codes or contracts, establish community rules regarding relationships, producing "a real being with an organic form of life", characterized by intimate, private, and exclusive living together. Each person's membership in the community is viewed as natural, something expected to last a lifetime because of the emotional meaning it has for other community members as well as for the individual.
Gesellschaft communities are characterized by bonds which are pre-dominantly formal, impersonal, and secular in tone. Community members relate to one another through formally structured relations within community institutions such as work organizations, professions, and civic organizations.

DEVELOPMENT

Various perspectives on development include the reallocation of assets and power (Bregha, 1971), experiential learning and the act of knowing (Freire, 1978), and going forward with defined goals, with purposeful activity aimed at real achievement (Griffiths, 1982).

Numerous definitions of community development have been presented in the literature (Compton, 1971; Edwards and Jones, 1976; Shirley, 1979; Ponting, 1986). While these definitions focus upon community development either as a process or a desired product, others (MacMillan, 1991; Edwards and Jones, 1976; and, Johnston, 1982) point out that unsuccessful efforts often result from not fully integrating the following characteristics:

- Members of the community must organize themselves and participate fully in the organizations or institutions they create.
- Community members must share responsibility for the identification of community problems and for designing solutions to these problems (i.e., they must not rely solely on outside professionals).

- The role of outsiders must, whenever possible, be limited to the provision of needed funds, materials and technical expertise so that the community retains control over planning its own future.

- Community development is a learning process, and community development initiatives must be used to enhance the planning, administrative and technical skills of the community.

- Extensive and open discussion should be the norm, and community consensus should be sought whenever possible.

- The presence of some emotional commitment to the effort on the part of the people involved.

- The formalization of goals to assure that their meaning is conveyed to the people involved.

- Using procedures that were designed for effectiveness and for consistency with those goals.

- Attention for people's felt need for action.

- Consideration to the socio-cultural, demographic, and ecological features of the community as a whole.

Here community development is defined as involving two phenomena: the conscious effort of local citizens to improve the quality of life for individuals and collective others in a geographic area - i.e., village, neighbourhood - with a necessary dimension of this effort involving the nurtured participation of those same individuals; and, secondly, increasing the connectedness or "goodness of fit" individuals have with each other, often emerging from such collective action.
In an encompassing definition, MacMillan sees community development as, "both a process and product of purposive social action which results in community empowerment." (1991, p. 6)

Compton reduces the relationship between empowerment and community development to its essence by arguing that "community development is not much more than people participating in the improvement of their lot" (1971, p. 384). He adds that not only allowing but encouraging people to participate in their own positive growth (development) is a process of empowerment, which ultimately results in positive growth for the individuals' community.

Rappaport illustrates two further elements of the relationship between empowerment and community development, presented as the political ideology of empowerment:

"On the one hand (community development) demands that we look to many diverse local settings where people are already handling their own problems in living, in order to learn more about how they do it...On the other hand, it demands that we find ways to take what we learn from these diverse settings and solutions and make it more public, so as to help foster social policies and programs and make it more rather than less likely that others not now handling their own problems in living or shut out from current solutions, gain control over their lives." (1981, p. 15)
For Katz, when the process of empowerment is merged with synergy this accesses valued human resources to achieve "synergistic communities". Within the synergistic paradigm, empowerment is viewed as "a self generating and generative resource...activated by individuals and communities who function as its guardian and not its possessor, and who, often guided by the motivation to help others, allow the resource to be shared by all members of the community." (1984, p. 202)

Synergistic patterns bring phenomena together through interrelation, often with an unexpected, new and greater whole emerging from the "disparate, seemingly conflicting parts." Within this pattern, Katz adds, "phenomena exist in harmony with each other, maximizing each other's potential. Within the synergy paradigm, a resource (such as empowerment) expands and becomes renewable, yet it can remain valuable." (1984, p. 202; parentheses added)

Synergy describes a pattern by which phenomena relate to each other, including how people relate to each other and other phenomena (Fuller, 1963; Benedict, 1970; Maslow 1971). The "synergistic paradigm" is the antithesis of the "scarcity paradigm", with the latter assuming that valued resources are scarce, with this scarcity largely determining their value to society. Even empowerment can become limited if it is framed within the scarcity paradigm, since power is viewed as a scarce resource
individuals and groups will be forced to compete for, with the likely result of "haves" and "have-nots" in communities. For instance, Katz points out that from the scarcity perspective, "even the best intentioned experts can create expectations and structures whereby an initial reliance on their knowledge endures. Those who seek to empower continue to direct the process of empowerment, and those who seek to become empowered continue to look outside themselves for advice." (1984, p. 205)

From a community development perspective, the concept of "synergistic communities" is viewed as an empowering environment, in which empowerment increases synergistically. Empowerment is not limited to or identified with individual participants, rather it becomes a resource beyond the self, occurring both across individuals and within communities. Yet within the synergistic paradigm, the sense of empowerment is not separated from social structure, so that within synergistic communities individual and social change are intimately linked, enhancing each other's effect.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Individual and collective participation in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs is innate as a central theme of empowerment within community development. Wandersman and Giamartino (1980) conducted a significant study, investigating factors influencing initial participation and non-participation in
neighbourhood "block" organization meetings. Their concern was with how characteristics of the community and of individuals influence initial participation. They conclude that the perception by residents of concrete problems and of an environmental climate conducive to working on them (perceived control) creates a necessary, although not complete, context for successful organization. "Within a conducive atmosphere" they conclude, "participants are distinguished from non-participants by the extent to which they know their neighbours and they feel their actions will be related to outcomes."(1980, p. 226)

Johnston categorizes citizen participation within community development as "community participation". She and others (Burke, 1968; Arnstein, 1969; Katan, 1981) argue that there are progressive levels of participation, adding that, "the primary aim of community-based programmes is to promote human development and this can only be achieved if people participate at increasingly responsible levels."(1982, p. 202) This is reinforced by Coopersmith's (1967) conclusion that "steamroller tactics, arbitrary procedures, and exclusion from consultation leave the minority with a sense of powerlessness, which presumably subverts their sense of esteem."(1967, p. 199)
Several authors, including Allred (1976) and Wandersman and Giamartino (1980), observed that most disenfranchised citizens and groups have little faith in government-sponsored development initiatives, nor significant opportunities to participate in them. Therefore, community participation must, in most cases, be purposively stimulated through strategies which both develop graduating levels of responsibility, while at the same time enabling each citizen to accept greater levels of responsibility, at the citizens discretion. Planners can be effective in such strategies by facilitating the development and monitoring of initiatives in cooperation with the agency and the community. Johnston (1982) views the success of such strategies as dependant on the following four basic elements:

(a) the existence of mutual trust between members of the community, between them and their leaders, and in outsiders cooperating with the community in the development of community-based activities. The greater the level and spread of trust the greater the chance of participation at all levels.

(b) people must be given opportunities to participate. Outside agencies and community leaders must have trust in the people's ability to participate effectively in all facets of the planning process. Not only must the initiators believe, but the people themselves need to have a sense of self-worth and self-confidence in their ability to participate effectively. This point is critical to empowering communities.

A weakness of many community development programs is that they may succeed in giving the elite, or the relatively well-off members of the community, the opportunity to participate, while failing to stimulate the participation of the disenfranchised, even at the most basic level of participation.
Strategies must include intensive efforts to stimulate and encourage the participation of those most in need of improved self-worth, i.e., members of the lower classes.

(c) the community must consider programmes worthwhile, based on providing something of value to them. Failure to achieve tangible and meaningful results within reasonable amounts of time will dilute enthusiasm and be unsuccessful in attracting dynamic participation of citizens. For example, including a programme monitoring system, one where citizens are directly involved in planning, implementation and analysis, should effectively maintain community interest.

(d) the community must have a strong sense of ownership and responsibility for the programme. A continuous process of awareness must be created of the citizens changing needs, the urgency/priority for addressing these needs, and the resources available to do so. Agencies must be prepared to gradually diminish their role, perhaps through a greater sensitivity to emerging opportunities for the community to assume more and more responsibility for the implementation of programmes. Citizen ability and confidence in participating responsibly can only increase through experiences gained as participants.

Munro provides an additional perspective of community development, based upon two phases of organizational intervention: community animation - facilitating the community-based identification of peoples needs, the establishment of organizations to facilitate meeting these needs, and the fostering of a sense of community and capacity for collective strength in place of individual alienation and resignation; and, secondly, societal and institutional support for the empowered community. Regarding the latter, Munro adds, "if community development is to become a reality and not a mere sham, then (planners) must be prepared to mobilize the necessary resources - to meet the legitimate demands of the new community." (1970, p. 5)
Empowerment from the perspective of organizational development implies the explicit involvement of clients and employees in various aspects of organizational decision making. For empowerment to take place within such a context, participatory practices must be targeted at developing the competencies and abilities of both the participant and the organization. This can be termed personal and organizational development.

DEFINITION

Bennis defines organizational development as, "a response to change, a complex educational strategy intended to change the beliefs, attitudes, values and structure of organizations so that they can better adapt." (1969, p. 50)

For Beck and Hillmar, empowerment from an organizational development perspective is "a process, or enabling means, by which (the) organization can maximize the efforts and effectiveness of people in using power", with their view of power as "the energy, capacity, or force to accomplish the outcome you want." (1986, p. 122) Empowerment provides the mechanism for transforming that energy into productive work that accomplishes organization results.
Empowering both workers and clients is seen as a positive orientation towards organizational development, one that assumes each individual has rich potential capable of improving the growth and performance of the organization. Planning for healthy communities from an empowerment model also requires an understanding of how organizations can plan, manage, and use power in positive ways. Organizational development can often be achieved through participation of both internal and external actors.

