A CENTRE AND AN EDGE:

AN EDUCATOR'S GENEALOGY OF COMMUNITY LIVING IN NORTH AMERICA

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ABSTRACT

This thesis maps a genealogy for the process of erosion that has affected functional communities in North America over the last half-century. It seeks to make links between this erosion of functional communities and the increasing stress that families and, by extension, schools are currently experiencing. This thesis argues that in order to understand the dysfunction and stress we are seeing in our schools today, our examination must extend beyond children and families to include the wider social ecology, philosophical, economic, and political contexts, as well as the physical landscapes that shape family, school, and community life.

RÉSUMÉ*

Cette thèse délimite une généalogie du processus d'érosion qui afflige les communautés fonctionnelles en Amérique du Nord depuis les cinquante dernières années. Elle établit des liens entre cette érosion des communautés fonctionnelles et le stress auxquelles sont soumises de nos jours les familles et, par extension, l'école. Cette thèse soutient que pour comprendre le dysfonctionnement et le stress constatés aujourd'hui à l'école, notre regard doit se tourner au-delà des enfants et des familles pour inclure une écologie sociale élargie, les contextes philosophique, économique et politique, de même que les environnements physiques qui conditionnent les vies familiale, scolaire et communautaire.

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* French translation by Paul-Antoine Taillefer

Preface

This is not a history. Nor is it a description of a linear evolution or de-evolution. This is a genealogy; I hope in the most beautiful and living sense of that word. Foucault (1977, p. 139) writes: "genealogy is grey, meticulous, and patiently documentary. It operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments, on documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times."

In a genealogy, we begin with what or who is present. At present, many North American[1] families and schools are experiencing stress and isolation. Change and growth have occurred in North American society, a great deal in the last century, and especially since World War II. This change and growth has had a significant impact on the health and functioning of North American families and communities, which has affected the functioning and health of schools. The living entity for whom we will map a genealogy here is the family, and by extension community, in all its permutations. Before we can consider solutions for the future, *we must understand where we are now and how we came to be here.* "...[Genealogy] will cultivate the details and accidents that accompany every beginning..." (Foucault, 1977, p. 144).

No attempt will be made here to write a comprehensive history, address all issues, or exhaust all possibilities. I will not say that schools or society generally are in crisis, that this is some sort of critical moment in history where all problems must be addressed. In many ways I think schools and society in Canada and the U.S. are healthier than they have ever been. Like all things at any moment in time, there exist at this time both

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[1] Note: Throughout this thesis, North America will refer to Canada and the U.S. only.

strengths and limitations. Limitations restrict potential and obscure possibilities for growth. In order to grow, we must therefore identify what our limitations are and where they lie. Before trying to remove or address the limitations we have identified, the next most useful step is to come to some sort of understanding of how existing limitations came into being. This calls for a genealogical exploration.

I see the loss of *functional community living*[2] as the greatest present limitation to the healthy growth of schools, families, and wider society. The genealogy that will be the focus of the first part of this thesis will work to describe functional communities and to "unravel the accidents, minute deviations, errors, false appraisals, and faulty calculations" (Foucault, 1977, p. 146) that have contributed to their decline in the second half of the last century. The second part of this thesis will explore concrete possibilities for systemic change in schools and related human service systems in the context of the genealogical work that will follow. It will seek to establish a framework for effective educational leadership in the context of functional communities and their current limitations.

The exploration to follow will not seek to delineate events and confirm causality but will rather engage with history as one of many elements that contribute to our understanding of existing limitations.

> The purpose of history, guided by genealogy, is not to discover the roots of our identity but to commit itself to its dissipation. It does not seek to define our unique threshold of emergence...it seeks to make visible all of those discontinuities that cross us. (Foucault, 1977, p. 162)

There are perhaps many ways to tell this story; this one grows according to its own pattern and innate intelligence.

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[2] This term will be defined in the following pages.

Introduction

Origins of the Project

I have worked over the last few years in an elementary school as an integration aide helping to support children with a wide range of special needs within the classroom. As part of this job I participated as a member of the school's Resource Team. We met weekly, sometimes with teachers who were seeking support, and sometimes internally reviewing the ongoing challenges presented by the large number of children with special needs in our school. I noticed that invariably we would come, at some point in each discussion, to the issue of family involvement or lack thereof. We felt a strong need to engage with families in order to make any real headway with our students. We also usually found that we were incredibly limited in our ability to reach out to families if they were not choosing to involve themselves. Not only were the school's resources limited in terms of what we could offer to families, but I also noticed that our active connections and relationships with other social service providers in the community were weak, if they existed at all. This meant that we were not readily able to direct parents to other available resources, certainly not to other professionals with whom we had a personal relationship or trust.

These problems are not unique to my school. As public schools go, mine is exemplary in many ways. The staff is an enthusiastic and dedicated group of highly professional people, who work as a supportive and often joyful team despite the highly exhausting work they are involved in. The principal is a selfless leader who works hard everyday. She attends all meetings, is more often in the hallway working with staff and

children than in her office, constantly seeks out every possible grant and extra program available for the school, actively pursues her own learning and professional development, and is still somehow always available if a staff member needs five minutes alone with her to talk. The school I work in is a vibrant, active place where adults and children both engage daily in the challenging process of growth. Despite these efforts, these gaps between school and community and school and family persist, and in my estimation, greatly limit our ability to succeed with our students.

I was moved to investigate these gaps when I had to meet with a mother to tell her that her child had threatened to hurt himself, and she was therefore strongly advised to seek immediate psychological help for him. The principal and I met with this mother, who was several months pregnant with her second child and had recently left her partner, and gave her this information about her eight-year-old son. We did not, however, have any specific resources to help her find appropriate help. By specific I mean the name of a doctor, or a list of doctors, or a clinic that specialized in helping parents find appropriate resources of the kind. We told her to go to the city's children's hospital but we couldn't even give her any names of people who might help her once there, or the proper phone number to call to arrange an assessment. Nor did we have a relationship with this mother outside of the context of formal meetings. So when she began to cry I felt I had to check my impulse to take her arm, or offer some kind of comfort because, although I knew her son well, she and I were strangers.

I was shaken by this meeting and I began to think more carefully about the limitations of the school system. It seemed clear to me that schools were far too isolated from the families of students, as well as from other social service professionals and

community organizations. In most schools, including mine, there is no place for families to sit comfortably or spend time. In my school there is a low, child-sized bench outside the office where children having trouble will often have to sit while waiting to see the principal. This is the only place for family members to sit if they have to wait in the school, and I always notice how uncomfortable they look; on a too-small bench outside the office with everyone walking past and looking at them as if they too are "in trouble."

Schools and school systems everywhere in North America are designed to be child-centred and child-focused. Certainly, most schools have parent volunteers, and parent teacher associations, but these traditional roles are limited and, for the most part, families are excluded from school life. As a result a huge divide tends to persist in most relationships between school staff and the families of students in the school. I had already developed an interest in community education and had begun researching in that area, but these observations and experiences are really what have fueled this project and made it not an abstract academic exercise for me, but a living document, essential both for my professional development and my understanding of the society we live in.

PART I: GENEALOGY, CITIES, AND COMMUNITY

1. Definitions and Context

Finding what is Lost

> Millions of young people have lost the traditional safety nets that used to provide love and security even when their nuclear family was in trouble. Extended families, close-knit neighborhoods, churches, synagogues, or mosques — all could be counted on to respond. But now the safety net is too often stretched to the breaking point. (Lewis and Morris, 1998 p. 34)

Authors of studies and articles about community schools or family education often introduce their topic with similar statements to the one quoted above. We all seem to be in agreement: there has been a loss of community, extended family, and support systems, and this is putting stress on families and schools. I agree with this assertion, and I also have recommendations to make about how to compensate for this loss in the context of our schools. However, I find it quite incredible that such a strong statement is made so often by so many without any history offered, without any genealogy drawn for these families, these communities, and our society that has "lost" so much.

It should be noted that I refer to society (our society, us) in the broadest terms. The terms "we", "us", and "society" include everyone who lives out a life in North America; everyone who daily walks on Canadian sidewalks or drives on American roads. I am not interested for the purposes of this thesis in securing a specific, careful, closed definition of what society is or is not. I wish to produce an understanding of the way in which all of North American society across classes and subcultures and in its formal and informal structures, has evolved and changed over time in ways that affect community life, not in terms of formal history, but in the way we may look at a body and see its

stories written there. Here is a scar where she fell from a tree; here the lines that record his smiles, there his frowns.

I want to examine society as a living being that has changed over time as a result of a complex and almost indecipherable interplay of choices and of things that were not chosen. The landscape in Canada and the United States that seems so immutable, so stable, has not always existed. We think of the highways and roads that now cover the body of this continent as veins and arteries, essential to the life of this massive organism. But in reality these stretches of concrete are still quite new, not internal and essential, nor there from birth, but scars on the skin from cuts made with a knife.

In the introduction to *The Order of Things*, Foucault (1994, p. xxii) writes: "in attempting to uncover the deepest strata of Western Culture, I am restoring to our silent and apparently immobile soil, its rifts, its instability, its flaws, and it is the same ground that is once more stirring under our feet." That is what I hope to do here. I wish to create a stirring, a seeing, a jolt in the body that occurs in the moments where nothing is taken for granted and nothing is claimed to be understood. The way I'm using "society" in this context is therefore all-inclusive. My hope is that whoever finds their way to these pages will see some movement in the apparently immobile soil, if only for a moment.

Loss and Living and Death and Dying

We speak of loss, and rightly so. Our society lives with a strong feeling that there has been a death (or many deaths); that some of our most beloved ways of life have been rendered untouchable; memory and mist. And these words: extended family, church, neighborhood, and above all *community* evoke in us sighs and sadness and we clamour to

find these beloved things that have been lost. Marilyn Taylor (2003, p. xii) cautions

wisely that "the romanticism in the rhetoric of community airbrushes out the considerable

complexities and contradictions inherent in this set of ideas." And I would argue that

when we write, as Lewis and Morris (and others) have, of this loss without any sense of

why, without any glance toward our own genealogy, it amounts to reading a eulogy at

one's great-grandparent's funeral which is all about one's self. Before any talk of

community schools or family resource centres, before solutions, before *planning*, we

must not only grieve for the things that we have lost, but we must also understand how

and why they were lost; we must understand the ways these dead relatives of our present

society lived, and we must also understand the ways in which they died.

Anne Whiston Spirn writes:

> Architects' drawings show no roots, no growing, just green lollipops and
> buildings floating on the page, as if ground were flat and blank, the tree an
> object not a life. Planners' maps show no buried rivers, no flowing, just
> streets, lines of ownership, and proposals for future use, as if the past were
> not present, as if the city were merely a human construct not a living,
> changing landscape. Children's textbooks, from science to history, show
> no nearby scenes, suggest or demand no firsthand knowing, just formulas
> and far-off people and places, as if numbers and language had no local
> memory, as if their present had no past, no future, the student a vessel not
> an actor. (1998, p. 11)

I believe in roots and growing, in firsthand knowledge, in local memory. I believe

in learning as action, as an engaged and transformational process. I believe in the

interconnectedness of things, in rhizomes (Deleuze & Guittari, 1987). I do not think it is

possible or productive to work for change in the future without first carefully exploring

our present and also our past; and this exploration must move out in all directions with

hands outstretched, seeking not events on a two dimensional timeline printed on a page,

but things we can hold: shards and scraps, threads and fragments, songs and stories as well as what we call facts.

> ...[Genealogy] must record the singularity of events outside of any monotonous finality; it must seek in the most unpromising places, in what we tend to feel is without history—*in sentiments, love, conscience, instincts*; it must be sensitive to their recurrence, not in order to trace the gradual curve of their evolution, but to isolate the different scenes where they engaged in different roles. Finally, genealogy must define even those instances where they are absent, the moment when they remained unrealized... (Foucault, 1977, pp. 139-140, italics added)

In attempting to explore all the possibilities of genealogy, I have woven throughout this thesis stories and anecdotes related to healthy or ailing communities, schools, and families. Some of these stories, or *shards*, are drawn from my own experience, and others are retellings of stories I have heard. My goal with this collection is to offer something that can be easily remembered and carried away. I also wish truly create a genealogy by adding "sentiments, love, conscience, [and] instincts" to the history and theory being recounted here. Abstract academic theory does not stay with us long, and generally is not shared over dinner. On the other hand, small moving images of moments when communities *worked* are things we can easily remember, carry with us, and share with friends and colleagues. My hope is that the reader will come away with impressions of moments of *connection* and that this might in turn help to contribute to other moments of connection.

Nostalgia, Memory, and Mourning

Before moving on I would like to make a note about nostalgia. Although I am writing about loss and sadness for that loss, my intention is not to write a nostalgic lament for some imagined golden age of North American community life. This is an

investigation of limitations. I see this loss of functional community living as a great limitation, and I also see thousands of strengths that belong to our current society that were limited for those before us. If I had been writing at some other point in history my critique would have been about a different set of limitations. I want it to be very clear throughout this thesis that I am in no way harkening back to any other point in time with nostalgia or a longing to return; I am moving out from where we are now. Nostalgia is stagnant. I see mourning, on the other hand as an active process, a seeking to understand. Genealogy is really the work of the bereaved. It is an exploring and looking back not so as to live in or return to the past, but rather to live more fully in the present and move into the future with curiosity about and connection to ourselves, and everything that informs that self, just as it is in this moment.

Claudia Mitchell and Jacqueline Reid-Walsh (2002) discuss an alternative relationship to and view of nostalgia. They note that "nostalgia, itself, is…often described in disparaging terms as though it were a weakness, based on untruth and best not indulged in" (Mitchell & Reid-Walsh, 2002, p. 54). They then point to the work of several writers

> …such as Susannah Radstone (1995), Mary Jacobs (1987), Janet Flax (1987), and the poet Adrienne Rich (1978) [who] are working to rehabilitate the idea of nostalgia, preferring to treat it as "future oriented remembering" based on what they describe as "the half remembered and half anticipated." These writers use the term "feminist nostalgia" to refer to a kind of yearning that is at one and the same time both nostalgic and utopic. Yearning for a past that never was, they argue, can be an impetus for future action.

While this is not the way in which I have chosen to work with nostalgia here, I think this approach could be effective in creating momentum around community building.

I have witnessed this type of nostalgia (or utopic remembering) being used to create an impetus for future action among leaders in the community school movement. The most notable example was part of a keynote speech at the Coalition for Community Schools (http//:www.communityschools.org) 2005 conference delivered by a member of the Coalition's steering committee. The speaker made a statement to the effect that "mom isn't waiting in the kitchen with cookies anymore when the kids get home, and our schools must adapt to meet these changing needs of families." I remember this statement in particular because of the irritation it evoked in a friend sitting next to me, a policy maker and educator in her early fifties. She leaned over and whispered angrily that the speaker's comment was "classist, racist, sexist, and nostalgic." When I questioned her she explained that women in working class and minority families in the U.S. have always had to work, and were never "waiting with cookies", and her mother (a Jewish immigrant in New York City) was certainly never in the kitchen making cookies because she was a *scientist*. "My mother's kitchen served her more as a home lab than anything else," she said.

At the time I agreed with my friend, and dismissed the speaker's comment as nostalgic in the most negative sense of the word. Now, working from Mitchell and Reid-Walsh's discussion of nostalgia, I find this exchange to be extremely interesting. Although I still think my friend's comments were valid in their own right, I am now able to have another reading of the speaker's comments. It could be argued that in evoking a nostalgic 1950's image of "mom waiting with cookies in the kitchen", the speaker's intention was not to gloss over race, class, and gender concerns with a two-dimensional stereotype, but rather to instill in the audience that "yearning" that is both nostalgic and

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utopic so as to create impetus for future action (in this case working to develop community schools). I think this reading of his use of nostalgia makes a good deal of sense here, because although the 1950's image was evoked, the desire of the speaker was not to regress by taking women out of the workplace and putting them back into kitchens. His goal was rather to move forward by making changes in the school system to better support today's families.

Shouting Out and Storytelling

Jane Jacobs (2004, p. 34) writes: "A community is a complex organism with complicated resources that grow gradually and organically." We are crying out at the loss of our communities in North America. There are many people who, out of fear and anger, are shouting about the reasons for this loss. We are all familiar with these shouts. These people wring their hands and repeat abstracted buzzwords that do not refer to anything in particular. "We have lost Family Values!" is a favorite shout. These fearful and angry explanations are highly simplified; they are not eulogies, but accusations. The way in which we have come to lose community living is not simple or straightforward; it is therefore not meaningful to claim that this is a result of having been robbed of vague abstractions like "Family Values."

"A community is a complex organism with complicated resources that grow gradually and organically." Complex organisms do not die from simple sicknesses. They die from a combination of complicated factors working in concert gradually and slowly. Here a seed fell finding only concrete and could not germinate; here a taproot found no water and could not spread; here old and tangled roots were destroyed with loud

machines; here leaves harvested and sold for some other purpose than nourishing the plant. Let us begin telling these stories; tracing these discontinuities.

Naming. Classifications. Definitions.

The word community is invoked often, by various groups, and with a wide range of intentions. It is a word that risks becoming meaningless if not used precisely. Marilyn Taylor (2003, p. 35) offers a list of factors that have traditionally determined what constitutes a community, such as "common traditions and identities, common economic interests, common experiences of power or oppression, common residential base, or common experience." This is not the notion of community that I intend to explore. I find this type of definition simplistic and believe that it risks being closed and exclusive. Furthermore, it may serve to foster an Us versus Them worldview. Ideally, for me, community is made up not of a homogenous group of people with shared or "common" backgrounds, but of an eclectic collection of people from a wide range of backgrounds who can offer as many different perspectives and resources as possible.

Notions of community based on commonality may lead too easily to hatred, conservatism, and defensiveness (Taylor, 2003). Furthermore, traditional definitions based on commonality do not address issues such as cooperation, available resources, and safety. A group may meet the traditional criteria for community if they share a common background, culture, language, religion, and value system, and yet this group may not necessarily provide any of the supports or relationships that are essential to a community as I will define it here. This is true for many suburban communities in North America today.

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The definition of community that I am interested in here emphasizes those elements of community that I believe are in greatest danger of extinction in North America. A community should locally address the needs of all of its members in terms of economics, healthcare, childcare (formal and informal), friendships, acquaintanceships, family, strangers, shopping, employment, education, recreation, common space (public), private space, natural internal surveillance and security (rather than artificially imposed security), and should foster a sense of responsibility in each individual for the whole (Jacobs, 1961/1992, 2004). This holistic picture of a locality where a diverse collection of people are provided, through their relationships with each other and with local organizations, with all that they need to live engaged and healthy lives is my notion of community. I would like to distinguish my definition from traditional definitions with the terms "functional community" or "functional community living."

It should be well understood that I am conceiving of community here in a much broader sense than is traditional. For example, within my definition of functional community, religious groups that are often referred to as "communities" in and of themselves would rather be seen as only one piece of a functional community. Functional community therefore is an extensive and inclusive concept, referring to all the institutional and social aspects of in a human life; and within this definition, the more integrated and local those components, the healthier or more "functional" a community is.

