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ORGANIZING AMID DIVERSITY: LOCAL ACTION, SOCIAL CHANGE AND

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION. A CASE STUDY OF TENANTS ORGANIZING

FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO

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MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

BY

MARYANN MASON

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This case study examines tenant participation in a community organizing campaign mounted in order to preserve and improve affordable housing in a diverse neighborhood in Chicago. The study addresses important issues widely debated in the fields of community organizing and urban and political sociology.

Tactics and strategy are important concerns in the field of community organizing. Questions are constantly raised regarding the effectiveness and long term results of various approaches to community organizing campaigns. This case study takes an in-depth look at these issues in the context of the Eastwood organizing campaign. In particular, this study examines the connections between Eastwood residents' life situations and the strategies and tactics employed in the campaign.

Urban sociology raises questions about the existence of community within the larger urban environment. In particular, this concern tends to be articulated in terms of the ways in which individuals align themselves with one another based on common factors. This case study looks at the ways in which community is configured in the Eastwood building. In particular, the study looks for linkages between residents as mediated by factors such as race, ethnic origin, location and class.

The study addresses issues fundamental to political sociology in that it focuses on the Eastwood struggle as political in nature. In this, the case study provides information on the ways in which citizens participate in, and are able to influence, policy decisions which effect their daily lives. In addition, the study is concerned with understanding the extent to which local and extra-local concerns are linked through the organizing efforts and specifically, the ways in which preservation of Eastwood's units is understood as part of the larger issues of affordable housing, equitable policy and social justice.

The Eastwood case study is significant in that it tells the story of tenant activism in public policy matters and illustrates the ways in which low and moderate income tenants have participated in, and been impacted by, extra-local policy decisions. It is also important in that it provides actual case study data on community organizing which can contribute to a rethinking of sociological theories and critiques regarding community organizing. Because the study highlights the experiences of women and recent immigrants, it also adds insight as to the ways that these often politically disempowered groups have participated in political decision making.

Literature Review

There are two distinct perspectives in the literature on community organizing relevant to this study. One set of literature focuses on the experiences of women, and to a lesser extent, immigrants. This literature provides case studies of specific organizing campaigns linking the life situations of the "unorganized" to the strategies and tactics employed in organizing drives.

The second body of literature focuses on the practice of community organizing as a particular form of social movement. This literature examines the practice of community

organizing in terms of its ability to link local issues to wider structural analysis. This section also offers a discussion of the Alinsky model's localized focus and in particular, its reliance on community-based ideologies and values.

A third area of literature has been added in order to provide the reader with the background on the Alinsky-style of organizing necessary for the discussion of case study findings. This review of the Alinsky model is based on Alinsky's own writings, writing of his followers, and analysis in Robert Fisher's work, Let the People Decide (Fisher 1984).

Everyday Lives and Activism

Jacqueline Leavitt and Susan Saegert's book, From Abandonment to Hope, a study of tenants active in attempting to turn around the deterioration and abandonment of their apartment buildings highlights the connections between domestic life and strategies for saving abandoned buildings. Leavitt and Saegert found that in many cases there was a similarity between the work of organizing and operating co-operatives and the managing of households. The authors found that women's life experiences provided the foundation for the organizing and management activities which enabled the successful establishment of tenant owned co-operatives in buildings which had been abandoned by their owners.

Similarly, Karen Brodkin Sacks' in her study of a hospital union organizing drive ("Gender and Grassroots Leadership") found that the roots of resistance lie in everyday social ties and networks and that often women play a key role in these networks. Sacks found that women built and sustained informational social networks which were often times based on family models. These networks then became a vehicle for expression of politics and mediating conflicts.

Sacks concluded that leadership exercised in the particular organizing campaign she studied was complex and multi-faceted. In her study, Sacks identified two different leader roles. The "centerperson" leads on behind the scenes negotiation, mediation and communication. The "spokesperson" engages in public speaking and official duties in relating to outside entities. While Sacks does not claim that the roles of centerperson and spokesperson are always split along gender lines, she did observe such a split in her study. Sacks theorizes that different patterns of racial and gender separation have stimulated different patterns for the expression of resistance along gender, racial and ethical/cultural lines. Thus, resistance must be understood in the context of these differences. The activities which comprise community organizing can be viewed as resistance against the forced relations of power which determine our everyday lives. As such, this study is valuable in that it suggests a new analytical approach to understanding issues surrounding leadership and organizing. In particular, it raises questions regarding how we are to understand the relationship between life experiences and the practice of organizing and leadership.

Sandra Morgen, also writing on grassroots activism in her study, "It's the Whole Power of the City Against Us!: The Development of Political Consciousness in a Women's Health Care Coalition", critiques the notion that women's involvement in community organizing can be explained simply in terms of their roles as wives, mothers and daughters. Instead, Morgen looks at how events and conditions of the struggle and the social construction of political meaning by participants affect the development of political consciousness and the choices of political action.

In her study of a multi-ethnic, multi-class coalition of women fighting for the re-establishment of health care, Morgen found that there is a clear connection between the forms

of resistance employed and women's lives. Morgen concluded that "community organizing is a conscious and collective way of expressing and acting on their interests as women, wives and mothers, as members of neighborhoods and communities and as members of particular race, ethnic and class groups. Race, gender, ethnicity and class become politically meaningful in their interrelatedness in daily life and political involvement. Thus, the everyday realities of women's lives gives critical meaning to their development of political consciousness and their choices of political action. Here, Morgen's work moves beyond the understanding of women's activism as driven solely by their roles as mothers, wives and daughters to include their locations within structures of class, gender and race. This finding provides a valuable insight regarding how we are to understand the ways in which women and immigrants involved in community organizing campaigns define, act on, and respond to issues.

Ann Bookman in her article, "Unionization in an Electronics Factory: The Interplay of Gender, Ethnicity and Class" takes up a similar point in her study of a multi racial and ethnic organizing campaign. In this study, Bookman identifies a number of strategies and conditions which women used to bridge the divisions that separate workers. These included giving "life crisis" parties, uniting against a common enemy (the time motion study man), the interdependent structure of the work and the translation of a union newsletter into Portuguese. Bookman found that, for many of the women union leaders, their real strength and contributions were found in in-shop participation, not after hours meetings or events. Women were able to contribute significantly to the union drive, however not in a traditional, public manner.

Bookman also looked at differences in participation among women to determine the influence of life situations on the women's activism. Here, she found that differences in

participation were related to women's stages in the life cycle. Women with young children were less likely to participate than were women with fewer household responsibilities. Also, Bookman found that their was a variability of child care and housework among women of different ethnic groups and that this subsequently affected women's political activism.

In this study, ethnicity was viewed as positively related to women's activism in that shared background and language tended to encourage and support women's participation. Class was also found to effect the nature and scope of women's subordination in the family, which in turn, effected the participation of women in the organizing drive. Finally, national and cultural differences were found to affect the ways in which people relate to their jobs and their abilities to mobilize ethnically specific institutions to aid their organizing efforts. In summary, Bookman concludes that there is no one model to explain the interplay of family, community and work place in shaping political consciousness and participation.

Bookman's findings offer a number of suggestions for my study. For example, that one ought to look beyond the roles of women in their family situations to understand their participation in community organizing efforts. And secondly, that race, ethnicity and class ought to be analyzed for influence on community activism.

These case studies of organizing efforts indicate that there are a number of complex and interrelated factors which influence and, at times, direct the participation of women in community organizing efforts. Following these findings, my own study seeks to develop an understanding of the complex interplay of factors shaping the realities of the lives of Eastwood's tenants and their participation in the organizing effort to maintain the affordability of their housing. This

literature focuses on the inter-relationship between everyday life and political consciousness and action. My own study reveals a similar relationship between the context in which tenants live their lives and the expression of activism.

Organizing --Locality and Ideology

In the following section, I review literature concerned with the level of locality and ideology involved in organizing for collective action and social change. Two areas of tension are raised in this literature --that between class and community and that between "the traditional wisdom and values of the people and a systematic critique of conditions by intellectuals" (Posner 1990, 4). These tensions have created splits among organizers in their approaches to promoting social change and collective action. Most notably, there has been tension between Marxists who view it necessary to change structural conditions in order to bring about changes in political consciousness and community organizers (including those who work in the Alinsky style) who believe that resistance must be based in community relations of affection and self-interest (Posner 1990).

The tension surrounding ideology also follows, to a degree, the split between Marxists and community organizers. Marxists have promoted the use of systematic critiques of the conditions in which people live as a tool for changing the "false consciousness" which is understood to cloud everyday people's understandings of their oppression. In this, Marxists have tended to use what Fisher and Kling ("Leading the People") call derived ideologies.

In contrast, community organizers have expressed a faith in the values that come out of community traditions and solidarity in directing their efforts toward building collective action and

affecting social change. Community organizers look toward the values articulated by everyday people in the contexts in which they live in order to direct the scope and issues taken up in campaigns. This "traditional" ideology is tied to individuals self-esteem and sense of identity and is viewed as particularly relevant to shaping activism in defense of peoples' rights and liberties.

These tensions form the basis for my discussion of the Alinsky model and some of its implications for affecting social change, particularly with regard to the Eastwood setting. However, before continuing the discussion of issues raised in the literature, I would like to acknowledge a critique offered by an organizer working in the Alinsky tradition regarding the lack of a singular, unified Alinsky model of organizing. In preparing this study, I shared a draft manuscript with Eastwood's lead organizer, Ted, to get his reaction to the piece. Many of his strongest criticisms of the work dealt with the representation of an unified model of Alinsky style organizing. Indeed, he charged that the representation was facile and undeveloped in terms of the complexities present in the Alinsky tradition.

To an extent, I can agree with Ted. The representation of Alinsky style organizing in the relevant sociological literature and in my presentation are somewhat static and do not capture the rich diversity of practices which have evolved out of the fifty-year old Alinsky inspired tradition. This is in part attributable to the way in which followers claim allegiance and legitimacy to a recognized tradition, helping to create the impression of a consistent framework which can be to "categorize" and analyze social change initiatives. I also agree with Ted in that a great deal of the sociological literature on community organizing has failed to address the complex dynamics involved in the evolution and practice of community-based organizing. For example, when I initially began reviewing literature for the study I was amazed by the amount

of material which, while claiming to focus on community organizing, actually dealt with charitable and social work activities.

The literature on community organizing which deals with the Alinsky tradition that I have drawn on does however, despite a lack of depth in addressing the variety found in the tradition, raise important issues for consideration in understanding community organizing. As such, I believe that, although it could better address the dynamism and diversity found within the Alinsky tradition, it serves as a helpful starting point from which to proceed.

As I noted above, the literature I draw on in this review raises two specific issues pertinent to my exploration of Alinsky-style organizing --tensions between community and class as areas of focus and the role of traditional and "derived ideologies" in shaping activism.

The Alinsky tradition, as a form of community organizing, obviously takes up on the side of community in the conflict between class and community focus. The conflict between class and community is about more than the location of the organizing (e.g. work place or living area). In a larger sense, the tension involves the breadth and depth with which issues for organizing are defined.

Kling and Poser ("Class and Community in an Era of Urban Transformation") discuss distinctions between the class- and community- (or constituency) based organizing efforts. Traditional Marxist organizing has focused on a class-identified understanding as the basis for social action. This promotes a structural analysis of capitalism and the worker's location within the system as a basis for informing social action.

Constituency or community-based activism focuses on citizenship and its associated rights and liberties as the basis for informing social action. Here, Kling and Posner write that: "Community organizer Saul Alinsky put forth a concept of workers as citizens, whose first responsibility was to society as a whole, not to a union and certainly to not a 'class'" (Kling and Posner 1990, 25).

The emergence after World War II, of a well-spring of community-based initiatives has had the effect of encouraging a reconceptualizing of the class-based approach to include related issues such as race, community, and gender. Kling and Posner review the work of Manuel Castells in terms of his attempts to "conceptually and empirically link constituency movements to class structures through the notion of urban space" (Kling and Posner 1990).

Castells studied a wide array of community-based social movements concluding that the expression of the resistance in these movements was in essence, resistance to capitalist modes of domination. Yet, Castells found that constituency movements, with their rootedness in a belief in citizen rights did not make the connection between capitalist systems of control and the issues which defined constituency movements. Castells then goes on to argue that, "unless it does (recognizes these connections), and makes such linkages explicit and manifest in its organizing activity, neopopulism will continually undermine itself and the organizational movements that follow from its principles" (Castells in Kling and Fisher 1990, 29). Castells goes on to argue that "urban social movements are not agents of structural social change, but symptoms of resistance to the social domination even if, in their effort to resist, they do have major effects on cities and societies" (Castells in Kling and Posner 1990, 29). In this analysis, Castells critiques community-based activism for its failure to recognize and address the structural roots of the issues

which it takes up.

This critique raises issues for my study of the Eastwood campaign, in particular with regard to the extent to which it acknowledged and addressed the structural roots of the loss of affordable housing, the inability of tenants to pay market-rate rents, and the public policies which govern housing subsidies. In my research, I found that the Eastwood campaign offered little in the way of articulating an understanding, analysis, or strategy which addressed these extra-local structural issues. This is not, however, to say that organizers did not engage in strategies and tactics which recognized the role of non-local structures and players in determining the fate of Eastwood. Organizers did work with national and local media, politicians, and policy-makers to exert their influence into the decision-making process. What they did not do, however, is to critically examine or take up issues regarding the ways in which these larger structures function to create and define problems and their possible solutions.

Similarly, Manuel Castells ("Urban Poverty, Ethnic Minorities and Community Organization: The Experience of Neighborhood mobilization in San Francisco's Mission District"), offers a case study of an organizing effort in San Francisco's Mission District. Castells evaluated the Mission Community Organization (MCO) in terms of its impact both on the immediate lives of residents and connections made to the less specific locally based issues of class, city and race. Castells concluded that MCO's difficulties ultimately leading to its dissolution were the result of the failure to link the immediate needs of residents to the larger, extra-local issues of class, race and city. That is, to build a non-localized understanding and constituency with which to relate to the state power. Instead, MCO proceeded to create a campaign focused entirely on issues particular to the Mission neighborhood. As a result of this

narrowly local focus, the organizing effort was politically isolated and coopted by city-wide political operatives. Castells argues that a non-localized constituency allows community groups greater bargaining power with the state in that the group cannot be bought off as easily, nor can it be strategically excluded as easily as a single neighborhood group.

My findings indicate that, unlike the MCO campaign, the Eastwood campaign was successful in reaching its immediate, short-term goals. This difference may be due to the extent to which Eastwood's organizers worked to connect their efforts to national and state-wide local political actors, through staged direct action events and other efforts to garner media coverage. In effect, while the organizers focused on the local context of the Eastwood situation, their strategic use of extra-local actors prevented political isolation.

Sidney Plotkin, ("Enclave Consciousness and Neighborhood Activism"), critiques the Alinsky model's territorial focus for its failure to explain the ways in which capitalist systems work to oppress groups of people. Plotkin writes "At its core, Alinsky's approach can be read as a systematic effort to awaken enclave consciousness, although rarely to inform it with an explanation of the forces that make the larger social system tick" (Plotkin 1990, 229).

While these critiques of the localism of community-based organizing are helpful in thinking through the issues associated with such an approach, they do not address the difficulties organizers face in actually implementing such approaches. For instance, Plotkin discusses the potential costs of exclusively local focuses but ignores the potential costs of extra-local focuses in his critique of Alinsky-style organizing. What he neglects to consider is that extra-local efforts may drain critical resources needed to win a local issue.

Losing on a very immediate, concrete and meaningful local issue may, in turn, lead make it virtually impossible to eventually address extra-local efforts. In part, the debate between these approaches has more to do with timing in terms of addressing larger structural issues than either/or decisions to exclude these components. Community organizers argue that immediate victories are needed in order to strengthen efforts to build collective approaches to problems, and that eventually, such efforts can move toward addressing the structural conditions which define local community life. For example, Alinsky wrote that:

> The program of a real People's Organization calmly accepts the overwhelming fact that all progeny of certain fundamental causes, that ultimate success in conquering these evils can be achieved only by victory over all evils. For that reason a people's program is limited only by the horizon of humanity itself (Alinsky 1974, 60).

In the Concluding Chapter (page 86) I argue for a compromise position moving toward a more simultaneous treatment of local and extra-local structural issues.

With regard to the second tension --the role of ideology in social action and collective movements I review Robert Fisher and Joseph Kling's ("Leading the People") discussion of the role of ideology in organizing. Fisher and Kling make a distinction between derived and traditional ideologies. Derived ideologies are based on abstracted analyses of the world and its problems. Often provided by outside intellectuals, derived ideologies are structured systems of ideas through which one can form an understanding of the world. In contrast, traditional ideologies are essentially attitudes which emerge from direct experience and oral histories. Traditional ideologies are generally less structured and more like attitudes or outlooks than derived ideologies. The distinction between the two types of ideologies is important because it becomes a point of differentiation in understanding social change organizing efforts.