Client or citizen participation can be a mechanism employed by organizations for various reasons. These can include participation strategies which can either empower or disempower (coopt) clients, and can serve various roles which organizations perceive for citizen/clients, including: conformist roles - those that are narrowly defined and have little effect on the organization, used more for controlling clients; mediation roles - that serve mainly as a bridge between client and organization; and, changing roles - that allow participants to affect policies, structure, and activities of organizations. (Katan, 1981) The latter two roles can be seen as the only ones which would involve empowerment of the citizen/client, the former considered disempowering.

Katan (1981), expanding upon previous work by Burke (1968) termed "strategy objectives", summarized the following motives/rationale for involving clients in community organizations:
clients have a basic right to participate in organizations whose services directly affect their lives. This is viewed as a primary value of democratic societies that are committed to the individuals right for freedom and self-determination.

- participation may counterbalance the negative effects of community loss in contemporary society. These negative effects are brought on through urbanization, technological development, bureaucratization and accompanied by a decline of primary social frameworks such as the extended family and the "Gemeinschaft" kind of community. These variables are linked to passivity, anonymity, and powerlessness, as well as different forms of deviant behaviour within communities. As such, this motive emphasizes the contribution of citizens to the renaissance of the local community, and to the restoration of meaningful relations among its residents.

- participation acts as a mechanism for educating individuals, either where participation educates them to properly perform their roles as organizational clients or where it enhances their citizenship.

- participation acts as citizen/client therapy, whereby the passive role of receiving help is countervailed by enabling active participation in service delivery processes. This "helper therapy" motive is based in part on the principle that improved self-image and increased community participation results from the role of helper rather than helpee. (Reisman, 1965)

- participation strengthens the power of individuals and communities by organizing them into interest groups to collectively express their needs and impose pressures on authorities and institutions which affect their lives.

- participation serves as a vehicle for sharing experiential knowledge from citizen/clients to the agency, complementing the professional knowledge existing within the organization. The need to combine both forms of knowledge is based on the assumption that individual and social needs and problems are multi-dimensional, therefore require the combination of professionals and participants from the community.

- participation is a mechanism to broaden the base of legitimacy and community support for organizations, within the context of improving leverage and bargaining power between the local organization and outside agencies, to which the local one is dependant on for resources.

- participation as a mechanism for controlling the behaviour of citizen/clients (cooptation), also referred to as "conforming". Involvement or participation within the organization may be utilized by organizations as a cover for activities designed to
prevent or limit external threats toward the organization, and to mobilize support for programs.

- participation as an opportunity to effect change within organizations. Change may occur in two ways, by allowing clients to pressure the organization and counteract pressure clients receive from other organizations, as well as through the opening of new channels of communication between agencies and citizen/clients. The latter process may increase both the opportunity to express needs and opinions to the organization, as well as the agencies' readiness to listen to them and to take this information into account when developing and evaluating programmes.

SUMMARY

Empowerment suggests an individual's determination over one's own life, as well as democratic participation in the life of one's community, often through relations with mediating structures in society (entities that can connect individuals to the larger community) such as schools, churches, and other community-based organizations. Empowerment implies fostering local solutions by a policy which strengthens rather than weakens these mediating structures. These relations also satisfy a basic human need of connection or attachment between people and their community, which, if absent, perpetuates a sense of powerlessness, alienation, and despair.

Research (Coopersmith, 1967; and, Zimmerman and Rappaport, 1988) supports the notion that those who are allowed and encouraged by societal institutions to actively participate in planning processes will be characterized by higher levels of self-esteem.
Such practices can also strengthen the psychological sense of community. Therefore, organizations and systems that actively foster and promote participation can provide a foundation for improved community health by increasing the connectedness between individual citizens and the larger community.

The thesis presented here echoes the assessment that empowerment can be a process where planning agencies and individual planners can promote community health by fostering and promoting a greater sense of community. This may be achieved by consciously and systematically involving citizens in decision-making through community-based organizations. The literature tests and supports the contention that improved self esteem and participatory competence not only result from such involvement and community action, but also act to increase a sense of community. It also supports the notion that communities and organizations are entities which can be empowered both by direct (eg., financial) and indirect (eg., political) support from outside the community, as well as through the increased sense of community which emerges from the empowerment of individual citizens and members.

For planners, the concept of empowerment is a departure from the paternalistic model of interacting with communities, which is the hallmark of traditional planning. Planners within local government have operated within a professional and political culture that emphasizes product over process, a corporate approach to planning
which suggests that as the "experts" we must plan for our communities, rather than plan with them.

A key to empowerment for planners may be the conscious effort of planning (and human service) agencies to foster individual empowerment through the establishment and support of community-based organizations. These organizations should encourage participation in decision making, and provide a variety of flexible roles for citizen/clients to fill; roles which reflect graduating degrees of responsibility.

From a healthy community's perspective, traditional planning initiatives emphasize existing power dynamics, often with an implicit goal of maintaining the status quo in relation to control over community decision making. This coopts the powerless into believing that healthy communities are those with a high degree of satisfaction with the dominant culture, rather than a healthy community being one which allows for and accepts that individual citizens will have divergent opinions and interests. Planners may also play a role in facilitating the community's attempts to strive for consensus when these contrasting or divergent interests are in conflict.

For empowerment to emerge a number of actions must take place, including the powerless must experience a consciousness raising or enlightenment, enabling them to recognize obstacles to improving
the quality of their life. Planners must also become enlightened about the dynamics of empowerment, understanding that their role should involve empowering communities by fostering indigenous leadership capable of establishing further empowerment strategies at the "grass-roots" level. Planning institutions must provide support and legitimization for these locally-based indigenous organizations, organizations which provide a connectedness between local citizens and others through increasing levels of participation and responsibility for members.

The literature review illustrates that empowerment is widely analyzed and employed by several disciplines as a mechanism for improving the lives of others. The literature also reveals inconsistencies in both the definition and practice of empowerment, ranging from teaching the powerless to adapt to the status quo, to viewing empowerment as more suitable than prevention as the theoretical basis for mental health services. This inconsistency reveals the critical need for developing a strong theoretical foundation for professional practice, particularly when attempting to apply such a multi-dimensional concept as empowerment. The implications of improved self esteem and increased participatory competence for more effective planning is evident from the literature, based both on case studies and theoretical discussions.
If planners are to incorporate empowerment in planning practice, and it is argued here they should, then planners must better understand and more consistently apply the fundamental principles of empowerment, and develop a stronger theoretical basis for doing so. To advocate for empowerment as a basis for planning practice prior to developing a more explicit theoretical foundation would both reduce the effectiveness of our actions in the field, and undermine efforts to shift from or change the paternalistic culture within which we currently operate. As Rappaport reminded his Community Psychology colleagues, "If we do not develop our own theories we will adopt other (less appropriate) theories by default" (1987, p. 123; original parentheses). This has credence for the planning field as well.
Chapter II illustrates that an integral dimension of empowerment is cognitive awareness by all participants of the emotional, organizational and systemic processes and forces which effectively inhibit or nurture personal or collective power, also referred to as consciousness raising. A thorough examination of empowerment demands a greater discussion of the concept of consciousness raising, which is considered as a mechanism for empowering, as well as an indicator that empowerment has indeed taken place. The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the phenomenon of consciousness raising, including two related concepts, feminism and conscientization, to assess the significance of these concepts when applying the empowerment model to planning.

Within the concept of consciousness raising, the citizen is viewed as developing social self by becoming aware (conscious) of oneself as a social being, a precursor to overcoming powerlessness. It is primarily through mediating structures of group association that consciousness-raising takes place. The role of group involvement or
mediating structures emerges when shared social conditions, and the realization of the existence of these conditions, contribute to a social consciousness sufficient to instill social action.

Social consciousness is premised on self-awareness, and the ability to objectify or externally appraise one's social conditions, allowing for the evaluation and interpretation of the present in light of the past. Achieving the goal of reversing powerlessness, helplessness, alienation, and a loss of sense of control over one's life, requires consciousness-raising on the part of the three major influences on community planning: citizens, planning organizations, and planners. To develop a sense of control over their lives, citizens and communities need to be conscious of the sources of their own powerlessness, alienation, and helplessness, for these are reflections of self; a state of mind.

Feminism and Consciousness-Raising

The feminist movement provides an example of individuals who have collectively developed a process of empowerment through a social movement or mediating structure. The essence of the feminist consciousness is based on the credo "the personal is political", meaning that one cannot divorce personal change issues from change in social structures. Butterwick puts this concept into historical context by adding,
"Women began to realize that what they viewed as individual problems are actually shared, and are the symptoms of society-wide structures of power and powerlessness, rather than personal deficiencies." (1987, P. 6)

Consciousness-raising groups stress the individual's awareness as part of a social category (women), which has shared characteristics (e.g. oppression at the hands of a dominant social group, men). By identifying and understanding the underlying causes of their oppression (e.g. paternalistic societal value systems and power structures) individual women can begin experiencing the liberating emotional effects of consciousness raising.

