PLANNING FORUM

CITY ON THE HILL
IMAGES OF CITIES
FROM THE GROUND UP
AMOR Y VIGOR
ADA ON CAMPUS
POINT / COUNTER POINT
BOOK REVIEWS

PLANNING FORUM

INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Manuscripts may treat any subject matter conected with the subject of planning. the suggested length of submissions is between 5000 and 10000 words, including endnotes and references. Papers submitted are reviewed anonymously. Authors should refer to themsleves in the third person in texas and notes. Authors should submit one printed and one digital copy of written materials, which will not be returned. A cover sheet listing the article title, author's name, and author's address and phone number must also accompany each submission.

Authors should follow the most recent edition of the Chicago Manual of Style. Authors may use either the author-date (parenthetical notes with references list) of endnotes style of references. Manuscripts with footnotes will not be accepted. Authors should submit a copy of each illustration, chart, table, or graph. If the manuscript is accepted, the author will be required to provide a camera ready copy of each graphic, not to exceed 6-1/2" by 9". Black-and-white or color photographs may accompany an article, but publication of these will be at the editor's discretion.

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EDITOR'S NOTE...

Planning Forum is back after experiencing some minor setbacks in the last year. We regret that the publication of Volume 4 was delayed, but we're excited about this issue and hope that our readers will continue to enjoy the articles and features *Planning Forum* offers. While the focus of the journal remains multidisciplinary, in this issue we present articles from the planning students and faculty of the University of Texas. In the future, we hope to present articles from other disciplines and will continue to welcome submissions from students and faculty across the country.

Volume 4/5 of *Planning Forum* begins with an article by Dr. Barbara Parmenter. In her article, *City on the Hill*, Dr. Parmenter discusses how the many political factions in Jerusalem influence the development of that city. Carl Grodach takes us through three neighborhoods in Austin to explore how mural art defines local space and represents social relationships among City residents.

Two articles discuss the significance of community building. Dr. Elizabeth Mueller looks at the need for increasing the capacity of community development organziations in El Paso. Her article looks at how efforts to improve housing are done on a city-wide, rather than a neighborhood level, due to scarce resources and the need for technical assistance. Dr. Patricia Wilson presents important findings on the impact of community participation in encouraging a sense of public identity and individual empowerment for *colonias* residents. Finally, Maureen Meredith describes the frustration felt by disabled students at UT and their efforts to become more active participants in campus accessibility planning decisions.

Two features are also included in this issue of *Planning Forum*. In *Point/Counterpoint*, edited by Joseph Cahoon and Leslie Oberholtzer, several planning professors and practitioners discuss the role of community involvement in the planning process. Our book review feature, *Off the Shelf*, highlights the variety of interests among planning professors at UT.

Planning Forum, Volume 4/5 would like to thank the Mike Hogg Endowment for so generously sponsoring this effort. Their kind support has again ensured that *Planning Forum* can continue to present timely research and important perspectives to both academic and professional planners. Our thanks also go to the School of Architecture and to Dr. Hani Mahmassani, whose beneficence is greatly appreciated. The Planning Forum Advisory Board, particularly our faculty sponsor Susan Handy, was generous with sage advice and encouragment. Finally, I would like to thank this year's Editorial Board for their perseverance and enthusiasm, with a special thanks to David Danenfelzer for his tremendous effort in producing this volume. This issue represents the tenacity of students who have many demands on their time, but whose commitment to this project never faltered.

Tammy Morales

CITY ON THE HILL

Barbara Parmenter, PhD.

> The city of Jerusalem has been the scene of some of the most bitter struggles in the history of the world. In the twentieth century professional planners are also struggling to do their jobs.

By the first light of dawn Jerusalem appears as it always has in the imaginations of countless minds across the globe, in centuries past and present. Standing on the Mount of Olives, one can gaze across the Valley of Jehoshophat at the Dome of the Rock rising above the city wall. Muslims believe that Muhammad ascended to heaven from this mosque astride a winged horse during a miraculous night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem. The mosque stands on the site where King Solomon built a temple for the people of Israel, a holy edifice destroyed first by Babylonians, rebuilt and destroyed again by Roman legionnaires. Beyond the mosque, out of view, stands the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, venerated as the place where Jesus of Nazareth was crucified and buried. On both slopes of the valley below lie the graves of believers, carefully segregated by religion. All are first in line to be resurrected on the Day of Judgement.

Jerusalem is an ancient and holy city, sacred to a large swathe of humanity. But as the morning brightens, the high rises on the western side of the city appear, and from every direction comes the clamor of taxis, buses, and cars. Six hundred thousand people are waking up to another day. They are bitterly divided over the city's future, but regardless of their differences, they still need water, electricity, roads, housing, and the other necessities of urban life. How does one plan for such ordinary needs in such an extraordinary place? The answer, it seems, continues to elude Jerusalem's city planners who must practice their trade amidst a highly politicized web of conflicting demands and priorities.

Such is the story told by two recent books: Meron Benvenisti's *City of Stone: The Hidden History of Jerusalem* and Michael Dumper's *The Politics of Jerusalem Since 1967*. They join a plethora of books about Jerusalem written from all sides of the political and religious spectrum but are among the few which recount in detail the city's modern planning history. Both stand out for other reasons as well. Dumper's study is carefully researched and documented and shows how exhaustively he has studied the multitude of planning documents produced since the Israelis gained control of the both sides of the city in 1967. Meron Benvenisti's book, on the other hand, expresses the frustrations and insights of first-hand experience. Immediately after the chotomy suggests. In Jerusalem, municipal planners struggle with national authorities, secular and religious Jewish residents face off in neighborhood turf battles, and pragmatists battle ideologues to present their vision for a sustainable urban future.

THE POLITICS OF HOUSING

Housing is a major flashpoint of local conflict in Jerusalem, as both books explain in detail, whether between city planners and national politicians, between Arabs and Jews, or between orthodox and secular Jews. Immediately after the 1967 war and the capture of East Jerusalem, the Israeli government embarked on intensive housing development in the Jerusalem region for the strategic reasons discussed earlier. The neighborhoods of French Hill, Ramot Eshkol, and Pisgat Ze'ev were strategically located to link West Jerusalem with Mount Scopus, an important hilltop site in East Jerusalem that is the home of Hebrew University. These and other communities gave rise to the concept of "Fortress Jerusalem" in which new densely built apartment complexes rise on hillsides behind massive retaining walls, dwarfing scattered Palestinian settlements below. Satellite cities were constructed farther out to further enclose Jerusalem with Jewish settlement. The first four of these, all on territory captured in the 1967 War, mark the four compass directions: Ramot to the northwest, Neve Ya'acov to the northeast, East Talpiot to the southeast, and Gilo to the southwest. The two northern towns serve the additional purpose of breaking up the continuity of Palestinian settlement in the corridor leading from Jerusalem to the important West Bank Arab town of Ramallah. Since the construction of these satellite towns, several other suburban communities have been built to complete the belt of Israeli settlement

around the city, and others are in planning stages.

These housing developments have many repercussions, as exemplified in the bitter controversy over Jewish housing construction at Har Homa (Jebel Abu Ghneim) in 1997, which dealt a severe blow to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. From the point of view of city planners, the new towns and neighborhoods placed a large burden on city services and diverted funds to outlying zones. Because the new settlements were built quickly for housing purposes, they lacked the infrastructure and economic development opportunities necessary for sustainability. Further, because the national government has continually offered financial incentives for Jews to move to these communities, the new towns draw residents away from existing Jewish neighborhoods in Jerusalem. This both damaged the economy of the central core and hampered efforts to maintain a Jewish majority of 78% in the city.

With housing construction paramount for strategic reasons, the provision of infrastructure has fallen behind the construction pace. The city government has repeatedly protested against increased housing construction without adequate infrastructure. As one example, Dumper details the scandalous state of sewage treatment in the city. In 1995, Jerusalem's sewage outflow amounted to 95,000 cubic meters daily, of which only 13,000 cubic

Map 1: Israel and the Occupied Territories

meters were routed through a purification plant. Most of the rest went through simple filtration systems in which the bacteria was left untreated and then discharged into local streams. Some sewage was pumped out into the desert entirely untreated. The Jerusalem Municipality has had disputes with the Ministry of Housing in which the latter has reneged on promises to provide sewage treatment or postpone occupation of housing units until such treatment is provided (Dumper, 1997:145-152). City officials see themselves as saddled with the results of problems created by national strategic policies or by Ministries pandering to their particular political constituencies.

THE OTHER JERUSALEMITES

Thirty years of intensive effort to support growth of the Jewish population in Jerusalem through immigration, housing subsidies, and other incentives has only managed to maintain the status quo of 1967: 78% Jewish and 22% Arab. This indicates that the Palestinians have a demographic power of their own. They have higher birth rates—a fact all too familiar to Israeli government strategists—and are equally intent on maintaining and expanding their proportion of the population. In addition, in one of the many striking ironies one encounters in Jerusalem, Israeli housing projects have acted as magnets attracting Palestinian workers from elsewhere in the occupied territories into the Jerusalem region, where they form the bulk of the construction industry's labor force. Although these workers are mostly forbidden from living or even spending the night in Jerusalem, large numbers of them have settled in the city's immediate West Bank periphery, and unknown numbers may be living illegally within the city. The result is that although the 78/22 population split has been maintained within the city limits, in the Jerusalem region as a whole there may be parity or even a population advantage for the Palestinians (the numbers largely depend on how the "Jerusalem region" is defined, as Dumper explains).

Thus, in addition to encouraging Jewish growth and strategically locating new Jewish neighborhoods, Israeli authorities have also attempted to restrict Palestinian development.
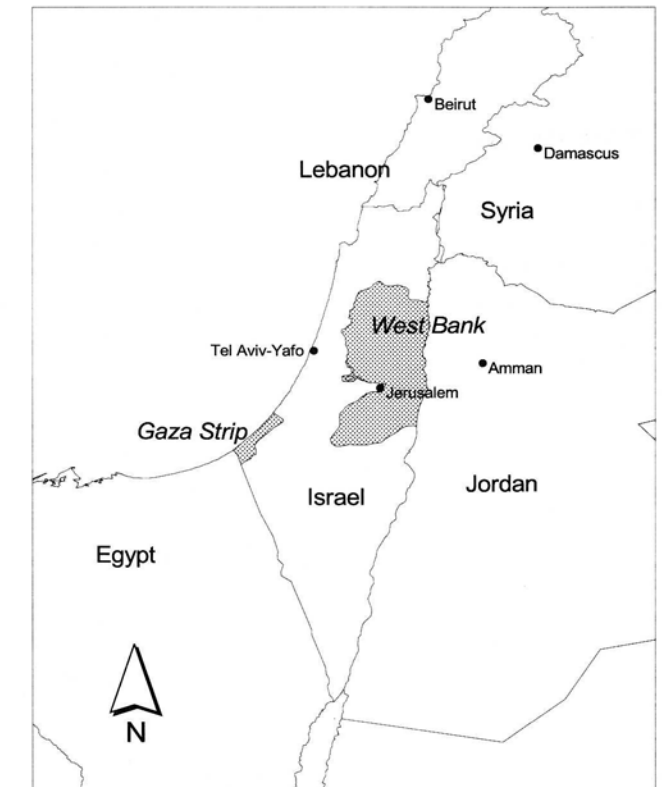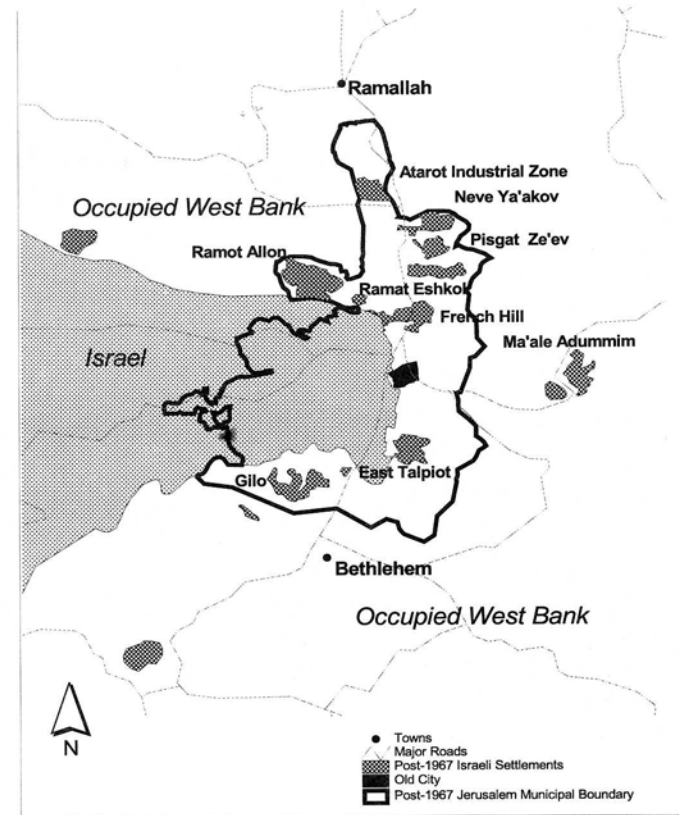
Map 2: Jerusalem and Israeli Settlements in the West Bank
Post-1967