Fisher and Kling profile two types of organizing efforts distinguished by their uses of derived and traditional ideologies. The authors use the American Communist Party as an example of organizing which incorporates derived ideologies. They write:

> The most comprehensive level of the Communists' overall political practice loosely corresponds to the overarching, theoretical framework of the movement --ideological principles such as general commitment to socialization of the means of production, the nature of class conflict, and promotion of the concept of working-class democracy. These ideas get expressed in the classic writings, in movement literature or the party press, or at forums and plenums and ritual celebrations such as May Day. Here is the level out of which the 'derived ideology' identified by Rude operates. Organizing at more specific and immediate levels takes on effectiveness as an instrument for transitional social change only to the extent to which it relates back to broader principles and analysis (Fisher and Kling 1990, 78).

The Alinsky style is profiled as an example of organizing that employees traditional ideologies. Here, Alinsky is cited as a leader in the movement toward "non-ideological" organizing. The use of the term "non-ideological" as Alinsky labeled his own work is not entirely correct. As Fisher and Kling note, all organizing is ideological in that it reflects a philosophical understanding of social change. Alinsky's labeling of his work as "non-ideological" refers to the extent to which pragmatic tactics and organization building are emphasized in contrast to political education in accordance with derived ideologies such as Marxism. Alinsky rooted this emphasis in the pragmatic on a firm belief in the importance of community values and tradition. Fisher and Kling note that:

> With the advent of the Cold War, Alinsky organizing, always heavily oriented toward tactics and organizational skill development, consciously sought to exclude any derived ideology from the organizing process. What remained was a hard-nosed, interest-group style of organizing and a popular ideology that professed that people's values and traditions were somehow intrinsically democratic and progressive (Fisher and Kling 1990 p. 84).

There are two problems in the Alinsky approach which tend to limit its effectiveness.

One, the assumption that people's values and traditions were progressive and democratic by nature. Unfortunately people's values are not always progressive and democratic. There are numerous instances in which people's values represent racist and exclusionary beliefs and practices at the community level, for example, the white working-classes opposition to busing in Howard Beach, New York. In my study of Eastwood, I found that many tenants articulated racist views of their neighbors which, in conjunction with other factors, tended to inhibit organizers efforts to build collective action. Eastwood's organizers did, not, however, make any real effort to address the racist values which building tenants held. As a result, many of the tensions between tenants went unaddressed in the organizing campaign.

If one reads Alinsky's own writing on organizing, we find that Fisher and Kling's portrayal of the Alinsky style's reliance on traditional, community ideologies is apparent. For example, Alinsky wrote:

> The organization has to be used in every possible sense as an educational mechanism, but education is not propaganda. Real education is the means by which the membership will begin to make sense out of their relationship as individuals to the organization and to the world they live in, so that they can make informed and intelligent judgements. The stream of activities and programs of the organization provides a never-ending series of specific issues and situations that create a rich field for the learning process (Alinsky 1971, 124).

Here, Alinsky acknowledges the importance of political education and awareness in the work of community organizing, but insists that this political education must be rooted in direct experience and analysis, not on abstracted understandings of the systemic roots of oppression which Alinsky refers to as "propaganda." Alinsky believed that organizers must be political realists and see the world as "an arena of power politics moved primarily by perceived, immediate self-interests, where morality is rhetorical rationale for expedite action and self-

interest" (Alinsky 1971, 12-3). Alinsky practitioners such as Bobo et. al. (Organize! 1991) echo this notion that education is gained not from exposure to an abstracted and articulated analysis, but through action. That is, the action of fighting for and winning a stop light does more to illustrate the ways in which power works and the power of collective action than does the organizer's efforts to illuminate abstract relationships around notions of race, gender, and class than does indoctrination in systemic views on the structural nature of oppression.

Fisher and Kling critique the Alinsky style's overwhelming reliance on traditional, community-based ideology. They argue that without linkage to extra-local ideological orientations, Alinsky-style organizing efforts lack significant impact in changing the conditions which create oppression. Fisher and Kling write that:

> Without an emphasis on bringing the radical ideology of the organizer to the organizing process, without a commitment to raising the political consciousness of the organized by both challenging and refining community values and traditional ideology, the legacy of Alinsky to his current neo-populist supporters, most of whom continue to follow in his 'non-ideological' footsteps --has been limited (Fisher and Kling 1990, 85).

The second problem involves Alinsky's "tacit faith in pluralist politics" (Fisher and Kling 1990, 85). Alinsky clearly demonstrated this viewpoint in his writings on organizing. For example, in Reveille for Radicals, Alinsky wrote:

> The people themselves are the future. The people themselves will solve each problem that will arise out of a changing world. They will if they, the people, have the opportunity and power to make and enforce the decision instead of seeing that power vested in just a few (Alinsky 1989). This pluralistic orientation in which organizations and interest groups compete for resources and pressure the system in behalf of their own interests is limited in that it allows no room for questioning the structure of the basic order (Fisher and Kling 1990).

Fisher and Kling critique this attachment to pluralism because, in their view, through its investment in the system of domination, the Alinsky approach is limited in its ability to engage in a critique of the capitalist system and address its inherently anti-democratic structure. Thus, Alinsky organizing is limited by its ideology of pluralism because it refuses to address the ways in which capitalism creates a system in which democracy (and pluralism) is essentially impossible. In short, this belief in pluralism prevents a more radical and structural analysis.

There are counter-examples to the Alinsky ideology in which people who have, because of their systematic exclusion from decision-making processes, evolved strategies of resistance and power that reflect different understandings of the way in which power works. As James Jennings writes in "The Politics of Black Empowerment in America," strategies reflecting different understandings of power and its relationship have been developed in response to the perceived shortcomings of the Alinsky approach. For example, Jennings cites the work of activists working toward black empowerment as seeking not only the redistribution found in the Alinsky style, but also a "fundamental change in the social position of black vis-a-vis white power structure (Jennings 1990, 121). Here, Jennings advocates going beyond what is viewed as the limits of Alinsky pluralism to address more fundamental structural issues of inequality and oppression.

This critique of the Alinsky method raises questions for my own study. In particular with regard to the limitations presented by its pluralist goals and the reliance on the intrinsic progressiveness of community values. In my study, I found that while there was an effort to influence extra-local forces such as policy makers and politicians the Eastwood campaign was limited in the scope of change it sought and tenants, were for the most part, not involved in these efforts. The Eastwood campaign's extra-local efforts included presenting the local Eastwood

situation as a model of what could be in other localities and communications with Secretary of HUD, Jack Kemp. The local focus of changes sought and the lack of a structural analysis did not appear to limit the achievement of the campaign's short-term goals. Emphasis of the local context and the lack of a structural analysis did, however, appear to limit the achievement of the efforts' long-term goals. A more detailed presentation of study findings is presented in Chapter Four.

Fisher and Kling's work suggests that an organizing effort built on the Alinsky method will be generally lacking in the treatment of larger structural issues such as race, class, and gender which are experienced locally, but rooted in systematic structural configurations. I found that to be the case in the Eastwood campaign, particularly with regard to issues of racism. Second, Fisher and Kling suggest that the Alinsky method is based in a pluralistic understanding of power. I also found this in the Eastwood setting, particularly in terms of the organization of the formal tenant's association and the organizing strategies targeted at policy makers and politicians. Third, Fisher and Kling assert that such Alinsky models of organizing are ultimately less effective because they do not address wider issues such as the inherent injustice found in capitalist systems which limit the ability of oppressed groups to realize their self-interests in a significant way. Here, my findings are less straight-forward. The Eastwood tenant's association was quite successful in reaching its immediate short-term goals with regard to transferring building ownership and improvement of building conditions. However, it was much less successful in achieving its larger goals of building a democratic organization of empowered tenants capable of further action.

These groupings of literature offer important insights regarding two critical issues

concerning community-based activism. The literature connecting activism to the conditions of everyday life aids in understanding the formation of political consciousness. The literature focusing on the linkage of local and extra-local issues and analyses provides a way to think about moving beyond the immediate and particular, to form broader coalitions and partnerships directed at the systemic causes of oppression experienced at the local level. However, the literature addresses these issues separately and, in doing so, sometimes creates contradictions between the two perspectives where none exist. For example, one might read the literature on the impact of everyday conditions on political consciousness and, as a result, be inclined to view social change as relevant at the local level alone. Or, one might read the local/extra-local literature and come to view the extra-local level of analysis and change as the more critical of the two levels. In the separate treatment of these issues, the critical and necessary connection between them is lost. The understanding of social change becomes shaped in terms of the particular versus general instead of creating a both/and dialectic in which the particular and general co-exist and are, indeed, necessary for one another's existence.

In my work on the Eastwood case study, I have brought these critical issues together. In the study I have examined the local, everyday conditions which affected and shaped tenant participation and political consciousness. At the same time, I have examined the campaign for its efforts to move beyond purely local concerns to form linkages with others outside the local community on issues such as race, class, and gender which are experienced locally but have systemic causes.

I address the issues of class, gender and ethnicity in the Eastwood organizing campaign as well as examine the organizing effort for linkages to the larger national and international

context of political and economic conditions. For example, my focus on understanding the political consciousness of Eastwood tenants revealed that the everyday conditions to which many Middle-Eastern women tenants are subject prohibit their public participation in community activities. Yet, through observing the actions of some of these women, I was able to discern a private network of communication and need-based exchanges. However, because of the gendered nature of the Alinsky ideology, these women's strengths and skills were made invisible to organizers. For example, the stress on public participation through organizational activities found in the Alinsky model precludes many women from making contributions because of cultural restrictions, fear due to inexperience and intimidation, and the combination of out-of-home work and household duties. As a result, the organizing effort was denied resources these women might have provided and missed an opportunity to link the locally experienced gender oppression to a wider, extra-local context. This combination adds insight to understandings of the interactions between the development of political consciousness, strategies of community organizing, and formation of extra-local linkages with regard to race, class and gender issues. In particular, it provides a context in which to connect the particular to the extra-local in thinking about social change.

The Alinsky Method: An Overview

The overview of the Alinsky method is drawn from a number of sources including the writings of Alinsky, and his followers and critics. See the attached bibliography for a complete listing of sources for this review.

Founded upon a model developed by Saul Alinsky in the 1930's and 1940's, the Alinsky method has come to dominate the field of community organizing in the United States. Indeed,

Alinsky has so influenced the practice of community organizing it has been said that "Alinsky is the Sigmund Freud of modern community organizing" (Booth quoted in Fisher 1984). The Alinsky method of organizing has been used in communities in the United States for the past forty years.

The Alinsky method is based on two basic orientations --pluralism and pragmatism. It is pluralist in that it is based on the notion that the current American political and economic system can work for all citizens equally if all citizens are represented in the negotiating process. The goal is to empower citizens so that they are able to play a part in making decisions which effect their lives. The method highlights democracy as the process by which citizens are able to claim and exercise their power.

The Alinsky method also stresses a pragmatic approach to solving the problems of the "have nots" in its fundamental notions that power must be won by any means necessary and that self-interest, not altruism, motivates the individual toward social action. In the Alinsky model, ends are what count. The means to the ends are considered mere tactics or techniques for achieving the ultimate goal of winning power. As such the means are divorced from the ideology of the ends.

The Alinsky method is distinctive from other models of social change in that its orientation forms the basis for claims of a non-ideological model of community organizing. Alinsky believed that following ideological prescriptions limited the ability of the "have nots" to take a seat at the table where important decisions were made. In this, Alinsky viewed ideology as setting limits on the ways in which community organizations and residents could go about

gaining power. He believed that this unfairly restricted the "have nots" from obtaining power that was rightfully theirs and indeed, put them at a disadvantage because those in power did not subscribe to high-minded ideologies which restricted their pursuit and exercise of power. As a result of his belief in the limiting nature of ideology, Alinsky created a method in which the practice of community organizing was easily separated from ideological content.

Alinsky's emphasis on pragmatism and the motivation of self-interest limits the role of political education and extra-local linkages. As a result, the model has been critiqued for its limited vision in terms of building political consciousness and extra-local networks viewed by some as necessary for meaningful social change to occur.

The key person in Alinsky-style organizing is the community organizer. The organizer is a professional trained in the Alinsky method --a social change "expert." The professional organizer enters into a situation sponsored by at least one institution in the community. The organizer's job is to facilitate social change through working with community members and institutions. The organizer's main job is to identify indigenous leaders and to frame the issue in a way which ensures that the organization can win.

In the Alinsky model, the focus of the organizer's work is not merely winning on a single issue. The primary goal is to build a stable, multi-issue, democratic community organization. In doing so, the organizer draws on established and recognized representatives of local institutions for the community organization's leadership. In this, the organizer perpetuates the status quo to the degree that he or she works with traditional, established community institutions and leaders. There is, however, an opportunity for changing the status quo in this model if the organizer

chooses to work with developing organizations which have not yet been vested with power but stand to gain power and legitimacy through organizing efforts. Such an effort to work with emerging organizations can have the effect of altering the balance of power in a particular community setting. Given this, depending on the breadth of vision of the community organizer, the community organization may pursue strategies of power building or power taking. Ultimately, the goal is for the organization to win the power to control what happens in their community and how this affects the lives of community residents.

In the Alinsky method, the community organization is viewed as the interest group representing the disempowered and unorganized. The organization's goal of power is two-fold: it is a means to attract community residents because they are viewed as motivated by their self-interest. And, in turn, gaining power is seen as a strategy to empower the community for the long-term because once communities have power, it is unlikely that they will continue to suffer the disinterest and neglect of other power players.

One of the most distinctive features of the Alinsky method is its separation of means and ends. No tactic is beyond consideration if it is thought it will lead to winning power for the organization. Thus, the Alinsky method is not constrained by commitment toward a progressive ideology and can applied to any situation without regard to ethical considerations. The Alinsky method stresses tactics of conflict, confrontation and surprise. The tactics stress pressuring those in power to respond to the demands of the community organization. The importance of tactics over values gives an almost technician-like character to the community organizer.

Despite its proclaimed non-ideological bent, the Alinsky model puts a high value on

representation and pluralism, both as processes in which the citizen group exercises power and as means for the group's attainment of power. However, because of the extremely local focus of the Alinsky method, the representation driving the community organizations may, in fact, be based in exclusionary practices. Thus, while narrowly representative in its micro constitution, the organization may, in fact, be anti-democratic in its larger implications.

CHAPTER 2

STUDY SETTING BACKGROUND

The research setting for this study is 850 W. Eastwood, a hi-rise apartment building located in the Uptown neighborhood Chicago. 850 W. Eastwood was constructed in the late 1960s under the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 221 D(3) Program. The 221 D(3) Program was initiated in 1966 as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society ProgramS as a means for providing affordable housing to low income families and individuals and to offer financial incentives to owners and developers. The Program was designed to encourage the construction of subsidized housing. Developers and owners were offered below-market rate financing if, in return, they guaranteed rental units for lease at below-market-rates for the duration of the mortgage. The Program's legislation also included a loop-hole which allowed owners to pre-pay the subsidized mortgage after twenty years. Prepayment would then free the owner to raise rents to market levels.

Ten of these 221 D(3) buildings, including 850 W. Eastwood, were built in Uptown in the late 1960s. In Illinois alone the 221 D(3) Program is responsible for 21,550 apartments housing 88,000 tenants. In Chicago there are 12,946 apartments housing 52,000 tenants. In Uptown and the adjacent Edgewater community there are 2,667 units and 11,000 tenants. 850 W. Eastwood has 231 units and approximately 650 residents.

The threat of the loss of 850 W. Eastwood's affordable rents must be understood in the context of the national affordable housing crisis which dramatically deepened in the 1980s. Declining incomes combined with rising rents and a steady depletion of affordable housing stock created a housing crisis for low income households throughout the nation. Given the scarcity of affordable housing, buildings such as 850 W. Eastwood became invaluable to low income tenants.

In 1986, at the end of the twenty-year period, communities across the U.S. faced massive loss, of affordable housing as a result of the pre-payment loop-hole. Owners of seven of the ten Uptown buildings in the 221 D(3) Program applied for the pre-payment option when it became available. Housing advocates across the United States drew national attention to the affordable housing crisis through holding hearings and protests against prepayment and by garnering media attention to the plight of families housed in 221 D(3) buildings.

In February of 1988, President Reagan signed a federal moratorium on pre-payment, thereby halting owners' efforts to end their participation in the 221 D(3) Program. The moratorium signing occurred in the context of a massive scandal implicating then HUD Secretary Samuel Pierce in fraud and financial mismanagement. Pierce was accused of using his power as Secretary of HUD to his and his associates financial benefit. After a series of highly publicized Congressional hearings into Pierce's alleged wrong-doing, Pierce resigned and was replaced by former U.S. Representative Jack Kemp. As the newly appointed Secretary of HUD, Kemp was under enormous public pressure to demonstrate HUD's good-faith commitment to providing affordable housing for low income families. In his tenure as Secretary, Kemp publicly advocated measures to invalidate the 221 (D)3 Program prepayment loop-hole as a means to preserve

affordable housing units.