As Riger points out,

"grassroots organizations that enable people to obtain access to resources and develop skill and self-esteem can be important vehicles for empowerment. The contemporary feminist movement has been particularly successful in creating such organizations." (1984, p. 99)

While this process may not physically liberate women from their real and ongoing oppression, it provides a vehicle for psychological empowerment, and the motivation and encouragement to sustain a politically motivated base of empowered women (and sympathetic men) to actively work for social change. In addition to the initial consciousness-raising which can occur from social learning with others, citizens can become empowered further through community-action, which individuals can channel through these more formalized organizations.
Consciousness-raising for men can also help in dealing with the issue of control in community organizing, planning and administrative roles. Brandwein argues that, "learning to let go, to share power and decision-making, and to realize that one cannot unilaterally determine outcomes will enhance men's effectiveness in these roles." (1981, p. 187)

Expanding on the concept of role differentiation between men and women, Brandwein introduces the notion of androgyny, which implies that what are traditionally ascribed as male or female attributes are really human attributes. The implication for the planning profession is that not only should women be freed to assume perceived masculine traits of being logical, assertive, and direct, but that men should, inversely, be freed to be sensitive, nurturant, and caring (1981).

EMPOWERMENT AND GROUPS

The feminist movement example illustrates that the ability to overcome powerlessness, alienation, and helplessness can be directly attributed to feeling part of a larger group or segment of society - i.e. mediating structure - which uses its collective capacities to become empowered through social change. For instance, empowerment can occur when individuals feel part of the larger fabric of their neighbourhood and community, even in a generalized context.
Benello, in his examination of group decision making, points out that,

"(e)ffective group decision making arises as people come to know that the group is capable of significantly enriching their lives, both through the solidarity that it provides and through the performance of tasks that are important to its members."(1971, P. 44)

This is reinforced by Guthrie's contention that "whether the lack of power is real or perceived, the feeling of powerlessness and alienation needs to be recognized. People who feel powerless are powerless unless something happens to show them otherwise."(1978, P. 169) Both new found social status and the collective empowerment of group involvement can help citizens recognize a change from a state of powerlessness. Status, perceived through group involvement, is very much an informal source of personal power.

Stokes contends that the process of empowerment can occur from collective action.

"In any society, political and economic power gravitates to those who solve problems. Over the last few decades, bureaucrats, businessmen and professionals have accrued power by assuming ever greater responsibility for problem solving. As people take a more active role in solving their problems through self-help efforts, they can begin to take some of that power back into their own hands...no longer powerless, they can begin to create societies that are truly democratic."(1981, p. 19)
This is supported by Head who asserts that,

"Citizen groups may begin the task of relating the individual to his society through community action. (Consequently) he is beginning to break through the impersonal bureaucracy of big business, big government, big educational systems, big health bureaucracies and other structures that dominate his life at every level." (1971, p. 27)

The synergistic paradigm, presented earlier, effectively synthesizes the relationship between empowerment and the needed dimension of consciousness raising. It postulates, that the synergistic community is established by "rituals of transformation" - events or moments where participants experience a transformation of consciousness.

"This transformation seems to bring on a (new) way of experiencing self as embedded in and expressive of community. By establishing a transpersonal bonding between people so that individuals realize and activate communal commitments, these rituals can activate expanding and renewable resources. New solutions to problems become possible; or old problems are seen in a new way and cease to be problems...It can be argued that such transpersonal connectedness, and the sharing of resources which accompanies it, are essential to the survival of the human species." (Katz, 1984, p. 208)

CONSCIENTIZATION

Conscientization is a community development method and perspective popularized and prescribed by Paolo Freire, developed through his involvement in adult education and literacy programs with rural poor.
His work reflects a phenomenological view of consciousness, where knowing is no longer directed by what others say, but is the deliberate decision by the oppressed or powerless. Authentic knowledge is when an individual becomes the subject of their world rather than the object.

For Freire, empowerment results when actors reflect upon their actions by applying theory, termed praxis.

"(one's) activity consists of action and reflection: it is praxis; it is transformation of the world. And as praxis, it requires theory to illuminate it. (one's) activity is theory and practice; it is reflection and action." (1976, p. 171)

There are several major themes central to this ideology. Those who are working with the powerless must first recognize the critical need of the powerless to develop this understanding of praxis, and the hypocrisy of not doing so.

"The leaders cannot treat the oppressed as mere activists to be denied the opportunity of reflection and allowed merely the illusion of acting, whereas in fact they would continue to be manipulated - and in this case by the presumed foes of manipulation...The leaders do bear the responsibility for co-ordination - and at times direction - but leaders who deny praxis to the oppressed thereby invalidate their own praxis." (Freire, 1976, p.172)

Freire adds that,

"(i)t is absolutely essential that the oppressed participate in the revolutionary process with an increasingly critical awareness of their role as Subjects of the transformation." (1976, p. 172)

This is the essence of Freire's conscientization.
In this relationship, planners would be considered co-ordinators of the learning or critical awareness of the powerless. Dialogue between coordinators and learners, another major theme, is the foundation of authentic education, "the encounter between men mediated by the world, in order to name the world" (Freire, 1970, p. 76). True dialogue between coordinators and learners can only take place in an atmosphere of love, hope and mutual trust. This atmosphere can only be developed from a relationship based on working with, rather than working for, the people. "(Coordinators) have no right to steer people blindly toward their salvation" (Freire, 1973, p. 167).

Conscientization views the role of the coordinator as fundamental to the success of programmes. However, coordinators must work with the learner, rather than for them, sometimes requiring class suicide from coordinators who are from the middle class or intellectual elite. If co-ordinators fail to do so they "decree the ignorance of someone else". In this context, those making this decree define themselves and their class as those who know or were born to know, categorizing their words as "true words", which are then imposed on the learner.

"Those who steal the words of others develop a deep doubt in the abilities of the others and consider them incompetent. Each time they say their word without hearing the word of those whom they have forbidden to speak, they grow more accustomed to power and acquire a taste for guiding, ordering and commanding." (Freire, 1976, p. 174)
PLANNERS AND CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING

Forester argues "if planners understand how relations of power shape the planning process, they can improve the quality of their analysis and empower citizen and community action." (1989, p. 27). He concludes that "planners must assess encompassing power structures and recognize how their own actions can work to either discourage or to encourage citizen organizing." (1989, p. 154)

Forester also supports the notion presented earlier that organizations within traditional planning models reproduce socio-political relations that ignore ways to socialize and democratize. He also argues that THE traditional model discourages widespread participation and representation which might reveal the contradictions between private accumulation and public needs, and deters cooperative, well-organized, community-based organizations that might press to meet social needs to the detriment of concentrations of private capital. He concludes that this model acts to distract public attention from social needs, instead focusing on the promotion of individual consumption.

Once planners are conscious of how their organizations render citizens powerless, the planner can begin to respond by playing an educative and organizing role, aiding the citizen's political and community organizing toward democratic control of resources.
The planner can also encourage the community's local autonomy and the protection of social networks as countervailing influences to professional power, while broadening the content of alternatives presented to affected citizens. Forester concludes that,

"(b)y learning how the public welfare is threatened, how the powerless are kept powerless, and how the poor are kept poor, planners can also learn how to counteract these conditions: to organize, politicize, and empower citizens" (1989, p. 81)

Part of the process of consciousness-raising for planners involves understanding the organizational environment they work within, and the existing power dynamics. The effect of these conscious actions by "enlightened" planners may be to resist social relations of knowledge that might otherwise leave citizens practically ignorant. These actions may also mitigate the dependency and helplessness that organizations traditionally create, both for client and workers, within the scarcity paradigm. Ultimately, Forester believes this will focus public attention on actions that directly address the needs of the poor, the underserved, and the powerless.

Implicit in Forester's argument is the concept that planners, and other change agents, should critically evaluate the policies of the organizations they work for, and if these policies do not address issues of powerlessness then the planner is socially and ethically obligated to "change the system from within".
This position reflects the notion that planners have varying degrees of power and influence in the development and application of organizational policies, reinforcing the significant contribution planners can make towards citizen, community, and their own empowerment.

As Reisch, Wenocur and Sherman (1981) argue, "as workers become more empowered, empowerment itself sets off a cycle of positive reinforcement." This can be seen as a process of recursion, where empowerment permeates from one strata of the system to another. From the feminist perspective, Reisch, Wencour and Sherman assert that this process can be enhanced by the formation of mutual support groups, whose activities would initially revolve around the following goals:

- helping members perceive themselves as causal agents in achieving solutions to their problems;
- helping each other to identify the knowledge, skills and resources each member brings and which can be drawn on for support;
- helping members to see each other as sharing the responsibility for the problem-solving efforts of the group;
- helping each other examine the dynamics of the disempowerment processes going on in the agency and developing avenues for functional non-captulation;
- helping each other understand the organization as a political-economic entity with shifting or multiple coalitions in power and, therefore, not monolithic, but open to influence.
On a more personal level for planners, Pinderhughes (1983), in a relevant analysis from the social work field, concludes that for social workers (and planners) to avoid the traditional benefactor role they must identify the significant experiences that have caused themselves to internalize feelings of power and powerlessness. This consciousness raising and self-awareness enables the social worker to share their realized knowledge, and own professional power with clients, in a process of adult learning and education.

Understanding that conditions of powerlessness exist and are institutionalized through traditional planning practices can be a consciousness raising experience for planners and community workers, and the agencies they represent.

So, while organizing at the community level for the powerless, apathetic and helpless, requires an advocacy ethic, consciousness raising programs must explicitly emphasize self-help through the training of indigenous leaders from within the community. Once a sense of alienation from the community is overcome, empowered individuals can be encouraged to share their consciousness raising experiences, as a further empowering exercise of shared or adult learning.
As Russell-Erlich and Rivera point out, "Community organization must always see its role as a temporary one. As it works towards the empowerment of people, it is also working towards reducing the professional presence in the community by training indigenous leadership from the earliest possible time." (1986, p. 460)

Russell-Erlich and Rivera contend that empowerment and community organizing should work toward reducing professional presence in the community by training indigenous leadership from the outset of the intervention. From an empowerment perspective, if citizens are not acting like leaders then planners may not be doing their job, or they may be operating within the scarcity paradigm. Their role is paradoxical in that they are expected to empower the community, and instill confidence in citizen's ability to lead themselves, which eventually sees the planner/community organizer in this situation as redundant.