Local and Global

I feel I must include a note here on the question of local versus global policy approaches to community development. It must be remembered that this entire discussion

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of community and what will be recognized as healthy and functional constantly relates back to the level of stress on families and how that contributes to the stress we are experiencing in our schools. Therefore, while on one hand I am not writing from a particularly "anti-globablization" position, I also do not believe that relationships mediated by the Internet can replace local, real, human interactions and relationships in the context of maintaining healthy, well supported families.

A long-distance friend through the Internet, however immediately accessible in the virtual world, certainly can't help out with the kids in a pinch, or contribute to neighborhood safety by noticing a stranger lurking on the corner. If our goal is to reduce stress for families and schools, I believe it is essential that in our policies and initiatives we strive to develop and encourage local, integrated, human relationships and networks on all levels. This is especially important because of the current overwhelming tendency toward a global orientation in many arenas.

I also believe that the Internet has great value and potential as a tool for creating connections between people both locally and globally. Given many of the changes that have taken place and the erosion of functional community life in North America, virtual connections may in many cases be the best option for making services and programs available to people, especially in communities that have been stripped of their local autonomy through a process that began as decentralization and has developed into globalization.

Literature and Framework

What I wish to uncover with this thesis are the reasons for the loss of functional community life; not abstract and gradual social transformations, but the quite concrete and sometimes even violent changes that the landscape of our society has undergone. This is why I am rooting my definition of functional community so deeply in the body of writing Jane Jacobs has produced over the last forty years. I find her work to be most useful because she bases her analysis in her own direct observations of functional and non-functional communities. Although there is a wealth of recent and interesting literature offering theories related to community and community building (see Putnam, 2000; Bauman, 1999, 2001; Saegert et al., 2001; Shepherd & Rothenbuhler, 2001; Delanty, 2003; Taylor, 2003; Proctor, 2005;), and although I was initially drawn to certain works on communitarianism — most notably, that of Henry Tam (1998) as well as others (see Etzioni, 1991, 2003; Frazer, 1999, Khatchadourian, 1999; Selznick, 2002;), Jacobs' is the only work that bears out a clear, comprehensive, and realistic framework for understanding and analyzing the actual "real life" workings of communities.

While others offer persuasive theories that might excite, anger or provoke, Jacobs does not merely theorize, but observes, and then from her observations draws conclusions and points to concrete, identifiable factors that contribute to making one community work where another does not. Her work is compelling because it does not ask us to believe anything simply because it is written on the page; it invites us to observe our own communities and see for ourselves if what she writes holds true. Since discovering Jacob's work, I have been observing every community I have visited or lived in, and I have found for myself that her analysis is valid.

Causes and Conditions

Teachers today often wonder how they can be asked to worry about details in curriculum or test scores when their students are under-supported, under-nourished, and emotionally under-developed. They wonder why it is that they cannot connect with the families of their students. And why, in many cases do they do not even *know* the families of their students. While at first glance, it may seem impossible to answer these questions to any satisfaction, there do exist a number of relevant factors that are rarely raised within the fields of education and social work. These factors are related to deliberate choices and decisions taken, either in the realm of government policy or business, that have directly impacted on the health of functional community living and, by extension, on our classrooms.

Writers in the field of education rarely make any links between these concrete policy factors and the stress on families that we see in our schools today. Writers in the fields of urban planning, architecture, and public policy often draw connections between developments in their field and the needs of children, families, and schools. However, I find that there tends to be a lack of cross-disciplinary exploration in educational literature. While there is a great deal of discussion and study surrounding parental involvement (or lack thereof) as a factor relating to children's success in school, the investigation tends to stop there, and fails to explore related factors such as public policies related to housing, zoning, and automobiles, all of which have direct impacts on parental involvement in schools.

Those working with asset based community development and social capital development come closest in bridging the gap between issues affecting families and

schools and some public policy and planning issues in the field of education (see ABCD Institute http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd.html; Kretzmann, 1993; Putnam, 2000; McKnight, 2003). However, this work tends to be focused on urban, "at-risk" communities, and therefore gets overlooked in terms of coming to a more global understanding of the stresses affecting all families today whatever their level of affluence.

Writers like Kenneth T. Jackson (1985), Clive Doucet (2004), Lewis Mumford (1961), Peter S. Fisher (1995), Paul Hopper (2003) and, above all, Jane Jacobs (1961/1992, 2004) have identified a set of factors which, though they may at first seem unrelated to families and schools, have direct impacts on the health of communities. The list of factors is long and varied and includes, among other things, the introduction of the modern mortgage after World War II; the dramatic change in the 1970's of the relationship between a median family income and a median cost of shelter; a shift in taxation policies that rewards home ownership and penalizes renters; zoning and public housing policies; declining support for public transit; highway development programs; urban renewal programs; slum clearance programs; and the development of factory made, easily reproducible, single family homes. Fisher (1995) and Hopper (2003) both investigate the complex relationships between social policy, economics, philosophy, community and family life, and individualism.

2. Economics, Philosophies, Social Policies, and Community Life

Citizens or Consumers?

Peter S. Fisher (1995) examines the perpetuation and exacerbation of poverty and the loss of community in the context of shifts in social policy. He points to several policies, including the privatization of public services, a shift to user fees instead of taxes to finance these services, deregulation leading to a loss of universal services, and governmental competition that are having an important impact not only on poverty, but also on functional communities.

Fisher (1995) is writing in and about the United States, and I think until very recently it would have been necessary to point out that there is a significant difference in climate and policy between American and Canadian governments. Although significant differences between Canadian and American policy remain, in the nine years since I left my native United States and moved to Canada, I have watched a shift take place in the general climate surrounding Canadian social policies. This is most clearly evidenced by the current debate about the universal health care system, arguably the crowning jewel in Canadian social policy but lately the target of wider-spread criticism and legal battles, leading to the loss of more and more support of this entirely publicly funded entity. Political leaders of all stripes seem to be increasingly convinced that the health care system, at least to some degree, must be turned over to the market. When I hear leaders speak on the subject, there is a sense of the inevitability around the shift toward private-sector management and ultimately, a total inability to see anything other than the supreme power of the marketplace.

The concern with these policies (Fisher 1995) is that they represent a wholesale shift in how we conceive of ourselves as individuals and as members of society in relation to one another. These public policies

> are based on a utilitarian individualism that denies the existence of community and defines the social good as simply the sum of individual desires. The individual, in turn, is a consumer and a factor of production, but not a citizen; citizens have rights, consumers have only demands. And the only kind of demand that counts is an effective demand—which is to say, willingness and ability to pay. Needs or wants not backed up by the income to purchase their satisfaction do not count. *Communities have no standing as social institutions; they are only places where consumers happen to live* and, perhaps, own assets such as houses. Efficiency [becomes] the over-riding goal of public policy; it requires that everything possible be marketed rather than distributed outside of markets. Where markets do not exist, government should establish property rights so that they can exist. *Inequalities that persist despite the workings of markets to eliminate them must be the fault of the individual.* (p. 47, italics added)

The juxtaposition of citizens, who have rights, with consumers, who have only demands, is important to understand. We have moved away from a democratic model, which emphasizes *rights* in the context of *citizens* who are members of the *public* and have a voice and agency in government, and whose choices relate to the public good. We have moved towards a capitalist model, which caters to the *demands* of individual *consumers* (Fisher, 1995). The problem is that we are often still using democratic language to describe a capitalist process. So when we should really be talking about the demands of consumers, we are still talking about the rights of citizens, and the language of right lends power to those demands, regardless of how frivolous, self-indulgent, or even dangerous they may be.

Rightism

Recently on CBC Radio's afternoon call-in program, Radio Noon, the topic was whether or not callers would support legislation in the province of Quebec to ban cell phone use while driving (See http://www.cbc.ca/radionoonmontreal/ hour two, March 23, 2006). The first guest on the show was a medical doctor who had been researching, for the past four years, risks associated with cell phone use while driving. She reported that there were indeed high risks associated with cell phone use while driving; in some cases cell phone users were twice as likely as non-users to have an accident. Despite this report of research at the beginning of the show, many callers were strongly against any such legislation, and the theme of the conversation was generally centred around "individual rights." Even a deputy minister from the Conservative Party who had introduced a bill to place some limits on cell phone use while driving spoke about his concerns about limiting individual rights and freedoms. The public good seems to have lost currency even when it comes to this type of legislation.

However, one caller stood out from the rest of the discussion. He pointed out that when a car is travelling in a *public* space, what is most important is the legal responsibility of the person occupying that public space to other members of society, and not the individual "rights" of the person in the private interior space of the car. He argued, "...the life of citizens is more important than the private privileges of certain people who drive cars carelessly."

Paul Hopper (2003) addresses the issue of rights versus demands when he points to what a number of scholars are calling "rightism" (p. 42). He writes: "...the conviction and passion with which many individuals and organizations assert or demand 'their

rights' often resembles an uncritical commitment to an ideology" (p. 42). He explains that negotiation and compromise are limited, and it is difficult to listen empathically to another person's arguments when one relies on "rights" in order to argue a position. He observes that a "rights-based politics can therefore undermine the basis for democratic governance" (p. 42). Hopper also refers to Fukuyama (1995) who "...contends that the 'culture of rights' in America is uncompromising and not balanced by a sense of duty, responsibility and obligation to other people" (cited in Hopper, p. 43).

Detraditionalization

Hopper (2003) also examines the rise in individualism due to a shift in philosophical, social, and economic trends. He looks at what he calls "detraditionalization" and the resulting implications for community life. He too is careful about falling into a nostalgic view and losing sight of the ambiguities and nuances of the changes our society has undergone. He does not deny that traditional societies and institutions generated their own set of problems. He cautions, "there should be no attempt to go back to some alleged 'golden age'—often considered by those on the political right to be the 1950s —because quite simply for many groups in Western societies it was far from being golden" (p. 43).

Hopper (2003) does not suggest that detraditionalization is either strictly positive or negative in its consequences. He acknowledges that for many individuals it has allowed for freedom and power where in the past they had little. "And this is not only a liberating experience, but it enables the development of personal responsibility and maturity" (p. 34). However, the other side of detraditionalization is that it can lead to the

development of individualism. And, Hopper notes "in a detraditionalized era, actions are to a greater degree guided by individual preference," and less by a "...distinct moral framework for acceptable and unacceptable conduct" (p. 37). The loss of that moral framework leads to the erosion of many different facets of functional community life. Hopper points to the loss or shortening of the family meal; a loss of trust in democratic government and a resulting decline in civic participation; and the narcissistic inward orientation to the self evidenced by

> the growth of the cosmetics, fashion and leisure industries; the vast range of diet and health products; the veneration of the beautiful and the fashionable; the plethora of magazines and television programs providing life-style advice; and the rapid turn-over of popular fashion crazes. (p. 41)

Again, we can see that these issues are complex. Each society has its own set of limitations. Traditional societies tend to limit personal choice and individual freedoms, but they also tend to enjoy the benefits of strong social networks and support. In our "detraditionalized" society, we are facing a set of limitations due to the erosion of a clear "collective conscience" (p. 41) or what Durkheim (1961) called 'the collective sentiments' (cited in Hopper, 2003, p. 34). The loss of these "collective sentiments" contributes to a lack of a sense of interpersonal responsibility and general cohesion in our society. Without a sense of collective responsibility, we may feel less safe and therefore more defensive, more entitled to have our individual needs met at the expense of others, and more critical of those around us (see *shard 1*).

These philosophical, social, and economic shifts and the incredible physical changes that our residential and commercial landscapes have undergone in the past five decades constantly reinforce one another.

> With the erosion of tradition, the individual is less influenced or guided by
> collective conscience. It means our decisions and behaviour are no longer
> shaped to the same extent by reference to past collective experiences, nor
> to shared beliefs and cultural practices emanating from particular
> communities or societies" (Hopper, 2003, p. 35)

This again echoes the need for genealogical exploration. Genealogy serves us by holding inside it stories, histories, ideas, and facts. It serves as a physical space (like a shoebox full of letters and old photographs) in which to gather collective memory, something essential to a functional community, and also essential if we want to engage in any true change. Huyssen (2000, p. 28) writes: "lived memory is active, alive, embodied in the social—that is, individuals, families, groups, nations, and regions" (cited in Strong-Wilson & Ellis, submitted, p. 4). Without "lived memory" or genealogy "...each of us [can be encouraged] to develop a subjective morality, whereby our behaviour and codes of conduct suit our own interests, and have little reference to the collective sentiments or conscience that go to make up a common moral culture" (Hopper, 2003, p. 35). Hopper cites Paul Heelas (1996, p. 4) who points out "...that detraditionalization is premised upon the notion that people no longer 'think of themselves as belonging to the whole.'"

With this socio-political climate in mind, let us move now to an examination of some of the more concrete factors that have shaped our society over the last several decades; factors that have changed the physical landscape of North America. In the context of detraditionalization and a shift to a more individualist society, these physical factors help to reinforce individualist attitudes and further erode functional community life. There is one factor that trumps all others in terms of its far-reaching effects on the health of communities. Its history is complicated, touching both industry and government policy. This factor is automobiles and related infrastructure.

Isolation and Individualism

One afternoon I was riding the number 80 bus north on Parc Avenue in Montreal. The bus was nearly full. Seated near the front window were a mother and her three-or-four-year-old daughter. In the seat next to them was an older woman, probably in her late 80s. The little girl was extremely agitated. She was standing up on the bus seat, grabbing at the bell-pull, banging on the window, nudging her mother, and occasionally screaming. Her mother was talking on a cell phone and completely ignoring all of this behaviour. The older woman, who was sitting beside the little girl, was jostled and bumped as the little girl squirmed around. A few of the other passengers on the bus glanced up when the child screamed, but quickly looked away again. Things continued this way for about 10 minutes as the bus made its way north, through Mount-Royal Park. Despite the fact that the older woman was being jostled every few moments, her face remained impassive as she tried to ignore the little girl's behaviour.

We then came to the bus stop at the intersection of Parc Avenue and Mont-Royal where there is a large McDonald's. The little girl, who was standing on the seat with her hands against the windowpane, spotted the McDonald's and began throwing an impressive tantrum, screaming that she wanted McDonald's *now*! The mother (without looking at her daughter) snapped at her to sit down but continued her phone conversation. The little girl persisted in her tantrum, and after a minute or two, the older woman gently reached out towards the little girl and, placing her hand lightly on the child's shoulder said, "Shhh...we must be quieter on the bus." The mother, who had been successfully ignoring her daughter all this time, *immediately* turned on the older woman. She said things like "who do you think you are?" and "this is *my* child" and "you can't tell me or my daughter what to do." She grabbed her daughter by the hand and they moved toward the back of the bus. The older woman shook her head sadly. No one else on the bus said a word.

Connection and Collectivity

Two years ago, I spent about a month travelling in Argentina. The most striking thing about the country for me was not the tango or architecture or the impressive Iguazu waterfalls. Instead, what most struck me about Argentina was the way I observed adults interacting with children. In North America, very often I notice adults walking along with their young children trailing several feet behind them. I find it common in North America to see parents walking ahead of their children, not talking to them, not touching them, nor even looking at them for long periods of time. I was struck in Argentina by the way adults seemed to be constantly engaging with children. In all the time I spent there, I never once saw a child and adult together who weren't engaged in conversation. They were most often holding hands, pointing to things and discussing what they saw.

One afternoon, I was on a bus in northern Argentina. A group of about six children ranging from age five to 12 boarded the bus, followed by two mothers. The children ran very quickly down the isle of the bus making a lot of noise. One woman, who was seated in the middle of the bus, slowly and gently raised her left hand to slow them down. She placed her other hand over her mouth, gesturing for them to be quiet. Then, with another gesture, she offered the seat next to her to the oldest girl who was first in the line of children. The little girl smiled and said "gracias, señora" and sat down with her. The other children continued (more quietly and slowly) down the isle and other adults offered available seats to them in turn.

The two mothers had meanwhile been paying the fare at the front of the bus. After paying, they glanced back, saw that all their children were already seated, and took two seats together at the front of the bus. At first I thought that these children must be acquainted with the adults who had offered them seats. I noticed that all of the children had quickly become engaged in lively conversation with their older seatmates and I heard several of the children introducing themselves. All of the adults who had offered their seats were strangers to the children, and yet there was a tangible sense of collective responsibility for and care about the children on the bus.

3. Driving Out Functional Communities: Cars and Community Life

The Supremacy of the Automobile

Jane Jacobs, a writer and activist in the field of urban studies and community development, foresaw the destructive potential of cars and roads for functional communities over 40 years ago when she wrote Death and Life of Great American Cities in 1961. Her view of the car's adverse effect on the health of communities has not changed in 40 years. In her latest book, published in 2004, she writes: "not T.V. or illegal drugs but the automobile has been the chief destroyer of North American communities" (Jacobs, 2004, p. 37). She remarks:

> One can drive today for miles through North American suburbs and never glimpse a human being on foot in a public space, a human being outside of a car or truck....this is a visible sign that North America has become bereft of communities. For communities to exist, people must encounter one another in person. These encounters must include more than best friends or colleagues at work. They must include diverse people who share the neighborhood, and often share its needs. (pp. 36-37)

Politicians and leaders in the automobile industry often argue "...that the American people, through the workings of the free market, decreed the supremacy of the automobile and its public appurtenances and the demise of public transit" (Jacobs, 2004, p. 38). This, however, according to many urbanists, is absolutely not true. "To claim that [the car fairly won its supremacy] and to be believed is to rely on mass forgetfulness of persistent corporate attacks on public transit for the sake of selling oil, rubber tires, and internal-combustion vehicles" (p. 38).

There are two vivid examples of this type of corporate attack, both involving General Motors. One example took place at the beginning of the last century, and the

other, at the beginning of this one. The first example is from the 1920's when GM created a number of small puppet subsidiaries for the purpose of buying public transit systems and streetcars (Jackson, 1985; Jacobs, 2004). Most notable of these subsidiaries was National City Lines. This company approached city leaders with cash offers to buy and take control of their transit systems. Myopic city governments, depression stricken, overwhelmed, and starved for money, were easily convinced to sell off these valuable assets. This relieved them of one management burden and immediately put some cash into their coffers. General Motors, under the guise of National City Lines, wasted no time in beginning to dismantle the transit systems and tear up the tracks of the streetcar lines that they had purchased. They then began replacing the transit systems with buses that were manufactured by the General Motors Company, and rolled on rubber tires manufactured by other GM subsidiaries. "Manhattan led the way, with most of its [streetcar] routes ripped out during a single eighteen-month period during the 1930s, *despite massive rider complaints and petitions*" (Jackson, 1985, p. 170, italics added).

Two anti-trust investigations were mounted against the GM subsidiaries. The first was dropped completely because the attack on Pearl Harbor occurred shortly after the investigation had begun, causing all else to be forgotten. When the war was over in 1946, a former GM employee warned local and national governments "...that they were being 'swindled' by 'a careful, deliberately planned campaign' to obliterate their 'most important and valuable public utilities'" (Jacobs, 2004, p. 40). Congress and the Department of Justice tried and convicted nine corporations and seven CEO's for illegal acts in restraint of trade. When they were found guilty, each CEO was fined $1, and each corporation was fined $5,000. The $5,000 fine "...was less than the profit returned from

the conversion of a single streetcar" (Jackson, 1985, p. 170). This slap on the wrist therefore did little to stop GM's predation on public transit systems, and by 1950 transit systems in 83 cities were owned by a variety of GM subsidiaries, and the dismantling process was quickly completed (Jacobs, 2004).