In 1990, a public law was passed which permanently extended the moratorium on prepayment of building mortgages in the 221 D(3) Program. The law also allocated additional federal funds for the maintenance of affordable rents in 221 D(3) Program buildings throughout the nation. although the law mandates the preservation of affordable housing units and allocates funds to this end, it did not establish a streamlined program to accomplish housing preservation in urban areas.

While national low income housing activists pursued national legislative efforts to preserve 221 D(3) housing through testifying at Congressional hearings and issuing research reports on the potential impact of the loss of 221 D(3) housing, local activists in Chicago attempted to devise innovative housing preservation solutions, exploring a variety of ownership and financing structures. The case of 850 W. Eastwood is one example of a local attempt to develop innovative solutions to preserve affordable housing.

The struggle to preserve the affordability of 850 W. Eastwood must also be understood in the context of its ethnic, cultural and racial diversity. 850 W. Eastwood is home to immigrants from Africa, the Middle-East, Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe, the Caribbean, Russia, various Slavic nations as well as African-Americans and American whites. More than twenty languages are spoken by Eastwood tenants.

The 850 W. Eastwood case study must also be understood in relationship to the community context in which it is located. Uptown, a community area on the North side of

Chicago, is considered a "port of entry" community. Immigrants from many countries have flocked to Uptown for its wide variety of social service and mutual aid organizations. In addition to its close proximity to Lake Michigan and excellent public transportation, Uptown is a community where immigrants can shop for ethnic foods, relate to same language communities and find fellowship with other recent immigrants. Uptown is also a particularly unique community in that it has in large part, successfully maintained itself as an economically mixed community despite intense pressure for gentrification. Uptown's ability to resist the market forces of gentrification can be attributed to the large amount of subsidized housing in the community, the unique cultural character of the community, and the many community organizations which work to maintain and protect these balances.

The Eastwood struggle can be seen as a local example of a nation-wide situation. The 1990 census data indicate that the demographic profile of U.S. cities is changing. Increasingly, urban communities are made up of a majority of minorities. There is no clear dominant ethnic or racial group, but rather a diversity of representation. The increasingly heterogenous nature of the urban community raises questions regarding our theories and assumptions about participation, organizing strategies and democratic function. In short, the Eastwood case study may provide data with which to re-think some basic assumptions regarding the role of culture in struggle.

This case study is an attempt to document the specific details of one particular struggle to maintain the affordability of hi-rise apartment building subsidized under the 221 D(3) Program. My purpose in developing a case study is to offer a description and explication of the ways in which low income building tenants participated in the struggle to preserve housing

subsidies and thereby impact public policies in their self-interests. I then want to use the case study to rethink sociological theories of community organizing and leadership development, particularly with concern for issues of gender and diversity and the practice of organizing.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The data for this study was collected in three waves. The initial field research was undertaken as part of a joint graduate-level class project examining the population characteristics, and social issues facing low income tenants in 221 D(3) buildings eligible for pre-payment. A report, "Racial, Ethnic, and Economic Diversity in Uptown's Affordable Housing: Its Present Character and Future Possibilities" was produced from the class project (Nyden, et. al. 1990). In this phase of the data collection, eight residents of the 850 W. Eastwood building were interviewed. The interviews were open-ended and lasted approximately one hour. An interview schedule is provided in Appendix 1. Most of the interviews were conducted in tenants' homes. While the eight interviewees were not selected as part of a random sample, an attempt was made to reach a broad range of residents through referrals from community organizers and other building residents as well as door to door requests for interviews.

The second wave of field research was undertaken as a project for a graduate level field methods class at Loyola University of Chicago. This project specifically focused on tenant involvement in efforts to preserve affordable housing in the 850 W. Eastwood building. In this phase of the data collection, the range of persons interviewed was significantly broadened. From February to April of 1990, a total of ten interviews were conducted with community organizers, building tenants and housing developers. These interviews were open-ended and lasted approximately one to two hours each. A basic interview schedule is provided in Appendix 2.

Again, the interviewees were not selected as part of a random sample, however an attempt was made to reach a broad range of residents and persons involved in the fight to save Eastwood through contacts with community activists and referrals from residents in the building.

Additional data was collected through participant observation and secondary data sources. Participant observation was conducted in public areas of the Eastwood building including the elevator, lobby, and laundry room as well as at public meetings and training sessions sponsored by the community organization and the tenants' association. Materials used in secondary data collection included newspaper clippings, meeting notices and meeting notes taken by community activists.

The third and final wave of data collection was conducted as an extension of the Community Research Action Project Directed by Dr. Philip Nyden at Loyola University of Chicago. The Community Research Action Project has researched a number of issues relating to the wide ethnic, racial, and economic diversity and multi-culturalism found in the Uptown and Edgewater communities of Chicago. To date, the Project has produced two reports: "Our Hope for the Future: Youth, Family and Diversity in the Edgewater and Uptown Communities" and "Diversity and Opportunity in a Local Economy: Community Business in Edgewater and Uptown." See the bibliography for complete citations. In this phase of the study, twelve residents and one community organizer were interviewed. The interviews were open-ended and lasted between one half hour to one hour. An interview schedule is provided in Appendix 3. Interviewees were not selected as part of a random sample. Again, however, an attempt to reach a broad range of residents was made through referrals from residents and a community organizer. Here again, the interviews focused on tenant involvement in the effort to preserve and improve

affordable housing in the 850 W. Eastwood building.

Analysis of the data was conducted in several phases. Initially the data was coded for instances of involvement in the efforts leading up to the preservation of the building's affordable rents. The second phase of data coding involved a more comprehensive analysis of tenant involvement in activities both proceeding and following the preservation of the building. In this phase, the data was also coded for tenant interaction and acts of neighboring.

In addition, the data was coded for community organizing ideology, strategies, and tactics. Both tenant and community organizer interviews were coded on these issues. As a result of the data coding procedures, several major themes were developed as study findings. These findings are discussed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

It is important to contextualize the discussion of findings so that it is not misunderstood as a critique of, or personal attack on, the organizers and tenants involved in the Eastwood struggle. The discussion focuses on uncovering some of the complexities and contradictions involved in community organizing. As such, it examines the ways in which theories about organizing influence its practice, the consequences of treating the "unorganized" as a monolithic whole, and the ways in which the local focus of Alinsky-style organizing impacted the campaign's results.

The discussion of findings is divided into three main Sections. Section One explores the ways in which the Alinsky theory of organizing have influenced the practice of community organizing at Eastwood. Section Two looks at some of the ways that tenant's differing backgrounds have influenced their view of, and participation in, the Eastwood campaign. Section Three examines consequences of the Alinsky model's local focus in terms of the outcome of the Eastwood campaign.

Section One: Alinsky Comes to Eastwood

> *"The proper way to do it is to build relationships first."*
>
> *--Ted Smith, Community Organizer*

The organizers orchestrating the campaign had clearly identified a "proper" way of organizing based on the Alinsky method. As such, they modeled their efforts after key elements of the Alinsky model. In this modeling, an understanding of the problems faced by Eastwood residents and possible solutions to those problems developed out of a non-contextualized theory of organizing applied to a specific situation.

At Eastwood, organizers often identified the difficulties they faced in their work in terms of truisms of organizing. For example, Ted, Eastwood's lead organizer commented that the Eastwood campaign was difficult because it "dragged on so long." This presented problems because "you can only maintain interest in an issue for six to eight weeks" (Ted Smith, interview, February 6, 1991). Here, Ted is drawing upon an understanding of the situation which transcends Eastwood's specific situation. He does not know for certain the residents of Eastwood will lose interest after six to eight weeks. In this, the organizer has taken wisdom developed out of the Alinsky method and applied it to the Eastwood situation.

As we will see later in this chapter, the application of a general Alinsky model to the specific Eastwood setting, along with other factors, has prohibited organizers from realizing the potential impact of two resources particular to the Eastwood setting --racial and cultural diversity and the existence of extensive informal networks. Partly as a result of this oversight, the organizing effort missed some key opportunities to affect the lives of Eastwood residents.

I do not want to imply through omission that I am unaware of the constraints organizers faced in their work. Clearly time limitations and policy and bureaucratic regulations forced organizers to act quickly in their efforts to help Eastwood's tenants. Indeed, organizers

themselves recognized that their efforts suffered from such constraints. Ted's following statement reflects this: "(T)here was a narrow leadership group, five or six people. In order to organize a building you need more. There was no time to do it. We were unable to broaden the leadership. It was critical --either we won or lost now" (Ted Smith, interview, February 6, 1991). This assessment of the Eastwood campaign illustrates the complex combination of factors at work in this community organizing campaign. Ted recognizes the time constraint's impact on the organizing effort. Yet, his statement also indicates the influence of what he has defined as the "proper way to organize." Ted's statement, "(I)n order to organize a building you need more (than 5 or 6 leaders)" (interview, February 6, 1991) is also indicative of the influence a particular model of organizing has had in the Eastwood situation.

These time and regulatory constraints, taken along with obstacles faced by tenants, and the approach to organizing structured by the Alinsky style shaped what organizers did at Eastwood. In this interaction of factors we can see the complexities involved in community organizing and its outcomes. It would be too simple and inaccurate to portray the outcome of the Eastwood campaign as a product of the Alinsky method of organizing alone. Instead, we need to understand what has happened as the product of complex and often contradictory factors. The following discussion of findings is an attempt at understanding the Eastwood campaign's outcome in terms of these factors.

Organizing Eastwood

One of the most apparent ways in which the general Alinsky method was overlaid onto the particular Eastwood situation can be seen in the organizers' efforts to establish a formal tenant association. As I have discussed in the literature review, the Alinsky method emphasizes working through established community organizations. The rationale behind approach this is that community organizations are thought to provide a stable base for both obtaining and exercising power.

Eastwood's organizers' initial efforts were geared toward establishing a tenants' association. The impetus for building a tenant association at Eastwood did not, however, come from Alinsky influences alone. There were at least two other key concerns which influenced the efforts to establish a tenants' association. The for-profit owner attempting to purchase the building, CCDC, put together a financial package to finance the purchase of Eastwood. A key part of the financing was subsidy from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Affairs (HUD). In order to gain HUD approval of the financing plan, HUD officials made it clear to CCDC that it was advisable to demonstrate tenant involvement in the building. As John, CCDC President, noted: "(Y)ou need tenants to work at HUD these days. We had political relationships with different people. It got us in the door" (interview, March 26, 1991) From his perspective, tenant representation was a key factor in obtaining subsidies for the building owners.

Additional, funding was needed to support tenant association activities in the building. This was a key consideration, though one not very often articulated by organizers or tenants. At the tenant meetings regarding passage of the by-laws, board members read the reasons why there was a need for by-laws from a sheet drawn up by the community organizer. Tina, a tenant board

member read, "We need by-laws for a functional organization, tax exemption, to get funding. It's a way to protect ourselves, they are written rules so that we all know how to operate" (Tenant Meeting, February 21, 1991). This was one of the few times that funding needs and bureaucratic requirements were articulated as a rationale for forming the tenants' organization.

Although policy requirements, bureaucratic regulations and funding needs suggested the need for a formal organization and all its trappings, they did not dictate that a new organization --specifically a tenants' association be formed. Other options might have been pursued. For example, the local community organization providing staff time might have written a grant proposal to fund the campaign as a special project. Or, a special Eastwood committee might have been founded within the established organization to represent tenant support of the buyer's plan to HUD officials. The local community organization, however, following in the Alinsky tradition, opted to pursue a strategy for building a formal tenants' organization at Eastwood.

The above discussion regarding organizational development implicitly questions the benefits of building a tenant association. The rationale behind this questioning is based on two concerns: one, does organizational development make the best use of limited resources, especially time constraints? And two, is the organizational format most fitting to tenant needs and desires? While neither issue is explicitly discussed in the study, they remain valid concerns in the Eastwood case study and are implicitly raised throughout the investigation.

In building the tenants's association, organizers used two primary methods --board development and the floor captain system. Both were key organizing strategies in Eastwood campaign. Following is a description of their use in the Eastwood setting.

To understand the organizers' board building efforts, one must have a historical perspective of the board's evolution. I begin with a short history of the formation of the Eastwood Tenants' Association board of directors.

Board Development

After convening several initial meetings to gauge tenant interest in involvement in determining in the future of the building, tenant organizers decided, with input from a few concerned tenants, to form a legally incorporated tenants' association. The board was formally established through a charter filed with State regulators about three months after the initial meetings began. Organizers managed the incorporation process with the assistance of several pro bono attorneys and input from several involved tenants. Incorporation of the association required the establishment of an official board of directors responsible for the organization.

Membership on the board was initially selected on a volunteer basis. Former board President June recalled how she came to serve on the board "(N)obody else wanted to do it. When the TA got incorporated we needed a board. We kept nominating people and they kept declining. I was forced to do it. They needed a fifth person. I wanted to see the Association formed and in order to do it, they needed another person" (interview, March 6, 1991) Another board member recalled attending a meeting in which organizers "said that they needed people on the board. I can't remember how I got in the board. I think someone asked me. I said 'yeah, OK'" (Sharron, interview, March 21, 1991).

After asking a number of tenants to serve on the board, organizers finally found five residents willing to make the commitment. The Eastwood tenant association's first board of

directors were all African-American women. This homogeneity is interesting given the diverse racial and ethnic mix of building residents. I will come back to this point in Sections Two and Three.

In subsequent years, after the initial board was seated, residents interested in serving on the board were required to take part in a building-wide election. All residents over the age of 18 are eligible to vote. Turnout for each of the three elections held to date has been very light. One resident estimated that far less than half the building turned out for the latest election and that this latest election had generated the most participation of any held thus far.

In the past four years, the number of board positions has increased from five to eleven. The increase in the number of board members does not appear to be driven by increased tenant interest in the board. As Wilma, the current board President noted, "I think about four people ran for the eleven slots" (interview, March 18, 1993) Rather, the increased board size is related to organizers' attempts to restructure their organizational development efforts. (See "Reworking the Strategy" below for more on this).

Board members have two primary duties. They are responsible for communicating with building residents regarding the tenants' association activities. Board member, Sharron explained what board members do --"We put out fliers, we have pot lucks, go door-to-door, talking to people. We assign each board member to get ten people to a meeting downstairs" (Sharron, interview, March 21, 1991)

The board is also responsible for making decisions regarding the future of the building.

This has involved issues such as drafting and approving a partnership agreement with the building's new owner, managing tenant complaints, planning activities and, guiding the growth of the tenants association. Again Sharron explains the way in which she viewed her role as a board member, "(A)ny of the major decisions, I take a role in voting on. When the by-laws were approved we voted on them ahead of time and then they got voted on in the general tenants meeting. You have to think ahead. Not only for yourself. I don't plan on being here too much longer, but when I make a decision I think about people who will live here in ten years" (Sharron, interview, March 21, 1991).

The Eastwood Tenant Association's board of directors is a formal body governed by official by-laws. According to organizers, tenants, and the official charter, the tenants' association exists in order to facilitate communication and consensus among residents and represent tenants' interests in issues of concern to the building. In practice however, the board has not yet had much success in encouraging communication and participation among the larger body of Eastwood's residents. Board member Sharron comments on the board's difficulties -- "We have a way to go yet. The building is not as organized as I said. If tomorrow CCDC (the owner) was going back on their work, we aren't as together. We are together enough to have a few people coming to meetings, but we couldn't take action right away if something like that were to happen suddenly" (Sharron, interview, March 21, 1991).

Other residents also commented on what they perceived as a lack of tenant participation in the association's affairs. For example, Michael, an Eastwood resident and the former director of an ethnic community organization involved in community issues commented that "The tenant association is very important. Most tenants did not, have not had a good idea what the tenants

association is doing. Full participation is lacking. Even though tenants support it. That's very important. I am aware of what's going on. I should tell my family and friends. I should tell people and get them involved" (Michael, interview, March 21, 1991).

As I discussed earlier in the literature review, one of the most important themes in the Alinsky method is the notion of democracy. Democracy is important in establishing the community organization because it is both the source of the organization's power and the process by which the organization's agenda is set. However, in Eastwood's case, the tenant association was established without a significant depth of resident participation. The process was one in which organizers selected board members whom they thought would be particularly good leaders. Building organizer, Cynthia selected tenants for leadership roles based on her criteria for identifying leaders. Cynthia discussed the criteria she used, "Do they ask articulate questions? I sit down with them and do a one-on-one if I can see that they are interested. I also look for experience...June started a co-op at work. I knew she had the qualities" (Cynthia, interview, March 14, 1991). After they were selected, this group of leaders, was asked by organizers to serve on the board of directors. After several refusals, five tenants were seated as board members.

At Eastwood, the process of leadership selection combined with low levels of tenant participation has created a situation in which the board was vested with the power of a legitimate democratic institution, yet was not the product of a democratic process. Despite this disparity, the board of directors was established as the official decision-making body, representing tenants' interests in the preservation and ultimately the renovation of the Eastwood building.