For planners to be effective in this role they must, themselves, go through a personal process of raised consciousness or enlightenment. This will enable them to more fully understand the institutional, professional and societal barriers to both their own, as well as their client's empowerment; barriers inherent in the paternalistic culture within which they interact.

Anderson and Boothroyd elaborate on this point by adding that "a goal of corporate planning is to make decision-making as programmed
as possible; the equivalent goal of social planning is to loosen up decision-making, to make it democratic, to allow for change." (1983, p. 3)

ROLE OF THE AGENCY

Planning agencies can play a significant part in the consciousness raising of individual citizens through the legitimization of citizen participation in local planning. The deliberate establishment by local government of community-based organizations in all neighbourhoods can provide a nuclei for empowering citizens, in terms of both physical setting and psychological presence. However, the success of any such process depends on both the agency formally recognizing that systemic barriers to empowerment exist, as well as the understanding on the part of the planners directly involved with the community, of the dynamics of empowerment and the role they play in this process. In other words, an organizational consciousness raising must accompany that of the planners it employs.

SUMMARY

Empowering others demands that planners recognize the critical importance of developing their own consciousness around societal and institutional forces that effectively inhibit others ability to
control their world. This implies that planners develop their own praxis or theoretical context for action.

Empowerment theory dictates that planners not speak for the powerless, but rather focus on the development of the learner's theoretical basis for action; developing the learner's praxis. Marrying the two concepts of feminism and conscientization, this praxis can be developed through consciousness-raising achieved through groups.

The co-ordinator or planner must also work with groups to develop awareness around resources available from political and bureaucratic institutions, as well as work to ensure continued support within these institutions. The latter support may result from planners facilitating the consciousness raising of others within these bureaucracies.
CHAPTER IV

EMPOWERMENT, PARTICIPATION, AND DEMOCRACY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines various theories of democracy and citizen participation to assess the possibility and implication of empowerment-based planning within these democratic models. Understanding and expanding upon these arguments will help conceptualize the reciprocal relationship between participation and empowerment. From a planning perspective, having a fuller grasp of the empowering properties of citizen participation necessitates understanding the import of citizen participation within democratic theories.

DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION

Fagence (1978) and Rosenbaum (1978), among others, contend that democratic theory is generally based on two values: political equality and popular sovereignty. Citizen participation is derived from both of these values. Political equality is based upon the principle of the equal right of every citizen to participate in the
process of government through direct decision making or influence on decision makers. In contemporary democracies this is achieved through an elected representative government. The notion of popular sovereignty posits that such government be responsive to as many citizens as possible. Most approaches to defining participation within democratic theory postulate two generalized traditions: classical or participatory, and polyarchy or elitist theory.

CLASSICAL DEMOCRATIC THEORY

Classical or participatory democracy is a normative or prescriptive theory, based on what could or should be possible through humanity's good, and innately cooperative, nature. The broad spectrum of this theory spans the golden age of Greece, emerging from direct democracy practices of the "Athenian experiment" - with its central principle of the equal right or every citizen to participate in the process of government - to the eighteenth and nineteenth century philosophies of J.J. Rousseau and John Stuart Mill, with more contemporary perspectives provided by participatory democrats like Alan Altschuler and Milton Kotler.

Rousseau, possibly the theorist par excellence of participation and participatory democracy, hinges his entire political theory on the value of individual participation of each citizen in political
decision making. He equates the absence of democracy with the unnatural servitude of slavery, eloquently summarized as follows:

"Every (person) born in slavery is born for slavery; nothing is more certain. Slaves lose everything in their bonds, even the desire to escape from them;...If, then, there are slaves by nature, it is because there have been slaves contrary to nature. The first slaves were made by such force; their cowardice kept them in bondage." (1895, p. 17)

Rousseau saw citizen participation as providing a form of countervailing power to special interest groups and bureaucrats. Yet, from a healthy community perspective, he viewed participation as being much more than this countervailing power: it has a psychological effect on the participants. Pateman interprets this as "ensuring that there is a continuing interrelationship between the working of institutions and the psychological qualities and attitudes of individuals interacting with them." (1980, p. 22), a view supported by Zimmerman and Rappaport (1988).

The central function of participation for Rousseau is education, as individuals learn that they have to take into account matters beyond immediate self/private interests to gain cooperation from others. "...for, in the first place, since each gives himself up entirely, the conditions are equal for all; and, the conditions being equal for all, no one has any interest in making them burdensome to others." (1895, p. 27)
As a result of participation, individuals may also learn that the public and private interests are linked. Once this realization takes place they learn to be public as well as private citizens. This realization can be seen as another form of "consciousness raising". For planners, this aspect of participation could be incorporated as a non-coercive mechanism for addressing issues like NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard). In other words, the more involved citizens are in their community and exposed to the diversity of interests and opinions present within their community, the more tolerant they will be of change.

THE PARADOX OF PARTICIPATION

In his landmark essay on empowerment Rappaport (1981) argued that the most important aspects of community life are by their very nature paradoxical, particularly human social systems. A paradox is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (p. 450) as: 1) a seemingly absurd but possibly true statement. 2) something self contradictory. Basic to this idea is the notion of antinomy, "a contradiction in law, or between two equally binding laws" (Oxford English Dictionary, 1971, p. 371)

It is proposed here that the paradox inherent in citizen participation is that to more effectively implement localized strategies that serve the interests of the larger community,
individual citizens should be afforded greater opportunities to participate in community decision making, which makes this also an antinomy. Traditional planning initiatives, developed within a paternalistic culture, provide only token opportunities for citizens to participate. These initiatives perpetuate powerlessness, and, in essence, only serve the interests of those already in positions of power. This traditional model forces citizens to react with hostility, since this is often their rare opportunity to be heard. The powerful can point to this hostility and resistance as examples of why participation only results in NIMBYism, and does not serve the "public interest".

The paradox is that as western culture moves away from the paternalistic/scarcity model to one that is more synergistic, the emphasis on planning "processes" rather than "products" will empower citizens and result in greater consensus on public initiatives. This consensus emanates from the greater sense of community which evolves from empowered individuals.

Another example of antinomy in relation to democracy is freedom and equality. If one is maximized the other is necessarily minimized. Total freedom allows the strong to dominate the weak, eliminating equality. Equality requires constraints on freedom, which necessarily imposes limits on certain individuals. A role planners can play in empowering communities can be to facilitate planning processes that strive for consensus, rather than the traditional
planning consequence of the majority rule. This role can maintain balance within the community between the citizen's freedom to participate and equality for those in the minority.

Rousseau connected the notion of individual citizen's control with the concept of participation, through his notion of freedom. Actual, as well as a sense of freedom increase through participation in decision making as it gives the citizen a very real degree of control over the course of their life and the structure of their environment.

Participation increases the value of freedom by enabling the individual to be (and remain) one's own master. In this context, the participatory process also acts to ensure that no individual or group is master or subordinate to another, as all are equally dependent on each other, and equally subject to laws/decisions all have participated in creating. These laws and decisions will be more easily accepted by individuals if those decisions are arrived at through consensus-based participatory decision-making processes.

When conflict arises between the majority decisions of the group and an individual member, the member may begin to question the continued relevance of the group. Yet, as long as the group fulfils the member's needs - e.g. sustaining a locus of control - it is possible for a member to take the longer view.
In such instances of divergence between the group's decision and the individuals wishes, the member maintains a belief in the group's continuing capacity to respond to their own needs.

Benello supports this notion of the individual's learned trust in group processes, by adding,

"Out of this (belief) the possibility of consensus arises, not because every member is at all times aligned with the majority decision, but because every member is aware of his continuing impact on the group, and is thus capable of accepting occasional decisions in opposition to his own views." (1971, p. 45; parentheses added)

A significant point is that once the participatory system is established it becomes self-sustaining. The very qualities required of individual citizens to make the system work successfully are those that the process of participation itself develops and fosters. The more the individual citizen participates the greater the opportunities to develop their participatory competence. This should particularly result if this participation is nurtured and supported by community-based organizations which provide graduating levels of responsibility for citizens. This ability, manifest as improved self-esteem and perceived competence, is also a product of personal and political efficacy (locus of control).

As argued earlier, the positive cycle of improved self-esteem and increased political efficacy has the integrative function of
increasing one's sense of community. Empowering the individual and the community becomes a reciprocal relationship, where the individual is empowered through opportunities to participate or connect with others in the community, participation which can be provided and nurtured through community-based organizations. A greater sense of community can emerge for individuals who are encouraged to interact or participate with others in the community and share decision making.

The basic premise of participatory theorists can be summarized as an interrelationship and connection between individuals - their qualities, actions and psychological characteristics - and types of societal institutions. Effective social and political action depends largely on the sort of institutions within which the individual has to act. This assumes that over time citizens will become increasingly rational, better informed, more willing to participate, and will develop greater tolerance to defer decisions to the majority.