Both Benvenisti and Dumper deal with these latter policies in detail, and the two authors are interesting to read in tandem. Dumper has the statistics, documents, and in-depth analysis of an academic researcher; Benvenisti the exasperation and bitterness of a political insider turne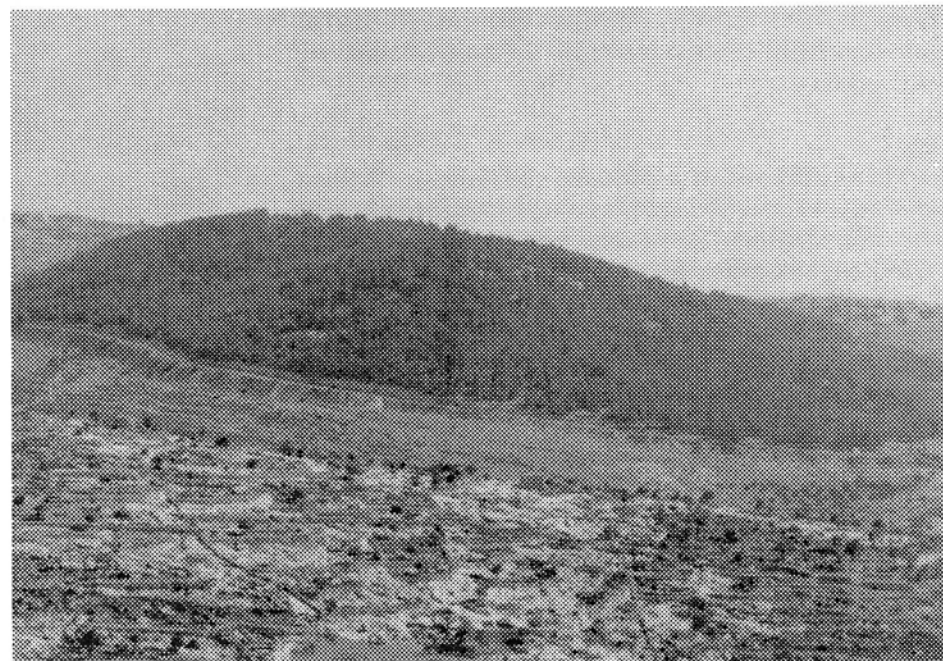d angry critic. First and foremost, the large-scale land expropriation and massive public expenditures for housing construction has benefited Jewish residents almost exclusively. As Benvenisti notes, the expropriation of Arab land, which is legal for public purposes under Israeli law, demonstrates an extraordinary interpretation of the word "public" as including only the Jewish portion of the public. New Palestinian housing construction has thus been restricted by expropriation of landholdings and by the fact that Arab housing usually must be privately funded and executed. The dearth of Israeli investment in Arab housing has been partially compensated for by funding from Arab and Palestinian "steadfastness" organizations outside Israel that have been dedicated to maintaining an Arab presence in Jerusalem. In another of Jerusalem's great ironies, a fund established by the Palestine Liberation Organization to support Arab construction in East Jerusalem became so mired in corruption that the PLO began requiring applicants to show proof that they had acquired a building permit from the Israeli government.

Apart from funding and land expropriation, several planning tools are used to limit Palestinian growth in the city. One characteristic of Palestinian settlements which is similar to traditional settlements elsewhere in the world is that houses are grouped together, with private lands located outside this built-up area. These lands are used for crops, orchards, and pasturing and often represent a reserve land supply for future family expansion. Palestinians complain that their undeveloped land is frequently zoned as open space or not zoned at all. Because building permits are only granted for areas that have been zoned for development, construction is illegal in either case. This restricts Palestinians from building on their own land, thereby confining their rapidly growing families to existing residential areas

where housing density is already twice as high as in West Jerusalem. Within Palestinian neighborhoods, building is usually restricted to one or two stories, while height restrictions in West Jerusalem are three to five stories. The salt in the wound from the Palestinian perspective is when their unzoned or "open space" land is expropriated and then zoned for residential or other use by Israelis. Zoning is thus seen as a method to hold land in reserve for new Israeli development. Finally, Palestinians complain that even in situations where Israeli law should allow them to build, they still find it difficult to obtain the necessary permits. Although the Israeli government has long denied discrimination in this regard, according to Dumper, a city official at a public meeting inadvertently admitted that quotas are used when granting permits—again so as to maintain the desired 78/22 population split.
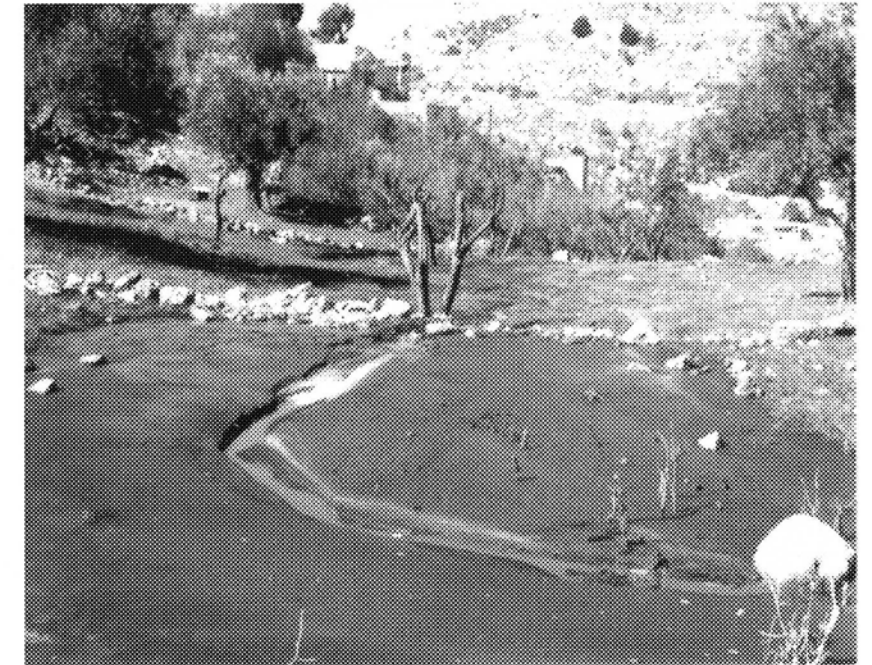
WHOSE JERUSALEM?

Although the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians looms large in both Dumper's and Benvenisti's books, the growing numbers and power of the ultra-orthodox community in Jerusalem is creating another faultline of division. A recent opinion poll concluded that Israelis were generally more worried about the intra-Jewish religious conflict than they were about relations with the Palestinians. In Jerusalem itself, 10% of secular Jews who left the city in 1997 cited the influence of the ultra-orthodox Jews as the main reason for their departure (The Economist, "Israel at 50", 4/25/98, pp. 4, 8). The term "ultra-orthodox" is widely used outside Israel and in Benvenisti's book, but it is somewhat of a misnomer. The so-called "ultra orthodox" represent a small percentage of Orthodox Jewry and may not be any more religiously observant than their fellow orthodox. In Israel, the "ultra-orthodox" are called haredim (haredi, singular), a Hebrew word meaning "those who tremble" (i.e., tremble before God). The haredim deny to varying degrees the legitimacy of the Zionist political system, which they see as secular and a violation of a divine injunction not to hasten the return of exiles to the Promised Land, a task to be accomplished only by the messiah. One small sect of haredim has gone so far in its rejection of the Israeli state as to actively work with the PLO. For the most part, however, the conflict with the Arabs is of little interest to them. Instead, they devote their lives to religious duties and to opposing the secular political system and lifestyle that they fear will bring down divine retribution on the people of Israel.

Benvenisti calls attention to the growing tensions between haredim and secular Jerusalemites but judges these problems less significant than the Israeli-Palestinian rift. Another book, To Rule Jerusalem, by Roger Friedland and Richard Hecht, takes a dimmer view. Friedland and Hecht, both professors at the University of California, Santa Barbara, devote nearly two hundred pages to the various "culture wars" ongoing between Jewish residents of the city. The haredim fiercely reject secularism in all its guises. In order to follow Jewish law, they prefer to live in homogeneous neighborhoods with all their needs close at hand (they must live within walking distance of a temple, for example, because they will not operate a car on the Sabbath). Although they live in communities throughout Israel (as well as in the United States and Europe), they are strongest in Jerusalem, where

they account for approximately 30% of the Jewish population. Further, the population of the haredim is growing at a rate twice that of the secular Israelis. Thus, a group that Zionist leaders once thought was a relatively harmless and anachronistic annoyance now wields substantial local and national political power. In Jerusalem this power translates into the ability to capture a substantial share of public funding to fuel their expanding neighborhoods, schools, and services. It also leads to a battle for living space in an already crowded city. Secular residents accuse the haredim of block-busting tactics: moving a few families into a neighborhood and paying high prices for housing, then slowly forcing secular Jews to leave by harassing anyone who does not follow their strict rules of behavior. As properties become available and housing values fall, more haredim move into the neighborhood.

The influence of haredim is felt far beyond their neighborhoods. Jerusalem, unlike other Israeli cities, falls silent from Friday night until sundown Saturday in observance of the Sabbath. Movie theaters, restaurants, and other entertainment venues close, bus service stops, and cars passing near haredi neighborhoods risk being stoned. Road planning has been fraught with difficulty because haredim vociferously and sometimes violently oppose driving on the Sabbath. For most Israelis Saturday is simply a weekend day on which to travel, relax, run errands, etc., thus the threat of haredi violence towards drivers is frustrating in the extreme. A new highway linking Jerusalem to the new suburb of Ramot led to six years of violent protests and pitched stone-throwing battles between haredim, Ramot residents, and the police. A by-pass finally had to be constructed to route traffic out of haredi neighborhoods. The influence of haredim on city policy and their success at garnering public funding are a double affront to other Jewish residents of the city because the majority of haredi men do not work (in order to devote themselves to religious study) and are exempted from army service. Friedland and Hecht see these culture wars as intractable. "The haredim seek to regulate the public, as well as the private, behaviour of their Jewish neighbors....Locked in moral battle with the Zionists around them, they increasingly threaten to make Zion unlivable for the Zionists." The result is yet more polarization in a city already strained between competing visions and histories.

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ANGER AND CONSOLATION

Meron Benvenisti presents himself as an angry pragmatist. He notes in an earlier book that, as administrator of the "Eastern Sector" of Jerusalem after the 1967 war, he was responsible for both overseeing the demolition of homes belonging to the families of suspected Palestinian guerillas and helping those same families to find new housing. Such are the contradictions of Jerusalem, and these, in Benvenisti's opinion, cannot be willed away by nationalists, fundamentalists, or would-be peace-makers. It is not surprising therefore that Benvenisti is considered suspect on many sides. He is condemned as a traitor by right-wing Israeli commentators but is also frequently criticized by the left for his pessimism and subsequent unwillingness to work for a peace he considers unattainable. Amos Elon, an Israeli scholar and author, paraphrases Benvenisti's position as, "You can have Jerusalem or you can have peace, but you can't have both." It is a stark decision for all of Jerusalem's residents, and those who make it must be prepared for its consequences.

The source of Benvenisti's anger lies in the continual subordination of Jerusalem's needs to ideologues of all stripes who envision it as their eternal city. A native of the city, he is exasperated by partisan interpretations of Jerusalem's history which are promulgated only to give credence to particular groups' own visions. He ends his book by taking the reader on a walk through Jerusalem's many cemeteries where one can find a moment of rare quiet and consolation among the dead. The graves are a reminder that the city's stubborn historical reality has seen many visions come and go with "no victors and no vanquished." City of Stone and the other books mentioned here shed a fascinating and stark light on this brief moment of Jerusalem's life.

Both books examine, in different ways, the city that has been created since the 1967 war—an unwieldy, sprawling metropolis in which the exigencies of national and regional politics have frequently run roughshod over the needs of an urban community.