We may wish to believe that this type of corporate wheedling and deliberate attack on public systems for the sake of profit is a thing of the past. However, Jacobs (2004) gives us another example from the year 2003. In the city of Vancouver, British Colombia, General Motors embarked on an advertising campaign in the daily newspaper, the Vancouver Sun. The first advertisement showed a city bus approaching. On the front of the bus, the route number had been replaced with the words "Wet Dog Smell." The text of the advertisement lauded the virtues of owning a private GM automobile, especially (as a choice) over public transit. A week later GM ran a second advertisement, again showing a bus approaching, but this time the words replacing the route number read, "Freaks and Weirdos" (2004).

The fearful, individualist attitude that is demonstrated in those GM advertisements has become increasingly prevalent in the last several decades, and even more so since the attacks on the World Trade Centre in 2001. Many people have ceased even to question this leery, mistrustful, isolationist view of the world, despite the ironic fact that it leads to less safety and more stress for the individual rather than the reverse. Bauman (1999, pp. 5-6) points out that

> ...most measures undertaken under the banner of public safety are divisive...they sow mutual suspicion, set people apart, prompt them to sniff enemies and conspirators behind every contention or dissent, and in the end make the loners yet more lonely than before.

This does in fact make our world a more dangerous place. The more that people withdraw from public spaces and from each other, the more our streets become dark and abandoned. And streets without a healthy flow of human beings are more likely to be dangerous. The proliferation of cars and the development of roads have already contributed to the isolation of individuals by destroying many of the chances people had in the past to "encounter one another in person" (Jacobs, 2004). Personal encounters contribute to the growth of healthy communities. In communities where people regularly encounter one another, strangers are more likely to feel a sense of mutual responsibility. This regular human contact and the sense of collective responsibility it can foster, is often the most effective method to ensure public safety. We will come back to the question of safe communities shortly, but for now let us continue to explore some of the other ways that the car has been as much a hazard as a convenience for human beings.

The Cost of Cars

Clive Doucet, a Canadian poet who was elected to city government in Ottawa, writes about his concern for the health of Canadian cities. Like Jacobs, he too identifies the car as one of the most insidious threats to the health of human relationships and functional communities. He points out that the threat is far from abstract. An average of 3,000 lives are lost on Canadian roads every year, and in the United States the same number is lost every month. As Doucet (2004, p. 63) wryly observes, "these are just fatalities." He reports that automobile injuries number at 220,000 per year on Canadian roads, and "...for the United States," he says "multiply by 14 to get the rough equivalent" (p. 63).

Car accidents have become so routine and taken for granted that they don't even make the news. We are so unperturbed at the loss of life on our roadways that for the most part we only take note of them in our traffic reports. In any given rush hour traffic report, as many as five to ten accidents might be reported. These accidents seem to carry the same weight as information about construction zones or bad weather. We accept this loss of life as part of our daily routine, along with the morning commute; it may not be pleasant, but what choice is there really? Doucet (2004) points out that, in fact, very few transit options remain in our cities, and even fewer options exist outside of urban areas. This, he argues, indicates a state of ill health.

> Healthy cities and healthy nations should mimic trees. There should be lots of redundancy in the system. They should have many kinds of transit possibilities, many small producers, many farms on the edges of the city, many shopping streets, many warehouse and factory districts. Duplication and diversity in the urban world, as in the biological world, creates stability: if one system breaks, there's always another to take its place. (p. 63)

Very little redundancy remains in our system. We have allowed most public transit systems to be destroyed. Most of those that remain are consistently under-funded. We have allowed our sidewalks and old trees to be torn up in order to widen roads by several feet to speed circulation of cars by several seconds (Doucet, 2004); we have rarely demanded that our governments build and maintain bike paths, wide sidewalks, or other pedestrian routes. There is less train capacity in Ottawa today than there was in 1950 (2004). In short, we have allowed the development of a world that is designed for our cars and not for ourselves.

In a documentary about New York City that explores the years of city commissioner Robert Moses' large-scale highway development projects, a man reflects on

the days before large highways ran through the city and says wistfully, "the streets belonged to us then" (Burns & Ades, 1999). This man's comment struck me because along with his voice, images were shown of children and adults gathered in the street. This is hardly possible in North America in 2006. The roads belong to our cars, not us. They are neither gathering places nor pedestrian routes. In many places, they are not even commercial districts, but merely strips of concrete designed for maximum speed and minimal distraction.

The purely financial cost of cars and roads is also staggering. "For most cities, more than 50% of the municipality's annual budget is now devoted to road construction and maintenance" (Doucet, 2004, p. 63). In Ottawa, to widen a road by two lanes for 7.7km costs more than three times the entire city budget for parks, community centres, swimming pools, ice rinks, and day care for 800,000 people. These figures are typical for any North American city (p, 64). The financial burden of maintaining roads and related infrastructure has fallen mostly on municipal governments. This is true despite the fact that cars are not a public form of transport, but a private one.

Jackson (1985, p. 163) points out that: "although the motorcar [is] the quintessential private instrument, its owners [have] to operate it over public spaces." He notes that governments might have been expected to "...levy heavy user fees to reimburse local treasuries in full for the cost of streets, traffic maintenance and police services" (p. 163). This however, was not what governments did. Coalition lobby groups made up of a wide range of interested parties, including automobile manufacturers, tire manufacturers, various industry dealers, parts suppliers, oil companies, gas station owners, developers and real-estate speculators, and eventually even parking associations, began lobbying

governments for more road development in the 1920s. "In 1943 these groups came together as the American Road Builders Association...to form a lobbying enterprise second only to that of the munitions industry" (p. 248). Jackson recounts that "elected officials bowed to private pressure and the public purse was opened to improve the quality of streets" (p. 164). In addition, members of these lobby groups "promoted legislation to spend state gasoline taxes on highways, rather than on schools, hospitals, welfare, or public transit" (p. 248). Ever since, public responsibility to maintain this extremely costly infrastructure for the support of a private industry has been a drain on municipal budgets and, by extension, on social programs that must compete with roads for funding. Doucet (2004, p. 63) writes:

> The hallmark of a successful city is efficient inclusivity — society gets what it needs. The hallmark of a successful business activity is efficient exclusivity — you sell to those who can afford to buy. The two objectives are incompatible. The car is sold to those who can afford it, yet it depends on society to pay for the roads it drives on. As a form of transportation, it presents a double jeopardy to government: it is exclusive and heavily subsidized.

Cars and Family Life

Doucet's comments bring us back to Fisher's analysis of the shift from social policy to market philosophy. Fisher (1995, p. 46) points to the "replacement of universal service with willingness-to-pay as the guiding criterion in regulated industries." He writes:

> In transportation and communications, universal service implied a basic right of citizens or communities to have access to the transportation network or the telephone system. Deregulation has meant the end of requirements to serve low-volume places...instead, the market principle—that service is sold to those who can afford to pay for it—is given greater weight. (p. 46)

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A general shift to market principles results in the redirection of public monies away from social programs because, according to market principles, individuals should pay for the services they use. However, with roads and other automobile-related infrastructure, market principles have been less strictly applied. Drivers bear the imposition of only the most minimal taxes and user fees (like tolls and relatively low taxes on gasoline), but otherwise, total dependence on public funding for roads is the norm. Despite the fact that only those who can afford an automobile make use of them, roads are seen as a "public" service, and *all* taxpayers (rather than only registered car owners) pay for their construction and maintenance. Municipal budgets are drained as a result of the high costs of maintaining roads and related infrastructure, which, by extension, places a strain on funding available for human service programs. Furthermore, family budgets are more tightly constrained by the costs of maintaining, fueling, and insuring at least one car when other transportation options are not available.

Jacobs notes that although median family incomes have generally increased in the past several decades as large numbers of women joined the workforce,

> ...necessary household expenses [have also] tended to grow, and not merely because of inflation but because qualitative changes [have] occurred in what constitute necessary expenses. Public transportation [has] declined or is altogether absent, especially in suburbs. In cities that underwent urban renewal in the 1950's and later in new suburbs, stores and working places [have been] segregated from residences, without feasible, much less enjoyable, walking or bicycling routes. By the mid 1960's, simply to get to a job, or to buy provisions, or to get a child to school or a playground or a playmate, a car became a necessity. (2004, pp 33-34)

This dependence on the car for transport has a significant effect on the independence and autonomy of children. When cars are the dominant mode of transport, extended family may choose to live at greater distances, often in separate neighbourhoods

or towns. This makes extended family much less accessible to children without the help of adults. If children can walk to visit family and friends, both parents and children benefit from increased independence. To drive a child to visit his grandparents, on the other hand, involves the burdens of both time and money (see Friedman, 2005, p. 89).

In communities where residential and commercial areas are mixed, there are also many positive effects for both parents and children. For example, older children have the opportunity to contribute to meeting their family's needs by running errands on foot. This not only saves time, energy, and gas money for parents, but also fosters the development of independence and self-esteem in children. Proximity to commercial activity may also provide teenagers with local employment opportunities. Where children can walk to school, to the store, or to a friend's house, a family's stress and spending are both reduced. Furthermore, children have the chance to create networks of resources for themselves outside of their immediate families, and to engage in a wider range of relationships. They have a chance to learn for themselves whom it is safe and enjoyable to talk with, and whom they may want to stay away from (important skills in human development) rather than simply living by the fearful "don't talk to strangers" mantra. Hopper (2003, p. 64) reports that in the United Kingdom, only 44 percent of 11-15 year olds were walking to school in 2003, compared with 53 percent ten years earlier. He calls this the "stranger danger phenomenon" (p. 64).

When there is dependence on cars for transport, parents and children become more isolated. Children lose chances for developing autonomy and independence, as well as opportunities for healthy physical activity. Parents are forced to take on additional financial responsibilities related to car-ownership and, at the same time, possibilities for

the development of networks of support are reduced. If we then also take into account long car commutes, now a standard part of the working day, increasing the number of hours away from home as well as isolation of parents from children and spouses from one another, we can begin to see why families in the era of the car may be under more stress and have less resources to draw upon. In contrast, neighbourhoods with pedestrian routes and mixed residential and commercial zoning enable children and parents to benefit from wider networks of support.

Jacobs (2004, pp 35-36) writes:

> Everyone needs entrées into networks of acquaintances for practical as well as social purposes....The neuroses of only two adults (or one) focusing relentlessly on offspring can be unbearable. The diverse viewpoints and strengths of many adults can be educational and liberating....Sitcom families and "reality" TV can and do fill isolated hours, but cannot offer the support of live friends and the practical information of varied acquaintances.

The car has dominated our landscape and way of life for little more than fifty years, and yet in that short time it has come to be so taken for granted that most of us never question it. I would venture to guess that many of us find the notion of children walking alone to a friend's house difficult to imagine, not only because in many communities without sidewalks it is virtually impossible, but also because it strikes us as dangerous. Even in cities where sidewalks still abound, many parents have become fearful of letting their children out of their sight. The combined factors of an increased sense of isolation as a result of individualism, and increased physical isolation as a result of dependence on cars, are having a detrimental effect on the health of families and communities in North America.

Finding Space for Highways on Narrow City Streets

The construction of highways in North America has had a great impact on the health of our communities (see Doucet, 2004; Jacobs, 1961/1992, chapter 18; Jackson, 1985, chapter 9). The effects of highway construction have been greatly shaped by the ways in which their development was carried out, including who was consulted, how the development was paid for, and how routes for new highways were planned. Even by limiting the discussion to the history of the city of New York, I will not have space in this thesis to explore in detail all the ways in which this factor relates to the health of community life in North America. The following pages will refer to the story of one New York City community in order to illustrate some of the effects that the construction of highways has had on functional communities, rather than attempting to summarize such a complex history in such limited space. Put simply, decisions surrounding highway development within large cities were not, for the most part, collaborative with citizens. Many decisions that were made not only failed to take the needs of existing communities into consideration but, in some cases, deliberately sought to target the heart of (healthy, functioning) communities for demolition.

The Story of Robert Moses and East Tremont

The most notorious name in city planning and highway development is the giant of all New York City commissioners, Robert Moses. There are lists of facts and figures, statistics, maps, and models that could be presented in order to portray the effects that highway development had on communities in New York City, but none of those could really impart a sense of the transformative and destructive process that typified highway

development under the direction of Moses. His biographer, Robert Caro, succeeds in doing so more vividly with his story of the destruction of the neighbourhood known as East Tremont.

> Robert Moses built 627 miles of roads in and around New York City. This is the story of one of those miles. There is something strange about that mile. It is one of the seven that make up the great highway known as the Cross-Bronx Expressway, but the other six, like most of the other miles of Moses' expressways, are — roughly — straight, on a road map a heavy red line slashing inexorable across the delicate crosshatch of streets in the borough's central expanse....When [the road] curves, the curves are shallow, the road hastening to resume its former course. But during that one mile, the road swerves, bulging abruptly and substantially toward the north. (Caro, 1975, p. 850)

Caro goes on to explain that this abrupt swerve in the road cuts directly into "...a solid mile of apartment houses, fifty-four of them, fifty-four structures of brick and steel and mortar piled fifty, sixty, seventy feet high and each housing thirty or forty or fifty families" (p. 850). He points out that had the course of the road continued heading straight, rather than swerving north, very little damage would have been done.

> Only six small buildings — dilapidated brownstone tenements—would have to be torn down. Most of the right-of-way—the park and the avenue—was already in the city's possession. While turning the road to the north would destroy hundreds upon hundreds of homes. (p. 850)

East Tremont was a section of the Bronx that belonged to a not too rich, not too poor, vibrant Jewish community, and "...the neighborhood provided its residents with things that were important to them" (Caro, 1975, p. 851).

> Transportation was important to the fathers that worked downtown, and the neighborhood had good transportation....Jobs were important to the fathers who didn't work downtown, and the neighborhood had jobs available—good jobs...in a miniature garment and upholstery manufacturing district that had sprung up around Park Avenue, just ten minutes away....Shopping was important to the mothers who stayed home and took care of the kids, and the neighborhood had good shopping....Parks were important to mothers, too. There were no

playgrounds...but running down its length was Southern Boulevard, whose broad center mall had grass plots plenty big enough for little children to play on, and surrounded by benches so mothers could keep their eyes on them...And the southwestern border of the of the neighborhood was Crotona Park. 'Beautiful. Lovely. Playgrounds. There was a lake—Indian Lake. Nice. We used to sit there—under the trees. We raised our children in Crotona Park.'

Social scientists, who had never lived on the Lower East Side, might consider East Tremont 'crowded.' The people of East Tremont, who had, considered it open and airy, wonderfully open and airy. Thanks to Crotona Park, young adults as well as children didn't have to leave the neighborhood for recreation. 'It was a *great* park. Twenty tennis courts right *there*. Where you could walk to them. Baseball diamonds, magnificent playgrounds with baskets—three man games would be going on all weekend, you know....And kept really clean then, you know. And safe. *Sure* people walked there at night. You never worried then.'....On the avenue's one mile in the neighborhood were seven movie houses. The Bronx Zoo...was one stop away on the White Plains El, The New York Botanical Gardens was there; you could *walk* your children to these two perfect places to spend a Sunday with the kids.

The neighborhood provided the things that were important to its old people. 'The benches over on Southern Boulevard were beautiful, gorgeous....On weekends, they'd be so crowded, you couldn't sit down.' ....The "Y"—The East Tremont Young Men's Hebrew Association—listed more than four hundred 'senior citizens' on its active membership roles. 'There was no reason for an older person to be lonely in that neighborhood,' says one who lived there. 'You knew where your kids were at night, too,' says one mother. They were at the Y, which had 1,700 families as members.

....To the people of East Tremont, East Tremont was family. In its bricks were generations. (pp. 851-853)

The end of Caro's story of "one of those miles" of the 627 that Moses built over his many decades in public office is probably clear by now. The neighbourhood of East Tremont was demolished. Hundreds of people were not effectively relocated by the city and became homeless. The ramifications of this demolition project were complex and far-reaching. The devastating effects touch even the neighbourhoods of present-day New York.

I have included Caro's portrait of East Tremont because I believe that in its poignancy, it serves as both genealogy and "feminist nostalgia." Like Foucault's genealogy, Caro's description, "...does not resemble the evolution of a species and does not map the destiny of a people" (Foucault, 1977, 146). Rather, Caro's collection of images and memories, facts, and catalogue of streets and parks, serves to

> ...maintain passing events in their proper dispersion; it is to identify the accidents, the minute deviations—or conversely, the complete reversals— the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us. (Foucault, 1977, 146)

The word, the notion, and the experience of C O M M U N I T Y continue to exist and have value for us. Our grandparents' stories as well as legal documents from the New York City Commissioner's office can serve us equally in coming to understand "errors, false appraisals, and faulty calculations" that gave birth to things that continue to exist. All of these pieces are important in coming to understand; in building; in rebuilding; in creating and recreating; in repairing damage done; and in preserving what will nourish us.

Caro's portrait of East Tremont with all of the memories woven throughout is also "feminist nostalgia." It serves as the "future oriented remembering" that writers such as Adrienne Rich (see Mitchell & Reid-Walsh, 2002) refer to. When faced with the loss of a community like East Tremont, this type of future-oriented remembering can help us as we seek solutions to current problems. We do not look back so as to languish in stagnant nostalgia, but rather so as to harness the momentum that is gathered through this process of remembering. Through identifying what things of great value have been lost to us, we are better able to discover our wishes for the future.

It is important to remember that the story of East Tremont is only one among many that depict an unsustainable, non-community centred approach to highway development in North American cities. Although many hailed the automobile as a harbinger of new wealth and progress, for many families and communities the rise of the automobile has led to many damaging social and economic repercussions.

4. A Roof and Four Walls: Housing and Community Life

Imaginary Cities

When asked to imagine a safe city neighbourhood, one might think of a residential street with big brownstone houses occupied by upper middle class people of similar backgrounds. We imagine the street as quiet; perhaps every so often a young mother passes by with a stroller and enters one of the houses, closing the door behind her. Around dinner time the men and women who work regular jobs come home, and for a few minutes the street bustles with activity, and then they too disappear behind closed doors. Perhaps in the later evening two couples take a stroll together; a young man hurries down the street towards one of the busier streets full of restaurants to meet some friends or a date. The hustle and bustle of the rest of the city does not touch our safe, imagined street; the shopping, the restaurants, bars, and all other interesting and dynamic things are shunted away for fear of the messiness, disorder, and possible dangers that they could bring. The cultural monuments, museums, and parks are also extracted from the daily hustle of our imagined street, cut off and kept pure for viewing rather than for use, like good china in a glass case.

This idyllic image of a city has been part of our collective imaginations for well over a century now, planted there by a group of planners, architects, and theorists who have contributed to a body of thinking that has directly influenced urban planning over the last century, mostly, as Jacobs (1961/1992) notes, to the city's demise. For although china in a glass case may provide a lovely decoration, the case inevitably gathers dust and becomes unsightly. Perhaps a better analogy is a violin, which must be in constant use if

it is to maintain its beauty. Violins belong to that large category of things that suffer from lack of use and from extraction from their natural contexts. Cities, and more specifically, the various parts of cities such as their residential neighbourhoods, their cultural monuments, their shops, their bars and restaurants, all have the same need as a violin if they are to be healthy and safe: they must be in constant use. That is, they must be integrated into the larger context of the city (in the way a violin must join in the larger movements of the orchestra). But for the most part, this is not the way we have planned for our cities over the last century. We have instead captured the different parts of the city and cut them off from each other; we have encased them in glass.