However, two points must be made here. First, this tolerance must emanate from actual experiences demonstrating that majority decisions continue to reflect the principle of equity. A decision reached by the majority which reflects a bias against one group, particularly a group to which the individual was a member, may not be accepted or tolerated. The second point is that a dramatic paradigm shift away from the traditional/paternalistic model must
occur before the type of empowering social environment exists where this level of tolerance can be developed.

ELITIST THEORY

Theorists like Robert Dahl and Joseph Schumpeter attempt to refute most of the 'classical' assumptions of democracy, through a mixture of normative and empirical theory, derived as a composite of various studies. For example, much of this theory is based on analyzed voting and participation patterns, with the conclusion that community influence is, by nature, inherently elitist, reflected in a hierarchy of power resembling a pyramid.

They assert that, in terms of countervailing powers, government officials can be made to exercise their powers more beneficially and responsibly through the public's involvement in periodic elections, at which time the citizenry can hold them accountable for their behaviour. It is only through elections that the concept of individual control, central to all democratic theories, is present within elitist theory. For example, during terms of office leaders must be cognizant of the needs and wishes of constituents, with the greatest degree of influence or control exerted by constituents during elections, as leaders compete for votes.
Elections are pivotal to the elitist democratic method, providing the mechanism through which the control of leaders by non-leaders can take place. Dahl views elections as the citizen's opportunity to control factions of powerful elites and avoid "tyranny". He adds,

"(i)n a modern theory of democracy 'political equality' refers to the existence of universal suffrage (one person, one vote) with its sanction through the electoral competition for votes and, more importantly, to the fact of equality of opportunity of access to influence over decision makers through inter-electoral processes by which different groups in the electorate make their demands heard."(1956, p. 56; parentheses added)

Elitists also point out that empirical data confirms that the majority do not participate as fully as possible. This is seen as a reflection of the efficiency and success of the system.

One of the main arguments of this ideology is the destructive potential of full participation proposed by classical theorists, for if all citizens were to demand equal access to decision making nothing would get done. The very stability of the system is dependant upon minimal participation.

"Non participation is not an indictment of the system but a testimony to its success in satisfying the interests of its polity. And far from being a threat to the system, it is a benefit since the lack of participation shields the political system from unreasonable and overwhelming demands and gives the political elite the necessary maneuvering room to govern effectively."(Kweit and Kweit, 1981, p. 21)
Two further assumptions put forth to justify this theory are that a participatory system of decision making fragments political power to the point that government becomes incapable of dealing quickly and comprehensively with the many problems government must face. The second insists that the consolidation of power is necessary since the great majority of citizens are incapable of rational, competent political decisions.

THE REBUTTAL TO ELITIST THEORY

Elitist theory is countered by contemporary participatory theorists such as Benello and Roussopoulis, who contend that bottom up participation - starting with close inter-personal relations, then neighbourhood institutions and institutions of work - establishes the basis for effective political participation. "When men are conditioned to be passive by repressive social institutions, the elitists' fear of general political participation is probably justified." Elitist planning perpetuates a kind of "pluralism of the powerful", which fails to recognize that "those who are not organized and who lack access to wealth and power have no voice in the pluralist cacophony, and it is precisely these constituencies that most need to be heard." (1971, p. 77)
Returning to Freire,

"Those who steal the words of others develop a deep doubt in the abilities of the others and consider them incompetent. Each time they say their word without hearing the word of those whom they have forbidden to speak, they grow more accustomed to power and acquire a taste for guiding, ordering, and commanding."(1976, p. 173)

By systemically excluding the unorganized in society, a stratified or class structure is created, one that works to further alienate and disempower large segments of the population.

Fagence replies to elitism by adding that, "the primary concern of elitist theory is to maintain political stability by promoting processes and structures for decision-making more accommodating to efficiency than to popular equality in participation."(1977, p. 22)

PLANNING AND PARTICIPATION

Planning agencies need to develop more participatory processes which consciously and explicitly recognize the importance of empowerment for the development of individual citizens and communities. Traditionally, citizen participation initiatives at all levels of government have served the interests of the upper class in an attempt to maintain status quo power relationships (Scaff, 1975; Serrano-Garcia, 1984; Russell-Erlich and Rivera, 1986).
Citizen participation in the present, elitist, form of democracy, is manipulated to support the interests of the elite, "function(ing) to provide legitimacy for elite decisions and hence for the system in which decisions are made." (Scaff, 1975) Policies emerging from elitist systems act to preserve the economic and social power-base of these groups by implicitly recognizing property rights over citizen's rights.

Within the traditional/corporate/paternalistic/elitist planning paradigm, the powerless are systematically excluded from participating from decision making, since the planning process often acknowledges only existing power groups, such as Chambers of Commerce and "ratepayers" associations, when calls for public participation are made (Kweit and Kweit, 1981). This approach is also structured so that groups are forced to compete for institutional recognition and legitimacy, as well as funding, often resulting in resources being directed to groups adept at organized lobbying, at the expense of others, less sophisticated at "playing" by the rules of this particular "game".

Despite attempts to enshrine or mandate participation in planning efforts such as the "war on poverty" or in response to "urban renewal" (Head 1971), there is little evidence that the powerless in society - eg., the individual poor, new immigrants - alone can plan, operationalize and conduct major efforts directed at major structural changes in modern society.
In other words, empowerment cannot take place without the involvement of the mediating structures in society (churches, schools, community-based organizations) and the support and deliberate actions of societal institutions (planning departments, human service agencies).

While citizens groups regularly empower their members independently of these institutions (e.g. the feminist movement), many powerless members of our pluralistic and diverse society are inequitably represented by any such "organic" or "grass-roots" associations. Bridging this gap in equity requires the establishment by planning agencies of both procedural policies (e.g., involving citizens/clients in planning processes and decision making) and substantive actions (e.g., financial support for establishing community-based outreach programs).

Benello and Roussopoulos contend that, "(n)ew, participatory institutions must be built in all social spheres and, as they develop, will claim legitimacy and recognition as being genuinely democratic and accountable to their constituencies." (1971, p. 6)

Planning agencies can contribute to the establishment and on-going work of such institutions through locally-based planning initiatives which recognize the truly empowering qualities of informed and valued citizen participation. This approach is a reversal of traditional planning in western cultures, which Walker
characterizes as patronizing, elitist and remote from the experience of ordinary citizens. "Most commonly," he adds "(traditional) planning is conducted by administrators consulting and bargaining with each other in complete secrecy, with only the results of this process being published."(1983, p. 72) In this form of planning, citizen participation is most often allowed only when mandated, is seen only as a means to achieving goals, rather than as a goal.

Anderson and Boothroyd (1983) classify this as corporate planning (participation is a means to corporate ends), as distinguished from social planning (citizen participation is an end itself). Swift (1984) makes a similar distinction from a human service perspective, with the empowerment model of social policy and service delivery as a substitute for the paternalistic model which has dominated the traditional welfare state. Swift adds that in the paternalistic model, "the process has been to seek "expert" opinion with an infusion of funds administered by a bureaucracy of experts, and to wonder at the resistance of indigenous populations to our efforts to improve their lives."(1984, p. 16)

The empowerment or "synergistic" model requires the conscious acknowledgement by government and planning agencies that current processes are undemocratic, biased against the powerless, and that these biases act as organizational barriers to empowerment. In a true democracy, not only should citizen participation be a social
goal, citizenship in itself should legitimate the right to self-determination and participation in planning processes. Changing this model should begin with the planning field developing an explicit theory of empowerment-based planning. How can planners in the field be expected to begin to change the system, either from outside or within, if there is no theoretical foundation on which to reflect?

"The concept of democracy" Swift reinforces, "and its embodiment in our political institutions is based on the principle of empowering citizens to participate in decisions affecting their welfare." (1984, p. 18).

SUMMARY

Previous chapters have established that citizen involvement in community planning initiatives can be seen as a vital component of the psychological process of empowerment. A significant dimension of empowerment emerges from an individual's connectedness with others and the community as a whole, developed, in large part, through cooperative participation. Citizen participation is also a central tenet of democratic theory. However, planning has traditionally operated in a paternalistic culture, within the elitist model of democracy.
Planning for healthy communities requires the application of strategies which incorporate processes more aligned with participatory democracy. As Swift points out, "empowerment insists on the primacy of the target population's participation in any intervention affecting its welfare. It is the antithesis of paternalism." (1984, p. xiv) The notion of representative democracy or "governance" by an elected body, the dominant political process in contemporary society, is the very embodiment of paternalism.

If the planning field is to play an active role in the paradigm shift necessary for an empowerment-based planning model, then a theoretical foundation for such action must include a critical analysis of the democratic culture within which we traditionally operate. While citizen participation is purportedly central to all theories of democracy, the planning field must address the fundamental contradiction that sees the perpetuation of powerlessness in a so-called democratic society. The planning field must more critically evaluate its role within democratic society, particularly in the context of planning for healthy communities.
CHAPTER V

CASE STUDY: THE COLLINGWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE (CNH)

"The Neighbourhood House is the best thing in the world."

Jamie Olsen,
Collingwood resident, age 8

INTRODUCTION

As Chapter I pointed out, the objective of this case study is to address two questions: do traditional public participation strategies, usually facilitated by planners, serve to empower citizens and communities?; and, what mechanisms can planners employ to empower others and provide more effective community participation?

The information for this study was gathered through a literature review of historical and policy documents of both the City of Vancouver and the CNH, interviews with planners, CNH staff, community organizers, and local residents. As stated earlier, the research is supplemented by the observations and experiences of this author, based on the following: resident of Collingwood (1981-82); research on the socio-economic impact of Skytrain on the Collingwood community (Ahern and Rachwalski, 1983); and, board
member, volunteer and paid staff of the CNH (1987-92). Due to the
direct involvement and experiences of this author, a "second-
person" narrative will be used.