Here again, we must acknowledge the external constraints faced by organizers. Because they were working against time constraints set by policy makers, much of the long-term work of leadership development had to be postponed so that a formal entity could be established to work with HUD policy makers and bureaucrats who, because of the political power they possessed, were able to dictate the terms of their support for Eastwood's preservation as affordable housing. The potential danger in this situation is that an effective democratic organization will never be fully developed. And as a result, the tenants' association could have become an illegitimate source of power or dissolve without realizing its goal of winning power for tenants. Yet, we must also understand that while not perfect, the tenants' association was more democratic than other organizations tenants had been exposed to. This in itself, is an improvement. For example, many tenants had not lived in country's with stable democratic traditions and practices such as voting and public debate over government actions. Thus, even an imperfect, yet democratically principled tenants' organization presents opportunities for empowerment which were not previously available.

There is also the possibility, in contrast to the potential for an un- or underdeveloped democratic organization, that, over time the tenant's association will become more fully democratic as tenants adjust to the opportunities provided. In the very narrowest sense, the tenants' association presents an improvement because it offers an opportunity and possibility for development of a democratic organization. Yet, like all democratic institutions, it presents a danger in that it could be misappropriated.

Establishing a Floor Captain System

At the same time they were building a board, organizers put into place another tactic,

based on apartment location, and designed to facilitate communication among residents. The Floor Captain system is a strategy for building communication and democracy among the "unorganized." It is an attempt to build a representative means of self-governance for tenants based on the democratic ideal.

Each floor has a designated Floor Captain responsible for problem mediation and facilitating communication between the tenants' association and residents. Floor Captains are residents of the floor they serve and volunteered for or were asked by organizers or board members to fill the position. Floor Captains have a list of procedures that they are to follow in certain situations. For example, if a resident complains about another resident's noise level, the Floor Captain is to inform the offending party and request an end to the noise. The Floor Captain must also fill out a short report form regarding the complaint. The report forms are then given to the community organizer who keeps a record of complaints for future consideration in eviction proceedings. All Floor Captains are required to attend meetings held every two to three months. In addition several Floor Captains are selected to serve as representatives to the board.

My research indicates, that in practice, there is confusion about who Floor Captains are and what it is they do. Some residents have no idea who there Floor Captain is. Others do not understand the Floor Captains' duties. Others feel that their floor captain does not do the job properly. Still, others who were officially Floor Captains themselves, said that they did not carry out their assigned duties because they did not wish to cause trouble. Hussain, a Floor Captain, described his work as a floor captain as follows. "I really don't know how far Floor Captains should go. It wasn't much work. Just inform your neighbors about what the issues are, what they are going to... Even if I run across the situations I don't do it. I don't want to get into any

conflict. Sometimes it does become a nuisance" (Hussain, interview, March, 1991).

Residents who were not aware of who their Floor Captain was generally indicated that they had very little involvement in the building or with neighbors. For example, one woman, when asked if she knew who her Floor Captain was replied that she was "hardly ever home" (Sheila, interview, June 2, 1993). Others were confused as to who their Floor Captains were because of recent moves within the building either on their part or on the part of their floor captain. One tenant said that he had known who his Floor Captain was when it was his daughter, but after she moved, he lost track of who took her place.

The Floor Captain system is a formalized attempt to create relationships among tenants. However, in the Eastwood setting, this strategy became problematic in that residents feared that carrying out the duties of a Floor Captain overstepped boundaries and created or exacerbated conflict among neighbors. This may, in part, have something to do with the level of ethnic, racial and cultural diversity of residents in the building. Hussain (a Pakistani immigrant) explained that, while he "personally had no problem with Blacks, other Asians were afraid." He went on to say that "(T)heir activities do seem strange to us. Parties go on a long time, people get drunk. God knows what is going on. People with strange visitors coming into the building" (Hussain, interview, March, 1993). Given the "strangeness" with which some residents perceived the behavior of others, it is understandable that some Floor Captains may be reluctant to intervene when there is a dispute over such lifestyle matters. Some Floor Captains may not feel comfortable defining the parameters of acceptable behaviors in such a diverse setting. For example, one resident, when asked if she would like to be a Floor Captain, responded, "No, I don't want enemies."

Other barriers to the implementation of the Floor Captain strategy include language and comprehension. Because so many of the building residents are recent immigrants from many different countries, communication between residents based solely on their apartment location was often difficult. As such, a number of residents despite a seeming desire to, were unable to communicate with their Floor Captain and vice versa. For example, Wilma, a board member and Floor Captain, stated that, "When I have had to go door to door concerning some reason with the board, people opened up the door and smiled and talked to me, those are the ones home of course, the ones not home were not contacted. But the ones that were home were open, even the ones that don't speak much English. They seemed to be embarrassed, they can't open up to you. But you try to relate the best you can and they seem to kind of understand, they smile" (Wilma, interview, March 18, 1993).

The lack of contact and communication among different ethnic and racial groups raises issues regarding organizing within and/or across ethnic and racial groups. The above discussion suggests that organizing within narrower groupings could be more beneficial in terms of facilitating discussion and comprehension. Yet, this method has been tried in other settings, for example unions, and has resulted in racially segregated groupings. For this reason, the implied alternative to broad-based multi-ethnic organizing is considered controversial among those concerned with building broad-based empowerment organizations.

Building Relationships --Starting Points

Both the board development and floor captain strategies have had limited success in establishing democratic tenant involvement in the Eastwood setting. My research points to several possible explanations for this limited success: 1) A lack of recognition for the ways in

which informal relationships between residents could serve as a foundation for building resident communication and collective action; 2) An undifferentiated understanding of the "unorganized", by this I mean that the differences among tenants in the building were not viewed in terms of the ways in which can produce tensions and difficulties between tenants. Instead, organizers tended to lump tenants together in one category despite the fact that they came from many different cultural, social and economic backgrounds; 3) Time and regulatory constraints (particularly those mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Affairs) imposed on the situation by factors beyond the organizer's control and; 4) the influences of tenants' experiences and backgrounds in determining their perceptions of, and participation in, organizing activities.

Before proceeding, with this discussion I must address the issue of the significance of the depth of participation. This is in itself a matter of debate. One might argue, as some have, that in any case, the original issue of retaining rent subsidies was resolved in favor of the tenants and that this victory should be enough. It is certainly a point on which Eastwood's organizers must be credited. However there is a broader issue under investigation here in accordance with the Alinsky model's goals --the extent to which significant and long-lasting social change has been made. Winning improved living situations for low and moderate income tenants is a good thing. Yet, we are led to ask, what are the other possibilities for change which could emerge from this effort? Are tenants more equipped to bring about other positive changes in their lives in the future?

Clearly, if the Alinsky method is to be evaluated against its own claims, we need to look more closely at the effort's outcome in terms of empowerment and, in turn, at the relationship between its outcome and its methods. This case study is an attempt at providing such an analysis.

Formal and Informal Communication Networks

In my investigation of the organizing campaign, I found that, while organizers were concentrating their efforts on building public formal relationships between tenants, residents were actively participating in a variety of informal networks based on household needs, previously established friendships and religious, language and ethnic groupings. In many of these networks I witnessed women playing central coordinating roles. As I conducted interviews in residents' homes I witnessed neighbors stopping in to ask favors, borrow household items, and trade skills. For example, the women I interviewed would often keep one another's children in an exchange of favors.

Other residents organized networks based on common interests and lifestyle preferences. One Catholic Filipino resident held prayer groups for Spanish speaking Hispanic residents. Another group of residents shared rides to religious events.

Many of the residents had friends and family in the building with whom they socialize on a regular basis. Often these relationships are bound up in a shared ethnic background. For instance, this summer a group of current and former Filipino Eastwood residents are planning a picnic in a nearby park.

In addition to these informal household based networks there are also many more networks which are informally facilitated through ethnic and cultural community organizations in the nearby community. For example, one current board member said that he would announce tenant association events at meetings of an ethnic community organization of which he was a member. That way, he reasoned, he could let "his people" know what was going on in the

building (Jacob, interview, March 18, 1993).

Many of the informal networks are based on shared ethnic or cultural identities. However, some of the informal interactions transcended these homogenous groupings. For example, when interviewing a Pakistani couple, I witnessed an African-American neighbor stopping in to ask if the woman could tend her pre-school aged child while she went on a job interview the next day. The Pakistani woman agreed and they set a time to drop the child off. After the African-American woman left, the Pakistani husband (who was a Floor Captain) asked the African-American woman's name. He said that he had seen her at meetings, but that he did not know her name or anything about her. This incident illustrates the ways in which such informal exchanges, based on household needs instead of apartment location or formal roles, can form a basis for communication which transcends homogenous cultural or ethnic groupings.

Most formalized structures or get togethers at Eastwood, have tended to reproduce cliques based on cultural or ethnic similarity. For example Joyce, an African-American tenant commented that "when we had the block party here, they were out there and everybody brought some food, like a potluck. But they weren't very talkative. The Asians, the Pakistanis, the Negroes and the whites. They click (clique) in they little special groups you know" (Joyce, interview, April 21, 1993). Another example of this can be found in the composition of the first tenant association board. All five board members were African-American women.

Based on my observations and those of tenants interviewed, the informal networks bridging cultural and ethnic differences have not yet permeated the formal, public networks created via the tenant's association. Yet, the informal networks do offer an example of the

possibility for such transcendence.

Basing their understanding of the situation on an Alinsky model with established definitions and truisms, Eastwood's organizers approached the campaign with the perspective that, because tenants were "unorganized," and had no formal means of representation, they did not have the "right" kind of relationships needed to work collectively to sustain the affordability of their building. As such, the perceived need was for building, from the ground up, a democratically representative formal tenant organization.

The Alinsky model provided organizers with a ready-made assessment of the "have nots" and their problems. It also provided prescribed solutions to those pre-defined problems. For example, the solution for the problems plaguing "have nots" is the establishment of a community-based organization through which power can be obtained and exercised in their favor.

Unfortunately, the Alinsky model's prescriptive approach and, to some extent, time constraints, prevented organizers from attempting to understand the situation from the perspective of tenants living in the building. As a result, the specifics of the situation, such as the rich network of informal relationships were overlooked in the attempts to build a tenant organization. At Eastwood, organizers initially overlooked the fact that tenants had a number of informal networks in place at that time. In part, these relationships were overlooked because they were not viewed as the "right kind" of relationships needed to form the basis for collective action.

Eastwood's organizers stressed the role of "public" relationships in the work of organizing. When organizers talked about building the relationships necessary to organize tenants

public and private relationships were contrasted. Lead organizer Ted, stressed that in private relationships one seeks love and security, but that in public relationships, one has to do without these comforts and step out and take risks, possibly disagreeing with others because we want and need to do what is right for the whole group (Leadership Development Training Meeting, April 19, 1993). In these public relationships, people are guided by their understanding of the group's common mission, not their own personal preferences. In establishing this public/private split, organizers have structured their view of relationships useful for organizing in a way in which informal relationships do not count toward the work of common ends. As such, informal relationships are discounted in the organizing strategy.

Because the Alinsky method's prescriptive focus helps to limit organizers' ability to see informal relationships among tenants and their potential to form the basis for collective action, and again, to some extent, because of time constraints, organizers were not able to draw on them as a resource in their organizing efforts. I believe that this is one of the primary reasons that strategies to involve tenants in organizing activities were less effective than anticipated.

Section Two: Treating the "Unorganized" as a Monolithic Whole

The Alinsky approach to community organizing is rooted in an homogenous understanding of "have nots." In this perspective, people are perceived as powerless or unorganized and viewed without attention to the differentiation among them. They are thought of primarily in terms of their shared lack of power. This creates a perception of a singular, monolithic unorganized population. This perception has impacted the Eastwood organizing efforts by obscuring the diversity and rich informal communication networks found among tenants. In contrast, other studies of community organizing have found that informal communication among

workers and tenants, can form a springboard for organizing efforts. For example, in their study

of Harlem tenants organizing to reclaim their buildings from abandonment, Jacqueline Leavitt and

Susan Saegert found that informal tenant relationships were an important indicator of the success

of organizing efforts. They write:

> The sense of ease, of knowing and trusting people, combined with overlapping networks of kinship and friendship; material as well as social support provided the matrix for the more intensely cooperative relationships of tenant ownership. The process of organizing tenants' associations usually extended the informal support to a wider group (Leavitt and Saegert 1990, 37).

Or, as Ann Bookman found (Unionization in an Electronics Factory):

> It was workers' relationships with their families, as well as with their friends, church, community organizations that provided the basis for contact and limited cohesion, especially between women of different ethnic and national backgrounds (Bookman 1988, 165).

As a result a of a lack of attention to informal networks and diversity in the building, the

differences and tensions which tended to separate tenants along class and racial lines went largely

unaddressed in the organizing campaign. Unaddressed, these tensions continued to undermine

organizers' efforts to bring residents together around building issues.

Traditionally, Alinsky style tactics and strategies rely on drawing on commonalities in

the lives of the "unorganized." This works to create an "us versus them" understanding in which

the problems faced in particular communities are found only in external threats and internal

differences are minimized. As a result, the ideology of a homogenous community is created.

In turn, strategies to address problems of external threats to homogenous communities have been

developed out of the Alinsky model at the cost of neglecting internal divisions and tensions.

Yet, the diversity of Eastwood's residents makes the use of organizing strategies evolved

in more homogenous settings less effective. For example, a lack of shared behavioral parameters makes it difficult for Floor Captains to carry out policing functions. Language and cultural differences made initial communication based on apartment location alone quite difficult. For example, John, the building owner and a former organizer commented on the difficulties caused by diversity of languages in the building, "(T)here are twenty languages and dialects in the building. It was a weakness of ours that we never did a good job of translation. Notices weren't translated" (John, interview, March 26, 1993).

In the failure to translate meeting notices and organizational updates, organizers have demonstrated a lack of recognition regarding the implications of the diversity which differentiated residents from each other. Instead of understanding residents as situated in particular contexts which define their everyday lives in more complex ways than their lack of power, organizers overlaid a general category of understanding onto the tenants. As such the effort became to organize the "unorganized" and not an attempt to reach tenants based on their locations in, and understandings of, their everyday worlds.

In retrospect, organizers recognized their oversight. For example, Ted reflected that "We never successfully figured out how to involve Africans. We used the old way of organizing with floor captains. They relate to each other through family, community networks, region" (Ted Smith, interview, February 6, 1991). Here we see that the initial approach was recognized for its lack of insight into the ways in which residents are differentially located within the context of their daily lives. Later in the campaign, an attempt was made to address this oversight (see "Reworking the Strategy" below for a discussion of this.)

The organizers' initial lack of understanding of the impact of diversity in differentiating tenants also resulted in a failure to address issues of racial tension and fear which divided tenants (the issue of racial fear and tension at Eastwood is also addressed in Section Three). A number of tenants and organizers commented that they perceived a fear of African-Americans among Asian and Middle-Eastern tenants. For example, John, theorized that a generalized fear of African-Americans might have contributed to the lack of willingness of other tenants to participate in the organizing campaign. John noted that:

> There is racial tension between African-Americans and other nationalities. There is fear. Anti-social conduct is attributed to blacks. The tension doesn't flow with any of the people I've mentioned, but, it is there. When residents saw that the tenants' association was black, they didn't get involved (John, interview, March 26, 1991).

Laura, a Filipino resident viewed American blacks in ways which support John's comment. She said, "...they (blacks) see these things going on on TV, so they would be like they are in Cabrini Green. Because the cleanliness and the way that they take care of things, you know, they just don't want to. They say, 'no, we don't care, we're just tenants here'" (Laura, interview, March 28, 1993). In this statement Laura communicates a negative stereotype of blacks as bad neighbors and irresponsible tenants.

Another tenant, Hussain reflected on the racial tensions he perceived in the building, "People have to be educated when they come over here. The media present black men --all crime is attributed to them. People who heard this come to believe this if they see a black guy drunk. They are paranoid. This is the paranoia of Asians and the sub-continent" (Hussain, interview, March, 1993).

The conditions of fear and prejudice based on race and the fact that the tenants' association had been run mainly by African-American women, helps to explain why other tenants were reluctant to participate in the organizing efforts. Indeed, racism in the context of racial and ethnic diversity of the Eastwood building has been a significant factor in limiting the participation of tenants in the Eastwood organizing efforts. Yet, organizers have done little to date to address issue of racially based fear and prejudice in their attempts to unite building residents. Clearly this is not an easy task as racism so permeates American society that it is often times invisible to the dominant group. However, tenant comments and organizers' reflections indicate that these issues prevented many tenants from participating in the campaign and therefore need to be addressed in the organizers' future efforts to engage building tenants in collective action.

One of the more interesting positive examples of the way that organizers were able to recognize and, to some extent, harness for their purposes the diversity in the Eastwood setting can be seen in the role children living in the building played in both bringing together and separating residents. Traditionally, in community organizing, children have been viewed as a catalyst for bringing neighbors together around common causes such as safety, schools, or health issues. This was, to an extent the case at Eastwood. During my interviews and visits to Eastwood, I witnessed many exchanges of child care among Eastwood residents, some of them transcending cultural and ethnic groupings. For example, a Pakistani woman who seemed to be afraid of people who were not from her country, regularly exchanged child care favors with a Vietnamese neighbor. And, as I mentioned earlier, during one of my interviews I saw a black woman make arrangements for child care with a Pakistani woman.