Barbara Parmenter received her Ph.D. in geography and is currently a lecturer in the Graduate Program in Community and Regional Planning, both at The University of Texas at Austin.

Books Discussed:
Benvenisti, Meron. 1996. *City of Stone: The Hidden History of Jerusalem*. Translated by Maxine Kaufman Nunn. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.
Dumper, Michael. 1997. *The Politics of Jerusalem Since 1967*. New York, New York: Columbia University Press.
Friedland, Roger, and Richard Hecht. 1996. *To Rule Jerusalem*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

IMAGES OF CITIES:
INTERPRETING MURAL ART IN AUSTIN, TEXAS

Carl Grodach

> Murals can serve as unique means to describe and compare geographically contiguous, yet socially distant areas of the city, serving as detailed indices of actions and events within everyday life.

I visited Austin for the first time in 1993. After driving all night from Tucson, Arizona, we approached the city just as the sun was rising in spectacular deep red. The first significant thing I remember was a mural greeting us to the entrance of "The Drag," the portion of Guadalupe Street adjacent to the University of Texas. The mural displayed a frog-like creature with eyes on the end of it's tentacles exclaiming, "Hi, how are you?" (Fig 1). This mural in fact was painted by long time Austin resident and renowned singer/ songwriter Daniel Johnston from the cover of his 1983 album.

This was a sight for sore, tired eyes. The impression of this sight, while in part due to sleep deprivation, was amazing. The mural not only reinforced an outsider's preconceptions of Austin, that of a potentially bizarre place that produces diverse music, but was an appropriate sign announcing the entrance to this place filled with students, artists, punks, and hippies. Daniel Johnston's simple scrawling on a wall captured at once the physical and symbolical essence of Austin, Texas as university town.

People mark the spaces of every city physically and symbolically. The forces and relations of production of every society in history create, i.e. produce, a physical and social space appropriate to its social, political, and economic needs. Everything from extensive state projects to daily routines engrains meaning into the urban landscape. Space gains symbolic values laden with history, ideology, and power. Space is a "product to be used, to be consumed, it is also a means of production; networks of exchanges and flows of raw materials and energy fashion space and are determined by it" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 85). In *The Production of Space,* Henri Lefebvre argues that social life is literally produced and reproduced through space. His social-spatial dialectic significantly describes not only how space and its economic and political organization express social relationships, but how these social relations reproduce and form space as well. (Lefebvre, 1991). Space and social relations are intimately intertwined (and can be interpreted).

One way the relationship between society and space is revealed is through urban murals. Murals can tell local histories of families and of social and class relations; they can transform or reinforce control of space and may also obscure the true meaning and use of a place. They may produce vernacular space, the appropriation of an environment that neglects local needs, identity, and culture, and, in effect open up a locale for lived experience. Conversely, murals may reinforce a space of domination. Finally, murals may incorporate what appear to be local definitions of a site, while actually strengthening outside influence.

The purpose of this article is twofold. First, I illustrate how murals define local space. The images within a mural and their location indicate representations of meaning, value, and interpretations of the neighborhood, city, and life for local residents. Murals may serve as unique means to describe and compare geographically contiguous, yet socially distant areas of the city, serving as detailed indices of actions and events within everyday life. They act as physical reproductions of places, while locating official or vernacular meaning in space. Second, I analyze urban places based on a methodology atypical to planning studies by coupling Lefebvre's theory of the production of space with an elaboration on vernacular space. This methodology can provide a framework for interpreting the complex social and spatial relations in Austin, Texas. East Austin, downtown, and the Drag. The pivotal points where, more than anywhere else in the city, murals reveal historical and social relationships- how individuals and groups claim space and how it is exploited politically and economically.

A DÉRIVE WITH HENRI LEFEBVRE

In order to comprehend the calculated/official and local/vernacular meaning of murals, we must first go astray. The theory of the production and reproduction of space outlined by Henri Lefebvre in *The Production of Space* (1991) is essential to understanding how control over space is a source of social power in everyday life. Space is filled with meaning, actions, and time. Alone it is an empty abstraction, but when space is treated as imbued with the thoughts and actions of people, it is revealed to be a fundamental part of everyday life. Space is anything but a simple container, separate and detached from daily experience. Indeed, space is a social product.

In order to unveil the significance of social space Lefebvre outlines a conceptual triad, which is a dialectical relationship between the *perceived* (sensory experience of apprehension and cognition), the *conceived* (idealized experience based on professional or scientific knowledge), and the *lived* (concrete, subjective experience). In spatial terms, the dialectical relationship composes a spatial code of *spatial practice*, *representations of space*, and *representational space*. The spatial code helps to uncover the illusions of space and unifies the spaces of social practice by revealing common characteristics between divergent places.

Closely associated with everyday experience and daily routines, *spatial practice* defines the actions appropriate to a specific locale. For example, it defines the relationship of person to place through land use and exclusionary zoning or through social networks that demarcate space. *Representations of space* are consistent and coherent symbols of idealized types of space. This is the conceptualized space of professionals such as architects, engineers, and planners. While often treated as "lived" space, it is quite literally a symbolic representation of space informed by the mode of production and the ideals of such specializations. The result is the production of distinct, separate, and often homogenized spaces. *Representational spaces* overlay physical space with historical and cultural symbols. It is the space of imagination "linked to clandestine and underground side of social life, as also to art" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 33). Representational space is grounded in social life in the form of symbolic places and objects such as a church, public square, or public art (murals) and graffiti. Representations of space and representational space profoundly influence social-spatial practice. Each symbolically circumscribes action, familiarity, or fear in and of an environment.

Fig. 1 - "Hi, How Are You?"

Fig. 3 - "Safe Sex"

In studying murals, the spatial code serves to uncover hidden relationships buried in space and highlights the personal and social divisions between, for example, public and private, real and symbolic, or inside and outside. The spatial code reveals not only the instrumental use of space- fragmented and hierarchically ordered by political and economic authority- but the way in which individuals adapt a site to suit local and personal needs.

The social-spatial dialectic illuminates the intimate relation of people to place. It illustrates how social and spatial relations are inextricably linked to the mode of production, as to everyday life. Space, therefore, is not merely a container for events and actions but is constituted by and is the constitution of social space and practice.

VERNACULAR SPACE AND ART

The study of vernacular space seeks to understand how people build or design their needs, identity, and culture into a daily environment that lacks or otherwise obscures these things. Vernacular spaces are the non-market spaces within and between official representations of space. Such an analysis is concerned with the transformation and creative process that produces both new space and material forms that oppose the context of market-driven spaces and strengthen local identity and security.

Public art, specifically murals, is one method of establishing and organizing vernacular space in the urban environment. Murals mark social and physical space and imbue it with symbolic value. In this context, symbols imply either an emotional or financial investment and signify power and possession. The potential of murals is threefold. First, as vernacular space, they may transform everyday objects and spaces and territorialize them as symbolic, representational space. By setting up an oppositional space, murals may critique the production of officially planned representations of space (political, class, or social relations) and thereby set up "counter-spaces" to or within these particular representations. Second, murals can reinforce everyday spaces as capital-dominated representations of space through monumentality or nostalgia. Third, murals can incorporate what appear to be the spaces of lived experience into representations of space. What we often take as meaningful in a local or personal sense is often contrived by an instrumentally bureaucratic source such as a city tourist bureau. This is the hidden dimension of space that historically blurs the difference between conceived and lived experience.

The abstract, idealized conceptions of space created by architecture and planning leave open the potential for introducing new social practice into a place. Art allows people to transform the space conceptually attributed to them by materializing local history or community pride. Murals may set up points of reference for local residents to counter abstract representations mistaken for lived experience and murals manipulate this space without actually transforming it. However, art may also be employed as a strategy to reinforce representations of space dominated by non-local capital.

As vernacular space, a mural may serve to appropriate space for a group. Appropriated space is space transformed to meet local needs. An appropriated space modifies natural

Fig. 4 - "Safe Sex" at Habitat RE-Store

space, yet resembles a work of art: it is intentionally created, real yet filled with symbology. Appropriated space bounds and defines the area in question for the users. In this instance, the existing order is, in a sense, deceived by art: local techniques are reintroduced into abstract space and exist adjacent to or within it.

Murals may also serve to dominate space. Dominated space is that transformed outside local control through monumentality, spectacle, and conceptions of spatial types. This conception of space eradicates natural space and replaces it with the abstract, homogenized ideations and spatial grids formed by capital and mass culture.

Since murals do not single-handedly appropriate or dominate space, it is often more accurate to say they *reappropriate* space or reinforce dominated space. When an existing space has been abandoned

Fig. 5 - "Independencia"

or has outlived its original purpose, its use may be diverted or reappropriated to an entirely different use than originally intended. Murals sketch different stories and layers, symbolically binding people to place. On the other hand, murals may reinforce dominated space by serving as visual representations, symbolic of non-local images. Such murals organize space beyond the will of the community and their lived experiences.

Murals possess the ability to transform non-local representations of space by creating local, historical space. As such, art brings past, representational space to life. It is a means out of the space assembled and managed by economic obstacles and into history manifest in the present. Murals are not simply meant to be seen, but to *be*. They serve as local landmarks and anchor the nexus of paths and places physically, socially, and symbolically.

The reappropriation of a space through the mural, one that forms a locally defined site, may only be a temporary obstacle to the continuous advance of an ideal space contrived by professionals and tourists. Murals that do not make a profound mark on space, or generate their own space, simply become images. And as we will see, even when murals do constitute significant appropriated space or express community pride, they may still be commodified and contribute to outside exploitation. This is the role of vernacular space: to open space constantly and consistently for lived experience in the city.

THREE AUSTIN PLACES

Murals in this city serve primarily three functions. In East Austin, they may establish vernacular space or reinforce reappropriated space for the local community. Art transforms impersonal, anonymous buildings and brings them into the local realm. They visually reorganize space, enabling mental and social possession of place. Second, as seen downtown, murals can reinforce abstract or official representations of space. They can contribute to organizing a space of play or nostalgia or transform art into something trivial, reinforcing the image of a business or place. In this instance, instead of augmenting community power, murals transform the community image into a museum piece and tourist space. Additionally, as is the case for both downtown and on the Drag, murals appear to (re)appropriate space, but actually serve to consolidate representations of space into representational space. In this instance, cultural symbols

Fig. 6 - East Austin Bar Mural

Fig. 7 - George Washington Carver Library

and conceptualized civic goals are historically mixed in space. What appears to be a unique local space has always been a representation of "unique" and "local." Not only do murals play different roles in different places, artists rarely paint in multiple "mural communities" like East Austin and the university area (Martin, 1998). While every mural does not possess the authority of cultural symbols or civic goals, murals in the following instances play a significant role in organizing and interpreting space.[1] They reflect social-spatial practice just as social life refers back to the mural for reinforcement.

The description and interpretation of murals is one way to understand and describe typical urban spaces in a non-conventional manner. I intend to elucidate, rather than reinforce the representations of East Austin, downtown, and the Drag.

East Austin

The portion of East Austin chosen for study is defined by a vast amount of mural art. The study area is roughly bounded by Rosewood Avenue to the north, Pleasant Valley Road to the east, Cesar Chavez to the south, and Interstate 35 to the west (Fig. 2). This area is comprised primarily of Hispanic and Black families of low to moderate income.[2]

Most of the murals in East Austin help to produce a layer of vernacular space unique to the community. Here, the Cartesian representations of space reproduced throughout the city are re-employed as canvas to establish local identity. Vernacular space, in the form of localized public space, is produced by 1) opposing or eradicating representations of typical public space and 2) offering a type of social reproduction distinct from other parts of the city. This public space is the result of vernacular symbols and cultural history distinct from that produced by the space of capital.

Reflecting the largely non-white population, the representational space of murals is often rooted in history, experiences, and conceptions of space quite different than other parts of the city. In this way, a counter-space is formed in opposition to the historical spatial segregation east of Interstate 35. However, East Austin residents are not completely isolated from the rest of the city.

The physical space and housing grid in East Austin is not unique to the study area either. In fact, East Austin is gradually becoming colonized by outsiders who treat the area

as one that represents "culture," cuisine, or inexpensive housing. As a result, the residents live in an interestingly layered and differentiated space. Social relations and spatial practice serve to reinforce and reappropriate a representational space for the community out of a generic physical environment, yet these same community-defining actions and symbols attract outside attention back to a place historically abandoned by greater Austin.