The study is presented in three parts: a historical review of the
both the Collingwood community, and the development of the CNH,
including a discussion of the philosophy and practices of the
organization; an analysis of the organization in terms of the
empowerment model; and, a review of the role the City of Vancouver
played in the development of the CNH.

THE COMMUNITY

The Collingwood community is situated on the eastern fringe of the
city of Vancouver British Columbia, bounded by 29th Avenue to the
north, Kingsway to the south, Boundary Road to the east and Rupert
Street to the west. Collingwood is one of the original,
non-native, communities in Vancouver, with settlement dating back
to the early 1800's. Today, it is a predominantly blue-collar
community, mostly single-family housing, with many young families.

For much of its history, Collingwood has been a relatively stable
community, with a mix of family types and ethnic groups, as well as
commercial, retail and light industrial land uses. However, since
the early 1970's this community has undergone dramatic changes,
brought on by factors such as significant increases in ethnic and single-parent families, economic instability of the retail industry, and the introduction of the Advanced Light Rapid Transit system (known as Skytrain).

SKYTRAIN

In 1980, the Greater Vancouver Regional District, B.C. Transit (the provincial transportation agency) and the City of Vancouver announced that the Skytrain system would use the existing B.C. Hydro rail right-of-way corridor as its route connecting the cities of Vancouver and New Westminster. Collingwood is situated along this corridor, approximately half-way between these two cities, and because of its central location and the presence of an existing B.C. Transit bus loop, was selected as the site for one of 15 Phase-I Skytrain stations.

HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION

In the early 1970's, the City Planning Department presented to local residents a City-initiated plan for integrating social-housing projects into several neighbourhoods, including Collingwood. Considerable opposition developed to the plan, based primarily on concerns about property values, and the proximity of
the proposed site to schools\textsuperscript{1}. A very traditional planning process was used, which included informing the community of the City's intentions through advertisement in the local newspaper and flyers circulated to residents, followed by a series of open-houses which displayed the proposal using site plans and scale models. These open houses became the backdrop for the required public hearing process for the rezoning, the City's ultimate focus.

Citing a lack of neighbourhood support and the need for further review of the whole housing strategy, the City withdrew this particular housing proposal\textsuperscript{2}. Nonetheless, over the next several years City staff maintained contact with a number of more active and vociferous residents, using these residents as an ad hoc advisory group when the City needed to organize community participation around other public hearings, and solicit feedback on new City initiatives. These residents became the focus of the City's initial efforts to introduce the concept of the Skytrain station to the neighbourhood in 1982. (The Skytrain process is discussed later).

In 1984, primarily in response to the anticipated impact of the Skytrain development, local activists, some of whom were part of the original advisory group, requested and obtained a federal

\textsuperscript{1} Interview with Chris Taalu, 1992.

\textsuperscript{2} Interview with Pat Wotherspoon, 1992.
Canada Works grant. This grant was used to fund the Kingsway Community Development Project, a research initiative undertaken by two community development workers, which produced the report "Outline of Community Resources: Listings and Analysis" (Murphy and Woodsworth, 1984).

The goals of this community development initiative were identified as:

- to create a resource list of organizations and services in the immediate community;
- to provide a profile of the community;
- to create a resource for local groups which would enable them to function more effectively, both among themselves and in their relations with outside bodies and different levels of government;
- to identify unmet needs;
- to assist in the process of community development and social planning (Murphy and Woodsworth, 1984, p. 1).

The project's findings revealed the following about the Collingwood community:

- Historically the area has lacked strong community-based organizations, making responding constructively to community changes problematic;
- The neighbourhoods within the area lack a tradition of working together for problem-solving, since the overall community does not have the organizational ability to respond to changes effectively and creatively;
- There is little social cohesiveness within the community as a whole, making it easier for the established or better off sections of the community to ignore the legitimate concerns of those with unmet needs, and;
- There is a need for an umbrella community organization which would act both as an advocacy body and as a mechanism for community planning in the area (Murphy and Woodsworth, 1984)
The Project's findings illustrated the need for a central organization that could provide a number of functions and services to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population, particularly for a community in transition like Collingwood. The report identified the "neighbourhood house" as an appropriate model to use.

THE COLLINGWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE (CNH)

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE MODEL

The neighbourhood house tradition in Greater Vancouver goes back over fifty years, and involves locally-based agencies offering programs and services geared specifically towards improving the quality of neighbourhood and family life. Their mandates have been to serve the specific needs of the immediate community. Prior to the establishment of the CNH, there were 7 neighbourhood houses in the City of Vancouver, and one in the City of North Vancouver.

THE CNH

The CNH is a registered non-profit society, incorporated in 1985. It was initially sponsored on a temporary basis through a patchwork of temporary funding sources, including grants from the City of Vancouver Social Planning Department, the United Way of Greater Vancouver, and the Federal Government.
The original Board of Directors consisted primarily of long-time local residents and community activists, and representatives of local schools and businesses. Included on the initial Board were several members of the ad hoc advisory group and the authors of the Kingsway Community Development research project. Based on the experiences of other neighbourhood houses and other community-based organizations, input from City planners, and the findings of the community development report, the board identified the importance of creating an inward-looking organization, with a goal of reflecting the community and its citizens needs, rather one based on a predetermined service model. The CNH was also founded on the premise that leadership and control of the organization should be maintained within the community.

This approach demonstrates characteristics Macmillan (1991) views as necessary for successful community development. These include community members organizing themselves and participating fully in the organizations they create, while limiting the role of outsiders to the provision of needed funds, and technical expertise, such as fund raising, facilitating strategic planning sessions, and drafting of the Society's constitution and bylaws. The CNH model also has the important characteristic of community members, and particularly significant, program consumers sharing responsibility for identifying problems and needs, and designing solutions.
The basic structure of the organization also reflects the empowerment model proposed by Zimmerman and Rappaport (1988), who concluded that not only does the specific cultural context matter, locally developed solutions are more empowering than single solutions applied in a general way. Restricting the focus of the CNH to an area with less than 8,000 people (CNH, Annual Report, 1989) allowed for a setting which was small enough to provide meaningful roles for all members, yet large enough to obtain resources, an environment more likely to create conditions that lead to empowerment.

CNH POLICIES

An original goal of the CNH was to actively include local residents in all aspects of the organization, from coordination of the daily activities, programs and administration, to setting policies and procedures, and developing strategic plans which guide the overall direction of the organization (CNH Annual report, 1989). To achieve this goal, CNH hiring and recruitment policies reflect the principle of including within the organization, individuals from the community that represent Collingwood's diversity. This includes conscious efforts to recruit and select staff, Board of Directors and Committee members that represent the community's many cultural, ethnic, age and socio-economic groups.

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Recognizing that Collingwood residents with the greatest need for CNH resources could be categorized as traditionally disenfranchised (e.g. the poor, new immigrants, single parents), the CNH developed an organizational structure that provides opportunities for citizens to become involved in the organization at progressively greater levels of involvement. For instance, the organization developed a highly integrated decision-making process based on a committee and sub-committee structure. Individuals recruited for membership on advisory or subcommittees of the Board are often consumers of CNH services.

However, before they are asked to participate in committees, citizens are supported through a volunteer development program that allows them to develop skills and confidence in working within the organization. The goals driving this approach include: personal development for the individual through improved self esteem; organizational development for the CNH through more effective service delivery, and increased use of those services by consumers; and, community development through the collective identification of needs and resolution of problems, the tolerance and awareness of others needs this supported, and the increased sense of community this process nurtured³.

³ Interview with Paula Carr, 1992.
Other CNH policies and procedures explicitly intended to empower the community include: involving local citizens in its annual strategic planning exercises; providing easy access to information on CNH, and government services, in languages other than English, such as Cantonese, Hindi, Mandarin, Portuguese, Punjabi, Spanish, and Vietnamese; promotion of culturally specific, and multi-cultural events; consciousness raising around issues such as spousal abuse, and minority rights; and advocacy⁴.

The basic philosophy of the CNH is summarized in its brochure, "Collingwood Neighbourhood House: Realizing a Community Vision", which lists its "Distinctive Collingwood Approach" as follows:

- a community that works together.
- a community that sets and achieves goals.
- people who live in Collingwood control the neighbourhood house's development.
- Equitable Access to Community Life: eliminating barriers to participation are a primary concern.
- A Welcome Home Feeling: a place to feel connected in a big city.

CNH AND EMPOWERMENT

Chapter II presented three criteria for determining whether empowerment has, indeed, taken place. Applying these criteria to

⁴ Ibid.
the development of the CNH, and the organization itself, reveals the following:

A) The presence of both real and perceived control over 'environment': the actual process of establishing the CNH can be seen as the beginning of the community reclaiming some control over its future. With the CNH attaining full membership status with the United Way, and the inclusion of a permanent facility with the VLC development, the organization (staff, board members, volunteers, program participants; nearly 450 individuals) should feel an even greater sense of control over the direction of the community.

Individual citizens, through the organization's programs, hiring policies, committee structure and constitution, are afforded the opportunity to control the future of their community. Most committees include at least one community member, Annual General Meetings regularly attract several dozen society members, program participation has increased to include over 400 individuals, and most part-time, and some full time staff are from the community (CNH Annual Report, 1991).