History of Planning: For Cities?

The great problem with the group of architects, planners, and theorists whose writings, drawings, and theories have formed the basis of most or all of our legislation and city planning for decades is that they actually harboured a strong dislike for cities and for the most part sought to undermine and dissolve them (Jacobs, 1961/1992). Jacobs gives a succinct account of the history of this brand of thought. This history begins most notably with Ebenezer Howard's "Garden City", and Sir Patrick Geddes' "City in Evolution" at the turn of the nineteenth century in London (see Geddes, 1968; Howard, 1985; Beevers, 1988). Their ideas were brought to North America by way of the writings of Lewis Mumford (1985), Clarence Stein (see Guttenberg, 1999), Henry Wright (1948), and Catherine Bauer Wurster (1934, see also: Oberlander, 1995).

> Catherine Bauer has...called this group the 'Decentrists,'...for the primary result of regional planning, as they saw it, would be to decentralize great cities, thin them out, and disperse their enterprises and populations into

smaller, separated cities, or better yet, towns. (Jacobs, 1961/1992, pp. 19-20)

Jacobs reports that although the 'Decentrists' did not succeed in promoting their specific agenda, their success lay in that they "...demonstrated and popularized [a set of ideas] which are now taken for granted in orthodox planning" (p. 20). Jacobs outlines these ideas as follows:

> The street is bad as an environment for humans; houses should be turned away from it and faced inward toward sheltered greens. Frequent streets are wasteful, of advantage only to real estate speculators who measure value by the front foot. The basic unit of city design is not the street, but the block and more particularly the super-block. Commerce should be segregated from residences and greens. A neighborhood's demand for goods should be calculated 'scientifically,' and this much and no more commercial space allocated. The presence of many other people is, at best, a necessary evil, and good city planning must aim for at least an illusion of isolation and suburbany [sic] privacy....the planned community must be islanded off as a self-contained unit, that it must resist change, and that every significant detail must be controlled by the planners from the start and then stuck to. (p. 20)

Our list ends with two more influential characters in the field of city planning: Le Corbusier, a well-known Swiss architect, and Daniel Burnham, a Chicago city planner. Le Corbusier is one of the world's most famous architects of the last half-century and he has influenced city planning and architecture all over the world (see Le Corbusier, 2003). Best known for his "Radiant City," Le Corbusier has been hailed as a great and important architect and has been much imitated over the years. However, Jacobs is highly critical of his work and designs that emulate his style. She writes: "...an imitation of Le Corbusier shouts, 'Look what I made!' Like a great, visible ego it tells of someone's achievement. But as to how the city works, it tells, like the Garden City, nothing but lies" (Jacobs, 1961/1992, p. 23).

Daniel Burnham (see Moore, 1921; Shaffer, 2003) was the leading planner behind a movement called "City Beautiful." This movement aimed to sort the monuments "...out from the rest of the city" (Jacobs, 1961/1992, p. 24). These monuments, cultural centres, and museums were to be "assembled into the grandest effect thought possible, the whole being treated as a complete unit, in a separate and well-defined way" (p. 24).

Jacobs offers several examples of this type of planning, one of which is the Benjamin Franklin Parkway in Philadelphia (see *figures 2 & 3*). I lived in Philadelphia for some time with two friends, both of whom sparked my interest in the workings of cities and government policy (and one of whom would later introduce me to Jacobs' work). Even before we had read any urban theory, we would walk along the Parkway discussing the foolishness of its design. With its dozens of flags from countries around the world and the Philadelphia Museum of Art rising dramatically out of the horizon, there is no question that the Parkway is impressive to look at. However, it is entirely impractical. The sidewalks of the Parkway are cut off from the few commercial establishments that line one side of the street. It is difficult to cross the multiple lanes of fast traffic to get onto the Parkway in the first place, and then once one is walking on it, the feeling is of total isolation. The only functional part of the whole area is perhaps Swann Fountain (see *figure 1*) at the centre of the design, which in the heat of summer proves a lively gathering place for city families to cool their over-heated children, but lays neglected the rest of the year.

Figure 1: Swann Memorial Fountain, Philadelphia[3]

The way in which the design of the Parkway cuts the art museum off from the rest of the city seemed strange to me even before I had any knowledge of city planning or architecture. Rather than folding the museum into the activity and rhythm of the city, such a plan makes a trip to the museum a lonely expedition. Woe betide the family with a child who might need a toilet along the way. A casual person out for a stroll will never come upon Philadelphia's Museum of Art unintentionally. To go to the museum must be a planned event like the Parkway itself. The result of the "City Beautiful" design is that neither the Parkway nor the museum invites spontaneous and joyful use.

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[3] *Fountains of Philadelphia* (From: http://www.phila.gov/property/vp_fountains_swan.html.)

Figure 2: The Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia[4]

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[4] "Philadelphia and the Countryside" (From: http://www.gophila.com/julyfourth/BFP-B.Krist_tiny.jpg). Swann Fountain can be seen at the centre, and the Philadelphia Art Museum is seen at the distant end of the photo.

Figure 3: The Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia[5]

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[5] "Spring City" (From: http://www.springcity.com/WhatIsNew/BenFranklinParkway.gif)

Not only monuments and museums have been cut off from the natural daily patterns of city life. Urban renewal programs and suburban development (often drawing inspiration from the City Beautiful movement) have shared one very important feature: both use zoning laws to distinguish between residential and commercial spaces. In the last century, for the first time in human history, planners decided that people should neither live where they work nor work where they live. The notion of the home as a comfortable, serene, and protected (if artificial) oasis kept safely from any of what was seen as the disorder of daily life became a popular idea championed by city planners. Architects and community advocates, Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk (1994, p. xx) write:

> The separation of dwelling from work place in the course of the last century was the great achievement of the nascent planning profession and remains institutionalized in zoning ordinances. The suburbs and cities of today *continue to separate the naturally integrated human activities* of dwelling, working, shopping, schooling, worshiping, and recreating. The hardship caused by this separation has been mitigated by widespread automobile ownership and use, which in turn has increased the demand for vehicular mobility. *The priority given to road building at the expense of other civic programs during the last four decades has brought our country to the multiple crises of environmental degradation, economic bankruptcy [especially for city governments], and social disintegration.* (All emphasis added)

The planners and architects mentioned above, along with a number of others, have been hailed as revolutionaries and heroes in their fields, and hundreds of pages have been written by and about them. If you have lived in North America, you have, whether you know it or not, absorbed many of the ideas from people like the Decentrists and Le Corbusier. Their theories are so pervasive and ingrained in our collective consciousness that it is nearly impossible to avoid them. Their distaste for high density, heterogeneous,

urban living has even permeated the idea of "the American dream," which at some point in the last century, has incorporated into its narrative the idea leaving the city and becoming the proud owner of a suburban home.

I have already pointed to the importance of collective memory and collective consciousness for healthy communities. It is vital for the health of communities and families to map their own genealogy through a process of gathering and documentation (see Friedman, 2005; Strong-Wilson & Ellis, submitted). This genealogical work must include stories, images, and objects, as well as history, accidents, and omissions. Through this genealogical process we can develop an awareness of the ideas that have had a direct impact on the physical landscape in which we live, and especially those that have affected the imagined landscape in which we dream. The group of planners mentioned above has affected both. Our ideas and fantasies about house, home, safety, and material success have all been influenced by their ideas and their work. It therefore becomes important to explore their ideas and possible alternatives to their ideas so that we may choose for ourselves a perspective that seems balanced.

Health, Safety, and Connectedness

Before looking at the specific changes in housing policies that have affected the decline in functional community life over the last half-century, we must understand the factors that do actually contribute to safety and functionality in a community. If the fact that a neighbourhood is homogeneous, upper-class, and "suburbany" does not guarantee that it is safe and functional, what does? Jacobs (1961/1992) points to many factors, some small details, some large-scale public policy issues. Among others, these factors include

wide and well-used sidewalks; a wide array of transportation choices (such as public transit, safe bicycle routes, and safe and pleasant walking routes); the existence of informal public gathering places; intermingled commercial and residential spaces; diversified use of space; heterogeneous users of space (not only diverse in terms of ethnicity and social class, but also in terms of schedules, daily habits and lifestyles); a limited number of general use parks (i.e. parks without a specific activity associated with them such as swimming pools or skating rinks) or parks targeted for the use of one specific group (such as a playground). There is one thing that all of these factors have in common: all contribute to increased human contact.

Life Attracts Life

The houses in [one] project [in Cincinnati] front on pedestrian precincts of lawns and sidewalks, and they back up on service alleys for...deliveries. All the casual coming and going occurs between the houses and the alleys and therefore, functionally, the backs of the houses have become the fronts and vice versa. Of course the alleys are where all the children are too. *Life attracts life.* (Jacobs, 1961/1992, p. 348 italics added)

Life attracts life, and life creates safety. When there is a variety of people making constant use of streets and sidewalks, when there are "eyes in the windows" (Jacobs, 1961/1992), when the balance is struck between the need for privacy and the need for varying levels of human contact, then a safe and healthy environment is fostered (see *shard 2*). Because regular human contact contributes to the safety and success of a neighbourhood or region, it has been named "social capital." The most comprehensive (and indeed, popular) discussion of the need for and function of social capital since Jacobs is in Robert D. Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (2000). Putnam (p. 308) identifies Jacobs as "one of the inventors" of the term and compiles information from numerous studies

and surveys, identifying social capital as the most important factor (over other factors like poverty, education level, income level, family structure, ethnicity, homogeneity, or urban vs. suburban setting) in determining the general health and safety of a given neighbourhood.

It is important to understand that the application of the concept of social capital does not rely upon a notion of a utopic neighbourhood where all residents are intimate friends with one another. In fact, both Putnam and Jacobs make regular note of the fact that strangers are as important as friends and acquaintances in contributing to a healthy neighbourhood. Social capital is created as a result of all types of human interactions when these interactions occur with some sort of regular frequency. Such interactions may take place within formal or informal structures, and range in intimacy. For example, they may include regular encounters between friends, formal meetings through organizations like book or hobby clubs, casual greetings amongst neighbours, familiarity with local business people, as well as co-existence with strangers. In this context, all types of relationship are important as they help to cultivate social capital. The potential for the development of social capital is created in the regular and casual nature of interactions that occur when people move through the world on foot, on bicycle, or via public transit. If cars are the main form of transportation in a community, casual and unplanned contact between people is significantly reduced.

Jacobs (1961/1992, p. 30) notes that cities are "...by definition full of strangers." She continues, "the bedrock attribute of a successful city district is that a person must feel personally safe and secure among all these strangers" (p. 30). She points out that, "it does

not take many incidents of violence on a city street...to make people fear the streets. And if they fear them, they use them less, which makes the streets still more unsafe" (p. 30).

> The first thing to understand is that the public peace—the sidewalk and street peace—of cities is not kept primarily by the police, necessary as police are. It is kept primarily by an intricate, almost unconscious, network of voluntary controls and standards among the people themselves. In some city areas—older public housing projects and streets with very high population turnover are often conspicuous examples—the keeping of public sidewalk law and order is left almost entirely to the police and special guards. Such places are jungles. No amount of police can enforce civilization where the normal, casual enforcement of it has broken down. (pp.31-32)

Life attracts life. Without a certain amount of stability in a neighbourhood, a mix of residential and commercial buildings that draws regular circulation of human traffic, and heterogeneity in terms of ethnicity, social class, age, and family structure, streets will decline and be unable to attract the life that is necessary to maintain civility and safety. It is unfortunate that many public policy measures in North America over the last century have failed to put in place initiatives that foster the development of healthy streets and neighbourhoods.

Housing and Governments: Some History

•   "Although housing involves the largest capital costs of any human necessity, for the first three centuries of urban settlement in North America the provision of shelter was not regarded as an appropriate responsibility for government..." (Jackson, 1985, p. 191). After the Great Depression, however, government involvement in housing became a necessity. In the United States, President Roosevelt created the Home Owner's Loan Corporation (HOLC) in 1933.

> The HOLC is important to history because it introduced, perfected, and proved into practice the feasibility of the long-term, self-amortizing mortgage with uniform payments spread over the life of the debt...Prior to this only families that could afford to buy owned homes outright and there was a stigma attached to the mortgage. (p. 196)

In order to grant mortgages at "appropriate" rates, the HOLC needed a system to appraise properties and neighbourhoods. Far from being value-free, the system they created "...undervalued neighborhoods that were dense, mixed, or aging" (p. 197). The system was as follows:

> Four categories of quality — imaginatively entitled First, Second, Third, and Fourth, with corresponding code letters of A, B, C, and D and colors of green, blue, yellow and red — were established. The First grade (also A and green) areas were described as new, homogeneous, and 'in demand as residential locations in good times and bad'. Homogenous meant 'American business and professional men'. Jewish neighborhoods, or even those with an 'infiltration of Jews' could not be considered 'best' any more than they could be considered 'American'. The Second security grade (blue) had 'reached their peak' but were expected to remain stable for many years. The Third grade (yellow or C) neighborhoods were usually described as 'definitely declining,' while Fourth grade (red) were described as areas 'in which the things taking place in C areas had already happened'....As was the case in every city, and Afro-American presence was a source of concern to the HOLC....even those neighborhoods with small proportions of black inhabitants were usually rated Fourth grade or 'hazardous.' (pp. 197-201)

Although it was the organization responsible for drafting these racist and classist maps, the HOLC actually turned out to be "...impartial in their distribution of loans, making the majority of their loans in C and D neighborhoods" (p. 202). Instead, "the damage caused by the HOLC came not through its own actions, but through the influence of its appraisal system on the financial decisions of other institutions...who were obviously privy to...the government's Residential Security Maps" (p. 203).

The HOLC appraisers were, like the group of planners and architects discussed above, generally abhorrent of cities, and all the things that not only are attractive to city lovers, but that make cities healthy, habitable places.

> Although HOLC appraisers marked down [older, residential city] neighborhoods because of true slum conditions, their negative attitudes toward city living in general also affected their judgments. The evaluation of a white, working-class neighborhood near St. Louis's Fairgrounds Park was typical. According to the description, 'lots are small, houses are only slightly set back from the sidewalks, and there is a general appearance of congestion.' Although a city lover might have found this collection of cottages and abundant shade trees rather charming, the HOLC thought otherwise: 'Age of properties, general mixture of type, proximity to industrial section on the northeast, and much less desirable areas to the south make this a good fourth grade area.' (Jackson, 1985, p. 201)

As the modern mortgage became the norm, allowing more and more families to own their own home, and more and more middle and upper class families to leave cities for the new developing suburbs, cities were left to fend for themselves. Suddenly bereft of large percentages of their more highly educated and financially stable citizens, and cordoned off into colour-coded sections (colour-coded not only in terms of the green, blue, yellow, and red rating system, but along racial colour lines as well), cities were then also faced with urban renewal programs that segregated commercial and residential zones. This period of "urban renewal" also saw the first developments of large-scale, public housing projects.

The United States government designed public housing projects that flew in the face of common sense regarding safety, equity, or the workings of cities. These projects were large in size (even the smallest contained hundreds of units), and were cheaply and poorly designed with long, dark corridors that contributed to a sense of alienation. Public housing projects were often built in areas of the city that were physically cut off from

other neighbourhoods by highways, train tracks, or industrial sites. In addition, the large scale of most projects made it impossible for existing communities to absorb and integrate such a high concentration of poverty. Due to new zoning laws as a result of urban renewal programs, housing projects were also often isolated from commercial zones. This was problematic for two reasons. This meant, first, a lack of proximal employment opportunities, and second, that anyone who did not live in the projects had no reason to go near them.

These housing projects were designed in such a way that there was very little possibility for the growth of social capital, integration into wider society, or hope of finding viable, local employment opportunities. The windows, far from having "eyes," were blind. Violence and lawlessness began to overrun these projects, not (as many choose to believe) because the inhabitants were mostly poor and African American, but rather as a predictable outcome of such major design flaws. The end result was that the HUD's "security maps" appeared to have been proven right, and cities were successfully undermined, providing a further boon to developers in the new suburbs.

One of the most notorious such housing projects was Chicago's Cabrini Green (see *figures 4 & 5*). At its peak it housed some 15,000 people. It was a terribly dangerous place, feared by residents and non-residents alike. In the late 1990's the Chicago city government undertook a huge demolition and reconstruction project in an attempt to salvage the projects (for a fuller description of Cabrini Green's history see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cabrini_Green or http://www.voicesofcabrini.com).

Figure 4: A Cabrini Green building. This design was known as the "whites" due to the colour of the bricks. Dedicated in 1962, there were 8 of these buildings.[6]

Figure 5: One of the [Cabrini] "reds." These buildings (15 in all) were completed in 1958.[7]

[6] Bezalel, R. & Ferrera, A. (1999)

[7] Bezalel, R. & Ferrera, A. (1999)

Today the HUD is still an active department within the United States government. The city of New Orleans is also notorious for its slums and large-scale housing projects. Post Hurricane Katrina, the HUD is preparing to offer millions of dollars to developing firms and a carte blanche to demolish much of the existing public housing in the poorer New Orleans wards. There are two problems with this plan: first, many of these housing projects are among the buildings that sustained the least structural damage during the hurricane (probably due to their large size), and therefore do not need to be demolished. The second problem is that it was the HUD that funded these unwieldy projects in the first place. The agency responsible for the untenable design that led to New Orleans' current slum conditions now will get credit for tearing them down.

The responsibility for slum conditions often is subtly (and not so subtly) placed on the residents who are forced to live in such conditions, without any discussion of the wider historical context of housing policies, urban renewal programs, and suburban development that has contributed to the existence of ghettos in American cities today. When engaging in a discussion about communities and community education, it seems important to locate that discussion within an overall understanding of their socio-historical and socio-economic context. Part of this examination must include a genealogical understanding of the events that have contributed to current conditions related to racial and class segregation, suburban and urban development, and residential and commercial development. This context is important for many reasons, not least of which is that the community school model, family centres, and other "community based"

programs have often emerged as a response to the needs of these poor, ghettoized city neighbourhoods.

Shard 2

"Eyes in the Windows"

I lived for a time on a small cobblestone alley that was a cul-de-sac. Alleys can often feel dangerous because they are narrow and isolated, and tend not have much human or automobile traffic on them. The part of the alley I lived on was near the dead-end, which led to a parking lot that was just across from a metro stop. The other end of the alley led to a busy shopping street with plenty of small markets, local bars, and cafés. Because my block was sandwiched between these two destinations, there was a constant flow of human traffic, making the alley a lively place. Living on my block were several young families with children who played in the alley, an older woman who went for short walks several times a day, and a young couple who also went for walks several times a day with their new puppy. My street was therefore often busy with both strangers and residents.