Nearly all murals in East Austin stem from places perceived as centers of community and neighborhood outreach or encounter. Murals reinforce libraries, community centers, a Planned Parenthood clinic, the Habitat For Humanity RE-Store, bars, and restaurants as landmarks of East Austin with discerning messages (Figs. 3 and 4) and a blend of historic and cultural symbols (Figs. 5 and 6). Currently under restoration, the Carver Library mural (along with three other murals on this corner depicting community life) marks this East Austin node as a distinctly public space for the community (Fig. 7). The mural contains Aztec totems and symbols, such as Quetzalcoatl, the serpent of Mexican origin. Here, Quetzalcoatl lies below and supports a neighborhood of single-family homes. These symbols appropriate the street producing a distinct and localized representational space freeing local spatial practice.

Another mural that enlivens public space, while appropriating it for the community, wraps around the Habitat for Humanity RE-Store (Fig. 8). The mural localizes Mexican-American history and popular culture in the community (via low riders for example) as a reflection of spatial practice and integrates culture from both sides of the border. The representational space of death is merged with festival (mariachis and dancing, far right) and the living space of the public realm.

Bars and restaurants advertise themselves with symbols of history and popular Hispanic culture. The Iron Gate Lounge is one of many bars and restaurants displaying murals on East Sixth Street (Fig. 9). Here, the late pop star Selena shares representational space with an eagle sharpening a pool cue (rather than carrying a serpent as in the legend of Tenochtitlan). This use of representational space forms an interesting contrast to that of downtown advertisements. In comparing the murals of these places it becomes evident that two very different histories and cultures have developed on either side of Interstate 35. East Austin business establishments employ cultural symbols to signify their interdependence with the neighborhood.

In a prime example of why vernacular space must constantly evolve, the cultural symbols of East Austin murals are increasingly capitalized upon as representations of tourist and culture space that lie adjacent to the spaces of local experience. The *Austin Chronicle*, a weekly alternative newspaper, dedicated an entire issue to the culture and community of East Austin in the *Austin East Side Guide* (vol. 17, no. 42). Officially endorsed concepts of East Austin are *redominating* the area as another space of consumption. The schism between East Austin and the University of Texas and downtown is a product of past relations and the physical blockade of Interstate 35.[3] As a result, the very art that appropriates vernacular space has the ability not

Fig. 8 - Habitat For Humanity, RE-Store Mural

Fig. 9 - Iron Eagle Lounge

only to define East Austin locally, but to attract tourists to the area. Art layers local identity over the space assigned to residents east of Interstate 35. By fusing art with the physical, public environment and everyday life and routine, East Austin murals increase the potential for the reproduction of new social relations and distinct public space.

Downtown

Downtown is clearly bounded by Town Lake to the south, to the north by the steps of the capitol building, Interstate 35 to the east, and to the west by Lamar Boulevard (Fig. 2). The social geography of downtown Austin is layered with two conceptions of space and use: work and recreation. Murals serve to spatialize and reinforce the space of tourism, nostalgia, and of play. Downtown murals represent history and nostalgia and exist as advertisement.

Perhaps the most peculiar "mural" downtown is an advertisement on Congress Avenue for Joseph's Men's shop (Fig. 10). What appears as a remnant of Austin's past is actually a sign for this men's clothing store five blocks up the street. What is so striking is that this sign succeeds at reinforcing downtown as a nostalgic retreat much better than advertising the existing store. By ensconcing itself in the older, representational space of historic street façades, this billboard acts as a metonymic device, bridging the past and the present.

The whole scene is part of the old downtown (a representation of space), but today its original function of work space recedes into the representational space (redominated space?) of history and nostalgia. Today's work spaces tower above the old streetscape, creating a dual spatial practice in downtown Austin. Hence, two very different spatial textures exist and are reproduced side by side.

Other murals perceptually reinforce the recreational space of downtown Austin. Faded billboards, similar to Joseph's, serendipitously signify a historic Austin, (in that they have not been erased yet) while others seem to have been created for just such a purpose. The mural between Sixth and Seventh on Neches depicting Austin's 150th Birthday was sponsored by the city in 1986 (Fig. 11). This mural maps a popular geography of Austin, while propping up its image as the "music capital of the world." An armadillo with sunglasses plays a guitar and the state of Texas an accordion, while the University of Texas clock

Fig. 10 - Joseph's Men's Shop

tower and state capitol dance to a rockin' beat on the shores of Town Lake. This mural illustrates how hard it is to separate the city's promotional (conceived) image from the lived experience of the people. While the city is selling an image of itself, joining historic landmarks with major symbols of tourism, it also reflects many of the things Austinites cherish. The Austin birthday mural exhibits how social space is fused into and generated by a representational space. Additionally, this mural reveals how the images Austinites take pride in are produced as representational symbols by political and capital means.

Finally, Austin murals serve, "as part of local tradition," as advertising for bars, restaurants, and small businesses (Martin 1998). Many such murals dot the entertainment district on Sixth Street and

the surrounding downtown spaces. Poly Ester's, a 1990's style 1970's disco is a case in point (Fig. 12). Located just off Sixth Street, this mural of disco balls and high-heeled sneakers brightens up the corners, but appropriates space simply for itself. As a result, the representation of downtown space as recreation is reinforced.

It is as if downtown murals "erect a mental and social architecture above spontaneous life" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 140). The spatial representations of tourism and nostalgia, dominate, surround, and transform Austin's social spaces into spaces of consumption.

<u>The Drag</u>

The strand of Guadalupe Boulevard between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and 26th Street, known as The Drag, straddles the University of Texas. The Drag is a mediational area of space and symbol

Fig. 11 - "Happy 150th Birthday Austin"

between the University, it's spin-off economy of shops, restaurants, and cafes, and the public space of the street filled with students, punks, hippies, and tourists (Fig. 2). Here, these three interdependent spaces crash together mixing space and symbol. Drag murals do not tell as neat a spatial story as those downtown or in East Austin. Some, such as Daniel Johnston's mural (Fig. 1), truly establish a local vernacular space, while others, such as Austintacious, embody the social-spatial practice of many Austinites, or allude to an appropriated space that in reality softens or obscures the social space of capital.

Le Bonheur de Vivre constructs a surreal picture of the Texas hill country (Fig. 13). The view is made to appear inset into the wall while people float above the hills or hang on the edges of the mural. On the surface, the mural reinforces a psychedelic conception of "drag life." Unwittingly however, this mural incorporates aspects of the Drag's social space, spaces of capital that do not coincide with the artist's concept.

Just as the nature scene of the hill country is set into the wall, so is the sign for The Gap and a Wells Fargo ATM machine. Instead of juxtaposing these two conceptions of space, the mural blurs the distinctions. It fuses the artsy Drag space with its alter-ego, capital.[4] The reason this image can be so manipulated is because it is but a metaphor for the Drag, drained of any representational or vernacular meaning of lived experience. The

only local point of reference, the hill country, is obliquely related to the spatial practice of the users.

This mural unintentionally and powerfully comments on the true social space of the Drag. A space that mediates the users varied relations to the street. It brings out the interrelation between outside capital and the supposedly unique local image of a bohemian, student lifestyle (representational space). For many students this lifestyle consists of both college life and mingling with the street culture of drifters and punks.

Austintatious was painted in 1974 at 23rd Street and Guadalupe, in the Renaissance Market (Fig. 14). The mural is a mental map that defines spatial practice from the Drag point of view. Here, Sixth Street merges with the Capitol Building downtown and the university, while East Austin is conspicuously absent. In the foreground punks and hippies

Fig. 12 - Poly Ester's

walk the street. In the background lies the Texas hill county. The mural is a "celebration of the street life up and down the Drag in the early Seventies displaying local shops and colorful characters as well as historic personalities such as Stephen F. Austin" holding an armadillo (Martin, 1998). According to the artists, everything in Austintatious represents something. They see the mural as "a *living* thing" to be updated every few years (Martin, 1998). In 1982 they added such popular icons as Pac-Man, an Izod Alligator, and the then-new Mo-Pac expressway. In the future the artists would like to add what they consider to be everyday, local community symbols such as a cellular phone, sport utility vehicle, or a salamander, a local endangered species.

Austintatious symbolizes daily life and the representational space of the university area residents and in many ways succeeds in appropriating this space for them. It also powerfully illustrates how much representations of space are mixed into daily, lived experience and imbedded in images of representational space and practice. It is almost impossible to separate life as conceived by popular culture and capital from local ideations. The artists take such icons as Pac-Man and cellular phones to be as locally symbolic as an armadillo or the capitol building. Historically, the symbols we use to denote unique, lived experience or local representational space are formed by politics and capital. Underneath the images of Stephen F. Austin, the university clock tower, the Texas Capitol Building, or other symbols of the collective Austin experience there dwells a history divorced and obscured by these simple reproductions. These murals unwittingly embrace rather than critique the production of space as East Austin murals do.

CONCLUSION

This article couples the theories of Henri Lefebvre on the *Production of Space* with interpretations of the function of mural art to outline how space and social relations reproduce one another in three Austin places (East Austin, downtown, and the Drag). Additionally, the article introduces the concept of vernacular space as a method to establish and organize local needs, identity, and culture into our everyday environments. Using art in combination with the theories of Lefebvre to uncover the nexus of society and space in these three places, creates an enhanced sense of the power of space because the symbolic values in a community may be physically disclosed.

Murals perform three significant functions. In the case of East Austin, murals primarily establish vernacular space that counters the official representations of spaces of capital by setting up a dialog between person and place. This is done by visually marking local, representational space and thus setting up (re)appropriated spaces for the community. Downtown murals primarily reinforce abstract representations of spaces of recreation either by reference to a glorified past or by exploiting representational symbols to induce city pride. Finally, murals around the Drag, while alluding to appropriated space, for the most part hide the true spatial relations of the university area.

Fig. 13 - "Le Bonhur de Vivre"

Fig. 14 - "Austintatious"

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References
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Martin, Sam. 1998. Our Murals, Our Selves, *Austin Chronicle* 18, 1.

[1] There are murals of significance in other parts of Austin left out of the article for the sake of brevity.

[2] The study area is comprised of 40% Black, 29% White, 0% Asian, and 31% other residents, while persons of Hispanic descent makeup 57% of the population according to the 1990 U.S. census. Additionally, block group 9.02 (bounded by I-35, Cesar Chavez, Seventh Street, and Springdale Road), the majority site of East Austin murals, is 93% Hispanic.

[3] The nature of the article and time constraints do not permit a detailed history.

[4] In 1990, when Tower Records moved into the old Varsity Theatre building across the street, Tower representatives made plans to paint over the mural on their wall with another. City-wide petitioning and threat of boycott ensued, forcing Tower to keep the original mural (Martin, 1998). With this fight eight years in the past, this mural, "an important and well-loved member of the community," is now associated with Tower Records. It pulls the store, produced by capital outside the community, into the social space of the Drag as just another neighbourhood store.

FROM THE GROUND UP
BUILDING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CAPACITY IN EL PASO

Elizabeth J. Mueller PhD.

Nonprofit organizations are increasing their presence in service areas traditionally open only to government agencies. To meet these new demands, new forms of organization are being tested to make sure its working.

The devolution of funds and responsibility to lower levels of government, along with distrust of government as a service provider, has raised interest in expanding the role that nonprofit organizations play in providing social services. There is widespread interest now among proponents of community development in building the capacity of groups or entire regions to work at a larger scale and more effectively. Such groups are assumed to be more responsive to local needs and to enable residents to exercise greater control over developments or services that affect them (Koschinsky 1998). Several national foundations, either singly or in collaboration, are funding national efforts to build community development capacity (Chaskin 1998). Yet few efforts have been rigorously evaluated and the most effective methods of achieving their goals are not yet clear.

Just what constitutes 'community development capacity' is still being defined. Yin (1998) defines the top level in his description of the elements of a community development industry system. In such a system, CDCs participate in a complex web of partnerships. These partnerships, in turn, "take the form of a local system of differentiated organizations in which the design and implementation of programs are interactive across organizations" (p.138). This web of partnerships is the industry system. Chaskin (1998) provides a rich framework for conceptualizing community capacity building at the neighborhood level. He identifies six dimensions of communities with capacity: 1) fundamental characteristics (sense of community, commitment, problem solving, access to resources); 2) levels of social interaction (individual, organizational and associational); 3) the function of capacity (capacity for what?); 4) strategies for increasing capacity (leadership and organizational development, community organizing); 5) conditioning influences; and 6) side benefits of capacity building. Glickman and Servon (1997) present the most systematic consideration of what constitutes capacity for community development corporations (CDCs). They outline five key dimensions of capacity (resource, organizational, networking, programmatic, and political) and emphasize the importance of the links and interaction between them (Glickman and Servon 1997).