B) The opportunity to participate in decision-making at progressive levels: the policies of the CNH, supported by its volunteer development programs and committee structure, strive to not only
include all citizens, but to also ensure opportunities to develop the skills and confidence necessary to accept greater levels of responsibility. For example, the Board of Directors always includes several community members, usually local residents who have volunteered in lesser capacities. Most volunteer positions are filled by consumers, particularly new immigrants who are encouraged to use these opportunities to make new friends and test their new language skills.

C) Improved self-esteem and a greater connectedness to others: by encouraging involvement and participation of all citizens, as well as providing opportunities for progressive levels of responsibility, local residents can develop greater confidence by demonstrating their new skills. A greater connectedness to others and a sense of community are one and the same. Both evolve through shared values and norms with neighbours, the realization of common interests, and the security that comes from sensing tolerance of and from others.

All of these elements are actively promoted and nurtured by the CNH through such initiatives as regularly sponsored culturally-specific and multicultural events; weekly potluck dinners; nurtured participation of local residents in CHN's annual strategic planning workshops; and, the hosting of City-sponsored planning sessions around community issues.
It is beyond the scope of this paper to assess whether greater self esteem for individual Collingwood residents results from the presence and structure of the CNH. However, based on the characteristics and criteria necessary for environments conducive to empowerment, as presented by Compton (1971), Pinderhughes (1983), Kieffer (1984), Swift (1984), and Zimmerman and Rappaport (1988), the CNH has established a highly supportive environment for residents. This environment is designed to increase the connectedness between residents and others, and allow for the increased confidence and developed skills Kieffer (1984) believes is necessary for developing a participatory competence in community life.

The CNH's Constitution, the organization's structure for recruiting staff and volunteers from the community, and policies that encourage consumer-design of programs and services acts as a countervailing power to the organization's executive and staff by ensuring the needs of the community are continually assessed, and services reflect these needs. By actively encouraging and nurturing residents to accept graduating levels of authority and responsibility within the organization, the CNH follows the participatory model of democracy described by Kotler (1967), Altshuler (1970), Benello and Roussopoulis (1971), and Katz (1984). This model can provide the type of environment which can lead to the psychological empowerment defined by Pinderhughes (1983), and Zimmerman and Rappaport (1988).
THE CITY AND THE CNH

LOCAL AREA PLANNING

The role of the City in the initial and ongoing development of the CNH began with a City-staff facilitated, more traditional model, local area planning process. Since 1973, the City of Vancouver Planning Department has promoted a policy of local neighbourhood planning processes, aimed at developing local area plans through neighbourhood participation. The catalyst behind the development of these plans is often major land use changes within each neighbourhood, such as the development of the Skytrain system. This was the case with the Collingwood (Joyce) Local Area Plan.

At its conception, a number of models for citizen participation were explored by the City, including the "Community Advocate Model", the "Technical Model", and the "Partnership Model". The City opted for the Partnership Model, which involves recruiting citizen committees from each community and working, with assistance from City staff and other agencies, to define problems, describe issues, set objectives, and develop neighbourhood plans. The concept provides for a 2-5 year administrative budget for City staff, office space, etc.

Initially, all local residents are invited to public meetings hosted by City planning staff, where volunteers are encouraged to
make up the local citizen planning committee (which later becomes a 'working group'). These committees have no size limits, with the only membership requirements being local residency and attendance at three consecutive meetings.

A designated planner, with support staff, works with the committee on problem definition, searching out alternatives, and formulating policies and actions to be incorporated into a Local Area Plan. During this phase, the Chairpersons of other local area planning committees are invited to share their community's experiences in the planning process, as well as to discuss some of the problems defined and alternative solutions sought. After additional consultation and feedback from the community, the plan is presented to Council.

THE COLLINGWOOD "LOCAL AREA" PLANNING PROCESS

In 1982 the City Planning Department initiated a series of local area planning meetings in the Collingwood community, generally following the above formula. Planners operated out of temporary store-front offices in the Mount Pleasant neighbourhood, approximately four kilometres from Collingwood. The planners were directed by the City to emphasize this as a traditional land use
planning exercise\textsuperscript{5}, while some members of the citizen-based planning committee argued the community needed a more comprehensive approach that would bring the community together around larger economic and social issues.

As mentioned earlier, eighteen months after the City's planning process began, the Kingsway Community Development Project was initiated by local residents as a partial response to this philosophical difference between the City and the planning committee around the scope and appropriateness of the exercise. Many committee members felt the City, and City staff were advocating more for the needs of the City as a whole and less for the immediate neighbourhood\textsuperscript{6}.

Collingwood has historically been underserved in terms of social and health services and amenities, and many planning committee members viewed the City's planning process as further perpetuating this situation. The community development project was subsequently initiated by the community to identify and articulate its issues and concerns, independent from the City's planning process.

The community development project became a significant component of

\textsuperscript{5} Interview with Nathan Edelson, 1992.

\textsuperscript{6} Interviews with Don Van Dyke and Chris Taalu, 1992.
the initial establishment and ongoing development of the CNH\textsuperscript{7}. The project findings of Murphy and Woodsworth (1984), presented above, clearly illustrated the need for a community-based agency to act as a central focus for the residents, and to represent Collingwood's interests and provide much needed services for the community.

After the creation of the CNH, disagreement developed between some members of the still functioning local area planning committee and the CNH. At issue was the philosophical difference between the apolitical stance of the planning committee, and the commitment to social action and advocacy of the CNH\textsuperscript{8}. Planning committee members, all, of whom are property owners, also felt the CNH was jeopardizing the clout of the overall Collingwood community in negotiations with the right-leaning City Council around on going land use issues\textsuperscript{9}.

THE ROLE OF THE PLANNERS

During the local area planning process, the City provided a number of planners to the community (as many as six were involved), based both on general staff turnover, and pressure from the community for

\textsuperscript{7} Interview with Don Van Dyke, 1992.

\textsuperscript{8} Interviews with Nathan Edleson, Paula Carr, and Chris Taalu, 1992.

\textsuperscript{9} Interview with Chris Taalu, 1992.
Community pressure was often based on the community's dissatisfaction with some individual planning staff. Some local planning committee members felt the planners had varying levels of understanding, experience and sophistication related to community development.

For example, one particular planner assisted in developing the initial project proposal and supported the community's efforts to secure funding for the Community Development Project, while other planners advocated with City Council to ensure specific references to the need for City support of the CNH were retained in the final Collingwood (Joyce) Local Area Plan.

The final "Joyce Station Area Plan" endorsed by Council (1987) included several references to the need for Council's support of the CNH, summarized in Policy 8.2, which reads:

"The City should encourage the development of the Collingwood Neighbourhood House Society to serve as an ongoing organizational focus for identifying and articulating emerging community needs and to provide and

10 Interview with Nathan Edelson, 1992.

11 Interviews with Don Van Dyke and Chriss Taalu, 1992.
help coordinate programs and services for the general public with emphasis on those with unmet special needs."

Both of these examples demonstrate directing resources towards the neighbourhood, viewed by Forester (1989) and others (Pinderhughes, 1983; Serrano-Garcia, 1984) as a necessary component for altering the denial of resources to communities, historical to Collingwood, and for reversing powerlessness.

When the community development project's research findings were introduced in late 1984, the planning committee and the researchers had developed a strong rapport with some individual planners, particularly those planners who demonstrated a willingness to work outside of the original land use mandate, proposed by the City's Planning Department, and support a more comprehensive needs assessment\textsuperscript{12}. The research findings, as well as the needs assessment process itself, signalled a further evolution in the relationship between the committee and the planners. What was initially a planning emphasis on creating a land use document, shifted to the development of an organization that could meet community needs identified in the research findings. This organization emerged in early 1985 as the CNH.

The support of individual planners within the City for the CNH became critical as the community began its struggle in 1984-85 for

\textsuperscript{12} Interviews with Don Van Dyke, and Chris Taalu 1992.
seed monies to establish a store-front facility. City planners were active in obtaining financial support for the concept, both within the City's bureaucracy, but also with outside funding agencies. Again, this illustrates the planners directing resources towards a significant "mediating structure" in the community. Planners also participated in the development of the original constitution, which explicitly includes ensuring local involvement and indigenous leadership within the organization.

THE ROLE OF THE CITY (PLANNING DEPARTMENT)

The planning process initiated by the City, directed by the Planning Department, was clearly within the traditional elitist model, which implicitly served the interests of the already organized and powerful in the community. Instead of attempting to develop the "participatory competence" of those already disenfranchised by society, the Planning Department turned to the ad hoc planning group, dominated by property owners, to represent the interests of the community. Doing so supported the assumption of Kweit and Kweit (1981) that only those who are interested or competent enough to contribute would bother to participate.

The Planning Department failed to recognize the issue raised by
Benello and Roussopoulis (1971) that it is the unorganized and powerless who lack access to resources and have no voice in an elitist dominant culture. Also, the process was only opened to the community as a whole when the Planning Department went through the mandatory public hearing process for rezoning and Official Community Plan review. This supports the notion presented by Walker (1983) and Anderson and Boothroyd (1983) that public participation measures that are only a means to an end rather than as a goal themselves represent corporate, rather than social planning.

Despite the recommendations of the Council-adopted Local Area Plan, the City's Social Planning Department (responsible for providing community grants) balked at ongoing "core" funding or for a large grant for a permanent facility, opting instead to provide 'seed' monies for a modest facility. However, since the CNH was first established, the organization has lobbied and obtained increasing financial support from Social Planning, efforts supported internally by Social Planning staff assigned to the neighbourhood.