One afternoon I was preparing to go out for groceries when I heard the sound of glass breaking. I quickly opened the door and saw two young teenage boys breaking bottles that had been put out in the municipal recycling bins. Within minutes, other doors and windows opened as my neighbours came to see what was happening. I didn't know the names of any of the neighbours who came out into the street that day, but I recognized many of them and felt a strong sense of support. This gave me the courage to ask the boys what they were doing. They didn't answer me. I told them that they would have to clean up the mess they made. A moment later someone walked up behind me with a broom and dustpan and handed them to one of the boys. Then we all stood there and silently watched while they swept up the glass. The owner of the broom collected it, and told them that this was never to happen again. We all stood and watched them until they left the alley and then, one by one, people disappeared into their houses. No friendships were formed that day. I didn't learn anyone's name. But it was clear that there were indeed "eyes in the windows" on my street and that, if anyone were ever in danger, there would be people ready and willing to help.

5. La Ville de Montréal: Maisons, le Métro, and Maintaining the Metropolis

Discovering the "Inner City"

The city of Montreal offers an interesting study of the direct effects that policy choices can have on the health of communities. Although Montreal has its own share of difficulties, it tends not to suffer from many of the serious problems that plague many American cities, especially problems like severe blight and ghettoization. With a number of specific public policies, one choice was made for American cities while the opposite choice was taken for Montreal. On these specific points therefore, it is useful to compare the results. What follows is not intended to offer an exhaustive description of Montreal but rather, is a relatively simplified comparison examining a number of specific policy decisions and their resulting effects.

When I first moved to Montreal, I lived in a neighbourhood called Saint-Henri and heard quickly that this was a "bad" neighbourhood, a "dangerous" neighbourhood. At first, full of apprehension, I began to explore Saint-Henri and found, to my delight, a busy shopping district with several 24 hour diners, a stretch of antique and junk shops, dozens of tiny playgrounds scattered along street corners, a winding bicycle path well protected from traffic (see *figure 6*), a well-kept community garden, and best of all, one of the city's largest farmer's markets, open and bustling everyday (see *figure 7*). As I wandered I saw people of every colour and background, and heard not only French and English, but many other languages spoken as well. The Lionel-Groux metro station (one of the metro system's hubs), the 24 hour diners, and several small local bars guaranteed that there was always a steady flow of human traffic, and so I never felt isolated, even late at night.

Figure 6: Bicycle path (Saint-Henri, Montreal)[8]

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[8] This bicycle path begins at the Lionel-Groulx Metro station and winds through the neigbourhood of Saint-Henri. (Photo by the Author)

Figure 7: Atwater Market (Saint-Henri, Montreal)[9]

Years later while I was living in Philadelphia, a friend and I decided to take the subway as far north as we could and make our way back downtown on foot through North Philadelphia. North Philadelphia is a neighbourhood notorious for poverty, violence, and failing schools (a typical American "inner city" district). What we saw that day was shocking. I had just returned from a trip to Burma, and the "Third World" conditions in the capital city of Rangoon did not compare to what we saw in North Philadelphia. Rangoon was lively and energetic. People greeted each other as they passed and even on streets with crumbling buildings, there were crowds of people, eating and drinking together. North Philadelphia was desolate. I had never felt afraid as a young

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[9] Photo by the Author

woman alone in Montreal's Saint-Henri, nor did I feel threatened alone in Rangoon, but in North Philadelphia the streets and sidewalks were eerily empty and abandoned even on a sunny afternoon (see *figures 8 & 9*).

Because devastated neighbourhoods like North Philadelphia can be found in most American cities, poverty tends to be equated with desolation and danger in the American imagination. However, as I found in Montreal's Saint-Henri, poorer urban districts can be vibrant, healthy communities. The health of an urban community is not (as many people believe) dependent on the level of affluence or ethnic background of its members, but rather on the public policies that dictate (among other things) possibilities for heterogeneity, local commerce, public spaces, and a range of housing options.

Figure 8: The neighbourhood of Kensington, North Philadelphia[10]

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[10] "Somerset and Boulnot Streets"

Figure 9: Kensington, North Philadephia[11]

Policy Choices and the Health of Montreal

The Montreal neighbourhoods that are considered the poorest and the most disadvantaged are often quite healthy communities, unlike American urban ghettos. And although they do face challenges, they remain relatively safe, offer a range of social services, have a mix of commercial and residential zones, have well-maintained and well-used public spaces, and are ethnically, culturally, and linguistically mixed.

Currently I work in an elementary school in Verdun, another of Montreal's poorer neighbourhoods. My school is rated a 9 on a Ministry rating scale of 1-10, identifying it as highly "disadvantaged." Because of this rating, we receive extra money from a special Ministry program called "Supporting Montreal Schools". However, if an American tourist accidentally came upon Verdun's main street, Bannatyne Avenue, they would likely be quite unaware that they had wandered into a "bad" neighbourhood. They would

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[11] Photo: Rachel Mackow. I didn't take either of these photographs of North Philadelphia. My friend and I didn't bring a camera the day we went walking there. But these images correspond with my memories of empty dirt lots and abandoned streets.

see well-kept triplexes, a string of shops and restaurants, several banks, dentists, community centres, daycares, a scattering of small clean parks, a large church, and a public library. The children in my school come from mixed racial backgrounds; the most defining cultural feature of the community is that most people are Anglophone, or English speaking, rather than Francophone, or French speaking.

So, how is it that a neighbourhood in Montreal that rates at the bottom of the "disadvantaged" scale could pass for a privileged neighbourhood in an American city? How is it that the challenged neighbourhoods in Montreal are indeed poor, but not blighted, dangerous, filthy, or abandoned? How is it that

> despite the presence of a significant low-income population and the social divisions fragmenting the metropolitan area...Montreal can still be described as a socially sustainable city[?] How can we explain this paradox? (Séguin & Germain, 2000, p. 51)

Many of the housing and urban policy trends in Canada, and specifically Quebec, have been in direct contrast to U.S. policies, and have produced directly contrasting results. The city of Montreal, relative to its southern counterparts, has been well preserved through sound municipal, provincial, and federal policies.

> Montreal's social sustainability owes a great deal to both federal and provincial aspacial policies, that have provided for a decent level of redistribution of social wealth within both the province and the country. This redistribution process has taken different forms: financial assistance to the poor, the financing of health and education services, and various infrastructure investments necessary for the maintenance and improvement of older, urban residential areas. The local government has also played a smaller, but nonetheless important, role in the redistribution process through the establishment of policies related to housing and the general quality of life, and through the planning and development of a public transport system that is significantly more effective than those of many other metropolitan areas in North America. (p. 51)

The choices concerning housing and other related policies that Montreal has made over the last several decades have produced visible results. Of course, this city experiences poverty and a number of related challenges. However, this is not a city diseased with the cancerous blight that plagues the large American metropolis; this is not a city with segregated schools,[12] this is not a city with "neighbourhoods" that look like abandoned lots.

It must be acknowledged that many related factors have contributed to the relative health of Montreal compared with American cities. The American history of racial tensions, slavery, and a more laissez-faire political climate is in contrast to that of Quebec, and has no doubt contributed significantly to differences in the nature of poverty in cities. Quebec has had its own share of troubled history surrounding poverty and cultural tensions between French and English Canadians. However, over the last several decades, compared to American cities, Quebec has implemented much more successful policies in its largest metropolis that have helped to contribute to the health and well-being of community life.

The Significance of Old Buildings

One of the areas where policy approaches differ between Montreal and American cities is related to the treatment of aged buildings, which are important for functional communities. Jacobs (1961/1992, pp. 187-188) writes:

> Cities need old buildings so badly it is probably impossible for vigorous
> streets and districts to grow without them....If a city area has only new
> buildings, the enterprises that can exist there are automatically limited to

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[12] Many public schools in American cities in the 2002-2003 school year were almost entirely racially segregated. (For full details on percentages see Kozol, 2005, p. 41).

those that can support the high costs of new construction....Chain stores, chain restaurants and banks go into new construction. But neighborhood bars, foreign restaurants and pawn shops go into older buildings....Well-subsidized opera and art museums often go into new buildings. But the unformalized feeders of the arts — studios, galleries, stores for musical instruments and art supplies...go into old buildings. Perhaps more significant, *hundreds of ordinary enterprises, necessary to the safety and public life of neighbourhoods, and appreciated for their convenience and personal quality, can make out successfully in old buildings, but are inexorably slain by the overhead of new construction* (italics added).

The city of Montreal has invested in preserving and maintaining older buildings, both residential and commercial. In the mid 1970s, Montreal took advantage of several federal and provincial programs geared to improve older residential areas by restoring both renter and owner-occupied buildings. In the late 1980s, the Societé d'Habitation du Québec (SHQ) (Quebec Housing Association) supported district renovation programs and community groups played an important role by making ensuring that these funds be invested in improvement and rehabilitation of residential areas for the benefit of the poor (Séguin & Germain, 2000, p. 56). In the 1990s, Montreal identified residential buildings that were experiencing social or physical deterioration and required that they be returned to proper management and care. Interventionist policies and programs like these have prevented the decay of residential areas and especially of rental buildings, the deterioration of which would have had a negative impact on surrounding property values and "harmed the social fabric" (p. 57). These provincial and federal level initiatives protected older buildings and, by extension, laid the groundwork for the continued growth of healthy communities.

In contrast, the U.S. approach to old and deteriorating buildings was to demolish them as part of "slum clearance" programs whereby new public housing projects were funded in exchange for the demolition of older buildings. The definition of "slum" was

left open to a wide interpretation, and often included neighbourhoods on the basis that they contained older buildings as well as poor (or even not so poor) black, Jewish, Hispanic, or other immigrant populations. In other words, many healthy, functional communities were labeled "slums," and were destroyed as a result of these programs. Furthermore, the legislation dictated that new housing could not be constructed unless an equal number of "slums" were cleared. Jackson (1985, p. 226) quotes an exchange between two government officials regarding this legislation:

> Congressman Kunkel (Pennsylvania): 'Under this program, no area in which there is no substandard housing would be eligible for any public housing. Is that correct?'

> Commissioner Egan: 'That is correct. If there were no slums in that locality, regardless of how acute the housing shortage was, and if we knew we could not get the equivalent elimination required by the act, we could not go in there [to build public housing units].'

The problems with this approach were manifold. First, this meant that public housing was often not constructed where the need was greatest or where the land was cheapest (such as in the suburbs), but rather where there were already problems with deteriorating buildings. This exacerbated existing poverty trends and patterns of racial and class segregation. The approach also meant that the fate of new and needed construction was tied to the demolition of existing structures. In order to build homes for one group of families, another group would necessarily be displaced, creating a vicious cycle. Jackson (1985, p. 227):

> The destruction of deteriorating buildings to make room for public housing often created problems in adjacent neighborhoods. An excellent example of this phenomenon can be found in Brooklyn. When blocks of slums in the Brownsville district were cleared to make room for public housing in the 1950s, thousands of displaced families moved into the neighboring district of East New York, which at that time was a vibrant, predominantly white, middle-class area with a stable economy. The

sudden influx of large, lower-income black and Hispanic families from Brownsville strained the physical and social services of the community. A mass exodus of the white population began. Within six years, a healthy community became one of the most decayed and dangerous neighborhods in the United States. *If the government had invested its funds in maintenance programs for the older housing of the inner city, the poor might have inherited stable neighborhoods, and the cities might have avoided the sorry spectacle of abandoned areas.* (all italics added)

Jackson's hypothesis that the investment in older buildings might allow for the poor to inherit stable neighbourhoods, and for cities to have avoided blight conditions is supported in the example of Montreal.

Distribution of Wealth and Poverty

I have already discussed some of the problems associated with public housing in American cities, namely their size and isolation. We have just seen how a sudden and large influx of poverty can destabilize and quickly destroy even the most stable neighbourhood. Again, over the last fifty years the province of Quebec has made different public housing policy choices from its southern neighbour, and again, these different choices have yielded very different results.

Public housing units in Montreal, called "habitations à loyer modique" (HLMs) (rent-subsidized housing) which accommodate "very poor families who rely almost exclusively on social welfare programs or old age pensions" have been dispersed throughout the municipality as "concentrating these households in certain areas would have greatly impoverished these districts" (Séguin & Germain, 2000, p. 58). The city therefore developed small projects of 6-40 units each that were dispersed to fit into the existing social fabric (see *figure 10*).

Figure 10: Les *habitations Plaza Laurier II* was built 1994 and contains 28 units for families[13]

Montreal also developed some larger projects of 100-150 units. Although these projects were still many times smaller than the average American public housing projects, they often received criticism because these larger buildings created a concentration of 400-500 very poor people, which made social integration difficult to achieve (Séguin & Germain, 2000). With at least one of these larger projects, *Les habitations Lenoir Saint-Henri* (see *figure 11*), Montreal has recently attempted to address this problem of such a concentration of poverty. In 1997 Montreal's Municipal Housing Office (*Office Municipal d'Habitations de Montréal* or OMHM) agreed to provide other housing options in the neighbourhood of Saint-Henri for *Lenoir Saint-Henri* residents in order to "encourage [their] social integration" ("*Les territories,*" n.d. translated from French by the author).

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[13] "*Les territoires de location*" (n.d.). Translated from French by the author.

Figure 11: Les *habitations Lenoir Saint-Henri*, built in 1972, contains units for 150 families[14]

The "Plex"

The "plex system" in Montreal has also been effective in maintaining social diversity and a balance between stability and mobility. By encouraging the development of duplex and triplex row houses (see *figure 12*) rather than block apartment buildings, the city of Montreal has contributed to the protection of neighbourhoods. Large apartment buildings are often owned by a single landlord who lives elsewhere. Triplexes and duplexes, on the other hand, are often owner-inhabited, with renters occupying the remaining floors. When renters and owners are mixed, a neighbourhood's economic diversity is high. The "plex system" also promotes stability and safety because owners who live in a community have a vested interest in protecting and maintaining it (See Friedman, 2005.)

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[14] *"Les territoires de location"* (n.d.). Translated from French by the author.

Figure 12: An example of the "plex system," Montreal[15]

Maintaining the Inner City

"In contrast to the general North American trend of economic activities moving away from the city centre to the suburbs, Montreal's downtown area has preserved its status as the city's commercial and entertainment nucleus" (Séguin & Germain, 2000, p. 56). Montreal's success in maintaining this nucleus is due to several factors, perhaps the most important of which is the construction of the metro system (see *figures 11 & 12*) in the 1960s with its hub in the downtown core (p. 56). "Moreover, the quality of the public transport system gives lower income populations better access to the range of employment available throughout the island of Montreal and surrounding municipalities" (p. 56).

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[15] Photo by the author

Figure 11: Montreal's Mont-Royal Metro Station[16]

Figure 12: Montreal's Mont-Royal Metro Station[17]

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[16] The Mont-Royal station is in the heart of Montreal's vibrant neighbourhood known as the Plateau. Many factors contribute to constant activity and lively crowds outside this station such as: an outdoor market selling produce and plants in summer and maple products in winter, stops for several bus lines, and an adjoining public square with plenty of spaces to sit. (Photo by the author.)

Turning to American urban policy, we find that again many policy choices are in exact opposition to Montreal's, and these different choices yield clearly different results. In the United States, taxation and zoning policies not only allowed, but encouraged, decentralisation of commercial activity from cities to suburbs, again undermining the city's economy, social diversity, and solvency (Jackson, 1985). Montreal instead developed housing policies that had the main objective of either retaining or bringing back the middle class population to the central city (Séguin & Germain, 2000). Before 1950, the average American city had more than two thirds of area jobs in the city centre. By the 1970s, that figure had fallen to less than one quarter (Jackson, 1985). This shift from city centre to suburbs brings us back to dependence upon the automobile and the effects of this dependence on functional communities. While since the Second World War "...major Canadian urban areas have succeeded in protecting the density and vibrancy of their central cities" (Séguin & Germain, 2000, p. 58), "the American people have experienced a transformation of the man-made environment around them" (Jackson, 1985, p. 269). Jackson (p. 270) continues, bringing Lewis Mumford's (1961) views into the discussion:

> Commercial, residential, and industrial structures have been redesigned to fit the needs of the motorist rather than the pedestrian. Garish signs, large parking lots, one-way streets, drive-in windows, and throw-away fast-food buildings—all associated with the world of suburbia—have replaced the slower-paced, neighborhood-oriented institutions of an earlier generation. Some observers of the automobile revolution have argued that the car has created a new and better urban environment and that the change in spatial scale, based upon swift transportation, has formed a new kind of organic entity, speeding up personal communication and rendering obsolete older urban settings. Lewis Mumford...has emphatically disagreed. His prize-winning book, *The City in History,* was a celebration of the medieval

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[17] Photo by the author

community and an excoriation of 'the formless urban exudation' that he saw American cities becoming. He noted that the automobile megalopolis was not a final stage in city development, but an anticity, which 'annihilates the city whenever it collides with it'.

Montreal and other Canadian cities face their own set of challenges. In the last year, for example, Toronto has experienced a wave of gun-related violence, prompting a great deal of discussion in the news regarding the healthy assimilation of immigrant populations across the country. The problem of the "automobile megalopolis" is certainly as problematic in Canadian cities as in their American counterparts. However, Canadian cities are generally free from the devastated ghettos that plague American cities. Overall, Canadian cities are safer places with a healthier community life and these differences, far from being mysterious, can be traced to the different policy choices that have been made over the last several decades (see *shard 3*).

Shard 3

An Invisible Web of Support

One night, I was discussing the concepts of social capital and functional communities with two close friends, who are Montrealers. They shared the following two stories. One friend described a winter night in Montreal after the first big snowfall of the year. She was alone in her car trying (unsuccessfully) to free herself from a snow bank. After several minutes of spinning her tires, a man appeared with chains and shovels and offered his assistance. She thanked him and they began to work together to free the car. A few minutes later, another man passed and asked (in French) if they would like more help. Soon after that, one of her roommates came to help out as well. My friend suddenly found her lonely and frustrating experience transformed into a cheerful neighbourhood gathering. Every one was sharing stories (in two languages) of other times they had been stuck in the snow and laughing together. Working together they quickly freed the car, and everyone went their separate ways. Both the men who stopped to help turned out to be my friend's neighbours. She told me that she had never noticed them before that night and has never seen them since. But, she explained, just in knowing that they live nearby, she has felt conscious of an invisible web of support that is available to her should she need it as she moves among the strangers that share space in her neighbourhood.

Meeting Around a Table

My other friend, who had joined in our discussion, shared this story. She and her partner had just moved into a new apartment in Montreal. Their new street had traditionally been part of a Portuguese neighbourhood, but it was increasingly populated with young artists and students, creating an eclectic mix among residents. So this young lesbian couple found themselves surrounded by older Portuguese couples in the neighbouring triplexes. She told me that, at first, she and her partner were concerned about the treatment they might receive from their more traditional neighbours. On the first day that they moved in, my friend's partner took their kitchen table that needed sanding onto the sidewalk. Within a few minutes, an older Portuguese man appeared in a nearby doorway. He said that he had some better sandpaper that she should use. A few

minutes after that another older Portuguese man appeared with an electric sander, and soon another man had come with a "better" electric sander. My friend told me that 10 minutes later, when she looked down from her balcony to see how the work was going, she could barely see her partner because she was so surrounded by a large group of older men, all of them enthusiastically trying to help with the sanding project. She joined the group on the sidewalk and, she told me, friendships were formed that day that lasted for years. "They were always willing to help us. We knew all their names. We knew their dogs' names. We even knew their dead dogs' names! They used to show us pictures of their dead dogs. It was a wonderful neighbourhood. We always felt safe there."