While scholars are refining the definition of capacity, funders are implementing programs aimed at building it, embodying varied assumptions about which dimensions are most important and how they ought to be strengthened. For example, the Ford Foundation's Community Development Partnership program focuses on coordinating the community development industry system—bringing together funders and coordinating resource allocation. In contrast, LISC's pre-development program aims to organize and build new community-based groups from the ground up while also organizing financial and technical support for such groups (Gittell and Vidal 1998).

This paper discusses community development capacity building efforts in El Paso, Texas. It starts by describing the local context and level of support for community development, highlighting key gaps and barriers to such work. The next section describes the strategy being implemented by the El Paso Collaborative for Community Economic Development, a Ford-funded community development partnership, and the tensions emerging in their work. Finally, some preliminary views on their strategy are offered, based on an assessment of local needs and the various definitions of capacity in use in the field. Analysis is based on interviews conducted with local housing organizations, EPC board members and local experts in El Paso as part of a study of the early implementation of the EPC.[1]

In El Paso, few organizations with much housing development capacity exist. With few exceptions, those that are most productive work citywide or even region wide, with no

particular allegiance to one specific neighborhood. Consequently, they do not embody a holistic approach to solving community problems or building the capacity to do so at the neighborhood level. They are, instead, housing specialists. Nationally designed community building strategies that focus on increasing productive capacity in neighborhoods may end up supporting citywide groups in places with few CDCs. In such a context, community development capacity building efforts should focus instead on creating stronger neighborhood groups, with outward branching relationships, and building support for them among those with resources, before addressing system coordination and overall productive capacity.

THE CONTEXT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN EL PASO

El Paso offers a difficult environment for community development. The level of need is high, yet city government allocates relatively little of the federal funding it receives for community development to housing and even less to CDCs. In addition, few other stable sources of funding for community development are to be found in the region. Similarly, there are few sources of technical assistance available to El Paso's fledgling CDC community. National intermediaries have not historically been active in El Paso and the city has no explicit program for building CDC capacity.[2]

Poverty and housing conditions

El Paso is a poor city within an even poorer county. Unlike many cities, El Paso is wealthier than its suburbs. While the regional poverty rate was close to 27 percent in 1990, 37 percent of those living outside the city limits were poor.[3] While jobs and population are growing faster in the county, residential growth there is not of the typical suburban variety—much growth is due to expansion of unregulated settlements known as colonias, where plots of land are sold without water and sewer services. According to the 1990 Census, 75 percent of households in rural colonias and 45 percent of households in colonias in urban areas lived in poverty (Wilson 1997, 232).

In the last decade, the lack of affordable housing has emerged as an important issue in the city and county. In 1990, 51 percent of low-income households in El Paso (38,813 households) paid more than 30 percent of their income for housing.[4] In addition, 23.7 percent of these low-income households were overcrowded, with more than 1.5 persons per room. The current shortage of affordable units is estimated at 30,000-40,000 by demographers in the City's Planning Department (Lawrence 1997, A-10).

Poor conditions, high rents and housing prices beyond residents' means have driven people to suburban colonias in increasing numbers. An estimated 50-80,000 residents (8.5-13.5 percent of county population) lived in colonias in 1997. Colonias are attractive to residents since, for relatively little money down and with low monthly payments, they can purchase a tract of land and build their own homes as they can afford materials. Unfortunately, plots are sold through "contracts for deed," a legal process through which residents do not build equity as they make payments. Instead, they risk losing their entire investment (including the home they construct) if they miss a payment. Additionally, these areas are neither zoned nor covered by housing codes. Colonias often lack adequate plumbing and sewage systems, as well as access to clean water. In 1995, the Texas Water Development Board estimated that 43,385 colonia residents in El Paso county lacked adequate water supplies. Virtually all colonias had inadequate wastewater services (Wilson 1997, 231).

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Public Agencies Concerned with CD

Almost all funding for community development in El Paso comes from the federal government; virtually none originates with the city and little comes from the state. The largest sources of funds for community development activities are the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME programs. Last year El Paso received approximately $17 million from both sources and allocated $5 million to affordable housing. This represented all of the HOME funds and $2 million of the CDBG funds. The rest of

CDBG funds went to infrastructure and general service needs in the city's many eligible census tracts.[5] Between 1978, when the city first spent CDBG funds on affordable housing, and 1995, $64 million in CDBG and HOME funds produced 3,780 units. Texas currently allocates only $2.6 million per year to its Housing Trust Fund (Texas Community Developer 1997). By comparison, Illinois and New York allocate $13-$18 million and $25 million per year to their respective trust funds for affordable housing.

County colonias do not have access to city-controlled CDBG funds. Texas counties are extremely weak entities with few revenue raising or administrative powers. This lack of capacity at the county level has contributed to the proliferation of colonias in El Paso county.[6] Although county governments are responsible for approving subdivisions in unincorporated areas and can demand provision of roads and drainage in subdivisions, until recently, they could not hold non-compliant developers accountable. Nor could they provide these services if developers fail to do so since they are barred from assuming debt for the construction of water and sewer systems. Counties are also unable to receive grants from federal agencies (such as the EPA) to provide such services. Provision of water services in rural areas has traditionally been provided in Texas by agencies tied to the agricultural sector (such as water irrigation districts, water development districts, and water supply companies). These agencies have shown themselves to be uninterested in providing water to colonias unless forced to do so through organized efforts by colonia residents or their advocates (see Wilson 1997).

In addition, El Paso colonias are often deemed ineligible for federal funding for services to rural areas (such as those provided by the Farmers Home Administration (FMHA— now USDA/Rural Development) since they are located in an MSA. Similarly, HUD programs for small cities have not included urban counties such as El Paso in their programs. In the absence of federal money, an important source of financing for water projects is the Texas Water Development Board which sells bonds and uses the proceeds to make loans to eligible local governments (again, not counties) for water development projects. Given these constraints, colonias in urban counties can gain access to the protections of city regulations and enforcement and to city services through incorporation or annexation (Wilson 1997, 233-34). Several El Paso colonias have now incorporated.

Figure 1: El Paso Community Development Capacity

Dimension of Capacity	Status
Resource	Small budgets common Staff lack fundraising and grantwriting skills Heavily dependent on city-controlled funds
Organizational	Small, underpaid staff Burnout common Heavy reliance on volunteers Boards lack key skills, training
Networking	A key weakness Lack links to range of funders Lack links to TA providers Isolated from one another
Programmatic	Wide variation
Political	Few organize community residents Groups lack broad base of support Fear loss of city-controlled funds Isolated from one another

Source: Mueller, Elizabeth J. 1998. Building a Foundation for Community Development: The El Paso Collaborative for Community and Economic Development. Working Paper, Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University.

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) is the lead Texas agency responsible for affordable housing, community development and community assistance programs and for regulation of the state's manufactured housing industry. It administers an annual budget of $360 million (fiscal 1997), most of which derives from mortgage revenue financing and refinancing, federal grants, and federal tax credits. Finally, it administers the state's Housing Trust Fund grant competition.

TDHCA also administers Texas' "nonentitlement" CDBG program for non-metropolitan cities and counties. In 1997, the total budget for this program was $87 million, the largest in the nation. Funded activities focus on providing basic human needs and infrastructure to small communities in outlying areas. These funds are awarded competitively. Included within this program are several pots of money earmarked for colonias: the Colonia Construction Fund, the Colonia Planning Fund, and the Colonia Self-Help Center Fund.[7] In 1997, it opened five border self-help centers, including one in San Elizario, El Paso County.

PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

With no corporate headquarters, El Paso has only a small philanthropic community. Many firms are attracted primarily by low labor costs and are thus fairly footloose and weakly committed to the community.[8] The El Paso Community Foundation (EPCF) is the only locally based foundation. It is a small foundation, distributing about $1.6 million in 1994. In recent years, the Foundation has helped fund a number of policy reports on border development issues. It has worked closely with the Ford Foundation on a number of projects of benefit to colonia residents.

The El Paso Energy Foundation, part of a holding company for El Paso Natural Gas (no longer headquarted in El Paso) makes grants in cities where it does business. Last year it gave out $700,000 in grants in El Paso, most to the United Way. Its grants to groups are small, ranging from $5,000 to $50,000, and focus on social and educational programs and health care. The El Paso Electric Company makes grants to local organizations that focus on children and families at or below the poverty line, giving approximately $500,000 per year in grants. In such a poor setting, there is tremendous competition for funds from any of these sources.

Banks and Community Development

Banks in El Paso have not historically been interested in community development or affordable housing issues. Their interest is growing as the more affluent portion of the regional mortgage lending market shrinks. Banks are beginning to regard the lower end of the mortgage market as a viable sector for them, where they can receive acceptable returns (Melendez, in Farley-Villalobos, 1997, A-8). Across banks, there is variation in the degree to which they are committed to lending for affordable housing; some banks see broader benefits to lending while others see only individual deals. Due to mergers, virtually no locally based banks are involved in such lending.

There is virtually no Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) activity in El Paso.[9] None of the bankers interviewed knew of any local CRA challenges. While banks are aware that they need to satisfy CRA requirements, they are not engaged in negotiating agreements with local groups.

Local use of low-income housing tax credits

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit program awards federal tax credits to investors in low income housing. Between its creation in 1986 and 1994, 710,000 units were built using the credits nationwide. Credits are allocated to states based on their population— $620 million in credits were available nationally in 1994. In Texas, TDHCA allocates credits on a competitive basis. Two tax credit projects have been funded recently in El Paso. Together they will provide 164 units affordable to families at 60 percent of median family income or below. The City of El Paso supported both applications.

Role of National CD Intermediaries

Until the El Paso Collaboration was formed, few national intermediaries were very active in El Paso and none had offices there. The only group with a presence was the

National Council of La Raza (NCLR).[10]   Since the formation of the EPC, the Enterprise Foundation, a national intermediary, has decided to place a staff member in El Paso and NCLR has increased the number of groups it is affiliated with in El Paso. The EPC is helping a local group to become a chartered NeighborWorks group, giving them access to the underwriting services of the Neighborhood Housing Services. The Housing Assistance Council, a national nonprofit corporation that provides loans and technical assistance to housing organizations in rural areas, now offers important financial resources to nonprofit housing groups in the colonias. They run a pre-development loan program and have formed a Community Development Financial Institution—a bank able to offer loans with more flexible underwriting standards to colonias residents.

CDC Production in El Paso at Baseline

In 1996, during the first year of EPC's existence, the University of Texas-El Paso's Center for Sustainable Neighborhoods obtained a list of all organizations identified as involved in housing activities by the city. The list included 60 organizations and covered a variety of organizations, some community-based, some city-wide nonprofits, some focused solely on housing, others with small housing programs as a sideline to larger social service programs. Approximately twelve of these organizations could be formally classified as CDCs, the rest do not meet the criteria of having community representation on their governing boards (see Kelly 1977).[11]   Of those that qualify as community-based, three could be called "mature" CDCs, another three are stable. The remaining six are barely surviving financially. According to local experts interviewed, most CDCs are very small organizations with few staff and produce only a handful of units each year. Many are highly dependent on volunteers and exist from project to project, with no annual budget per se.[12]

A survey of housing organizations (including CDCs) conducted for preparation of the EPC's original application for funding yielded information on 19 housing organizations. (See Appendix A). The majority were quite small, with staffs of between one and four. Five groups reported having no paid staff, relying entirely on volunteers. Perhaps most indicative of generally weak level of local capacity at the time, only 8 groups reported having a full or part-time bookkeeper. Thirteen reported having a strategic plan. All told, the groups had plans to construct 323 new units and rehabilitate an additional 29. Close to 44 percent of the planned units were to be constructed by one group—Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation (TDS). Three groups (TDS, Lower Valley Housing and Northeast Community Development Organization) accounted for over 76 percent of planned production.

The list includes a wide range of types of organizations. When only those that focus on particular low income neighborhoods are considered, an even bleaker picture of baseline community development capacity emerges. Only seven of the groups could legitimately be called community-based; of these five have budgets between $10,000 and $50,000 per year. Several of the groups producing housing at a small scale also provide other types of services to their constituents, ranging from health services (Clinica La Fe), to workplace advocacy (La Mujer Obrera), to child development (Project Vida), to cite only a few examples. For these groups, housing is a new activity, one added to their existing services in response to the strong need they observed in their communities. There is no good data on the overall scale of output of these groups in all areas of operation. However, based on interviews with the directors of these organizations, it appears that groups operating in the area of health and social services are better funded and able to maintain a more stable base of operations, facilitating their entry into housing production in the current local context. They are able to draw temporarily upon operating funds to cover predevelopment costs for new projects in a way that small, housing-only groups cannot. These groups are very strongly committed to their neighborhood (or formal catchment area) and see provision of housing as an integral part of their approach to their work.