So, while the City's Social Planning Department was reluctant to be the Neighbourhood Houses's major funding source, it did renew partial operating grants each year, based on City staff recommendations\(^\text{13}\). The City, through the Social Planning

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\(^\text{13}\) Interview with Paula Carr, 1992.
Department, also supported numerous applications to other social service funding sources, culminating in the Neighbourhood House becoming a full agency member of the United Way in 1991.

SUMMARY

This case study is intended to assess whether the City's local area planning process served to empower residents and the immediate community, and if the CNH can be used as a mechanism for empowering others and providing more effective participation within the Collingwood community. The case study illustrates the contrast between the agendas of individual neighbourhoods and the larger community, represented by local government, when dramatic change takes place in the "public interest". It also demonstrates the professional dilemma planners face while working with individual communities in such an environment.

The initial local area planning program is typical of many urban planning processes. Planning agencies advertise that residents can attend meetings, discuss issues, and "participate". However, these forms of community participation are an extension of the elitist democratic model that assumes that this forum captures all the input necessary from communities, and the residents should feel honoured they are even allowed to be involved beyond the ballot box.
This study reveals that the community's needs were not being met by the local area planning program. The community, with support of planners who, through their own initiatives, operated outside of the constraints of the Department's traditional model, took measures to empower itself. This empowerment included acquiring the resources necessary to include residents in assessing the overall needs of the community, culminating in the development of the CNH. It may be impossible to speculate as to whether the CNH would have developed at all or with the same policies and constitution without the involvement of the City planners. Certainly, planners who contributed to the organization's development played a significant, supportive role by providing specific expertise on incorporating as a non-profit society, developing a Constitution and bylaws, and establishing strong relations with funding bodies. But, more significantly, the planners continued to support the CNH within their bureaucracy, including ensuring the Planning Department strongly recommend City Council's explicit support of the CNH the formal Local Area Plan.

During interviews conducted by the author, planners expressed that having offices located actually within the Collingwood community may have led to even greater community development. However, it is argued here that not having an office physically in the community may have allowed for a more grass-roots community development process that used planners for technical expertise in acquiring needed resources and developing the CNH. This, along with the
Planning Department's original land use agenda, may have served to 'enlighten' the community that in order to have real power they had to "take" control, rather than have it given to them.

The study reveals that residents interviewed felt planners who empowered the community were those who were enlightened about the dynamics of participation, and the need to develop a greater sense of community. Certainly, the advocacy of some planners for indigenous leadership was a conscious decision, as was the inclusion of community involvement in the CNH, entrenched in the organization's constitution.

Finally, the financial and community support the CNH ultimately received from the City served to empower the organization, but not until the community and the planners strongly advocated on behalf of the community. This has been enhanced by the City's support for the new facility, and the full-member status the CNH obtained with the United Way in 1991.
The issue addressed in this paper relates to fostering and maintaining community health through planning initiatives that emphasize empowerment. The literature says that empowerment emerges from the sense of community emanating from the connectedness between individuals, and their immediate neighbourhood and the larger community; and, the degree of control individuals and the collective community have over decisions that affect them. Empowerment also improves self-esteem of individuals, which, in turn, can produce an increase in citizen participation in community planning, greater self-reliance of individuals and communities, and improved problem-solving skills of both individual citizens, groups and the greater community. This may be achieved through consciously and systematically involving citizens in community goal setting and decision-making. However, since the planning profession has operated within the confines of more elitist rather than participatory forms of democracy, traditional planning initiatives cannot be seen as empowering.

THE MEANING OF EMPOWERMENT

Understanding the meaning of empowerment may be best achieved by understanding its antithesis, powerlessness. By being
systematically denied opportunities to have some degree of control over their lives, often through paternalistic policies, people will naturally feel apathetic and powerless. They can then become psychologically alienated from the world around them. Powerlessness is the absence of both real and perceived power.

Understanding empowerment begins with recognizing the emotional affect of powerlessness (alienation and despair), the negative impact this has on self-esteem, and the long-term implications of improving self-esteem. It connotes providing citizens with opportunities to change or control their lives.

Empowerment is the belief that one's opinions have validity and merit, reinforced from interaction with others in a problem-solving environment. It satisfies a basic human need of connection or attachment between individuals and their community, which, if absent, perpetuates a sense of powerlessness, alienation, and despair. It implies having both the ability to effect change or control one's life, as well as the opportunity to do so. Abilities are enhanced in a reciprocal cycle of improved self-esteem and self-confidence acting to motivate the person to greater action on their own behalf, which further improves self-esteem and spurs even greater action.

Opportunities to effect change are fostered through policies and initiatives which strengthen rather than weaken the mediating
structures between individuals and the larger society: neighborhoods, families, churches, clubs, and voluntary associations.

The top-down planning approach initiated by the City assumed that all individuals interested and capable of contributing to the local area planning process would simply show up and participate. It failed to recognize that those who are historically disenfranchised have the least developed participatory competence and need mediating structures in order to reconnect with others. Evidence from the CNH (Constitution, policies, level of voluntarism from the community) suggests that as a mediating structure it allows residents to first seek services, then develop skills for increased participation, beyond meeting their own needs to meeting the needs of the organization and the community. While the scope of this study did not involve a more in-depth analysis of the impact of the CNH on residents self esteem, the evidence also indicates the organization serves to effectively connect residents with others and the larger community, seen by Coopersmith (1967), Rappaport (1981), Pinderhughes (1983), Zimmerman and Rappaport (1988) and Staples (1990) as a necessary element for improving self esteem.

A significant component of empowerment is raised consciousness towards the institutional and societal forces that perpetuate the powerful/powerless relationship. The Kingsway Community Development Project reflects how the residents recognized the
Planning Department, through the land use planning process, was not acting in the community's interests, and needs were not being identified and met. Planners who supported the project and directed resources to the community also recognized that the local area planning process was perpetuating the historical denial of resources for the community.

EMPOWERMENT AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Empowerment is a concept that has deep significance for understanding the interaction and ongoing relationship (or lack thereof) of the individual to others in society. To comprehend the meaning of empowerment and its role in planning for healthy communities is to understand the significance of the individual's basic need to feel a connection or attachment with the community, in other words, to have a sense of community.

The processes and implications of involving citizens in community decision-making is as complex and dynamic as the human mind itself. To reduce citizen participation to a level of maximum efficiency for the political system is counter-productive to planning for healthy communities.

The concept of empowerment presented in Chapter II bears little resemblance to the traditional practice of public participation.
exercised in present-day western society. Current practices tend to breed passivity and apathy amongst the general citizenry by implying that the "system" is more efficiently operated by professionals and elected officials. These practices also imply that the opinions of the majority of those outside this system or "circle of power" are invalid, their knowledge and capabilities to contribute meaningfully are limited, and their interests too self-centred to be in the public interest.

The literature says that citizen or "public" or "community" participation, or whatever the label used, is considered to be an integral part of democratic society, particularly as it relates to urban planning processes. Yet, historically, citizen participation initiatives have been based as much on the preservation of and belief in the capitalist economic system as it is in the ideal of a truly democratic society. In other words, traditional public participation processes reflect contemporary societies support of property rights over citizenship.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The CNH case study supports the research discussed in the literature review (Coopersmith, 1967; Katz, 1984; Hirayama and Centingok, 1988; Zimmerman and Rappaport, 1988) which finds that community groups that employ empowerment principles can be
effective mechanisms for empowering its members. The case study research shows the CNH has developed policies and practices that attempt to provide members opportunities to control the direction and activities of the largest and most significant organization in the community. It introduces members to the decision-making structure of the organization at progressively greater levels of responsibility, which allows for the development of confidence in their abilities to accept this responsibility. Finally, the CNH provides members with a vehicle for interacting with others in the community, often around identifying needs and developing solutions, leading to a greater sense of community through shared experiences with others. The success of these policies and practices is evident in the consistent annual increases in program utilization and voluntarism by local residents.

TRADITIONAL PARTICIPATION STRATEGIES AND EMPOWERMENT

Traditional participatory planning programs assume that a "level playing field" exists in society, where all citizens at any given point in time, have similar degrees of confidence, competency and skills, and opportunities to problem solve and interact meaningfully with the larger community. The local area planning program initiated by the City typifies this approach, with its super-imposed planning program parachuted onto a community historically disempowered by societal institutions.
The Collingwood community had a limited history of collective problem solving, and had no mediating structures or institutions that could support residents in developing their participatory skills on a long-term basis. The City's agenda was that the already powerful within the community would represent the interests of the community as a whole. This is illustrated by its use of the property-owner dominated advisory group to set up this program.

It was only through the actions of planners and residents, who had developed their consciousness relating to forces that were disempowering the community, that the City's planning program resulted in a vehicle for empowering the community. So, it was through the non-traditional actions of enlightened planners and community activists with community development backgrounds, that the community began to assume greater control of resources.

Ironically, the City's planning program had an indirect empowering effect, by raising the community's consciousness about how and why the community was disempowered. The case study reveals that local needs were not being met by the City's program, and the community, with support of select planners, took measures to empower itself.

Planning agencies need to develop more participatory processes which consciously and explicitly recognize the psychological affect of empowering others. This case study and the research presented in the literature supports the notion that planning agencies can
employ community-based organizations as mechanisms for empowerment, through creation of a strong sense of community within neighbourhoods, and through the nurturing and development of participatory competence amongst local citizens.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Emerging from this paper, the following two areas are seen as requiring future research relating to empowerment and planning processes:

1) A closer examination of the impact of community-based organizations on individuals self esteem and willingness to participate in community action;

2) A review of planning curriculum throughout North America, to assess the theoretical approaches followed by Planning Schools in relation to community participation and empowerment.


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