6. Part I: Concluding Remarks

Two Neighbourhoods and Social Capital

An urban environment (especially a fairly healthy, well-preserved city such as Montreal) ultimately will always offer something that the suburb, despite all of its promise, does not. In cities, people are in regular contact with one another. Cities have an abundance of public property where people can gather (unlike suburbs, where sometimes even the parks are sometimes privately owned). Through this proximity, sharing of space, and human contact (however casual it may be), community is nourished, families are supported, and schools are enabled to function well.

As we have seen, Putnam (2000) establishes the significant positive effects of social capital in all aspects of a human life. He discusses a wide variety of studies that indicate that connection to a social network is in many cases *the most important factor* (weighing more heavily than factors like poverty, level of education, minority status, or poor health habits) in determining the welfare of children, safety in neighbourhoods, financial success, physical health, and general happiness and well-being.

Eric Klinenberg's (2002) *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago* highlights again the importance of social capital. Klinenberg challenged the research findings of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) following the devastating 1997 heat wave in Chicago that claimed over 700 lives. The CDC researchers paired individuals (survivors and non-survivors), and concluded that the survivors were still alive because they had done a better job keeping cool (a conclusion that seems rather obvious, and does little to shed any light on the *reasons* some were able to keep cool,

while others were not) (Jacobs, 2004). Klinenberg (2002) instead paired two communities, North and South Lawndale, which had experienced significantly different death rates during the heat wave. The differences Klinenberg found suggest the importance of social capital. Jacobs (2004, pp. 83-84) summarizes Klinenberg's findings:

> In North Lawndale, where the death rate was so high, elderly people were not accustomed to walking in their district because there was almost nothing for them to walk to. It was...almost devoid of stores and other gathering places. Old people were thus unacquainted with shopkeepers who could welcome them into air-conditioned space. They were afraid, too, to leave their apartments, for fear these would be burglarized. For the same reason, they feared strangers who came to check on them. *In the crisis they were behaving as they always did in this place with no functioning community....*
>
> [In] South Lawndale....the elderly were accustomed to walking outside. There were plenty of places for them to go on the district's bustling, crowded streets. They knew shopkeepers and had no hesitation about hanging around in their air-conditioned spaces, where they also had access to water. They felt secure about leaving their apartments, and they trusted those who came to check on them, some of whom they knew as acquaintances. *In the crisis they were behaving much as they always did in this place with a lively, functioning community.* (italics added)

It is interesting to note that what saved the elderly of North Lawndale was not necessarily intimate connections and friendships, but rather their *general habit* of engaging with other people, and having regular contact with others, even strangers. Certainly, friendships and more intimate relationships make up one facet of a social network, but with the definition of community I am working with in this thesis, a social network is a broad concept. In order for a community to support its members in both times of crisis and typical daily life there must be a *general climate* of human interaction with strangers as well as with friends and acquaintances.

In a post-modern, "detraditionalized" society that prioritizes individual over collective interests, maintaining an engaged and healthy social network is already a

challenge. But when we live in such a way that we remove even the basic experience of crossing each other's paths (either in environments where there is total dependence on the car, or in an urban neighbourhood that has been unsupported by policy-makers), the chances for healthy, functioning communities to thrive are slim to none. A lifestyle where a wide variety of people do not have the chance to experience casual daily contact with one another is a very poor diet indeed for a healthy community.

Erosion of Functional Community and the Role of Schools

As a result of the erosion of functional communities, families have become more isolated and are experiencing more stress. This has had a direct impact on schools. Children are coming to school with unmet needs that in the past were met through extended family and other relationships within the community. This places the burden on teachers and other educators[18] to try to meet those needs. However, it is difficult to do so within the structure of a traditional school system that focuses almost entirely on academics. Therefore, schools must adapt to meet the changing needs of students and families. How might this be accomplished?

Within the definition I am using for the purposes of this thesis, schools are only one piece of a functional community. However, many of the factors that have been discussed so far, which contribute to a functional community, can be applied to a school setting. Schools need "eyes in the windows" in the same way that neighbourhoods do.

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[18] I do not wish to limit this discussion to the role of classroom teachers. I use the term *educator* here very broadly, including (but not limited to) any and all staff members who work within a school, administrators working within school boards, educational policy makers working in government, those working in adult education and community centres, and professors working in education departments in universities. In short, anyone whose work is related to, or involved with, learning, teaching, or schools is referred to and called upon with the use of the term *educator* in this thesis.

They need people who are invested in keeping them clean and safe. They need a balance of stability and change. They need a culture of human interaction and many different levels and types of relationships. They need spaces that allow for the development of social capital among their various stakeholders, including students and teachers, parents and other family members, administrators, and community members.

Because of the central role they play in the lives of families, schools are a logical place to begin working to rebuild strong connections and relationships within a community. Two models will be introduced here that offer concrete possibilities for meeting the needs of families, communities, and educators. Let us move now to a more in depth exploration of the role that schools might play in creating change, and reviving functional community life in North America.

PART II: COMMUNITY, EDUCATION, AND SCHOOLS

Genealogy as a Map: Taking Action

The result of the type of genealogical exploration we have engaged in so far is neither a list nor a timeline; it is not an answer. Genealogical work is never finished and its result is a changing collection of ideas, questions, answers, and stories that shape the way we see the world. Once the collection process has begun, it continues unfolding according to its own intelligence, and it will affect which questions we ask and which answers we are willing to accept.

Through this genealogical process, we have made many discoveries about what contributes to functional communities and well-supported families, as well as what hinders their development. There are still more details, more factors, more stories that could be written here. But at some moment in the drawing of a genealogy there is a sense of returning to one's self; there is the moment when the pen unconsciously follows some strange, twisting line and suddenly we come upon our own name. There is the moment during a funeral where memories and grief give way to possibility and joy. We must understand where we have come from and we must remember and retell the stories we have learned; and at some moment we must also rise from our seat and begin again to take action. So what action, as educators, should we take?

Culture of Human Interaction

Someone recently asked me, after hearing about some of my research, about achieving diversity. It seemed to her that diversity was the goal of community education.

She wanted to know how, as educators, we could bring diverse people together and then teach them to work with one another. She asked how we might get people to overcome stereotypes and preconceived notions in a diverse educational setting. The woman who spoke to me was excited and enthusiastic, and I could almost see her designing anti-bias training programs in her mind as she spoke.

We must consider that we are perhaps overly fond of *programming* in our field. Often, when principals talk about a lack of parental involvement, they quote the low numbers of parents who come to special events nights, and when they seek to boost parental involvement they begin designing new and better special events nights. There is nothing wrong with special events, but given our understanding of the ways communities do and do not function, we need to take a step back and begin to consider *how we can change the culture of human interaction on a daily basis in our schools*. This human interaction includes all the people that are or could be involved in a school, including the entire staff, all the students, their entire families, members of the school board and policy makers, and community members at large. Again, the goal is not for everyone to become intimate friends. What saved the elderly in South Lawndale were not intimate friendships, but a *culture* of regular human interaction, the general bustle in their neighbourhood that *regularly* drew people into collective spaces.

Diversity and inclusion are necessary and important goals, but lofty ones. Diversity and inclusion are not things that are achieved through programming; they are achieved through regular and healthy interactions with other people. They are achieved through the development of empathy and compassion, and this must be an organic process. We must nurture habits of engaging with others. We must foster a sense of

responsibility for others, and to do this we must create spaces where all types of healthy

human interactions can take place on a regular basis.

Action as Educators

Our society's set of limitations to building communities and human relationships

has many components. Peter Calthorpe (1994, p.xii) writes:

> Our household make-up has changed dramatically, the workplace and work force
> have been transformed, family wealth is shrinking and grave environmental
> concerns have surfaced. But we continue to build post-World War II suburbs as if
> families were large and had only one breadwinner, the jobs were all downtown,
> land and energy were endless and another lane on the freeway would solve traffic
> congestion. Settlement patterns are the physical foundation of society and, like
> our society they are becoming more and more fractured. Development patterns
> and local zoning laws segregate age groups, income groups, ethnic groups, and
> family types. *They isolate people and activities in an inefficient network of
> congestion and pollution, rather than joining them in diverse and human scaled
> communities.* (italics added)

Many of these problems must be addressed through policy changes that are outside the

realm of education as we know it. The question I am trying to answer here is: working

from an understanding of how complex these issues are, what types of changes can

educators make to affect positive change for their entire community? It seems to me that

the answer to that question is that as educators, we can encourage the development of

diverse and human scaled communities within our public schools, within our university

teacher training programs, and among ourselves as policy makers (see *shard 4*). Schools

have enormous potential to do more than simply move children towards adulthood with

academic and professional skills.

Duany and Plater-Zybeik (1994, p. xvii), architects examining community design,

describe the neighbourhood as follows:

> The neighborhood has a center and an edge. *The combination of a focus and a limit contribute* [sic] *to the social identity of the community...*The center is always a public space, which may be a square, a green or an important intersection. (italics added)

Duany and Plater-Zyberk go on to offer various examples of natural and human-made features that may serve as neighbourhood edges. For the purposes of this thesis, I am not particularly interested in exploring the physical features that serve to delineate a given neighbourhood. However, I think the concept of a centre and an edge is useful when imagining the ways in which schools may encourage the development of social capital and the growth of functional communities. A school has the potential, in a time where greens and public squares are seldom used and only cars meet each other at intersections, to provide a sense of social identity for neighborhoods and communities that are lacking both a center and an edge.

Addressing Needs, Engaging in Change

Understanding the complexities of the stress being exerted on families and communities, as educators, we must develop models for our schools and other human service systems that are also complex. We must develop systems that are like healthy neighbourhoods; systems that are full of diversity and multiplicity; systems that are well-integrated with communities, like healthy roots within soil, that foster the growth of both a community's centre and its edge.

Two solutions will be introduced in Part II of this thesis. Both, if developed in a holistic and healthy manner, have the potential to meet many community needs and address existing limitations. The first is the family centre working in partnership with schools and the second is the community, or full-service, school. These two models have

a great deal in common, and are supported by the same theoretical frameworks. I believe both have the potential to truly affect change for families and for healthy, functioning communities.

Family Centres

Family centres develop their programming and description of needs based on input from users, and can act as an important support for families and an invaluable partner for schools (Kyle et al., 2001; Montgomery & Cook, 2001; Warren-Adamson, 2001; Dunst et al., 1994). Working from the framework of systems theory (Bingly Miller & Bentovin, 2003; Chavis et al., 1993; Dunst et al., 1994; Pardeck, 1996, 20003; Yuen, 2003), and the ecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1986, 2005; Germain, 1991; Pardeck, 2003; Warren-Adamson, 2001; Weiss & Kreider, 2005), family centres recognize the need for a healthy environment to allow families and communities to thrive. Both the ecological perspective and systems theory acknowledge the existence of a rhizomatic (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) relationship within families and between families and their larger environment. This means that families are seen as integrated systems, which are in turn understood as embedded within a wider social ecology. A family centre will encourage and allow for the ongoing development of leadership, competence, and expertise in all those involved with the centre, including professionals and centre users.

Within these frameworks, it becomes ineffective to attempt to address the needs of one individual without addressing the needs of her entire family. It is also ineffective to attempt to address the needs of one family without addressing the wider social

ecology. "Individuals are embedded in social systems, such as families and communities, that contain reciprocal influences, and these reciprocal influences must be acknowledged in human service delivery if positive and durable outcomes are to occur" (Quinn, p. 65, 1995).

Through these frameworks, then, a healthy community and healthy environment are essential for healthy individuals and families. A healthy environment consists of what are known as enabling systems (Chavis et al., 1993; Dunst et al., 1994 Simms, 2002; Yuen, 2003). In terms of functional communities in general, enabling systems are well-designed neighbourhoods with policies in place that support social capital: small local businesses, sidewalks, public gathering spaces, natural internal surveillance, all types of social and economic diversity, old buildings, a variety of transportation options, mixed residential and commercial spaces, and a general culture of human interaction and engagement. In the more specific context of human services like education and social work, enabling systems are resource networks, intermediary support organizations, seed capital and incentives, and multi-sectoral collaborative structures (such as schools, community centres, and religious organizations collaborating on a single project) (Chavis et al., 1993).

All of these factors are relevant in *all* classrooms. I believe there is little we can do to make changes in the lives of our students if we don't, at least on a conceptual level, consider their success in school within the wider context not only of their family life, but of our society at large. We must examine our approach to teaching in terms of which needs are and are not being met in our current society, that is, where the limitations currently lie. As educators, when we conceptualize something like enabling systems, we

might at first think only in terms of our classrooms or our school; how can we encourage the development of systems that better enable academic learning? I would argue, however, that if we truly wish to engage in change-making, we must begin to put theoretical models like systems theory and the ecological perspective to broader use.

Although these models encourage human service providers to see those they work with as integrated parts of larger social systems, I am not convinced that the way these theories have been applied is broad enough. These theories address the importance of community and other systems outside the family, but I think that often we remain overly focused on individual children and individual families. However, we need to acknowledge and engage—both in theory and practice—with a broader genealogical understanding of the *sources* for the struggles we are facing within our classrooms, and we must include ourselves within that genealogy.

Enabling Systems

Enabling systems serve several functions. They should "expand the base of citizen involvement through networking, promoting collaboration, and developing community ownership" (Chavis et al., 1993, p. 54). An enabling system also "...enhances the leadership pool available in a community and augments leadership skills through direct training for leadership, team-training...and organizational development" (p. 55). Through enabling systems, the resource and information base available to community sites is expanded. Enabling systems seek to develop *local control* and *local competence*. This is achieved by drawing largely on input from users and on existing local knowledge when developing programs and services within a given community (Kyle et al., 2001;

Mongomery & Cook, 2001; Warren-Adamson, 2001; Dunst et al., 1994). This also, over time, begins to alleviate the pressure to meet non-traditional needs in schools that is often overwhelming for educators, social workers, and other service providers. As enabling systems grow and develop and communities begin to be truly functional, *everyone* experiences more support, including the service providers themselves.

When thinking about the need for family and community involvement, too often we seek to make changes for system users, while leaving ourselves as providers out of the equation.

> The individualization of social problems has enabled professionals to see the identified individual, or family, as less able than those who do not have the problem. If, as systems theory suggests, the problem lies in the relationships among many people, are we to assume that all participants are deficient? ....Once it becomes apparent that whole systems perpetuate social problems, *even the experts whose job it is to change identified clients, pathologizing becomes clearly untenable.* (Smale, 1995, p. 72, italics added)

If we truly engage with systems theory and the ecological perspective, then we are required to see ourselves as professionals impacting on and integrated with the social systems in which we are working. We must take stock not only of the relationships that *exist* and have an impact on family systems, but also of the relationships that are *absent* or lacking within specific families, as well as on a broader scale in terms of the culture of human engagement within our school, community, and society. We are also required to acknowledge all the other ecological factors that are at play within a given community, such as physical landscape, architecture, transit options, commercial systems, public policies related to housing and taxation, and economics. We must take all of these factors that inform the ecology that we (and the families we work with) are living in, even when these factors seem beyond the scope of our field.

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Making Links Outside the Field of Education

I believe that educators need to step more often and with more curiosity across the traditional boundaries of the field of education. Education is fundamental to the functioning of a society and to the health of its communities. We must, as educators, begin looking for answers in our society as a whole. We must begin to see these links between the physical landscape of the world we inhabit (between cars and roads, zoning and housing policies, taxation policies, building and development patterns) and the health of the children and families inside our schools.

If we begin to shift our fundamental framework and to expand and put to use our understanding of theoretical frameworks like systems theory, the ecological perspective, and genealogical exploration, we may find that we approach problems or challenges differently, and may discover that even the questions we are asking are different. We may begin to see direct links between educational policies and policy decisions in other sectors of government. We may reach out to those architects and planners, community organizers and environmentalists, health care professionals and municipal leaders who have a vision of community, and ask them to enter the discussion when we try to create schools that better meet all the needs of families.

As educators, (and especially as researchers and professors who educate future teachers) we must begin to truly see ourselves as embedded in society. This means engaging actively with other disciplines. This also means creating a constant awareness of the tendency to pathologize, and act as if, as professionals, we are outside the system. The healthy versus problem dichotomy allows an "...abdica[tion] [of] responsibility at

the expense of stigmatizing those held primarily responsible" (Smale, 1995, p. 66). We

must begin to see the interconnectedness of all aspects of community health and how that

health impacts on families, and therefore on schools. "From this perspective social

problems are the malfunctioning of a network of people....The 'problem' may be that

there are no, or too few significant people in the system". Therefore, "to refer to such as

situation as a 'social problem' is more a comment on how needs are, or are not being met

by others than on the condition itself" (p. 65).

We must, above all, move away from this narrow focus on and obsession with

"improved results," and "accountability" when this simply means higher test-scores with

little regard for any other kinds of achievement. This type of focus is part of the shift to

market policy and individualism discussed earlier. Education is not a product and a

school is not a business. Yet more and more, business models and business leaders are

being introduced into public education. Hopper (2003) offers a discussion of Aristotle's

notion of "human flourishing" (p. 131-132). One of the most important aspects of human

flourishing is "association or friendship"[19] which in modern terms may be identified as

social capital. Hopper writes:

> the nearest we have come to the Aristotelian model is institutions like
> hospitals, schools, and universities where there is often a common sense of
> purpose amongst the people working within them—although...this is
> increasingly being eroded by market-drawn reforms. (p. 133)

Educators are in a unique position to provide leadership for the rest of society. We

have a C H O I C E as educators. We can create institutions that model cooperative,

multi-disciplinary, ethical, integrated relationships; we can create spaces to allow

friendship to grow and all human relationships to flourish, or we can continue to allow

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[19] Hopper notes that the Greek word for friendship has a broader meaning than the English word;
it includes a sense of mutual sympathy between any two human beings (2003, p. 133).

public institutions to be transformed into private enterprises with an narrow emphasis on "accountability." I am convinced that although the latter choice may produce positive "results" (to the extent that results can be measured by a computer compiling standardized test scores), in the long run this approach will do little to address the needs of children, families, and society for functional communities and extended social networks.

The development of family centres is one solution to the stress that families (and consequently schools) are under. A well-organized family centre can provide support not only for families, but for local schools as well. Information and programming can be shared and professionals can find mutual support. Families can develop skills and relationships through the family centre that may allow them to contribute to and engage with their local school. The more informal structure of the family centre can compliment the more formal structure of the school. Both systems can provide support for each other and for families, as well as for the broader community through a process of exchange and ongoing development in a healthy social ecology.

Empowerment, Power, and Transformational Action

Empowerment is a key concept in the literature about family centres. "Empowerment is sometimes an explicit aim of centre activity and on other occasions it is an implicit byproduct of the work" (Warren-Adamson (2001, p. 16). Empowerment "...implies that many competencies are already present or at least possible....What [is seen] as poor functioning is [rather] a result of social structure and lack of resources which make it impossible for existing competencies to operate" (Rappaport, 1981, p. 16).

What family centres seek to do in empowering their users is to create healthy systems where people can provide for their own needs as much as possible, and are able to seek help in providing for them when necessary.

I wish to note that although I like the *concept* of empowerment (especially Rappaport's definition above), I find the word is overused and often left undefined. Unless it is very carefully defined, it connotes hierarchical structures that stand simply to be rearranged, rather than undergoing any real transformation. It is problematic when within limiting, bureaucratic, or oppressive structures, empowerment of the oppressed comes to mean that they will simply take over in the role of oppressor.