Residents also reported increased mingling among neighbors of different backgrounds

when children's activities were involved. For example, Brian, a resident who runs a number of youth activities in the building commented that "Basically, mostly the children, the kids (interact with different groups). The older adults really are working all the time. When they do get a chance, like when we have our groups, they kind of get out....The parents talk to me a lot. They talk to each other quite a bit" (Brian, interview, June 2, 1993).

Another resident, June, recalled how enthusiasm in participation in the tenant association was initially higher among children than adults. June said that "A group is starting with children. The first meeting had better turn-out than the adult meeting. They want to start baseball and basketball teams. To do a graffiti paint out, to have little parties and things like that" (June, interview, March 6, 1991).

At Eastwood, children have supported the tenant association's activities through enthusiasm for the social programming as well as providing opportunities for adult parents to communicate on a wider basis. However, children at Eastwood have also been identified as a source of conflict among neighbors. For example, Laura commented, "If they (children) want to play or want to go talk to their friends they have to go inside. You know and not make noise. Because you know, they're supposed to be quiet in the hallways. Other people, tenants would complain about like sometimes nine or ten o'clock at night they are shouting. When there's a party, the Indian community...when there's a party, wow! You should see them running around the hallway shouting at the top of their voices" (Laura, interview, March 28, 1993).

Michelle articulated a common perception among tenants in the building when she was asked about problems in the building: "Children playing in the hallway are a problem. This is

getting limited now though. No kids are allowed to play in the hallway" (Michelle, interview, June 2, 1993).

Despite conflicts over children's behavior in the building, problems with children also united some residents. For example, at a tenant association meeting, I witnessed the following: an African man stood up and said "(T)his lady next to me (a Hispanic woman), we live together (on the same floor) for two years. We have nothing in common, but we have seen this --kids playing in the hallway. She told them to stop. The kids screamed at her, used bad words. He was little, but he knew bad words. The next day, there were markers all over her front door" (Tenant Meeting, February 21, 1991). In this example, we can see that despite the divisions caused by children's behavior, agreement over the meaning of that behavior can bring residents together.

The role that children play relative to diversity in the building illustrates the complex effects of difference in the Eastwood setting. That is, it can promote divisiveness, between parents and non-parents or among those who subscribe to differing parenting styles. But, children can also unite residents who have nothing in common except lifestyle preferences for quiet and cleanliness in the hallways. As a result, the diversity found among Eastwood's residents is both exacerbated and mitigated when children are involved. The ways in which Eastwood's organizers and leaders have dealt with issues of diversity brought forward by the presence of children provides an example for how other issues of diversity could be dealt with in the building.

Tenant Participation

As noted above, tenant participation in the events and tactics of the organizing campaign was limited. Forty to fifty residents (from an estimated adult population of 500) attended the several large community meetings held early on in the organizing campaign. These were fairly large meetings organized and attended by community organizers and CCDC (a for-profit developer committed to affordable housing who was interested in buying the building) representatives. The options facing Eastwood was the main agenda item at these meetings. Generally, residents recalled these meetings as the point at which the possibilities for keeping Eastwood affordable and livable were explained. For example, Sharron recalled, "At the meeting they explained what was going on, how we could stop the rent increase from happening" (interview, March 21, 1991).

In the initial stages of the campaign, community organizers held several meetings. The first meeting was to explain the options regarding the ownership status of Eastwood and their potential impact on residents. The second meeting was for residents to voice their decision about what they wanted to do with regard to Eastwood's situation. Forty to fifty residents attended the first meeting at which community organizers and CCDC representatives made presentations and tenants asked questions. Twenty-five to thirty-five residents attended the second meeting held one week later. At the second meeting, residents decided by a vote to support CCDC's attempt to buy and rehab Eastwood, while keeping rents below market rate. Tenant support was needed for CCDC's purchase of Eastwood because, according to housing policies at that time, CCDC needed tenant support in order to secure financing through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

After these two initial meetings, tenant participation at public events declined dramatically with a few exceptions. Along with community organizers and CCDC representatives, a core group of eight to ten residents participated regularly in the organizing campaign which included tenant association meetings and participation in direct actions.

The exceptions to the low level of tenant participation were all large public events with appearances by public officials. As a campaign kick-off, the local community organization, in conjunction with a number of other local and regional organizations, hosted a community meeting on housing issues in Uptown. The meeting concerned issues such as the availability of Section 8 subsidies in the Uptown community, national approaches to affordable housing and the specific housing plan for Eastwood. Politicians and policy makers, housing activists and residents of a number of publicly subsidized buildings in the community attended the meeting. Despite these other agenda items, the Eastwood situation was a main focus of the meeting. Approximately 100 Eastwood tenants attended this meeting/rally.

Several months later in the campaign, the local community organization organized and sponsored a meeting at the Eastwood building with HUD officials to promote and demonstrate tenant support for CCDC's purchase plan. The meeting was held in the community room at Eastwood. Tenant turnout was high with over one hundred tenants attending.

The third event which drew a higher level of participation among Eastwood's resident's was the ribbon cutting ceremony, celebrating the official reopening of the rehabbed building. This event featured presentations by politicians and policy makers such as the district's U.S. Representative and the HUD regional director.

I have developed several explanations for these exceptions. One, organizers promoted the big events more aggressively than the regular working meetings of the tenants association. This was done through door-knocking to notify tenants about the upcoming meetings. Regular meetings were usually promoted through circulating English-language flyers.

Second, a number of well recognized community organizations including local affordable housing providers, social service agencies, mutual help associations, and housing advocacy groups were involved in these meetings. As such they drew support from tenants who were involved in groups other than the one organization sponsoring the Eastwood organizing campaign.

Third, these meetings were not so much working meetings in which individuals were asked to take on individual responsibilities, but rather informational or celebratory in nature. Therefore, tenants attending these events did not feel as though they were taking on work tasks by attending these meetings. Policy makers attended to hear the tenants' requests and views. As Hussain, recalled, "(T)he purpose of the meeting was to get people to understand our problems and views. To make the Federal government see what they can do for us" (Hussain, interview, March, 1991). These meetings were a chance for tenants to articulate, to a wider audience of influential people, their needs and desires.

A fourth explanation suggested by a community organizer is that Cynthia and the other organizers involved may have correctly assessed the importance of celebration for building tenants.

For the most part, however, few tenants were consistently involved in the organizing

campaign. In fact, as one organizer recalled, the strongest leadership on Eastwood came from Missy, a woman who was not even an Eastwood resident, but lived in a nearby building facing a similar situation. A group of eight to ten residents were consistently involved in the campaign. Non-Eastwood residents like Missy were also involved in the campaign and attended major public events such as demonstrations and press conferences.

Most of the Eastwood residents heavily involved in the early stages of the campaign were African-American women. Few men and even fewer non-African-American women participated during most of the campaign. Most recently, there has been increased participation in the organizing effort by men as organizers have tried to increase tenant involvement through creating an ethnically representative board. I believe the increase in male participation is due, in part, to cultural prescriptions in some of the ethnic groups which prefer male leadership. For example, among many of the Pakistani and Indian households, females are prohibited from public interaction with non-family members.

By and large, African-American women have carried the heaviest burden in terms of participation in the organizing campaign. The first two board of directors were with two exceptions, comprised of African-American women. All of the board presidents to date have been African-American women.

Several African-American women active in the organizing campaign explained their involvement as based in prior experiences in public housing settings. As June explained, "I'll tell you my motivation. I lived in public housing before --a row house in Cabrini Green. The main reason I moved was a rent increase. I was paying $190.00. I got a letter in September

saying that effective October 1st, I would have to pay $530.00... I know what it is like to be displaced. There is no way I could pay the CHA that much rent. I would have to heat it myself too! A $150.00 - $200.00 gas bill! I didn't see where I could do it" (June, interview, March 6, 1991).

Cynthia, the building organizer also commented on this, "Leaders are not afraid to speak out. To take accountability. To understand this you have to know that a lot have lived in pubic housing --Cabrini Green. They understand that they will get screwed if they don't speak out. They've come so far, they fought a war" (Cynthia, interview, March 14, 1991).

These women's past involvement in public housing situations has prepared them to take active roles in the Eastwood campaign. Their experience taught them that they needed to take action in order to preserve their living situations. Involvement in public housing may have also helped these tenants to understand the ways in which housing subsidization is organized and can be impacted by tenants. Possibly, having lived in this context before, they were familiar with, to some extent, the subsidy system.

Another factor impacting the involvement of African-American women in the Eastwood campaign is the way in which they view their life situation in relation to subsidized housing. Again, Eastwood tenant June relates her view, "If someone comes in, a private owner, it displaces people with higher rents. You can't find a place in the city with affordable rent. A place that you're not afraid to go and come from. A place where they don't break in" (June, interview, March 6, 1991). June is invested in the building because she sees no better alternatives for her housing situation in the future. Given this, she has opted to invest her time

and energy in making Eastwood more affordable and livable.

Another African-American board member, Wilma recalled the start of her involvement, "...the building was up for sale. They had signs that were posted up about the meeting in Claredon Park to find out what is going to happen or something to that effect. CCDC was there explaining what could happen if they bought it and how we could get involved. One thing led to another and I kept coming to meetings" (interview, March 18, 1993). Wilma could have, like many others, attended the first several meetings and then dropped out. However, she chose to continue her involvement and her investment in the building. Her further comments, "(W)e (the tenants' association) are working toward a partnership agreement with the owners and then maybe eventually going to management of the building or maybe if they decided to sell, buy the building" (interview, March 18, 1993). Wilma's comments clearly indicate that she views herself as invested in the building and tenants' association for the foreseeable future. Whether or not this is due to a perception of a lack of viable alternatives as in June's case, is not, however, clear.

I have also identified a number of other factors which can be viewed as affecting the involvement of other residents in the organizing effort. These factors include: cultural prescriptions; immigrant status; racial fear and prejudice; work and family obligations; and ideologies of independence and privacy.

Cultural Prescriptions

Many immigrant women were prevented from participating publicly in the tenants' organization because of cultural prescriptions and familial duties. For example, when I asked

Ezra, Hussain's wife, if she would consider involvement in the tenant's association, Hussain replied, "I will answer for her. It is difficult. She is strictly a house lady. She likes to be a housewife, a housekeeper. It doesn't interest her. There are religious reasons too. She may not interact with men" (Hussain, interview, March, 1991).

These cultural prescriptions made it impossible for many women in the heavily Indian and Pakistani populated building to participate. John, the building owner, noted that "(T)here is a heavy Asian and Indian population in the building...I would say that there were issues of women in households. They were not allowed to participate. If you saw our ground breaking ceremony or the pictures you would have seen (former HUD Secretary) Jack Kemp standing outside cutting the ribbon with all these veiled women leaning out of their apartment windows cheering. It was a strange sight" (John, interview, March 26, 1991).

Other cultural practices prohibited attendance at evening meetings during certain holy times of the year. Cynthia, the building organizer remembered learning about Ramadon, a holy month in the Muslim religion, "...during Ramadon the men go to the temple to pray, while women stay home and pray. That means that meetings scheduled for next week will not be attended by Muslim men" (Cynthia, interview, March 14, 1991). In short, various cultural prescriptions, most found among Pakistani and Indian populations made participation in the organizing activities at Eastwood infeasible.

Immigrant Status

Eastwood is home to many recent immigrants to the United States from countries all over the world. Immigrant status has affected tenants' participation in organizing activities in a variety

of ways. Although many building tenants do speak some English, many are not yet proficient enough to communicate in English. This has made participation in the organizing campaign formidable to some. John, identified language as a barrier to tenant participation, "(T)here are twenty languages and dialects in the building. It was a weakness of ours that we never did a good job of translation. Notices weren't translated" (John, interview, March 26, 1991).

While interviewing residents in the building, I witnessed several incidents of communication barriers due to language differences. For example, I took a tour of the building with Cynthia, the building organizer, and she wanted me to see a newly rehabbed apartment. We went to an Asian family's door and asked to see the apartment. It was clear that the family did not understand what we wanted, but allowed us to enter the apartment. After a few attempts at communicating and a bit of awkward silence, we left the apartment. Given the language comprehension difficulties in the building, it is understandable that some tenants found the attempts to organize them formidably challenging and therefore shied away from involvement in the campaign.

Many of Eastwood's recent immigrants come from countries in which democratic political participation is unheard of. Indeed, many tenants came from countries such as India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos in which open political activity was dangerous. As a result, these tenants were distrusting of the tenant's association's efforts. Brian, an African-American man offered this understanding of the situation, "Basically, the kind of tenants we have in this building are foreign. …by their being foreign, they see that, they're afraid most of the time that if they speak out, something might happen. Like they might get kicked out or you know, they're just afraid because well maybe they're intimidated and they don't want to speak out" (Brian,

interview, June 2, 1993).

Hussain, an immigrant from Pakistan's comment that, "(G)enerally, people have been betrayed by officials" is indicative of the aversion many immigrants feel toward becoming politically involved. Viewed in this light, participating in an organizing campaign such as Eastwood's could be perceived as dangerous and unwise for a large portion of residents.

Finally, with regard to the influence of immigrant status on the participation of tenants in the organizing campaign, one must consider the immigrant's understanding of his or her situation in subsidized housing. Building resident Laura reflected on the experiences of Filipino tenants at Eastwood, "This is like just a common house that they (Filipino tenants) save money and then they buy their house. That's how they do it. Some of them are nurses and doctors. They save a lot of money, then they go out" (Laura, interview, March 28, 1993). Here we see that many Filipinos have viewed their stay at Eastwood as a temporary stop on the way toward increased economic security. They had no plans for long-term tenancy in the building as they viewed themselves with other, better housing options in the future.

This view of temporary residency at Eastwood was also held by other immigrant tenants I interviewed. Many of the households in the building had family members who were highly educated and skilled, yet were only able to find low wage work because their credentials were not transferable from their country of origin. As a result, many were in school, working toward establishing their credentials in the United States. These tenants may have viewed their tenure at Eastwood as temporary in that they expected to significantly increase their wages in the future. Given this, one can understand some tenants' reluctance to participate as an unwillingness to

make an investment in improving a situation they view as temporary. Plans to move beyond subsidized housing were shared by many immigrants and indicate that their vertical view of their economic fortunes made involvement in Eastwood's organizing campaign an unlikely choice on which to spend their very limited free time. Whereas, perhaps the some of the African-American women, having lived their entire lives in the American economic system, had less reason to believe that their economic status would change significantly in the near future.

Some of the differences between recent immigrants and long-time residents may be understood, in part, as a class issue. Many recent immigrants had hopes and expectations of class mobility. They expected to be better off economically in the future and based on these expectations developed a political consciousness which reflected their perception of class mobility. In this, they may view their future as tied to their individual mobility through the job market, as opposed to through collective action based on their immediate interests as low-income tenants.

Many of those who were not very recent immigrants held a different view of their future status. These residents tended to express a desire to invest their energies into maintaining and improving the building because they could not envision a future in which they would not depend on housing subsidies. In these differences we can see a divergence along class lines. One group, perceives themselves as rising in the class structure, while another group sees themselves as maintaining their current status. In turn, this difference can be viewed as contributing to the formation of differing political consciousness which in turn influences tenant participation in the organizing effort.

Racially-Based Fear and Prejudice

As discussed previously, there was a significant amount of racially based fear and tension beneath the surface at Eastwood. This was particularly noticeable between Indian and Pakistani residents and African-Americans. A number of Indian and Pakistani residents indicated that they feared "blacks" because of their perceptions of their behaviors as strange. For example, Paula a Pakistani woman commented, "I don't know if they (black Americans) are good people or not. I knew they played the tape recorder and danced" (Paula, interview, April 8, 1990).

African-American residents also indicated that they felt the fear and distrust of other residents. One woman commented that Asians don't want to talk to people outside of their race. Another man said that he felt that other tenants pretended that they could not communicate with him, even though he knew they spoke English. These fears and tensions have worked to limit some tenants participation in the organizing efforts and, because of the limits to participation, have forced tenants who are involved to take greater responsibility for the association's development and operation.

Work and Family Obligations

A number of residents interviewed said that they were unable to attend tenants' association meetings because of their work and family responsibilities. For example, one mother from Cameroon explained that she used to attend meetings "but my time is valuable. And so they would say the meeting was at 7:30 p.m. but they would start at 8:30. That's one hour I could be doing lunches for the kids to take to school, or ironing clothes. I stopped going" (Thersa, interview, April 13, 1990).

Others were only able to attend sporadically. Sharron, a current board member recalled the pattern of her involvement, "There was also a period when I started getting into over time (at work). For six to eight months I was basically working ten to twelve hours a day at my business. After the big church meeting I took time off. I came back when they started having recognitions" (Sharron, interview, March 21, 1991). In these cases, the very conditions which made it necessary for tenants to live in subsidized housing also make it difficult for them to participate in an organized effort to maintain the subsidizes.