Figure 1 presents our assessment of the community development capacity of local housing organizations and CDCs, using the categories laid out by Glickman and Servon. Lack of resources and isolation from one another and from resource and technical assistance networks stand out as key weaknesses of local groups.

FORMATION OF THE EL PASO COLLABORATIVE

Several events converged to awaken interest in housing issues and to create a broad-based coalition of people interested in addressing the need for affordable housing in the region. First, several groups were formed for the purpose of studying the affordable housing problem and for recommending a course of action. The key groups formed were the Mayor's Housing Subcommittee (1989), the Greater El Paso Affordable Housing Coalition—under sponsorship of the EP Community College (1989), and the Greater El Paso Housing Development Corporation (1990). Second, key legislation was passed at both the federal and state levels which focused attention and created mechanisms for resolving some of the problems of colonias. These included: the 1990 National Affordable Housing Act, which designated certain areas as colonias; the 1994 Texas Subdivision Reform Legislation, which stopped developers' worst abuses; and changes in the Community Reinvestment Act legislation, which sharpened enforcement. These changes came as local banks were absorbed by national banks through a series of mergers and shortly after the city and state had prepared new Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategies (CHAS) and Consolidated Plans, as required by HUD, outlining their plans for producing affordable housing.

In this setting, the Ford Foundation's early efforts to form an organization to foster community development efforts took root readily among key stakeholders, most of whom were already active in the Affordable Housing Coalition. Planning efforts flowed seamlessly from the Affordable Housing Coalition meetings. The El Paso Community Foundation, with its history of ties to Ford, was the original convener. Yet many of the actors interested in the production of affordable housing had little interest in or understanding of community development per se.

Governance

The EPC is governed by a Board of Directors currently composed of 17 members. The Board is responsible for setting policy for the organization, fundraising to support the work of the organization, approving annual budgets and grants, and maintaining quality leadership. Board decisions are made by a majority of members at meetings at which a quorum (a simple majority) is present. Members are selected by a majority of those currently on the Board at the time of any vacancies. Two "community-at-large" members are selected by the Board, chosen for their expertise and experience in community development.[13] Two ex-officio members are also designated: one from the City of El Paso and one from the county.[14] Other ex-officio members can also be designated by the Board.

The remainder of the Board represents funders who contribute a minimum of $2500 per year. Many of these positions are currently held by representatives of the banks operating in the region. In addition, there are three representatives of local nonprofit funders, one representative of the community college, and two representatives of national intermediaries (National Council of La Raza, Enterprise), although these national groups have no local offices.

It is notable that many of the funders on the board have little experience or understanding of community development or the value of building community based capacity. The underlying focus on these members (primarily bankers) was production of affordable housing for homeownership, at scale. As more representatives of national intermediaries join the board—and contribute substantial amounts of funding—this focus may shift.

The EPC is staffed by an executive director, an administrative assistant and a capacity and technical assistance coordinator.[15] The director and administrative assistant positions are funded by the EPC. The third position is primarily funded by the Center for Sustainable Neighborhoods (the Center) at the University of Texas-El Paso. The Center is a key partner in the EPC's Technical Assistance activities. It provides access to a pool of UT students who perform organizational assessments of housing organizations annually. Finally, the Center's Director, while not paid from EPC funds, is also a key partner in its work.

Funded by a grant from the Department of Education, the Center works with the City of El Paso, and the EPC to assist local CDCs in meeting community needs for housing and economic opportunity by providing training and seminars to CDC staff and boards. The

content of training is based on needs identified through the Center's annual assessment of CDCs and other local housing organizations. Since the Center was created before the EPC, it was able to conduct a first round of assessments and lay the foundation for the technical assistance activities of the EPC before the executive director was hired. The director was then able to use the information already gathered to shape her priorities for the EPC.

THE ROLE OF THE EL PASO COLLABORATIVE IN CAPACITY BUILDING

In this context, there are several ways the EPC could approach building community development capacity. Clearly, El Paso is far from having a community development industry system, as described by Yin (1998). It lacks the key ingredients—webs of relationships among actors at all levels. In fact, it lacks sufficient committed actors in key areas—financial support and technical assistance. It has very few organizations focused on building community capacity (as defined by Chaskin). Instead, it has several very small CBOs, with very limited capacity and a few citywide groups with greater capacity to produce housing but no commitment to community building. Its strongest CBOs are new to housing.

based approaches to neighborhood development. The EPC describes itself as a group that "serves as a resource and advocacy organization, providing funds and technical assistance for diverse community development corporations. The [EPC] is designed to strengthen community development initiatives in the City and County of El Paso that are engaged in affordable housing development services and community building activities, by enhancing their long-term stability and production capacities." Its long-term goal is "comprehensive grass-roots revitalization through the support of community-based organizations."

In the short-run, EPC focused on a more immediate goal—the production of affordable housing (HCDI Proposal 1997). This emphasis on housing production was seen as the best way to demonstrate both need and competence of local groups to potential funders and key local government officials. How they would go about this was the subject of debate: while some saw a strong need to build the political capacity of groups as well as their capacity to network with other key local actors, others saw their mission as purely increasing the production of affordable housing, by whomever was best positioned to do it at scale.

The link between pure production and the long term goals of 'comprehensive community development' were not made clear. While many argued that by showing short term results they would be building confidence in the sector, what exactly constituted the community development sector and what the potential benefits were of supporting it (as opposed to citywide nonprofit groups) remained unresolved. Interviews with several board members revealed that many had little understanding or sympathy for the goals of community-based development. Others simply saw such groups as 'too controversial.'

STRATEGIES

To achieve its short run goal of increased production of affordable housing and longer term goal of community-led revitalization, the EPC must accomplish two critical tasks. First, it must amass the capital—both financial and human—necessary to increase the scale of production of affordable housing. Second, it must build a constituency supportive of community development work, starting with housing and building toward a more comprehensive view of community development. While these goals are interrelated, they are not necessarily complementary.

Financial Strategies

Amassing the financial capital dedicated to the production of affordable housing means expanding the pool of resources available to housing organizations for project development and production. The EPC has developed three specific strategies for accomplishing this goal. First, it hopes to raise $200,000 per year over the next five years to support EPC-funded community development work, including affordable housing production. These funds are to be raised primarily from organizations represented on the board. Second, EPC will document financial methods or products used successfully elsewhere that can be

adapted by conventional lenders, thereby increasing access to mainstream sources of finance for home ownership or construction of rental units. Finally, the EPC will establish a flexible revolving loan fund (with a $200,000 maximum loan limit) of up to $400,000, to be loaned at low interest rates and used as project working capital, predevelopment financing, or to fund site development costs and other short term needs. The Fannie Mae Foundation recently loaned the EPC $250,000 toward the establishment of this fund.

It is interesting to note that these three strategies avoid directly targeting the city's CDBG funds, the largest pot of money available for community development locally. Given the fiscal constraints facing the city, increasing the portion of these funds dedicated to producing affordable housing means increasing the political will do so. The EPC Board had not discussed this openly, but many board members volunteered that they favored increasing the amount of funding dedicated to housing by the city, although they held varied opinions regarding the best strategy for making this happen. Some favored demonstrating increased efficiency and capacity on the part of housing groups (not necessarily CDCs) as the most efficacious route. Others, while not downplaying the need for increased capacity, saw the problem primarily in political terms, requiring mobilization of the broad array of groups interested in the issue in order to press the city to act. A few believed that both needed to happen at the same time.

While the EPC had raised more than $200,000 from board members by the end of 1997, many board members had yet to make a contribution. Ironically, the largest contributors have not been locally based institutions. Of the six groups that have contributed more than $20,000, only the El Paso Community Foundation is locally-based. This reflects, in part, the many recent bank mergers that have affected banks operating in El Paso. Several bankers on the board spoke of fundraising from corporations and made clear that their bank was unlikely to contribute large sums. The national intermediaries represented on the board have made sizable contributions—NCLR gave the largest single contribution ($95,000) and Enterprise has offered to pay for a staff person that the EPC

Figure 2: Funding Criteria

Criteria	Points
Within Mission: Addresses EPC's priorities (consistent with development of affordable housing or related services; addresses stated objectives of EPC; strengthens organization's housing capacity; addresses critical housing needs; encourages collaboration/partnerships or respond to a unique opportunity)	50
Capacity: Applicant able to carry out project	20
Efficient: Funds will be used cost effectively	20
Targeted OR Innovative: Project targets those at 50% MFI or below or represents an innovative/creative response	10
Homeownership: Group provides comprehensive homebuyer assistance	*5 bonus points*
Community Based: Groups have boards on which low or moderate income persons comprise 30% or more of membership	*5 bonus points*

will supervise in aiding CDCs on project development.

HUMAN CAPITAL/ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The EPC has several strategies for increasing the organizational capacity of CDCs and other housing organizations. The primary strategies employed are first, to fund community development activities directly—especially operating and pre-development costs that are critical to expanding the scale of operations, and second, to offer groups training or technical assistance tailored to their particular needs. By aiming these activities at all housing organizations, they serve both production and revitalization goals.

The EPC offers CDCs assistance in five broad areas: 1) organizational training/staff development; 2) brokering relationships; 3) project development/proposal packaging; 4) advising/crisis intervention; 5) information gathering/dissemination. In addition, EPC staff play a role in local advocacy and policy development efforts.

The EPC offers a range of types of training to staff and board members, through the Center. The training is based on needs the Center identified in its assessments of 20 groups at the start of the EPC and the follow up assessments they conduct annually. To date, training has focused on board responsibilities and potential conflicts of interest, and financial management. Even groups with years of experience reported benefiting from the training. One organization, after being trained in board responsibilities and conflicts of interest, substantially changed its operating procedures. EPC/CSN staff are also beginning to help organizations develop strategic plans. For many groups, this is the first time they have conducted a strategic planning process. This process encourages groups to think in organizational terms, rather than moving from project to project without time for reflection. Finally, EPC/CSN staff have gathered information on staff salary and benefits and used this information to push for increases in salary and adequate benefits to ensure staff stability. This work is in its early stages and it poorly understood by many board members.

RELATIONSHIP TO LONG TERM GOALS

Building a broad constituency for community development is a long-term project. It is clearly critical to the long-term success of the EPC and to its long-term goals. The first step toward building such a constituency has been the formation of the board and the development of some degree of consensus around the EPC's priorities. Agreement on the importance of producing affordable housing had been developed through the planning process, when the Affordable Housing Coalition brought together a broad array of groups to discuss housing issues. While board members differed in their view of the role of organizing and coalition building across grassroots groups, they were unified in their view that demonstrating increased production would be an effective way of bolstering support (public and private) for housing organizations. This consensus around housing production represented an important first step toward building a board for the EPC. Yet, ironically, the focus on production per se has made the transition toward a broader view of community revitalization difficult.

The conflict between production and revitalization as goals is illustrated by the board's debate over its funding strategy. Should it concentrate early funding on those few groups capable of producing a large number of units, building their capacity further through training and funding or spread funding and training across the many smaller, community based groups struggling to expand? To maximize production, focusing on the most productive groups would likely yield the best result in the short term. On the other hand, others argued that increasing the capacity of the smaller groups was also an important goal of the EPC—one more crucial to its longer term agenda. This group also felt that funds should be spread in order to build confidence in the EPC among the CDC community.

Funding Criteria

The tension between production and longer term community revitalization was played out in the first round of grants. The EPC issued its first Request for Proposals (RFPs) in February of 1997. In May, it issued its first round of grants, totaling $300,000. The RFP listed three categories under which applicants could apply: homebuyer assistance services

(maximum grant: $40,000), housing development and project support (maximum grant: $30,000, and technical assistance and capacity building (maximum $20,000). Homebuyer assistance and services covered such activities as credit counseling, homebuyer training, default prevention counseling, financing assistance, assistance in pre-qualifying and obtaining financing for potential low and moderate income homebuyers. Housing development and project support included pre-development costs (needs assessments, land acquisition costs, architectural and engineering costs, etc.), construction management and rental property management costs. Assistance could be in the form of loans or grants. Finally, technical assistance and capacity building grants could cover organizational needs such as board and staff training, strategic or business planning, project planning and technical support, computer and other equipment needs, development of financial systems, and development of organizational procedures.