An example of this type of power shuffling has taken place in the last several decades as women have gone through a process of "empowerment" and moved into the professional workforce. The work-place structures that had unhealthy side effects for men (such as long working hours, excessive work-related stress, spousal isolation, and isolation of children and from their fathers) have not significantly changed. As families and society made the transition from one working parent to two, one might have expected things like increased access to affordable and quality childcare, more flexible work hours, well-developed paternity and maternity leave programs, and more flexible options for longer vacation time. Overwhelmingly, however, this has not been the case (see Dryfoos, 1998, 2005; Hopper, 2003; Jacobs, 2004).

I would argue that as women joined the workforce they may have gained *power* but they were not *empowered*. Had empowerment (using Rappaport's definition) taken place, women along with men would have engaged in a transformational process that identified existing competencies and found ways to meet not only women's needs as this

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transition took place, but men's needs and the needs of families as well. A similar phenomenon occurs through certain affirmative action programs, when individuals from minority groups are promoted into positions of power. This, in and of itself, does little or nothing to address the structures and systems that have been the purveyors of endemic inequality. Instead, the groups that have been limited by those structures begin to participate in maintaining and reinforcing them.

The notion of empowerment is therefore problematic. It refers to an inherent hierarchy, and suggests that having power within that hierarchy is the ultimate goal. The empowerment of some, therefore, must mean the disempowerment of others. When women or other groups that have suffered discrimination gain some power, it is framed in terms of achieving equality. However, I would argue that equality isn't truly achieved until the *structures themselves* are critically examined, and changes are made to the hierarchical structure itself.

Another problem with the notion of empowerment is that it defines power and competence only with reference to the existing system. For example, our society views a mother who is a high-paid CEO of a company as evidence of empowerment and gender equality. However, this understanding of empowerment and equality does not consider any of the flaws in the system itself that may not meet the needs of the CEO who is also a mother. A program geared towards empowerment runs the risk of losing sight of the bigger picture. If a program is narrowly focused on getting a "powerless" group to have power in the system, it becomes easy to forget that the system itself may be dysfunctional.

We speak of enabling systems, and so I prefer the word enable to empower. To *enable* suggests that there *is* existing competence but that potential is simply *limited* by circumstances or current conditions. Enabling suggests a wider range of possibilities for achieving success and equality, and is not limited to the confines of hierarchical structures. In the example of women joining the workforce, the term 'enable' suggests the creation of a wider range of opportunities and choices for women that may include ways of integrating work with motherhood, whereas within the context of empowerment, the terms and definition of success are limited by the existing system.

The work of enabling is to address and augment those *systemic* limitations collaboratively through partnership, as opposed to "empowering," which suggests one group of people effecting changes in another. Enabling works for structural and systemic change whereas empowerment is often is geared towards personal improvement. Structural and systemic change implies changes will be required of professionals, as well as those who are the traditional "recipients" of human services.

Paulo Friere (1974) calls for programs that in themselves are acts of creation. If families and educators are required to reflect critically on their needs and to take an active role in meeting them, the chance that those needs will be met is greatly increased. He writes:

> The education...demanded would *enable* men to discuss courageously the problems of their context — and to intervene in that context; it would warn men of the dangers [or limitations] of the time and offer them the confidence and the strength to confront those dangers instead of surrendering their sense of self through submission to the decisions of others. By predisposing men to reevaluate constantly...and to perceive themselves in dialectical relationship with their social reality, that education could help men to assume an increasingly critical attitude toward the world and so to transform it. (Friere, 1974, pp. 33-34, italics added)

In most discourse, what Friere is describing here would be called empowerment. However, I believe that language is a powerful tool, and I would argue that it is impossible to use the word empower without invoking existing ideas about power and power structures. Friere is not arguing for power or empowerment, rather he is arguing for a critical and constant engagement with one's self, with one's environment, and with others. A power-based framework risks simply reinforcing hierarchies and maintaining inequalities.

Educational models must carefully examine issues of power dynamics and hierarchy into account if they wish to truly work collaboratively with families and other community members to contribute to the development of functional community life. Family centres are most successful when they are able to create dynamic leadership teams made up of a wide variety of stakeholders rather than limiting leadership and control to professionals. As we will see in the following chapter, the community school is another model that promotes education as a transformational process with non-hierarchical leadership structures.

Lunch and Friendship

The first year that I was working as an integration aide, I was assigned to the grade three classes. There were a large number of children in the grade with a range of problems, from learning disabilities to behavioural problems. I was working primarily with a group of about six boys, all of whom had problems with behaviour and violence. There was one boy named Josh[19] who caught my attention. He was constantly in trouble with his teachers, and often was sent into the hall. He also often got in fights with other boys in the class, and he didn't have any real friends. I decided I would try to befriend Josh. He was often sarcastic and rude, but I could also see that he was very smart and I liked him despite his attitude. I began spending time with him whenever he was sent out into the hall and, over a period of about two months, we developed a friendship. He told me he was interested in doing research in the library so I suggested that we spend one lunch period per week eating and working together. I mentioned that if he ever wanted to invite a friend, he could do so.

We met together for several weeks, and researched a variety of topics, but he never took me up on my offer to invite other children to work with us. Then one day we were heading to the library together for our meeting when we passed a boy named Brad in the hall. Josh and Brad regularly got into fistfights and seemed to dislike each other very much. To my surprise, Josh asked if Brad could join us that day, and to my even greater surprise, Brad accepted the invitation. Over the next few days, other third-grade boys became interested in the lunch group. I told Josh he could invite up to six other children. By the end of the week, the group was full. Three years have passed now, and Josh moved away and left our school, but our "lunch club" is still meeting (now twice a week). I bring drawing materials, and we talk and eat together. The boys in the group are all students who regularly get into trouble in school, but I rarely have any problems with

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[19] Names have been changed to protect identities.

them in our club. The only rules I have made are that they have to eat lunch before they draw and that they have to try their best to be kind to one another. Last year, one of the boys proposed a third rule that was accepted by the group. On their own, they decided that during the club time they wouldn't draw anything violent.

These boys all still run into conflicts with each other. However, I have noticed that the group provides a foundation for addressing conflict when it arises. They report having a sense of belonging to our group, and often try to convince me to meet more than twice a week. Through my experience with this group it has become clear to me that a community, especially an educational community, must not only support each individual in his or her own learning, but must also support each individual in his or her relationships to everyone in the group.

8. Community Schools

The Need for a General Description

In addition to the family centre, the community school, or the full-service school as it is sometimes called, is a model that holds a huge amount of potential to meet the needs of not only children, but of communities and society more generally. When community schools work well (and there are many examples of such schools that have and do) they may allow those associated with them to "...discuss courageously the problems of their context — and to intervene in that context" (Friere, 1974, pp. 33-34).

Community schools take many forms, but there are some salient details that define the model. The general description of a community school that will follow was not drawn from any particular work or set of works, but is my own summary based on all the information I have gathered over two years of reading and research, conversations, conferences, and visits to schools. For the most part I will steer away from discussions of specific examples of community schools. My aim is to introduce the model more generally as a concrete way in which educators can contribute to the development of functional communities from within their own schools.

A general description of the model is also a useful contribution given that the literature tends to refer to specific examples instead of offering a succinct overview of the concept. There are many prominent practitioner-writer advocates of the community school model. Each for the most part describes and refers only to his or her specific application of the model (see Blank, 2003; Comer, 2004, 1997, 1996 (Ed.); Dryfoos,

1998; Dryfoos, Quinn, & Barkin (Eds.), 2005; Epstein, 2005; Quinn, 2004; Weiss, 2005a, 2005b).

For readers who are interested in exploring the specific models further, there is an abundance of literature that does offer detailed examples of community schools[20]. In the following, I highlight which elements define the community school model and unite these various examples, and discuss each element in turn.

Integrated Services

The most important feature of the community school model is the integration of services within the school itself. Community schools often incorporate a wide range of services, programs, and even distinct partner organizations physically housed inside the school building. Some of programs, services, and organizations may address only needs specific to the school's students and their families, while others may be available to the wider community as well. Some programs and services may be administered and offered by traditional school staff, and others may be run entirely by outside organizations and service providers. Examples include (but are not limited to) various types of health care clinics, public libraries, community service organizations, daycares, after-school programs, environmental groups, community gardens, school-based stores, organized sports activities, computer training, family literacy programs, adult education, art and music programs, parenting programs, homework clubs, and breakfast clubs. The idea behind the community school model is that the school becomes a hub, offering a wide

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[20] For a selected bibliography dedicated strictly to research on community schools, please see Appendix.

range of services and bringing a wide range of organizations and leaders together. This brings us to the second key feature of the community school model.

Leadership Coordinator or "Neutral Facilitator"

A leadership coordinator, or what is sometimes called a "neutral facilitator" (Molloy, P. et al., 2000), is essential to this model. The coordinator's role often changes over time. When a community school is in the early stages of development, it may be difficult to bring various players, who are accustomed to having power and control in their own spheres, to listen openly to one another and work collaboratively. Leadership struggles and turf issues can easily surface. At this time the coordinator's role is to offer a neutral perspective, to help guide discussions toward a shared vision, steward the development of a non-hierarchical leadership team, and create an atmosphere of mutual interest and trust. The style of leadership required for this role is *facilitative leadership* (2000). The Coordinator must lead in a considered and mindful way that truly responds to the needs of all of the shareholders involved.

As the leadership team and the community school become established, the coordinator's role naturally shifts. Once there is a functioning team the coordinator becomes a liaison, ensuring that communication stays open between the various leaders and their organizations and that information is routinely and efficiently shared. At this time, the role may expand to include facilitation and engagement of families with the community school, at times shifting into the role of family coordinator.[21] The family

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[21] This is another example of the power of language. The word 'family' over 'parents' should be used whenever possible. The term family is broad and welcoming, and most importantly it does not make assumptions about family structure. If the term 'parent' is used, it should be made clear that it refers to all primary caregivers.

coordinator must establish close, meaningful relationships with school staff and families, while at the same time maintaining the role of a neutral facilitator who can help involved stakeholders navigate their problems and concerns effectively together. The family coordinator is responsible for reaching out to families, knowing the ins and outs of the community, making families feel comfortable in the school setting, as well as maintaining communication between family members who are not part of the leadership team and the rest of the community school staff.

Space for Families

One of the most important physical features of a community school is a family room. This is a designated space specifically for families of students that is open during and after school hours and is available for parents and other family members to relax and meet. Many family rooms in community schools also offer various resources to parents and other family members such as legal services, a small lending library with resources about parenting and child development, and more formal meetings and training sessions. However, what seems to me to be the most important aspect of this feature is that it provides a physical space (a centre and an edge) for families of school children to encounter one another and school staff. Unlike the awkwardly low, child-sized bench where parents end up waiting in my school, a space that is designated for family use enables adults in the community to develop formal and informal relationships over time through the regular sharing of space (see *shard 5*)

Extended Hours

Community schools generally run on extended hours, from early in the morning to late in the evening (sometimes as late as 10pm), and are also often open on weekends. Community schools will often remain open throughout the year without closing during the summer break, and also may run programs during other school breaks and holidays.

A Different Kind of Volunteer

Parent volunteers in community schools take on a much wider variety of roles than parent volunteers in a traditional school. Parents (and other family members) serve as members of the leadership team, taking a place at the table with the principal and the leaders of the other programs and organizations in the school. Parents may run various programs for other parents and community members, offering to share their skills, drawing on and expanding the local competency in the community. Because of the integrated structure of community schools, parents are able to establish open, connected relationships with teachers so that when they do volunteer in the classroom, there is often less hierarchy and a more open exchange. Parents (or other family members) in community schools may be invited into the classroom to share their specific skills or knowledge. Again, this type of interaction is facilitated by the fact that in a community school, teachers and parents are more likely to know one another informally and to have a sense of each other's interests and skills. Parents become advocates and fundraisers, leaders and learners in a community school.

Other community members who do not have children enrolled in the school are also often volunteers in community schools. Because of the wide variety of programs and

services offered, there are many points of entry to a community school, allowing for a wide variety of adults to become involved. For children, this means that they have access to many adults, and are able to form resource networks for themselves. It also allows adults in the community to have access to a network of their peers, to develop social capital as well as other skills and competencies, and to engage with children.

Potential

The community school model has enormous potential to address the limitations currently facing families and wider society. Community schools can be the site of all kinds of collaboration, support a culture of human interaction and civic engagement, promote life-long learning, and therefore build social capital. The community school can be a public destination for all ages and all community members. It can be both centre and edge; it can be the town square, the front porch, and the neighbour's kitchen. In many cases, community schools have been highly successful in creating this type of environment and have achieved a great deal of success, both academically and socially.

Lost Potential

Despite these successes, it is problematic when researchers and leaders take a model such as this, with potential for creating sustainable human and community development, and try to fit it into market policies and practices, defining success in terms of higher percentile scores on standardized tests. Most writers and researchers promoting a full-service school model make reference at some point in their work to studies confirming that increased parental involvement in schools has been shown to have

positive impacts on student achievement. I understand the need for this type of research and the need for hard evidence that this model has positive impacts on children's learning. It is necessary to establish that there are measurable positive effects for any new model being introduced in education, or indeed, in any field.

However, as I researched, (especially in newer publications from the last three to five years) I noticed an increasing emphasis on achievement in terms of test scores, and a decreasing emphasis on a more holistic view of success (see Comer, 2004; Gardner-Chadwick, 2004; Weiss & Kreider, 2005; Weiss et al., 2005). The hard evidence upon which we rely to measure the success of schools tends to be highly simplistic and fails to account for the contextual factors that contribute to a school's health, including the vitality of relationships, human systems, and community. Standardized testing rarely provides an accurate representation of a school's success. Reliance upon this indicator is particularly problematic when applied to the community school because the goals of the community school are broad in scope, and attempt to address a wide range of real needs that are non-academic.

For example, imagine a community school that is running an excellent inclusion program for children with disabilities. This school has small, multi-level, multi-age classrooms that are lively, engaged places for typically developing children as well as for children with special needs. This school has a great deal of family involvement and a wide variety of programming for students and their families. However, because of the wide range of academic ability of its students, this school may appear to be low-achieving when the major evaluation tool is standardized testing (Blenk, 1995). Now imagine a second school that has no active culture of human interaction, is not actively

meeting the non-academic needs of students or their families, or the needs of children with disabilities. This second school may be in a relatively homogenous, wealthy district where most of the students have material advantages that contribute to their ability to excel on standardized tests. When average test scores for the first and second schools are compared, the second school will be praised for its "success" while it may appear that the community school has failed to meet proposed "standards."

The many shootings in upper-middle class American suburban schools in recent years highlight the extent to which a school's success on test scores does not indicate that the needs of students and their families are being met. Market policies that call for "accountability" in schools and measure success based on testing, are relying on ineffective and simplistic methods for evaluation and school improvement that fail to account for the complex set of factors causing stress on North American families and schools today. The essence of models like the community school or the family centre is that they address the needs and health of a whole human being as well as the health of the social ecology that human being is a part of, and not simply the academic needs of a student.

These models draw on thought emerging from the field of community development (Task Force on the Role of the School, 2001), on systems theory, and on the ecological perspective, all of which acknowledge the need not only for healthy individuals, but also healthy environments and relationships. Therefore, to evaluate or promote such a model in terms of improved test scores and other narrow definitions of "achievement" undermines what the community school and the family centre set out to accomplish.

Kathy Gardner Chadwick (2004, p. 20) writes:

> While *all community engagement initiatives have as their ultimate goal improved student achievement*, each community will have its own specific challenges that require attention. In some communities, school funding may be the primary concern, while in other communities the current focus may be academic standards. (italics added)

To say that "all community engagement initiatives have as their goal improved student achievement" is highly simplified, and fails to address or understand the nuanced set of needs that are not being met within our education systems. Gardner Chadwick has a PhD in marketing and has spent her career as a market research analyst for the company 3M, as well as working as a private marketing consultant (2004, p. xv). It is not therefore surprising that she approaches issues in education through the lens of the marketplace. However, more and more often, even writers with an educational background are taking this approach.

Market philosophy does not effectively apply to education or other human systems. If we allow market analysts to evaluate our schools and marketing executives to run them, those schools will continue to decline because the more complex needs of families will fail to be addressed. Integrated, full-service models like community schools and family centres are in essential opposition to market philosophy. They place value on things that have no value in the marketplace. They value communities as social institutions, healthy human relationships, and social capital. They value human flourishing (see Hopper, 2003), which is neither determined nor measured by material wealth. A set of integrated services and a system of integrated service providers is not "one-stop shopping" (Dryfoos, 1998); it is a radical alternative that values collaboration

and cooperative leadership, and that should therefore be engaged in a complex and ongoing evaluation process.

Creating Spaces for Connection

This is a story I heard from someone I met at the Coalition for Community Schools 2005 conference. There was a principal in an inner-city neighbourhood in New York who wanted desperately to have more parent and community involvement in her school. She had tried unsuccessfully for years to create a culture of engagement and family involvement in her school. She held special events and open houses, called meetings, made herself available for breakfast dates, and sent newsletters home with her students, all with negligible results. After several years of trying to make changes and failing, she decided that if she couldn't make parents come to her, she would have to go to them. So the principal asked one mother if she would be willing to invite other parents to her home for a meeting. This mother was a natural leader in the neighbourhood and so, at her request, a small group of other parents gathered in her living room to meet with the principal.

The principal told this group about her desire to have more family involvement at the school. She told them that she felt she had tried everything to invite family members in, but had gotten little response. Then the principal asked the group of parents what it would take to get them into the school. One of the mothers spoke up. She told the principal that she had been interested in coming to some of the school events, but that she didn't have time. "One problem is that there's no Laundromat in our neighbourhood," she said. "I have to take the subway a couple of times a week with all my laundry and it takes all day to get it done." Other parents in the group nodded in agreement. The principal thought for a minute and then asked if it would be useful for these parents if there were laundry machines in the basement of the school. There was some laughter and then the group became excited about the idea. They wondered if it was possible.

The principal left the meeting and within a week had located and purchased several used washing machines and dryers. She had them installed in the school's basement. She provided laundry soap and also found some couches and tables to make the space pleasant to spend time in. The free laundry service in the school was a great success. Parents began spending time hanging out together in the school's "Laundromat."

The principal began spending time there as well. Over time, friendships were formed and parents became eager to become involved other projects and programs and, eventually, this school evolved into a full-service community school.

9. Working Together: Leadership and Educational Communities

Integrated Leadership

Effective educational leadership (rather than business leadership) is of utmost importance if we are to make relevant and sustainable changes in our schools and education systems. If educational leaders truly engage with development in our schools through an understanding of systems theory and the ecological perspective, they will not be satisfied with simplified or simplistic explanations, educational models, or methods of evaluation. Systems theory provides a paradigm for examining multiple levels of phenomena simultaneously and emphasizes the transactional process of systemic relationships (Pardeck, 2003). The ecological perspective recognizes that individuals can only be understood in the context of their larger social ecology (Pardeck, 2003), and that no sustainable individual growth or development can take place in an unhealthy environment (Warren-Adamson, 2001).