Ideologies of Independence and Privacy

In my interviews with tenants, most expressed a desire to be left alone by their neighbors. They wanted simple greetings in the hallways and then to be left alone to mind their own business. For example, Barbara, a Nigerian woman commented, "I've never visited other Nigerians. I don't want to get involved. Since I am busy, I like to stay away from problems. Everyone minds their own business. Only the Indians seem to visit each other more" (Barbara, interview, March 25, 1990). Wilma also commented on this, "Well, for the most part, everyone works and keeps to themselves. They say 'hello' and see people go it. It is more a business type thing" (interview, March 18, 1993).

Eastwood tenants value their privacy and independence. And because of their busy work and family schedules, they have fewer opportunities for privacy than do many people. As a result, tenants have tended to guard their privacy by limiting their involvement with neighbors in the building. In addition, because so many tenants are recent immigrants and are confronted with language and cultural differences in their relations to the outside world, many tend to retreat to their homes as a way of reducing the stress they feel in adapting to their new environment.

Discussion

In addition to the factors presented above, another way to view the low level of resident participation in the tenants association particularly with regard to issues of racism, limited time availability and ideologies of privacy and independence, is to understand their reluctance as an act of resistance in relationship to the organizer's goal of building a community organization. In this, I have appropriated the concept of resistance in a different way from its usual application. Stretching the concept of resistance in this way adds depth to our understanding of the ways in which people act in ways that are between total compliance and revolution. For a more detailed discussion of this broadened understanding of resistance see Lila Abu-Lughod's "The Romance of Resistance."

The organizers' goal has been to increase tenant to tenant communication and involvement in the association. However, there has had limited success in this regard. For example, Cynthia commented that "...I'd like to see them (the tenants) get more involved. Some are better than others and some are getting better about asking me 'what's going on?' And I'll tell them 'this is what's going on and this is who you can talk to to find out.' And sometimes they'll go ask and sometimes they won't. I haven't got them to the point yet of taking on that ownership, checking out what's going on" (Cynthia, interview, February 16, 1993).

Cynthia, talks in terms of bringing people along and getting them to certain points. Clearly her mission is to bring about a certain level of investment in, awareness of, and involvement with the association. In contrast, when tenants talk about their lives in the building, they focus on the aspects of building life which make their everyday lives easier or safer. For example, Joyce noted that "...we have a lovely laundry room on the second floor. And its

always in working order. You know, if they have problems all you have to do is report it and it's taken care of right away" (Joyce, interview, April 21, 1993).

Another tenant, Laura commented on what she and several other tenants had envisioned for the building's future, "we would like to have, would want to see a grocery convenience store (in the building). Like that twin tower, you know they have, laundry, dry cleaning. Something like that" (Laura, interview, March 25, 1993). For the most part, the issues tenants have identified as important were: ridding the building of mice and roaches, improving security, and increasing the amenities offered in the building. Tenants clearly did not appear to care how these changes came about, just that they happen. In contrast, Cynthia has articulated a vision for building an effective community of residents to make these changes happen. Yet, this desire to build deeper relationships with neighbors was seldom articulated in the resident interviews I conducted. In fact, some tenants indicated that they would rather be able to pay for better living environments than have to organize for the necessary changes.

Here, we see a difference in the goals pursued between residents and the building organizer. The organizer's goal is to build a community of residents united around collective action. The residents' goals are to improve their individual living conditions. One of the reasons for the disparity between the organizers and tenants might be that tenants do not view themselves as invested in the building for the long-term, whereas the organizers understand them to be invested. Instead, tenants, for the most part have viewed themselves as individualized from the fate of the building. The disparity between the organizers' understanding of the Eastwood situation compared to that of the tenant's might be understood in differences in political consciousness. But, because the Eastwood campaign has done little to address the sharing of the

organizers' analysis of the situation with that of the tenants, the disparity in tenant/organizer goals has become an issue.

The Eastwood experience with "unorganized" tenants points to a critique of the Alinsky approach to community organizing. The Alinsky model works off the premise that what is needed is a formal institutional base to facilitate the communication which holds democratic process together. As such, residents without an institutional structure in place appear to organizers as "blank slates" without connections and relationships to draw on. In addition, the Alinsky model tends to encourage the lumping of the un-empowered into a monolithic, undifferentiated whole defined merely by their lack of power.

In contrast, more recent work with women and immigrants' community organizing efforts begins from a very different premise. Starting from an understanding of the "unorganized's" location in a particular context, researchers have been able to identify the more informal, non-institutionally based ways in which the "unorganized" have organized themselves. For example, in Sacks' study of a hospital union drive, she found that the non-unionized workers had established a socially-based network which later became a vehicle for collective political action. This approach takes the everyday life conditions and location with respect to class, race and gender of the "unorganized" as a starting point upon which organizing strategies are based.

In the Eastwood situation, organizers came in with a transcendent prescription of the solution needed. This is the equivalent of a doctor prescribing a treatment before examining the patient. Organizers made an attempt to establish a democratic organization without respect for the class, gender, racial and cultural contexts of the tenants. For example, initially organizers

did not understand that Muslim women in the building were unable to participate publicly in the organizing campaign due to religious conventions. If this had been recognized up front, an alternative to public participation might have been devised to encourage the incorporation of the rich communication networks in use among Muslim women.

As Sacks' work illustrates, when the "unorganized" are viewed in relation to the context to which they are connected, the work of organizing changes significantly. Organizers are no longer required to enter a situation and commence relationship building from the ground up. Instead, the work of organizing begins with attaining an outlook on the issue from the embedded perspective of the "unorganized." In short, the Eastwood case study makes clear that the traditional, Alinsky-based practice of community organizing can be improved with a greater emphasis on the context in which struggles are situated.

Reworking the Strategy

In the later stages of the organizing campaign, organizers rethought their approach and significantly reformed parts of their organizing strategy to reflect a new and deeper understanding of the lives of the "unorganized." A discussion of the reworked approach follows.

In the beginning, Eastwood's organizer's chose strategies such as board development and a floor captain system to build relationships among residents. However, this overlooked the pre-existing informal networks which, exist to some degree, because of the enormous diversity in the building. As such, they did not attempt to encourage the growth of the tenants' association by working with these pre-existing relationships, creating mechanisms to bridge communication gaps and strengthening the existing relationships resulting from diversity.

As the organizing campaign continued, organizers rethought these formalized strategies in light of the particulars of the Eastwood setting. For example, one organizer reflected that "(O)ne problem (we had was that we) never successfully figured out how to involve Africans. We used the old way of organizing with floor captains. They relate to each other through family, community networks, region" (Ted Smith, interview, February 6, 1991).

More recently after reflection on and evaluation of their work, organizers have attempted to implement strategies which draw on the strength of these informal networks. The tenants association has placed an emphasis on diversity of representation on its board. Through this emphasis, organizers are hoping that communication networks built on shared cultural and ethnic backgrounds can be utilized to build tenant involvement in the association.

Other revised strategies for organizing Eastwood have included increased reliance on communication via ethnic and cultural groups in the larger community and increasing the number of events sponsored in the buildings community rooms. Events offered to date have included self-defense classes, tutoring for school children, children's art groups, adult dancing classes and various potluck dinners and mixers. At this writing, however, it is too soon to see the impact of this new strategic approach.

Section Three: Some Consequences of the Alinsky-model's Localism

This section focuses more on evaluating the content of program goals for their ability to bring about significant social change than on the meeting of the specific objectives set. This is done for two reasons. One, the Alinsky style has been developed and applied by organizers as a means of affecting significant social change. I will examine the Eastwood case study against

this intent. Second, a number of critiques of the Alinsky model have raised issues about its ability to affect significant and lasting progressive social change. Because they raise a number of valid questions about the effectiveness of the Alinsky method in this area, it is important to evaluate the Eastwood campaign against these charges.

The Eastwood organizing campaign has been successful in achieving its major short-term goals --HUD approval and subsidy of CCDC's purchase of the Eastwood building, and improvement of building conditions. In 1990, CCDC took ownership of the building. In the following months, 150 families' receiving Section 8 subsidies had their rent decreased. The remainder of the families' rent increased by five percent following a three-year agreement with CCDC for phasing in rent increases. The agreement between the tenants association and CCDC called for rent increases at the rate of five percent for the first year, five percent for the second year, and ten percent for the third year with a freeze after the third year.

Building renovation also began shortly after CCDC took ownership. Renovations included: window replacement; replacement of plumbing fixtures; window blind installation; hallway painting and re-carpeting; painting apartments; reconstruction of the parking garage; redecoration of the lobby, community meeting room, and day care center; and appliance upgrades and replacements. During the renovations, tenants moved, one floor at time, down a floor. Renovations began on the top floor. As each floor was completed, tenants moved up one floor, into newly rehabbed apartments.

The association formed a committee of tenants to represent tenant interests in the building renovation. This committee generated the most consistent tenant involvement in the organizing

campaign. Approximately ten residents consistently participated in the committee's activities. The tenant committee played a very active role in directing the choice of materials for redecoration. For example, the committee selected cabinet styles, and paint and carpet colors. Tenants were involved in giving their input regarding practicality and durability. Another committee was formed to met with tenants before they moved into the newly renovated apartments. The meetings were to review the care and use of appliances, the treatment of apartment fixtures ,and building procedures such as garbage disposal. It is interesting to note that the activity which garnered the most consistent tenant involvement was directly tied to the everyday lives of building residents. In this, we can see tenants' expertise regarding the conditions in which they live.

Through the tenants' association, tenants worked with building management to correct problems with the security service, pests and rodents and responses to requests for repairs. Throughout the campaign, tenants complained about poor security service and several different security companies were hired and fired based on the recommendations and demands of the tenants' association security committee. Eventually, the association was able to maintain a positive relationship with the security service now in the building.

Tenants were very pleased with the changes which resulted from the change in ownership. Many felt that the building and life in the building was much improved after CCDC took ownership. For example, Laura, an Eastwood tenant for twenty years, talked about how bad the building used to be in contrast to how much better things were after the tenant association was formed.

In addition to physical improvements, tenants noticed that building residents were

becoming more familiar to one another. Brian said that he felt there was "more togetherness in the building." Others have noticed tenants speaking to one another more often than before. A few tenants believed that the change in ownership, physical improvements, and the tenants' association's activities have resulted in driving "bad tenants" out of the building.

Each of the tenants interviewed was very positive about the changes they had noticed. No major complaints about the organizing efforts were offered. Although recently several residents indicated that there had been some dissention among board members over who should control the association and its expenditures. One tenant indicated that a number of board members were frustrated because an organizer was perceived as "too controlling" (Laura, interview, March 28, 1993). These complaints indicate that power within the tenants' association is becoming a source of conflict among board members.

Eastwood has been less successful in reaching its long-term goal of building a democratically governed tenants' association. Then again, it may be premature to evaluate the effort against its long-term goals after only three years of effort. However, based on the criteria of participation levels, it is apparent from board members' assessments, that the tenants' association has a way to go before it meets its goal for the participation level necessary to support a truly democratic process. Here, board member Wilma gives an assessment of participation in the tenants' association activities, "(It's) not very high. We have like eleven board members and that's the highest it has ever been. And, if we have a meeting we get twenty people if that many. At the open-house we had a huge crowd. Everybody came and it was great, so that's what we would like to get more of" (Wilma, interview, March 18, 1993). Wilma's comments and those of other tenants indicate that despite the tenants' association's success in making real and

appreciated changes in the way the building is run, it has had less success in creating a participatory organization or process through which change can be made. As a result, apart from involved board members, a sense of ownership and control of the tenant association is lacking. For example, Joyce a tenant not involved in the association said, "(W)ho am I to say who could and who could not, or who can or who cannot. I don't feel like I have a right to stand in judgement over anyone else's affair" (Joyce, interview, April 21, 1993), when asked why she did not take part in the group's activities. Joyce's statement indicates that she doesn't feel as though she has a right to make decisions which affect her life as a tenant at Eastwood. In this, she has not yet developed a sense of power over the conditions in which she lives as organizers had hoped the tenants' association would assist tenants in doing.

This is not to say, however, that the tenants' association has not worked to developed a sense of power among those who are involved in its activities. The majority of residents who were involved in the association commented on feeling an increased sense of power in their ability to affect their living environment. For example, Jacob contrasted before and after the tenants' association "(B)efore, oh man, the tenants here had no control...no control about the tenant community...Now we have very good control. Right now, the tenant committee comes to your apartment and interviews and makes recommendations to the management...That was not done before" (Jacob, interview, March 18, 1993).

The Eastwood tenants' association has established a tenant screening committee which interviews applicants for apartments in the building. The committee goes to applicants apartments to check on their living environment and housekeeping habits. The committee also takes the time to explain building procedures and rules to applicants. Finally, after applicants are approved and

sign a lease, the committee meets with the tenant to explain the care of apartment appliances and service procedures. This process can be seen as means by which tenants have increased their control in the building. Now, only applicants who meet the standards set forth by the tenants' association are allowed to move in. This provides a degree of control over building life for tenants who have had some input into setting evaluation criteria and conducting screening sessions. However, not all tenants are involved in this, as a result it may, in fact, represent a loss of control for those who have not been included in the decision-making or for tenants with differing standards.

It is clear that the tenants' association is making progress, albeit slow, toward the goal of building participation in the organization. Increasing numbers of tenants are participating in association sponsored social events such as block parties and pot luck dinners. The association has also had greater success in involving children in group activities offered in the community room. The tenants' association sponsors an art project evening, several athletic teams, tutoring services, rap groups and a dance class for children in the building. Recently the association has begun to offer adult activities such as classes in financial management, aerobics, dance classes and self-defense instruction as a means of reaching out to more adults in the building.

These socially oriented outreach efforts have brought more people in the building together and have contributed to an increased "sense of togetherness" among residents. At the same time, they offer instruction on topics of interest and needed services. In this, the association has structured its outreach around issues of everyday concern to tenants. And, although most tenants have not responded by furthering their involvement in the association, it has provided a means by which they can become more familiar with one another and the association's goals. Tenants'

association leaders hope that somewhere down the line, they can extend this socially oriented participation to the business side of their activities.

Eastwood organizers and tenants are working toward their long-term goal of developing a truly democratic tenant organization. And although, it does not appear that they will realize this goal soon, it is apparent that they have made progress in pulling people together to build the base for such an organization.

The above discussion pivots on a implicit connection between participation and democracy. That is, significant tenant participation will automatically constitute a democratic tenants' organization. However, the key to understanding the nature of democracy involves an examination of decision-making processes. In particular, we must ask, how is the organization's agenda determined? To what extent are those involved in the organization invested in the agenda setting process? At this point, it is difficult to assess the Eastwood effort in this regard. Cynthia, the building organizer, talks about training tenants to make decisions. For example, Cynthia said "I see myself as an organizer, someone who stays one step ahead of leadership, providing them with information needed to make the right decisions" (interview, March 14, 1991). In this, Cynthia plays the role of information disburser. She determines what information is relevant, what is not, what the issues of concern are and so on. In this, we can see that the tenant's leadership in the association has not yet fully taken over the process of agenda setting. This is not, to say, however, that they are not making process toward this, or that in the future they will be unable to take this function on. Rather, it is another means of assessing the degree to which the tenants' association has achieved its goal of forming a democratic organization at Eastwood. Again, to some extent, it may be unfair to evaluate the organizing campaign against their long-

term goals because they are only three years into their effort.

The next question that comes to mind is, "what is the long-term vision for a democratic tenants' association? What ends will it seek?" The answer to this question is uncertain by design. In the Alinsky style's non-ideological approach to organizing on which the Eastwood campaign was based, the goals cannot be established prior to the establishment of the democratic process because it is the democratic process itself which determines goals. As such, no guiding ideology apart from democracy is invoked in guiding the process.

Tenants involved in the association at Eastwood have hinted at what they would like to see the group work toward in the future. Board member, Wilma thought that, in the future, the association would work toward managing the building, and possibly purchasing the building if CCDC chose to sell. Another tenant Laura, said that she had hoped that the tenant association could sponsor a store in the lobby like a nearby high rise building had.

A few tenants indicated that they expected the tenants association to become more involved in the surrounding community. Tenants mentioned that the association was becoming involved in the local school councils and the park advisory council. For example, Jacob recalled that recently, a woman from the local high school had made a presentation to the association about programs available in the community. Most tenants did not seem to view this external involvement as good or bad. However, one tenant, Brian, thought that it distracted from the building-specific goals. Brian said that it was Cynthia's job to organize the tenants but that it seemed, instead, as though she was organizing other organizations outside the building and that the meetings at the building suffered as a result of this outside concentration.

Brian raises an interesting point in that he draws a line between internal and external building affairs with regard to the tenants' association. For Brian, the tenants' association is properly concerned with internal issues. External issues and organizations are beyond the scope of the tenant association. In some ways, Brian's thinking about the tenants' association's rightful activities follows the logic of the Alinsky method.