In funding the first round of projects, priority was placed on the first category— homebuyer programs. Two grants of $50,000 were made in this category to the only two groups doing homebuyer counseling in El Paso. Rental housing development was the second priority. Funds were allocated as "recoverable grants" (loans) rather than grants in all but one case. Five grants were made, all but one falling between $20,000 and $30,000. Capacity building was the final, and least emphasized, priority in this round. Seven relatively small grants were made in this category ($5,600 to $19,800). All told, these grants are expected to yield 250 units of affordable housing. By comparison, city allocated CDBG funds supported the production or rehabilitation of 400-500 units last year.

Four broad and somewhat overlapping criteria were used to evaluate applications (see Figure 2). The first criterion—did the proposal address EPC's stated priorities—was broad enough to encompass most proposals. How the points were allocated was then fairly subjective and influenced by those scoring the proposals. The second criterion, the applicant's ability to carry out the proposed project, appears to favor groups with greater initial capacity. The third (cost effectiveness) is fairly straightforward. The fourth criterion is particularly interesting. It offers a choice: either target those below 50% of MFI or be creative or innovative. This allows groups focused on homeownership for those closer to the area median income to get full points for creativity. The two bonus point categories allow most groups to get some sort of bonus—community based groups get points, and those involved in homebuyer assistance (generally not CBOs) also get points. Of the 15 funded groups, approximately 8 had boards upon which low or moderate income persons were represented. In sum, funding criteria were broad and could be interpreted to support either housing production or revitalization goals. The bulk of funding was awarded to homeownership projects.

Monitoring

When grants were made, organizations were notified that they would be expected to evaluate their own progress and were asked to describe the methods and measures they would use to do so. In addition, they were required to submit a Project Workplan detailing the objectives of their project, the particular activities to be carried out each month and the milestones or benchmarks to be met at various points in time.[16] Grantees are required to submit quarterly reports on their operations and progress toward their goals to the EPC. These reports are summarized and presented to the board. The first round of quarterly reports was submitted in early October. Finally, applicants were informed that as a condition of accepting their grant, they were required to undergo an organizational assessment, conducted by the Center for Sustainable Neighborhoods of the University of Texas or the EPC. The assessment was to be used to identify the group's technical assistance needs.

CONSTITUENCY BUILDING AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

While the funds allocated to groups were aimed at increasing housing production and the capacity of local housing groups, the work of building a base of financial and technical support for either affordable housing or for community revitalization is primarily about building relationships. The EPC is in a unique position in El Paso. Never before has there been such a group—a group able to bridge public, private and CDC worlds. The need for

such an organization is tremendous, and most participants in the EPC to date recognize this and view the EPC as an important asset for the community. By developing a coherent agenda for community development in the region and focusing public and funder attention on these issues, the EPC will advance the industry considerably.

Developing a regional agenda is a sensitive issue with city officials. The city has been the uncontested funder of local efforts until now and, by some accounts, it has been content to maintain local groups at a low level of capacity. The city has no programs aimed at building CDC capacity to manage housing or improve their performance and CDBG funds are not available for operating support. Several CDC directors interviewed spoke of past difficulties dealing with the City's Department of Community and Human Affairs. One group complained that the lack of funding for pre-development or administrative costs left them struggling to complete their projects. On the whole, these groups felt the city was not interested in helping them succeed. On the other hand, at least one group, with a more diverse funding base, reported finding the city's oversight quite responsible and reasonable.

Despite the city's limited commitment, local groups are highly dependent on city-controlled funds. According to one observer, the City has, in the past, discouraged national intermediaries from coming to El Paso. In this context, the EPC represents a potential shift in the funding context and in the dominance of the city—a shift toward a broader view of community development based on a more diverse funding base.

It is important to note that support for these activities comes largely from EPC staff and the few board members with community development experience. The debate over production versus longer term community revitalization goals comes to the fore here. EPC staff have been able to carry out many of these activities without explicit board support or through their work with the Center for Sustainable Neighborhoods. Obviously, however, they would be more effective with full board support and participation. Yet many board members do not understand the importance of this work and do not see 'relationship building' as part of their agenda.

To accomplish this work, the EPC must work at several levels. To work with funders, they have decided to demonstrate their approach for addressing housing needs. They plan to develop model or demonstration projects, able to illustrate the barriers to achieving scale as well as the potential impact of physical development activities desired. As one example of this approach, at the Colonias Summit the EPC arranged for a CDC to present an idea for a model colonia project. (The Colonias Summit brought together funders from across the state and the country to hear presentations on the situation in El Paso colonias and examples of groups addressing various aspects of their problems. Participants were invited by the Texas Attorney General.)

At another level, the EPC brokers relationships among CDCs, between CDCs and funders (including the city) and between CDCs and intermediaries. Many people commented that, although their groups did similar work, they had never met their counterparts in other organizations before the planning for the EPC brought them together. Since then, a few groups have begun to work together to share complementary skills. For example, EPC partnered two funded groups, Casas por Cristo and Sparks Housing Development Corporation to work on a project in Sparks colonia. EPC has also brokered relationships between banks and CDCs, helping secure loans for a few groups. Through the Colonias Summit, EPC sought to link potential funders to Organizacion Progresiva de San Elizario and other colonia organizations. In another case, they are helping Guadalupe Economic Services to become a NeighborWorks organization, allowing them to underwrite mortgages through Neighborhood Housing Services.

At another level, EPC helps CDCs find other funders willing to support their projects by helping them develop projects and package proposals to funders. They work, in particular, on technical elements of projects or with potential partners. For groups with limited experience, this help can be critical to their success. They have assisted with market surveys, feasibility studies and other technical tasks that are difficult for some groups to carry out. EPC's Director can be instrumental in negotiating with actors (such as the city or state) in putting together various pieces of proposed projects. For small groups with limited land acquisition and site control experience, this help is extremely valuable.

Figure 1: El Paso Community Development Capacity

Dimension of Capacity	Status
Resource	Small budgets common Staff lack fundraising and grantwriting skills Heavily dependent on city-controlled funds
Organizational	Small, underpaid staff Burnout common Heavy reliance on volunteers Boards lack key skills, training
Networking	A key weakness Lack links to range of funders Lack links to TA providers Isolated from one another
Programmatic	Wide variation
Political	Few organize community residents Groups lack broad base of support Fear loss of city-controlled funds Isolated from one another

Source: Mueller, Elizabeth J. 1998. Building a Foundation for Community Development: The El Paso Collaborative for Community and Economic Development. Working Paper, Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University.

Enterprise has recently agreed to fund a staff person who will perform this role in the future, allowing executive director Garcia to focus more strongly on management and fundraising activities.

The EPC also offers advice and assistance to groups that are in crisis, usually over financial issues. They have been able to help secure emergency funding for one group with a cash flow crisis and to help others address management crises as they arise. Their presence and promise to work with groups in crisis can make the difference in securing help for them.

Finally, EPC closely follows changes in legislation, in financial products available and in funding programs and conveys this information to CDCs by bringing in outside groups to offer training or by directing groups to such products or opportunities on an individual basis. As a recent example, EPC brought in LISC's National Equity Fund to do a training session on tax credit and bond financing assistance.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The El Paso Collaborative is laying a solid foundation for expansion of CDC capacity in El Paso. However, the challenges remaining are substantial. The organization needs to act strategically in future funding rounds to address these challenges. Perhaps most fundamentally, the EPC must revisit the issue of capacity building and its relationship to EPC's long term goals. Which organizations should be the focus of EPC efforts? Does increasing community development capacity mean emphasizing community-based organizations? How do community-based groups differ in their operations and in their

results from other nonprofits? Second, the EPC needs to consider how best to distribute its funding to serve its intermediate and long term goals. Realistically, how many groups can be supported from a given amount of funds? And at what point should funding be withdrawn from non-performing groups?

The context for community development work is bleak in El Paso. There are too few financial and technical assistance resources available to support it. In addition, available resources are often inflexible and don't fit the needs of local organizations. There is little impetus to change this situation since the local CDC community is weak and had no real champions at city hall when the EPC began its work. Finally, the potential benefits of community-based development are poorly understood.

To accomplish its goals in this context, the EPC needs to do several things at once: build the base of funders and help existing funders to reach their intended target groups; target EPC resources (financial and technical) to key gaps within the local environment (operating and pre-development costs, for example); build support for the work of CDCs by carefully documenting and publicizing local and national successes; and document the ability of community-based groups to reach those at the lowest income levels.

To demonstrate results and build confidence in community-based development, the EPC chose to focus on affordable housing. Few organizations with much housing development capacity exist in El Paso and the need for affordable housing is great. Yet with few exceptions, those groups that are most productive work citywide or even regionwide, with no particular allegiance to one specific neighborhood and do not, thus, embody a holistic approach to solving community problems or building the capacity to do so at the neighborhood level. They are, instead, housing specialists. The small number of local community based groups are unlikely to be able to produce a sizable number of housing units in the near term; some are new to housing but committed to community revitalization, others are extremely limited in focus and capacity. Yet it is precisely such groups that are likely to take a holistic approach to improving conditions in low income neighborhoods.

In this context, the emphasis on housing production has shifted attention away from community capacity building toward citywide nonprofits. Ironically, this mirrors rather than complements the city's strategy for spending its CDBG funds. Much more might be accomplished by placing emphasis on capacity building as both production enhancing and relationship building. The three community-based groups new to housing but with strong track records in community revitalization represent an opportunity for the EPC. EPC funding could help these groups expand into housing, based on their demonstrated competence in other areas. EPC could foster partnerships between them and some of the smaller housing-only groups. In these ways, a broader form of capacity building would be fostered, with benefits beyond the provision of additional affordable housing units.

Dr. Elizabeth J. Muller has recently joined the staff of the Center for Public Policy Priorities in Austin as a Senior Research Associate. Her research centers on strategies for the revitalization of low-income communities, particularly workforce development policies that lead to living wage jobs and strategies for developing community-based services and affordable housing.

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End Notes

[1] The full report, Building Community Development Capacity From the Ground Up: The El Paso Collaborative for Community Economic Development, is available from the Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University, 33 Livingston Ave., Ste. 400, New Brunswick NJ 08901. It was supported by a grant from the Ford Foundation to CUPR. All interviews and research were concluded by the end of 1997. As a result, this article does not reflect subsequent developments.

[2] Intermediaries are organizations that provide technical assistance and financial resources (often in the form of tax credits) to CDCs across the country. Examples include the Enterprise Foundation, the Local Initiative Support Corporation and Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation.

[3] Poverty rates for Hispanics were even higher: 32.5 percent of Hispanic city residents and 44.1 percent of suburban Hispanic residents were poor in 1990. More than one-third (36.1%) of children in the metropolitan area were poor (CUPR1996).

[4] Under federal standards, households receiving 80 percent or less of the region's median household income are considered low-income.

[5] It is estimated that over the last 21 years, public funds (from all sources) have produced a total of 13,000 affordable units or approximately 620 per year, on average.

[6] Texas cities have Extra Territorial Jurisdiction powers that allow them to regulate certain aspects

of development in adjacent areas. El Paso does not invoke these powers.

[7] Under Section 916 of the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990, Texas is required to set aside 10 percent of its state CDBG funds for colonias.

[8] Levi Strauss has been a major employer in the area and has a corporate foundation headquartered in San Francisco. However, this Foundation has been downsizing and tends to make grantmaking around yearly themes, making long-term commitments to housing or community development unlikely in El Paso.

[9] The Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 and the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975 enabled community-based groups to negotiate with banks to better serve particular neighborhoods or groups. In some cities, this process provided a rallying point for neighborhood activists and led to local ordinances that strengthened federal mandates (Goetz 1993).

[10] Habitat for Humanity, while not usually included in the list of intermediaries, is a national housing organization active in El Paso and has received funding from the EPC. In spite of the small scale of Habitat's production, it is regarded as one of the most effective groups in the city.

[11] To distinguish between the two groups, we will call the community-based groups "CDCs" and the others "housing organizations."

[12] According to data on 19 housing organizations presented in EPC's original funding application,

[13] Currently, these positions are held by one representative of the largest CDC in the region and one representative of a local anti-discrimination organization.

[14] At present, two city officials sit on the Board—the Director of City Planning and the Director of the city's Community and Human Development Department— there are no county officials, however.

[15] Rose Garcia was selected as executive director (ED) in October 1996 after a year-long search to fill the position. She came to the EPC from her position as director of Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation, the largest, most productive CDC in the region. TDS is based in southern New Mexico and began by focusing on providing affordable housing for the many Latino farmworkers in the region. In recent years, it has expanded into El Paso, and produced the bulk of the affordable housing in the region in the last six years.