Both systems theory and the ecological perspective have significant implications for engaged, collaborative leadership. Both models move away from traditional hierarchical or linear structures, and imply the need for a different form of leadership. Within these two frameworks, what is most fundamental to the success and health of a system is a healthy environment. Functional communities and healthy schools develop organically if provided with the right environment, much as a seed will sprout if given soil, water, and sunlight. The gardener's role is not to crack open the seed and draw out the sprout, but rather to *create the conditions for growth*. The role of leaders in integrated, full-service education is similar to the role of the gardener.

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Leadership that contributes to the growth of healthy systems is sometimes called transformational leadership (Alimo-Metcalf, 2001; Burns, 1978; Hanson, 1999; Liontos, 1992). Sagor (1992, cited in Liontos) explains that transformational leadership involves finding ways to be successful by *collaboratively* defining the essential purpose of teaching and learning and then *enabling the entire school community* to contribute to the teaching and learning process. Effective leadership will always create as much space as possible in order to allow for constant growth and ongoing critical analysis of the functioning of the entire system, including the role of the leader or leaders.

One of the most important roles of a leader in this context is to create both formal and informal systems for feedback, and to stimulate and promote organizational learning. Organizational learning is based in a conception of the organization as a living, integrated system capable of learning. Within the framework of organizational leadership, such integrated systems should be in a constant state of self-evaluation, and that evaluation should result in ongoing change (Barnes & Kriger, 1986; Beck, 1997; Choo, 1998; Lam, 2000; Leithwood, 1999; Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharrat, 2000; Senge, 2003).

Effective leadership can transform an institution. A leader who recognizes the interconnectedness of all members of the community and all components of the wider ecology can facilitate the development of healthy relationships. The need for the development of healthy systems is not limited to elementary or secondary educational institutions. Ron Morris (2001, pp. 227-228), a professor in the education department at McGill University, notes that many university scholars are also experiencing the "pain of disconnection," a general loss of community, and a sense of "disillusionment and fragmentation" in their own universities. Morris identifies creative, effective leadership

as a key ingredient that is missing in universities experiencing this type of fragmentation and loss. He complains that universities too have moved towards a market-oriented philosophy and that leaders have been replaced by managers. For Morris, the role of a leader is to facilitate and foster a sense of interconnectedness within an organization.

An effective leader, rather than attempting to gain and maintain control, will act as a facilitator. Furthermore, such a leader will always seek to create varied opportunities for the emergence of multiple leaders within an organization or community. Leadership is not something that should be located in one individual, but in the organization as a whole (Barnes & Kriger, 1986). Within an effective organization, "...leader roles overlap, complement each other, and shift from time to time and from person to person...[implying a] more inclusive concept of leadership" (p. 16). The leader's role is therefore to promote the health of the system, and to create subsystems that will not only contribute to that health, but that will also provide constant feedback, which will contribute to ongoing growth and development.

Leadership as Storytelling

One of the most important tools available to an educational leader is imagination. Educational leadership *must* be imaginative, and must recognize the power and importance of stories. In an interview on CBC Radio One's *Sounds Like Canada*[22], Jane Jacobs told host, Shelagh Rogers, that "the closest we can get to the truth are careful, aware stories about what is happening now....If we trivialize these stories as worthless anecdotes, we are cutting ourselves off from a certain kind of knowledge." Theories can

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[22] Special repeat broadcast: 26 April, 2006 on the event of Jacob's death. Original air date: May, 2004 (see http://www.cbc.ca/radioshows/SOUNDS_LIKE_CANADA/last.shtml)

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act as important guides but they cannot replace first hand experience and local memory. Educational leaders must be able to regularly look beyond theory in order to critically examine real life situations in their schools and communities. This requires imagination; this requires a belief in the value of a wide variety of types of knowledge; this requires the creation of genealogies and the preservation of local memory; this requires education to be a transformational process for everyone involved; and this requires engagement with an ongoing act of creation.

The two models that have been introduced here are not necessarily answers; they are possibilities. There are myriad possible ways to create positive, sustainable change in education, communities, and society. As educators, we are in a unique position to touch imaginations and work creatively. Schools have the potential to engender energetic change. Educators at all levels have the opportunity to shape this process.

The connections that create and maintain functional communities and healthy families live in stories; in the end genealogy is a fancy word for storytelling. Shared memory has value because it binds us together. Stories teach us, define us, and motivate us. Studs Terkle, an author and well-known radio personality, said in an interview: "sometimes an anecdote can tell us a lot more than an abstract theory."[23] Educational leaders must recognize the value of Terkle's statement if we wish to create diverse, human scaled communities within our schools. Storytelling is a powerful tool that can be used to encourage the development of collective consciousness and memory, which, in turn, contributes to the growth of functional communities. As we will see in the following

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[23] Interview with Jon Stewart on *The Daily Show*, 5 April, 2006 (see
http://www.comedycentral.com/shows/the_daily_show/videos/celebrity_interviews/index.jhtml)

chapter, stories and narrative can also play an important role in documenting the dynamic

relationships within a home, classroom, or broader community setting.

10. Physical Spaces and Design

Exploring Further

In Part II of this thesis, when I wrote about "creating spaces," I was referring to space in terms of climate and culture rather than to literal, physical space. However, the design of physical spaces like classrooms, homes, buildings, streets, and neighbourhoods is important to consider. Investigating possibilities for the implementation of physical changes in architecture as well as interior design of classrooms and homes that may contribute to the development of functional communities is a logical extension of this research. I was interested in pursuing this related set of ideas further, but was limited by available time and space. The discussion that follows is an account of the initial investigation I have conducted in this area.

The Importance of Place

As the process of researching and writing this thesis came to a close, I was introduced to some compelling research that explores possibilities for the design of classrooms, homes, streets, and neighbourhoods. In order to understand types of design that may contribute to the growth of functional communities it is important to understand the significant role that place plays in the development of relationships. "...Place is a source of meaning, belonging, and identity largely because of the relationships facilitated by bonds to place" (Strong-Wilson & Ellis, submitted, p. 5). Avi Friedman, a Montreal-based architect, well known for his work with affordable housing design and his interest in the development of healthy communities tells us: "people respond favorably to places

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that instill in them a greater sense of belonging and comfort" (2005, p. 85). We have seen that functional communities develop organically over time. We cannot plan for them directly; rather we can create favourable conditions for their growth. The same is true of place. "Physical attributes that foster a sense of place cannot be orchestrated or artificially introduced — they have to develop by accretion and evolve over time" (p. 85).

Teresa Strong-Wilson and Julia Ellis (submitted) explore the importance of place for children and how we might better design and create classrooms that are "children's spaces" (Rasmussen, 2004 in Strong-Wilson & Ellis) as opposed to "structured places that adults create for children" (p. 5). Their discussion is rooted in the Reggio Emilia approach to education, which views the environment as a "third teacher." Strong-Wilson & Ellis explain that "within Reggio Emilia, environments are thought of as living" (p. 1). They argue for the importance of transforming classrooms into "meaningful spaces" (p. 2) that should be "...set up to facilitate encounters, interactions, and exchanges" (Gandini, 1998, p. 170, cited in Strong-Wilson & Ellis).

Genealogical Documentation: Classroom and Home

Documentation is also vital to the creation of meaningful spaces (Strong-Wilson & Ellis, submitted). "Documentation both contributes to a sense of community and stimulates further interaction" (p. 4). Furthermore, "documentation functions as a living testimony to the interactions that define a social space" (p. 4). In classrooms the process of learning and social exchange must be documented so as to foster a sense of belonging for the children who learn there, as well as to invite adults to join in an active dialogue. The process of documentation, like genealogy, is inclusive. As with genealogy, a wide

range of types of "documents" may serve this ongoing process such as "children's portfolios, drawings, three-dimensional structures, words, photographs, videos, teacher reflections, parental involvement and constructing documentation panels" (p. 4).

Friedman (2005) suggests that a similar process of documentation is also vital in the context of the home. He points out that good architectural design is conducive to the development of human relationships. Furthermore, it is important to choose "décor and accessories" that "foster strong family relations by serving as a reminder of roots and times past" (p. 211). In Friedman's discussion, the process of documentation or "recording" may again be likened to the genealogical process. As with the process of classroom documentation described by Strong-Wilson & Ellis, Friedman suggests that objects such as drawings, photographs, audio and video recordings, mementoes, significant clothing (such as wedding gowns or baby clothes), as well as heirlooms like furniture, silverware, and pottery are important in the creation of a coherent family narrative and collective memory. This type of family-oriented attention to décor and design of interior space and the attachment to place that it fosters, is important in creating the conditions for the development of healthy human relationships.

Place and Relationships: An Example

In my last year of high school I first became aware of the importance of architectural design. My school constructed a new music building (see *figure 13*) that year and I remember a friend pointing out some of the important aspects of its design. This friend explained that in many music buildings the lobby gives onto long corridors lined with individual practice rooms. Practicing an instrument is by nature a solitary

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experience. When musicians must wander down long, lonely corridors in order to return to the lobby or other collective space, this can contribute to a sense of isolation.

Architect Alan Joslin's[24] design for my school's music building addressed this problem of isolation by eliminating corridors and by making public space the focus of the building. In his design, the practice rooms formed a border around the central public space. The larger group-rehearsal spaces and recital halls were mixed in among the individual practice rooms on both the ground floor and mezzanine. The mezzanine opened onto the public space at the centre of the design. The effect was that anyone leaving a practice room, even on the mezzanine, was immediately re-enveloped in the public space and bustle of activity. Additionally, this design afforded each of the practice rooms and rehearsal spaces large windows, providing access to natural light.

In light of my new understanding of the building's design, I began to consider the relationship between design and the way people moved in and make use of space. The building that it replaced had had a small, dark lobby and two floors with corridors leading to rows of individual practice rooms. The group-rehearsal spaces were at the dead ends of these corridors. Within this design, many of the rooms did not have access to window. No one, not even music students, spent time socializing in that building. One went there to practice alone and then left. The small, dark lobby, rather than serving as a destination, was merely a path to the practice rooms.

In contrast, the new building's open design and inviting common space encouraged informal gatherings, creating a more pleasant atmosphere. The new music building quickly became a popular hangout spot for music students. The building's

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[24] See http://www.epsteinjoslin.com

design allowed for the emergence of a culture of human interaction and engagement where previously none had existed. Attachment to place (Friedman, 2005; Strong-Wilson & Ellis, submitted) played an important role in the development of personal relationships. The bright and airy, inclusive design made the music building a place that we *wanted* to spend time in together. Even ten years later, when I think about the time I spent there, it is my memory of the building that evokes a sense of warmth and longing. Although I was in my late teens when I spent time there, I would describe it as one of my "secret spaces of childhood" (Goodenough, 2004, in Strong-Wilson & Ellis, submitted).
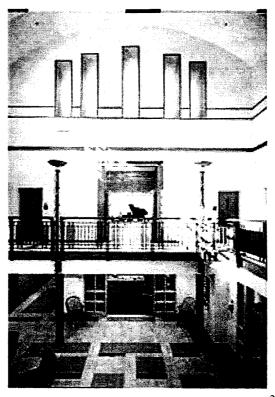

Figure 13: The Forestall-Bowld Music Centre[25]

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[25] (See Stubbs, 2002).

Architectural Design and Schools

Strong-Wilson and Ellis report that "secret childhood spaces" (Goodenough, 2004, in Strong-Wilson & Ellis, submitted) are known to contribute positively to children's learning and to the development of children's culture and community. Langhout (2003, cited in Strong-Wilson & Ellis) "...reported consistent findings that autonomy, social support, and positive feelings are associated with children's place attachment or sense of place" (p. 5). Therefore, given that children spend so much time in school, one might expect that schools and their surrounding landscape would, more than any other architecture, be designed to encourage such spaces. However, many public schools in North America today "date from the last century and are based on a model where all classes lead from a central hall" (Dudek, 2000, p. 44). Like the traditional conservatories described above, these schools consist of a series of long corridors lined with isolated classrooms. Such a design discourages people from lingering and spending time with one another in public space, and provides little opportunity for "secret childhood spaces."

Schools today may play many roles and serve various functions. Some schools act as civic centres, providing important space and services for entire communities; other schools may serve to reflect and help preserve a community's sense of identity as well as act as sites for the storing of and engagement with collective memory and genealogy; others may set an example as to sound ecological practices (See Stubbs, 2002). If any school is to achieve its full potential the importance of architecture is vital. Architects like Mark Dudek (2000) and others (Brubaker, 1998; Kliment, 2001; Feilden, 2004; Macmillan, 2004, Ed.) who have an architectural practice that is grounded in educational

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theory and seek practical solutions for the creative design of schools are important allies for educators. Educators in turn should become fluent, not only in research related to the importance of place in children's learning, but also in architectural literature that explores possibilities for sound, creative design in schools and classrooms.

Designing Neighbourhoods

As we have seen through a discussion of theoretical frameworks such as systems theory and the ecological perspective, all aspects of an ecology are important in contributing to the health of families and communities. The importance of design, therefore, is not limited to homes, classrooms, and schools but also includes the design of the entire neighbourhood. There are many writers who provide useful guides for exploring practical solutions for the design of healthy neighbourhoods and public spaces such as squares, parks, benches, sidewalks, (Friedman, 2005; Childs, 2004) and streets (Jefferson et al., 2001, Eds.; Rudofsky, 1982). I would argue that it is useful for educators to familiarize themselves with these practical discussions in the fields of architecture and design, which offer new perspectives related to encouraging the growth of functional communities. A broad understanding of architecture and design in addition to a genealogical understanding of public policy, history, and philosophy as they relate to education and community building will serve educators well as we work toward creating sustainable, imaginative schools to better meet the needs of today's families.

11. Conclusions and Summary

Intentions

This thesis has mapped a genealogy of the process of erosion that has affected functional communities in North America over the last half-century. It has further sought to make links between the erosion of functional communities and increasing stress on families and, by extension, on schools. The factors that are most often pointed to when attempting to explain the sources of the stress that families face are too limited in scope and therefore fail to provide an adequate explanation. In order to really understand the dysfunction and stress we are seeing in our schools today, we must look beyond children and families. We must examine the extended social ecology, the philosophical, economic, and political contexts, as well as the physical landscapes that shape family, school, and community life.

Frameworks and Terms

The arguments put forth here were rooted in the theoretical frameworks of systems theory, the ecological perspective, and most importantly, Foucault's notion of genealogy. Systems theory and the ecological perspective both emphasize the importance of relationships and the interconnectedness of things. Both theories see human beings as functioning within an integrated system whereby each individual has an impact on and is impacted by all other people and all aspects of the system. Genealogy, as it has been used here, also recognizes the interconnectedness of things. Genealogical exploration does not exclude; rather it seeks to incorporate as many different types of knowledge and ways of

understanding as possible. Genealogy offers us a place to gather and work with memories, stories, histories, misunderstandings, moments of connection, and facts in one place. Genealogy is the work of the bereaved, of the curious, and the hopeful.

Functional community is defined as a locality where a diverse collection of people are provided, through their relationships with each other and with local organizations, with all that they need to live engaged and healthy lives. Functional communities consist of: strong and well-developed social networks; a culture of human interaction and activity; many small, local organizations and businesses; healthy schools; various options for transportation; and appropriate and diverse housing.

Central Discussion

This thesis has explored three main themes that have had significant impacts on the health of functional communities in North America (and therefore on families and schools) over the last century, and especially over the last five decades. These are: shifts in the philosophical and economic context; the growing dominance of the automobile as the main mode of transportation; and major shifts related to housing trends and zoning policies.

First, there has been a significant shift both economically and philosophically towards a capitalist model with a focus on the individual. We have been transformed from citizens, who have rights, to consumers, who have only demands. Increasingly, the individual's "rights" (which are often really demands) are considered to be more important than the collective good. The inherent value of social institutions such as communities, schools, and religious and recreational organizations is increasingly

overlooked because these types of institutions do not fit neatly into market values. Historically, these institutions have helped to develop strong social networks, and these networks have in turn contributed to the well-being, health, happiness, and fulfillment of those who have been supported by them. These things have little concrete value in the marketplace. Increasingly, therefore, social institutions are either dissolving or finding that in order to remain viable, they must find ways of "producing" something of market value.

Second, dependence on the car for transport is devastating for the health of functional communities. Healthy social networks develop organically over time through regular encounters between people. In an environment where cars are the dominant mode of transport, there is a significant reduction in opportunities for such encounters. This contributes to the erosion of social networks and leads to an increased sense of isolation. The higher cost of living associated with car ownership, as well as the increased burden on government budgets related to road building and maintenance, limit resources for individual families and reduce available municipal funds for social programs.

Finally, there have been major policy shifts in the last half-century related to housing and zoning. The development of the modern, self-amortizing mortgage has made home-ownership a possibility for many families. This shift has resulted in more families carrying huge debts. Policy changes in turn began to offer various incentives to encourage home-ownership while penalizing renters. This has had a number of repercussions. Promoting home-ownership and penalizing renters results in attrition of middle and upper-class families from cities. Cities are then undermined through a loss of economic and class diversity, a loss of important tax revenues, and a widening of the gap

between rich and poor. New zoning policies and urban renewal programs separated commercial and residential areas. In cities, this separation results in the disintegration of functional, self-sustaining neighbourhoods by removing local ownership and employment opportunities. This separation also makes urban residential areas less safe by reducing the amount of human traffic and public activity taking place within them. In suburban and rural areas, this separation increases dependence on cars for transport and reduces opportunities for the development of social capital.

Possible Solutions within the Field of Education

This thesis explored two models as possibilities for addressing the current need for the development of social networks and functional communities. The first is the family centre working in collaboration with schools, and the second is the community (or full service) school. Both models work in close collaboration with families, depend on many different formal and informal systems to provide ongoing feedback, require non-hierarchical leadership, and view schools as one element in an intricate network of services. Both models have the potential to meet the needs of families by contributing to the development of social capital and creating a culture of human interaction.

This thesis argues that educators must more successfully integrate themselves with other disciplines and with other service providers. Schools and educators are suffering from the same isolation and fragmentation that is becoming increasingly pervasive in our society. Educators must come to understand the ways in which healthy communities grow and develop, not just in the context of their schools, but in the wider context of society as a whole. Through harnessing this understanding and then seeking

out more integrated models for education that address needs holistically, educators have the opportunity not only to better serve the children and families they work with, but also to better serve themselves and our entire society. The ways in which children and adults learn about and come to understand the world forms the foundation for a society. Therefore, anyone working in the field of education is in a unique position to make choices that will help to foster healthy relationships and strong social networks in addition to working towards academic achievement.

I believe that working to create integrated, complex models for education that force a wide variety of people to engage collaboratively is important because it is difficult, and "...that something is difficult must be one more reason for us to do it" (Rilke, 1986, p. 68). Models like family centres and community schools can push us to the edge of what is comfortable. They call into question what are seen as natural divides and hierarchies and ask if we are able to work in another way. They ask us to be clear about what we will allow ourselves to trust, and force us to examine our motivations when we would rather cling to the rules. Rilke (p. 92) councils that if "...we arrange our life in accordance with the principle which tells us that we must always trust in the difficult, then what now appears to us as the most alien will become our most intimate and trusted experience." We must seek to learn, most of all, from one another. Healthy change and growth occur most vigourously in the places where we share our experiences and tell our stories (see *figure 14*).

Figure 14: A Conversation, Buenos Aires, Argentina[1]

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[1] Photo by the author

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