The Alinsky method is characterized by its concentration on the very local level in its pursuit of social change. For example, one of the major guiding principles of Alinsky style organizing is that all efforts should be directed at winning "real, immediate, concrete improvements in people's lives" (Bobo, Kendall, and Max 1991, 6). The influence of the localism in the Alinsky model is apparent in lead organizer, Ted's explanation of the strategy he followed in the Eastwood campaign. Ted recalled:

> We chose to connect local issues with national issues. There was a lot of debate throughout this period in the coalitions (a group of local affordable housing advocates) about using local issues as the basis for this. This is a big issue. 22,000 families in Illinois live in HUD housing. Focusing on one building was risky. The decision was to focus on local policy.
>
> (Our) role is to shape the public perception of the issue by creating flash points. We are competing for attention. We make it a problem around the specifics (Ted Smith, interview, February 6, 1991).

As Ted's above statement indicates, organizers identified Eastwood's plight as connected to the nation-wide threat to affordable housing stock under a federal program. As part of this effort, Eastwood's organizers and several key leaders were active in the national campaign through giving testimony before Congress and lobbying key politicians such as Representative Sidney Yates and Senator Paul Simon. In addition, organizers put together several direct actions designed to pressure politicians to support efforts to preserve affordable housing. For example,

organizers sent a singing chicken telegram to Secretary Jack Kemp at a public appearance in Boston. The telegram called Kemp a chicken and a windbag for failing to keep his promise to make policy changes which would preserve low income housing units.

Ted explained the narrowing of the campaign's focus to the local context as an attempt to create a successful model which could inform federal housing legislation such as the Low Income Housing Preservation and Resident Homeownership Act of 1990 (LIHPRHA). "It was an attempt to create a specific model of the kinds of things you can do" (Ted Smith, interview, October 6, 1993). Later in the campaign, the focus was shifted more specifically to the Eastwood plan for purchase as organizers worked to establish their model. In this, many activities in the campaign were structured around the specifics of Eastwood's request for approval from policy makers at HUD. Eastwood's struggle became an effort to win the attention and approval of their plan by the key bureaucrats at HUD. Organizers viewed Eastwood as setting a precedent of a successful model which could be implemented in other settings as well. The campaign was an effort to stand out from the rest, to get noticed and to get special approval.

The local level focus of the Eastwood campaign is very apparent in Ted's view of the organizing victory. Ted reflected:

> This is quite a victory. If you think about it. All the HUD discretionary money for subsidized housing in the state went to the lake front. We also got more flexible subsidies than ever before. Out of a ten million dollar total for the region, three million went to Eastwood[1] (interview, February 6, 1991).

From Ted's perspective, the organizing victory was that Eastwood had received a greater

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[1] After reviewing a draft copy of the study, Ted later amended his statement to include a condemnation of the limited funds available for HUD assisted housing.

share of limited housing subsidy funds than had other buildings in the region. The Eastwood campaign had succeeded in intensifying and winning a competition among tenants for limited funds. In this, the Eastwood victory may be seen as pitting tenants of HUD assisted buildings against one another in an "us versus them" defensively-oriented struggle. For example, building organizer Cynthia assessed Eastwood against other buildings facing similar fates, "The organizations are going in and they're starting out where we've been four years ago. So, it's real slow. And we don't have time to wait. I mean, we've got our initial work done and we need to move on . So, in that way, we're really unique. Each building is different" (Cynthia, interview, February 16, 1993).

Interestingly, at the same time, the campaign focused on the local context in terms of its extra-local consequences, it can be viewed as failing to build local tenant involvement in its attempts to change housing policies. It is notable that the extra-local work of the campaign was very thin in terms of involving Eastwood tenants. Few tenants were involved in the direct actions, the pressuring of officials, or the structuring of the Eastwood plan as a model for other preservation activities. For example, most tenants recalled this phase of the campaign basically in terms of attending large meetings with public officials present. In a sense, tenants were bodies in a room representing support for a plan that they did not participate in structuring, actively promote or even fully understand.

Ted and Cynthia's perspectives illustrate some of the potential limiting consequences of the Alinsky model's local focus in terms of its promotion of the specific at cost to the whole. Eastwood was victorious in that it secured a larger portion of limited funds. But, the tenants of other HUD buildings lose when Eastwood gains because there is a smaller pot of money to be

divided among them. Here, we have to be careful not to blame the Eastwood organizers or Alinsky-style organizing for the broader power relations which help to set up win/lose dynamics which divide oppressed people's interests and loyalties. It is likely that the Eastwood campaign would have failed to meet its short-term goals if it had exclusively focused on winning broad housing policy reforms because of the time and energy this effort would have taken from the more immediate, concrete Eastwood struggle. Instead, we need to understand the ways in which local, specific and concrete organizing campaigns can be coupled with regional and national initiatives to win both local and extra-local improvements.

Given that in Illinois alone, there are 22,000 housing units facing similar futures and the terms of the competition as the Eastwood campaign has written them, it is clear that many more battles similar to that of Eastwood's must be fought in order to secure housing subsidizes in buildings built under the 221 d(3) federal program.

The key question in evaluating the consequences of the local focus relative to impacting significant social change is, significant to whom? Alinsky organizers like those at Eastwood take the position that the impact of organizing must be felt at the local community level. Not many of us would argue against this. After all, the logic of organizing oppressed people to alleviate others' oppression while ignoring their own doesn't make sense. Yet, there is a possible middle ground which the Alinsky approach toward organizing does not address --organizing to end one own's oppression while at the same time, organizing to end the oppression of others as well. Unfortunately, the Alinsky style does not provide for such win/win outcomes in its model.

The critical issue in creating linkages between the local and the extra-local through

organizing is political consciousness. Political consciousness as I use the term refers to the understanding of one's own situation as it is connected to that of others' with respect to location in terms of class, race, and gender and other such determinants within the social structure. Through political consciousness, individuals are able to make connections between their own situations and those of others. And, as a result of their political consciousness, individuals build alliances with others, identifying commonalities and forging relationships. Because political consciousness is forged from, and reflects one's everyday experiences, it would be mistaken and arrogant to view the unorganized as lacking in political consciousness. For what such a view really reflects is the perception of the organizer overlaid onto that of the organized.

The Alinsky model offers an interesting treatment of political consciousness in that in its non-ideological standpoint, it makes no attempt to shape political consciousness beyond that required to obtain change at the level local level. Critics of the Alinsky style argue that in its attempt to win at the local level, "it tends to obscure the systematic origins of problems in its attempts to identify solutions based in local political strategies" (Plotkin 1990). As a result, the political consciousness which develops out of the organizing experience is narrow and less able to understand the ways in which individuals are linked through their location in the social structure. The narrower political consciousness, in turn, is viewed as indicative of the lessened significance of social change resulting from the organizing experience.

During the organizing campaign organizers from the local community organization participated in several research projects which examined the potential effects of neighborhood change and the loss of affordable housing. These studies involved analysis of neighborhood tensions, trends in housing and household characteristics, and abilities to purchase adequate

housing. Yet, the findings from these studies were never shared with Eastwood tenants as a means to create an understanding of the systemic nature of the problems of unaffordable rent, low incomes, and poor living conditions faced by tenants. Based on my observations and interviews with tenants and organizers, I would say that no significant attempts were made to address the wider causes of the challenges that faced Eastwood's tenants.

In my observations of the Eastwood campaign, the only activity which addressed political education was a leadership training event held approximately a year and a half after the start of the campaign. At the leadership training, tenant leaders from a number of HUD assisted buildings in the local community were presented with two models of power. One model was characterized by a pyramid to represent top-down leadership and power configurations. The other was depicted as a circle in which all parties shared equally in the responsibility of leadership. The models were presented to provide tenants with an understanding of the way in which power operates systematically to influence their lives. A discussion analyzing everyday situations in which power operates helped to illustrate the models. For example, a discussion on how some churches function like the pyramid model with clergy dictating to members followed the presentation of the models of power. The tenants also received training on appropriate public roles which they must play as leaders and the team style of organizational activity.

The leadership training featured elements of analysis critics of the Alinsky model find necessary and appropriate for affecting significant and long-lasting change in the power structure. For example, the training leader related the pyramid structure to understanding sources of oppression in power relations, "Power structure analysis uses a pyramid. That's the kind of relationships we have with institutions. Are we on top? No, We're way down here...We are

not blameless. We have made mistakes, used it (power) against one another" (Leader Training Session, February, 23, 1991).

Organizers have, in conducting this training, made an attempt to go beyond the purely localized context to offer a broader understanding of the systemic nature of power relations which shape the conditions under which we live. However, because this attempt included few residents and was narrow in scope, it had limited impact on the tenants' understanding of the organizing efforts. For example, Eastwood resident Jacob commented on the tenants' association's activities as they relate to educating tenants in the building, "(W)e make them understand what the tenants' association is about, educate, let them know what we are doing, that's the change here, the attitude toward the building" (Jacob, March 18, 1993). For Jacob, the change brought about by the tenants' association's attempts at educating tenants is related to the specifics of living in the building and good neighbor behaviors. He has identified the very local issues regarding consideration for one's neighbors as the area in which the tenants' association has focused its educational efforts. These are important areas of concern, yet they do not move tenants beyond the local Eastwood context, to an understanding of, or actual linkages between Eastwood tenants and other oppressed groups such as workers and minorities.

The use of political training at this point in the campaign does indicate that organizers have given thought to expanding their efforts beyond the micro-local focus. As such, it is an indication of an attempt to reformulate its strategy to include wider systemic origins of the problems tenants are trying to address. Thus, while it appears that the Eastwood campaign has not placed much emphasis on providing a linkage opportunity for tenants to understand their own situations in terms of the wider systematic structure in which the problems they experience first

hand originate, it could do so in the future.

Despite the campaign's lack of emphasis on developing political consciousness beyond the immediate setting, a few involved tenants articulated a broader understanding of the efforts connections to wider issues. Laura noted that "(W)e have people from other HUD buildings. We get together a month. Like last time we had a meeting with...the National Alliance of HUD tenants..." (Laura, interview, March 28, 1993). Though meeting with other HUD tenants is a relatively new and limited activity of the tenant association, Laura has conceptualized the tenants association in a way which is connected to the larger context of HUD tenants. As a result, she has begun to think of Eastwood as part of a group of a larger tenants facing similar situations. In this, Laura has developed a linked perspective for thinking about her own and others struggles. The convening of the HUD tenant group is a good example of the type of activity which can create the local/extra-local linkages necessary for significant social change.

Another tenant, Michael, who had lived in a similarly embattled building prior to his residency at Eastwood, also linked the Eastwood situation to that of low income tenants living in subsidized housing. Michael recalled how, initially, the Eastwood struggle was linked to other housing issues in the community, "(T)here were a series of meetings about Eastwood and 920 Lakeside, and 500 something Belmont. People from Uptown and the South Side got together. Under paid, could not afford to pay high rents. They got together a coalition of these forces" (Michael, interview, March 21, 1991).

The Eastwood setting can also be viewed as encouraging linkage in that one of its primary leaders, Missy, did not even live in the Eastwood building. Missy lived in a nearby building

facing a future similar to that of Eastwood's. Missy discussed her involvement in Eastwood as motivated by her identification with Eastwood's tenants and believed that what she learned through her involvement would help to resolve her own building's struggle successfully.

These examples are positive indications of what might be considered as the potential of Eastwood's organizing efforts, albeit limited in intensity, to provide a linkage between local and extra-local situations. However, we must note that these attempts in terms of the Eastwood campaign have been somewhat sporadic and limited in intensity. Most of the intensive work in the campaign has been more narrowly focused on creating a model housing preservation plan and gaining approval for Eastwood's purchase plan. As a result, many tenants, were not able to make the connection between the Eastwood's situation and the larger struggles for collective action around issues of subsidized housing and poverty. Most of the tenants interviewed, when asked what they knew about the tenants' association and its organizing efforts replied in terms of their perceived changes in immediate surroundings. Paula, a recent Pakistani immigrant relayed her experience with the organizing effort, "My brother (who also lives in the building) tells CCDC and the local community organization what's wrong. Now they change everything. There are new rugs" (Paula, interview, April 8, 1990). In this sense, the largely localized strategy of the organizers worked to limit the potential of the tenants' association in providing the local/extra-local linkage which can form the basis for social change with more significant impact both for residents in their daily lives at Eastwood and others facing similar situations as tenants of HUD assisted buildings.

To be fair, we need to understand the conclusions reached regarding the campaign's efforts to form local and extra-local linkages as partly rooted in the narrow scope of the case

study. In the Uptown community in which Eastwood is located, there have been very significant changes with regard to affordable housing. A variety of organizing efforts have, due to their proximity, significantly altered the future of affordable housing in Uptown. As a result of these separate, yet simultaneous efforts, a qualitative, very concrete change has taken place for many low and moderate income tenants. Many residents have seen physical building and management improvements in the last several years. And while, there has not been a significant articulation of the impact this has had on tenant political consciousness, it remains a very dramatic improvement. Indeed, some may argue that viewing the lack of a wider (extra-local) understanding of the impact of the Eastwood campaign as a significant deficiency is a product of the researcher's middle-class pre-occupation and bias.

Enclave Consciousness

In their localized approach to community organizing, Alinsky methods have tended to a promote "enclave consciousness" in which communities develop an "us versus them" understanding of the problems they face (Plotkin 1990). Little attention is paid to the differentiation and conflicts within such communities. As a result, conflicts and tensions emerge within the community which undermine the organizing efforts ability to bring people together. Because of the extremely high level of diversity found in Eastwood, it was nearly impossible for the organizers to ignore the issue of ethnic and racial difference within the building. However, the ways in which difference was dealt with at Eastwood did reflect the Alinsky model's "us versus them" treatment of insiders and outsiders.

Most of the organizing attempts to address issues of diversity at Eastwood were pot luck or cultural exchange social events designed to "celebrate" the diversity found among residents.

Pot lucks were encouraged so that families could bring food and learn about how other cultures eat. Cultural celebrations displayed dances and performances from countries represented by Eastwood tenants. Eastwood's major celebrations --the ribbon cutting ceremony, the building dedication, and other such events featured ethnic performances and foods.

In addition, a multi-cultural mosaic mural incorporating flags, significant land marks and symbols from around the world was installed in the building's lobby. Residents worked together to bring significant objects to the artist for representation in the mural. On my visits to Eastwood, I have often seen residents viewing or explaining the mural to guests and children.

These events and mural celebrate the diversity that many tenants say they appreciate in Eastwood. A number of tenants have commented that they find living with so many different kinds of people interesting and educational. In particular, African-American tenants viewed Eastwood as an opportunity to raise their children in a multi-cultural environment, something they said was very important to them.

Underneath the celebrated appreciation of diversity in the building were, however, racial tensions and hostilities. More than half the tenants interviewed expressed their own prejudices or fear of residents from other cultures or acknowledged the fears of others. Following are some examples of the comments offered in this regard:

> Where blacks (African-Americans) are crowded in, there are writings on the walls. They need to be able to control their children. We still have control over our 15 year-old. They let their children run wild (Barbara, interview, March 25, 1990).

> Our country people I know. I don't care about Black people. We are scared about them. They drank (sic) a lot. I don't like them (Paula, interview, April 8, 1990).

They (Asians) don't really seem to socialize with people, people outside their race (Joyce, interview, April, 1993).

More or less, they (Eastwood residents) tolerate each other. They play their game --'I'm sorry, I don't speak English' (Larry, interview, April 13, 1990).

The Eastwood campaign made no substantive attempt to address issues of racism and cultural conflict between residents in the building. In this sense, organizers missed an opportunity to address issues which prevented more tenants from participating in the tenants' association. The racial and cultural tensions among Eastwood residents also provided an opportunity for organizers to address local and extra-local issues at the same time, providing immediate, real and concrete benefits to Eastwood tenants while dealing with larger systematic issues of racism and prejudice. Yet, nothing of substance was done to openly confront the racism and hostility among tenants.

One way to understand the lack of attention to racism and tension within Eastwood can be found in the Alinsky model's attention to developing a localized "us versus them" analysis of the problem. The organizing campaign was framed by organizers as the tenants of Eastwood against HUD officials. As such, threats to achieving its objectives were to be found in the external environment. In this emphasis on the external as the enemy, the enemy within was ignored. As a result, the conflicts which fragmented Eastwood tenants were not recognized and dealt with in a productive fashion.

My findings based on the Eastwood case study indicate that organizers using the Alinsky model, may suffer from limitations in goal setting. That is, the Eastwood organizers missed an opportunity to provide a critical, mediating linkage connecting local and extra-local issues, and

therefore making a more significant and lasting contribution to social change. In its limited definition of the problem and subsequently evolved possible solutions and strategies, the Eastwood campaign has achieved a narrow victory.

In addition, because organizers neglected to address divisive issues such as racism which are linked to both local and extra-local levels, the campaign missed an opportunity to encourage fuller tenant participation in the tenants' organization and broaden tenant understanding of their connections to the systems of power in which their locally experienced problems originate. As a result, the campaign was less successful than it might have been in bringing about democratic participation in the tenants' organization. Yet, despite the limits of the Eastwood agenda in terms of addressing systematically oppressive power relations, an effort was made at providing an element of political education for tenants involved in the struggle. As such, we can see that organizers have made an attempt, albeit a limited one, at beginning to link their local work to extra-local issues.

However, we must also keep in mind that Eastwood's organizers have had great success in reaching the more narrowly defined goal of capturing greater housing subsidies to finance the rehabilitation and continued affordability of Eastwood's rents. In realizing this objective, the Alinsky-style of organizing has proved to be a tool of merit.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

At first glance there is an inconsistency between the arguments presented in Sections One, Two and Three of Chapter 4. The findings presented in Sections One and Two indicate that organizers largely ignored the conditions in which tenants lived their everyday lives and their corresponding multiple and often contradictory locations in social structures. As a result, the organizing campaign was limited in its ability to draw on the informal networks and the diverse populations represented in the building. On the other hand, the findings reported in Section Three indicate that organizers have focused almost exclusively on the local context of the campaign and have not worked to link the struggle to extra-local matters concerning the wider issues of race, class and gender oppression. As a result, no serious or prolonged attempt was made to address the issues which created hostility and tension among tenants. In this, the campaign missed an opportunity to more significantly impact the lives of HUD tenants and to increase participation from Eastwood's tenants.

On one hand I critique the Eastwood campaign for a lack of local focus and on the other hand I critique it for its local focus. It appears as though Alinsky can't win. However, taking a deeper look at the Eastwood case study, one finds that the local and the extra-local are, connected in ways in which everyday life situations are, in fact, issues of global concern. For example, the racial fear and tension which contributed to tenants' reluctance to unite in the tenants' organization is part of a global system of oppression and domination which prevents all

people from realizing improvements in the quality of their lives. The lack of attention toward building linkages on these issues highlights a major shortcoming inherent in the Alinsky model. Its local, narrowly defined orientation neglects the articulation of and action toward establishing non-localized linkages to safeguard and expand upon the local gains made in the struggle for justice. As such, the Alinsky method creates a locally effective model, but at the cost of lessened impact on social change and neglecting the development of progressive political consciousness. This is, however, not to say that it is too late for organizers to take up these issues and efforts to build linkages. However, it does suggest that the Alinsky style's emphasis on efficiency, pragmatism, and expediency tends to produce a more narrow type of social change.

The Alinsky model's lack of attention to the everyday situations in which people live their lives also has had a profound impact on the Eastwood organizing effort. By dismissing the ways in which tenants have organized their lives, organizers have failed to see the foundations of tenants' political consciousness which help to explain their involvement in organizing activities. As such, the campaign has missed some opportunities to more fully engage tenants in social change activities.

The challenge raised by this analysis of the Eastwood campaign is how we, as activists, can work to link the everyday understandings and contexts of people to a broader understanding of the systematic nature of our oppressions --how to make the invisible, visible. This entails a respect for the political consciousness which we bring to our experiences. Sections One and Two made the point that no person is a blank slate, and that we must respect the validity of experiences which have led to the development of particular forms of political consciousness. Yet, because of the abstracted nature of the systemic causes of our oppressions it is difficult for

us to understand the ways in which our own behaviors are connected to oppression. As a result, the development of political consciousness remains a significant goal of social change.

In short, we need to find ways in which we can combine efforts to make concrete changes in everyday living conditions and at the same time broaden political consciousness. This is a difficult issue because these efforts have traditionally been treated in very separate ways. For example, writings on critical pedagogy offer some ideas for building critical consciousness within the context of people's everyday lives, yet offer little in the way of suggestions for concrete changes. Henry Giroux, a prominent theorist in the field of critical education talks about community center classrooms in which students and teachers together explore their experiences with race, class and gender in a way that both validates personal experiences and challenges relations of power. Here, Giroux calls for a creation of a dialogue in which different voices and perspectives can be heard, acknowledged and serve as the basis for changes in consciousness both on the part of the speaker and the listener. The concept of voice becomes an "organizing tool for the development of a relationship between knowledge and student experiences, and at the same time, creates a forum for examining broader school and community issues" (Giroux 1992, 200). The student or speaker becomes empowered through finding his or her voice and is challenged to articulate personal experiences as a means of identifying and articulating their understanding of the world (e.g. political consciousness).

However, characteristically, the literature on critical pedagogy is long on ideas and short on action. Part of the success of the Alinsky model is that it has been used successfully to bring about real and important concrete improvements in the lives of poor people --improved housing, clean water, better jobs, etc. At the same time, the Alinsky model has used for repressive ends

through for example, aiding community groups to oppose busing and racial integration. One of the reasons the Alinsky model has been flexible as a tool of progressive and regressive agendas is that it lacks an articulated component for the development of political consciousness rooted in an ideological commitment to ending oppression. What the critical education theorists offer to the Alinsky model is a means by which practices of democratic participation and progressive political consciousness can be developed. Taken together, a modified Alinsky model and the critical education methods for developing progressive political consciousness, could make for a more effective and progressive model than either one offers alone.

Another potential resource in rethinking the linking of the everyday and the extra-local can be found in recent feminist theorists writing on social science research methodology. For example, Patricia Hill-Collins writing on African-American women and knowledge, consciousness and empowerment, takes up the issue of where the everyday experiences of individuals fit into analysis. Hill-Collins writes that "Placing African-American women in the center of analysis not only reveals much-needed information about Black women's experiences but also questions Eurocentric masculinist perspectives on the family" (Hill-Collins 1990, 223). Here, Hill-Collins provides an example of how, by starting with the everyday reality of African-American women, social scientists can raise issues about the larger, abstracted systems of oppression which structure individual lives.

Hill-Collins emphasizes the dual nature of such an approach. For example, she writes:

> It is important to develop analyses of contemporary social phenomena that explore the connections among race, class and gender oppression and use new reconceptualizations of family, community, and power in doing so. Such analyses must retain the creative tension between the specificity needed to study the workings of race, class, and gender in Black women's lives and the generalizations about these systems created by cross-cultural and transhistorical

research. (Hill-Collins 1990, 224).

Hill-Collins theorizes that by beginning with the everyday realities of oppressed people, one can gain a better understanding of the way in which social constructs such as race, gender and class impact people's lives. As a result of this clearer understanding it becomes possible to connect these experiences to broader concepts of gender, race and class. And, in turn, it becomes easier to illustrate and perceive the ways in which these forms of oppression work together in very different local settings. This then provides a possibility for forming linkages which transcend specific instances of oppression.

In thinking through the need for such linkages, I have drafted a list of potential activities which may address these concerns. While the following list is not exhaustive it represents a beginning attempt to address some of the issues I have raised. Also, keep in mind that none of these suggestions is meant to be taken alone as the solution to the problems I have raised in this thesis.

1. Political education sessions in which specific issues are explored through combining testimony of personal experience, quantitative and qualitative research, and dialogue. This could also include sessions in which traditionally defined problems (and consequently their solutions) are reconceptualized based on the experiences which participants bring to the session.

2. Town meeting sessions which work to define local problems and create linkages to groups working on similar issues beyond the local community. For example, in the West Town neighborhood of Chicago, a group of Latino women

have gotten together to hold community-wide town hall meetings every month. A school improvement campaign linking African-Americans and Latinos has emerged out of these efforts. This linkage between African-Americans and Latinos is particularly significant in Chicago because of long-standing tensions between the two communities.

3. Formation of research, education and action committees which incorporate analysis, education, and action as a means of organizing for social change. For example, a group could dedicate itself to working on the issue of racism in the tax assessment system. Research documenting the extent to which this occurs could be done. Areas for linkage could thus be identified based on the research findings. The research could be used to educate and serve as the backdrop for the articulation of local personal experiences, and facilitate the formation of city-wide linkages between geographically disparate groups who share similar experiences. The information and linkages could then be used to educate the community about the issue in terms of its extent, its negative consequences, etc. Direct actions based upon these linkages and understandings could be executed in order to illustrate the need for change and the consequences of the problem.

These suggestions for modifying the Alinsky method and linking it to actions targeted at developing and broadening political consciousness, need to be explored more in depth. As such, it is a suggested topic for future work in developing an "intermediate" organizing strategy.

Appendix

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 1

Questions and Topics used in Open-Ended Interviews

1. Why did you move into this building?

2. Did you live in this neighborhood before moving into this building?
     If yes where?

3. What attracts most people to this neighborhood?

4. What attracted you to this building/neighborhood?

5. What do you like about this building/neighborhood?

     Probe for issues related to:

          Schools
           How involved are you with school?
           Teachers
           Other parents
           Convenience of school
           Quality of education
           other kids in schools
          How safe the neighborhood is
           Crime
           Police protection/responsiveness
          Transportation
          Proximity to job
          Proximity to relatives
          Parks/recreational facilities
          Shopping
          Close to where attend religious services
           Where attend
           How involved with this religion/religious group
          Community organizations/other organizations that are available
           to help out
          People living here
          Physical appearance/maintenance of building
          Health care

6. What don't you like about this building/neighborhood?

7. What community organizations are there in this neighborhood? (probe: what do they do?)

8. Are there any organizations that you or members of your household are involved in (in this neighborhood?

Probe as to how involved:
Attend meetings
Read their literature
Donate time/money

9. Is this a good place to raise children?

If respondent has children

9A. Where do your children play?

(probe: do your children's friends mostly live around here? where do they live? how did they met?)

10. Do people get along with each other?

11. Do the people who you consider to be your best friends live in this building? Neighborhood? (If neither, ask where best friends live)

12. How well do people of different ethnic groups, different races, or different nationalities get along with each other?

Probe --this question is important

13. What could be done to improve this neighborhood?

14. How long do you plan to live here?

15. If you were unable to live in this building anymore, what would you do? Where would you move? What difficulties, if any, would this present?

16. If you had to pay higher rent would you stay here? (Probe to let interviewee define what higher rent is. What would be the rent level at which the interviewee would feel they would have to leave?)

17. If needed help in an emergency (e.g. needed someone to watch children, or if no children, needed someone to take you to the doctor if no transportation available) who would you turn to?

18. When was the last time you asked a neighbor to help you out? (probe for what helped with)

19. When was the last time that a neighbor helped you out? (probe for what helped with)

20. Have you seen any changes in this neighborhood since you moved
here? Are these good changes? Bad changes? (probe re: impact of
development, gentrification, whether interviewee sees gentrification
good or bad)

21. Some people think that it helps a neighborhood when people with more
money move into it, do you think that is good?

22. Do you think it is good to live in a neighborhood with a lot of
different types of people? Or do you think it is better to live in a
neighborhood where people are more similar to each other? (probe for
good and bad points)

Demographics (to be answered during course of interview or at end)

D1. Respondent number

D2. Time/Day of Week/Date of Interview

D3. Address of Interviewee

D4. How long have you lived in this apartment?

D5. Sex of respondent

D6. Age

D7. Apartment characteristics
Number of rooms
Rent per month

D8. Marital Status

D9. Do you work?

D10. What do you do? (describe below)

D11. How long have you had that job?

D12. I am going to read you a list of weekly wages, which best describes the total wages earned by all members of your household in a typical week?

A. Less than $100 per week
B. Between $100 and $199 per week
C. Between $200 and $299 per week
D. Between $300 and $399 per week
E. Between $400 and $499 per week
F. Between $500 and $599 per week
G. Between $600 and $699 per week
H. Between $700 and $799 per week
I. $800 or more per week

D13. Which of the following best describes your education?
A. 8th grade or less
B. 9th grade or some high school
C. Completed high school
D. Some College
E. Completed four years of college
F. Graduate degree or graduate courses completed.

D14. What is your racial background? Are you (circle appropriate response)
A. White
B. Black
C. Asian
D. Something else, specify

D15. Are you of Hispanic origin? (circle all that apply)

A. Mexican
B. Puerto Rican
C. Cuban
D. Something else, specify

D17. Which of the following best describes you?

A. African American
B. Haitian
C. Jamaican
D. Ethiopian
E. Nigerian
F. Chinese
G. Filipino
H. Korean
I. Vietnamese
J. American Indian
K. Asian Indian
L. Japanese
M. Other (specify)

D18. Where were you born?

D19. Members of Household (other than respondent)

Age   Relation   If working or recently employed, occupation and location
        of job.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 2

Interview Questions for Eastwood Tenants, Organizers, and Owners

1. How long have you lived in this building?

2. How has the building changed over the time that you have lived here?

Is it better than when you first moved in? Worse? The same? In what ways is it different? Have the residents changed much since you've lived here? If yes, in what ways?

3. What are your neighbors like? Do you know many of them? How well? What sorts of things do you do or talk about with your neighbors? Give me an example of an interaction you've had with a neighbor recently.

4. People say that Uptown is a ethnically, racially, economically, religiously and culturally diverse neighborhood. They also say that there is a lot of this same variation in the this building. Do you agree? Why or why not?

What has your experience with diversity been like in this building? Do you see a lot of diversity? Can you give me an example of some of the diversity you've noticed in the building?

5. Are you active in the Tenants Association? What kinds of things do you do? How did you first get involved?

What sorts of things does the Tenant's Association do? How did you first get involved? (If involved, what have you learned through your involvement?)

5 a). How do Board members relate to building tenants?

6. There are a lot of kids in this building. What's it like having a lot of kids here? Is this a good place for kids? Why or why not?

7. Do you remember what went on with the building when CCDC got involved? Can you recall for me what went on? How were you involved?

8. Are there conflicts or tensions among residents in the building? If so, can you give me an example of a tension or conflict that you are aware of or have observed? If not, why do you think there are not conflicts and tensions in the building?

9. Tell me about the organizing campaign?

> what did you do?
>
> how did you do it?
>
> how were tenants involved?
>
> what was difficult about the campaign?
>
> can you give me a sense of what some of the biggest problems were?

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 3

Interview Questions for Eastwood Tenants

1. How long have you lived in this building?

2. How has the building changed over the time that you have lived here?

Is it better than when you first moved in? Worse? The same? In what ways is it different? Have the residents changed much since you've lived here? If yes, in what ways?

3. What are your neighbors like? Do you know many of them? How well? What sorts of things do you do or talk about with your neighbors? Give me an example of an interaction you've had with a neighbor recently.

4. People say that Uptown is a ethnically, racially, economically, religiously and culturally diverse neighborhood. They also say that there is a lot of this same variation in the this building. Do you agree? Why or why not?

What has your experience with diversity been like in this building? Do you see a lot of diversity? Can you give me an example of some of the diversity you've noticed in the building?

5. Are you active in the Tenants Association? What kinds of things do you do? How did you first get involved?
What sorts of things does the Tenant's Association do? How did you first get involved? (If involved, what have you learned through your involvement?)

5 a). How do Board members relate to building tenants?

5 b). Some Board members have mentioned that the Board is trying to increase representation among tenants by assigning Board members to communicate with specific ethnic or racial groups. For example, assigning a Nigerian Board member to keep Nigerian tenants informed on TA issues.

From your experiences how has this worked? Do people from different ethnic and racial groups communicate?

Does this tactic build relationships among tenants of the same ethnic or racial backgrounds? Does it build relationships among tenants from different backgrounds?

6. There are a lot of kids in this building. What's it like having a lot of kids here? Is this a good place for kids? Why or why not?

7. Do you remember what went on with the building when CCDC got involved? Can you recall for me what went on? How were you involved?

8. Are there conflicts or tensions among residents in the building? If so, can you give me an example of a tension or conflict that you are aware of or have observed? If not, why do you think there are not conflicts and tensions in the building?

APPENDIX 4

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

Ted Smith, white male, --lead organizer
Cynthia, white female, --building organizer
John, white male, --CCDC president, building owner and former organizer
Sharron --African-American woman, --tenant and board member
Michael --Ethiopian male, tenant
Hussain --Pakistani male, tenant and floor captain
Jacob --Nigerian male, tenant and board member
Joyce, African American female, tenant
June, African American, tenant female, board member and former tenant association president
Wilma, African American female, tenant, board member and current president
Ezra, Pakistani female, tenant
Brian, African American male, tenant
Laura, Philippine female, tenant and board member
Michelle, Nigerian female, tenant
Joe, African male, tenant
Paula, Pakistani female, tenant
Thersa, African female, tenant
Larry, African American male, tenant
Tony, African male, tenant
Sheila, white female, tenant
Kim, Asian female, tenant
Tammy, unknown ethnicity, female, tenant
Tina, African-American, tenant
Barbara, African-American, tenant

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VITA

Originally from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Maryann Mason graduated from Ripon College, Ripon Wisconsin in 1982 with a BA in Sociology and Anthropology. After college Maryann worked for the Community Workshop on Economic Development, Chicago, Illinois, as Coordinator of Member Services.

In 1989, Ms. Mason enrolled in the Graduate Studies Program in the Sociology Department at Loyola University of Chicago. While a Graduate Student, Ms. Mason has worked on several research projects including a study of homeless women with children and a multi-faceted study of a culturally and economically mixed community in Chicago.

Currently, Ms. Mason's academic and research interests include urban studies, affordable housing, public policy and women's issues.

APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis submitted by Maryann Mason has been read and approved by the following Committee:

Dr. Judith Wittner, Director
Associate Professor, Sociology, Loyola University of Chicago

Dr. Philip Nyden
Professor, Sociology, Loyola University of Chicago

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to the content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

12/3/93
Date

Judith Wittner
Director's Signature