[16] However, the measures included in project proposals of groups ultimately funded varied greatly in their specificity and in the degree to which they could be operationalized. In some cases, groups were unclear about the difference between objectives and milestones. For example, one new organization listed "begin project" as its sole milestone. Other, more experienced groups, have laid out specific objectives and measurable milestones. EPC and CSN staff had to work with a few of the most inexperienced groups to clarify their objectives and to set milestones.

AMOR Y VIGOR
SOCIAL LEARNING IN A TEXAS-MEXICO BORDER COLONIA

Patricia Wilson, PhD.

When David Arizmendi, a Mexican-born labor organizer for the United Farm Workers, decided to work with Colonias Unidas, a fledgling community organization in one of the impoverished *colonias* of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, he had one clear goal in mind: to build up the organizational capacity of the grassroots group to the point where his assistance would not be needed. He knew that the ability of the members to work together effectively depended on their individual sense of self-confidence, their sense of community, and their ability to learn from experience. In his terms, his purpose was to change the 'me' mentality to the 'we' mentality. His strategy was not to fan the widespread perception of lack (dolores) to motivate people to action, but rather to call each of them to a higher self-image based on a sense of solidarity with fellow residents and confidence in one's own ability to contribute. This strategy he summarized in two powerful and sonorous Spanish words: *amor y vigor.* Four years later, David Arizmendi arranged with a class from the University of Texas to find out how successful he had been.

> In our second article dealing with community building along the Texas - Mexico border, Patricia Wilson has completed an indepth look at the needs that everyday people have and the solutions they have found to build on the idea of community.

David did not want the class to use traditional indicators of success: number of houses served with running water, electricity, garbage pick-up, or postal delivery; number of blocks paved or storm drains built; number of residents receiving English classes, citizenship classes, food baskets, or construction skills; or number of school children participating in a stay-in-school incentive program. Even though Colonias Unidas had achieved measurable gains in all these areas, David asked the class to look for the intangible changes that for him are far more important: 1. Do residents sense progress in the community and have a positive outlook for the future; 2. do they feel that the organization is theirs and is continually improving; 3. do they have a sense of positive change in themselves as individuals; and 4. do they sense that those in power pay more attention to them. The important changes would be invisible.

The class wanted to use the same sensitivity in handling the evaluation as David had expressed in describing his relationship to Colonias Unidas. To this end the class plunged into its own conceptual and experiential learning process about empowerment, social capital, social learning, organizational development, dynamic systems theory, and leaning organizations. The members of the class studied and practiced the skills of facilitation, communication, dialogue, and team learning. Drawing on methods of participatory social assessment, they designed a methodology for facilitating a self-evaluation whose cornerstone was a community dialogue to be facilitated bay the students themselves.

SOCIAL LEARNING: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

Individual localities, such as the *colonia* Las Lomas outside of Rio Grande City, Texas, where this case study is based, are not simply passive victims of global forces. Locality studies have demonstrated the importance of local agency in responding to, or accommodating, global forces (Wilson, 1995). These studies tell the stories of local initiative and innovation. They offer much insight into the qualitative factors that shape the organizational capability of the local state, private sector, and civil society, as well as the interfaced among them. Locality studies of the colonias shed light on the ability of the colonias to serve as a social 'shock absorber' for the economic dislocations caused by global restructuring.

Locality studies have shown that the ability of a community to build consensus (concertacion) or cooperation among its various stake holders largely determines the community's level of social capital (Wilson, 1997). A sizable literature now available describes participatory methods for facilitating multi-stakeholder cooperation (Bunker and Alban

1997). This study evaluates the impact of the participatory approach employed in the colonia community of Las Lomas.

Locality studies commonly fall into one of two theoretical paradigms: a neoclassical economics approach which emphasizes the impact of individual responses to market forces in the development of a community, or a political economy framework which emphasized the power struggles among conflicting social groups and institutions (Ward 1999, 8). This study adopts a third approach: that of social learning, which emphasized individual change as the building block to community and societal transformation (Wilson 1996).

As a research methodology, social learning employs participatory action research (PAR), an educational process that respects and works with people's own capability to produce knowledge by reflecting on their experience. It is a process of group learning based on the idea that the individual has an innate wisdom that can be tapped if limiting beliefs are discarded (Friedmann 1987; Fals Borda 1988; Horton and Freire 1990; Forester 1985). The use of qualitative PAR methodologies has become widespread among development agencies doing social assessments, stakeholder analyses, participatory rural appraisals, and participatory monitoring and evaluation in developing countries (World Bank 1998). PAR methods are frequently supplemented by semi-structured interviewing, statistical surveying, and analysis of secondary sources.

As a set of practical methods for community and organizational change, social learning employs the tools of organizational development, communicative action, and dynamic systems analysis (Wilson 1997). With these tools a community or organization can consciously build an atmosphere of trust and honesty in which the group can lean from experience through open reflection and dialogue.

While David Arizmendi's approach to community development is uniquely his own and the result of many years of experience as an organizer, it provides a concrete example of the role of the outside organizer or change agent in the community's social learning process. This role is primarily one of facilitator, catalyst, and collaborator (Argyris and Schon 1974), and only secondarily the more traditional role of technical expert. Argyris and Schon call this role that of the 'reflective practitioner.' (See Table 1). The reflective practitioner builds a relationship of trust for a collaborative learning process that is mutually empowering (Schon 1983). An effective learning process allows the group to learn far more than how to adjust its tactics to solve a problem. IT can change the group members' theories of reality, values, and beliefs in a way that leads to individual inner transformation and ways of seeing and relating to others (Argyris and Schon 1974, 1978). In fact, this personal mastery is the *sine qua non* of an empowered and empowering learning organization (Senge 1990). David Arizmendi embodied the philosophy of the reflective practitioner: he saw his role as that of a quiet catalyst for individual and organization empowerment, working behind the scenes through the local leadership (interview, January 1998).

To address David's questions, the students adopted the model of the reflective practitioner themselves and used participatory action research to ensure that the residents would feel ownership of the findings.

Fig 1. - Drawing from participant in surveys.

The center piece of the methodology was a self-assessment workshop with Las Lomas residents, both members and non-members of Colonias Unidas. In addition to the participatory workshop, the student team conducted semi-structured interviews with key public officials, representatives of various non-profit organizations working in Las Lomas, and store owners inside the community. The students also conducted focus groups with representative groupings of Las Lomas residents: e.g. volunteer workers in Colonias Unidas, know critics of Colonias Unidas, children involved in the organization's programs, and parents of those children. The students also analyzed relevant newspaper archives; Federal, state, and county data bases; web sites; and published and unpublished studies about *colonias* and *colonia* organizing efforts.

THE TRAJECTORY OF COLONIAS UNIDAS

David Arizmendi began to work in Las Lomas in 1994 under the auspices of Iniciativa Frontera, a joint venture of several non-profit organizations newly formed to promote grassroots organizing in the colonias. He chose to work in Las Lomas, a community of 5,000 mostly low income Hispanics founded in the early 1980s, because a grassroots organizing effort was already underway there. Blanca Juarez, a resident of Las Lomas since 1986, had been elected president of the fledgling community organization in 1991 to stop the construction of a cattle transfer station adjacent to the community. She also organized residents to resume construction of a partially built community center to headquarter the organization, which became know as Colonias Unidas. Upon his arrival at Las Lomas, David began working with Blanca to develop her skills in networking and negotiating with outside organizations and agencies. With David's assistance, Blanca gained a sold grasp of technical issues while working with state and local elected officials on building codes and utility legislation.

David also coached Blanca on leadership within the organization. One of their first steps together was holding a meeting with the residents to develop a shared vision and priorities for the community –a classic first step for a reflective practitioner. This effort produced much misunderstanding, impatience, and mistrust among the residents, however, and David decided to build up confidence in the organization through concrete successes before resuming a participatory approach. David and Blanca changed their strategy from having community meetings where residents participated in solving issues, to meetings where residents were provided a plan of action and give the opportunity to offer feedback. In an interview about the resident's preference for a more structured environment, David indicated "Our success is that we deal with the truth and deal with the level that they can perform at (interview, March 1998).

David and Blanca chose initial programs that would directly empower residents at the most basic levels: reading and writing, speaking English, and becoming a citizen. The Citizenship Program, which includes ESL training (English as a Second Language), has proved to be immensely popular. Before the project started, over half of all local applicants were failing the citizenship test; now graduates of the citizenship classes pass at a rate of 95% (Fernandez 1998, 19). The project guides non-citizens in the community through the citizenship application process with the Immigration and Naturalization Service, making the process less intimidating and hostile than it could be facing it on their own. The Project provides a series of classes in Spanish to prepare the applicants for the tests in U.S. history and government, English sentence writing, and basic English conversation. The first class in 1995 had only 50 students, but 400 people enrolled in the next class, and at one point there was a waiting list of several hundred people. Over 2,000 Citizenship Project graduates have become citizens. The Citizenship Project is staffed entirely by CU volunteers, and most of the class teachers are graduates of the program (interview, March 1998).

The citizenship program means much more to the residents than gaining a legal status or even the right to vote. For many participants, the program has contributed to their feelings of self-efficacy. One Citizenship Project graduate said she is proud to be a citizen and feels she can speak out more. Before she was a citizen she did not feel she had the right to go to her son's school to speak up for his special needs arising from Down's

Syndrome. Now she is actively involved with her son's education (interview, March 1998).

David and Blanca also decided to organize a program called *Si Se Puede* (Can Do) to create incentives for children to do well in school. This collaborative effort with the local elementary school gives teachers of participating students a way to reward them for positive behavior other than grades. Since goo d grades may be out of reach for children who do not know English well, or show parents do not know English well enough to help them with their homework, this program rewards them for other positive behaviors: consistent completion of homework, good classroom effort, cooperative classroom behavior and consistent attendance. Points given for these behaviors are traded periodically for small toys at a store stet up at the Las Lomas community center. Focus groups were held with parents and children coming to the community store after school one day. One of the mothers said that before the program her daughter did not take school very seriously, but now has better attendance, pay s more attention, and gets better grades. A father said that while he gives five dollars for good grades to each of his kids, the ones in the *Si Se Puede* Program are more excited by the little toys that they earn with their own effort than they are by the five dollars he gives them. This successful program has garnered the support of more and more parents over time as the impact on their children has become visible.

The other major program that David and Blanca chose to organize was the Child Nutrition Program. This program has enabled 120 women in Las Lomas to become after school home day care providers, serving over 1,500 school children. These child care providers receive between $400 and $900 a month (depending on the number of children) from the Texas Department of Human Services for serving nutritious snacks and dinners to the children. These women have in many cases become the major income earner in the family. Moreover, they receive twenty hours a year of training in nutrition, budgeting, and child development to maintain their state certification.

Several program participants described their increased feelings of self-esteem and empowerment. One participant said she felt more secure with her children because of the training in health, nutrition, and safety. Furthermore, she felt "more powerful" than she did previously, believing than now she could be a community leader. Another child care provider noted that a significant reason she participated was to learn firs aid in case of emergencies with her children. Now she feels comfortable with hose skills. The field representative for the program, Las Lomas resident Alonzo Rubalcava, believes that the participants have learned more positive ways to raise children and how to budget. further, he commented, many participants now aspire to own a child care center in Las Lomas (Interview, March 1998). Alonzo himself has developed new skills and aspirations: "I now want to be a teacher. I realized after doing the training for the nutrition program that I really enjoy teaching and that I am good at it." The main problem with the program, according to David Arizmendi, is that some of the husbands of the child care providers have become resentful of the woman's earnings and will show up at the house only when the State check is due to arrive (interview, January 1998).

The Citizenship Program and the Child Nutrition Program produced a number of capable new volunteers, some of whom became board members in Colonias Unidas. David arranged for outside leadership training for the board. Blanca – a graduate of the leadership training herself – provided additional classes. In 1997, David and Blanca decided it was time for the board to make it s own programming decisions. When an opportunity for a multi-million dollar Federal grant for indigent food assistance became available, David was concerned that it would create mistrust, conflict and corruption; swamped the administrative capacities of CU; and distract the organization from its primary mission – organizing a cohesive community. He hoped the board would turn it down. Nevertheless, he felt that the board needed to make decisions and learn from the consequences. He prompted a discussion of the benefits and pitfalls of accepting the grant, but withheld his own opinion. The board opted to accept the money.

The Food Pantry Program, as it is known, is funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Through this large grant, Colonias Unidas receives a biweekly shipment of food intended for distribution to those who meet income guidelines. Eight to ten

volunteers are required to divide the truck load of food into smaller boxes, notify qualified recipients, and distribute the boxes. The volunteers also perform many administrative tasks such as helping residents complete the application, verifying the applicant's income qualification, and filling out monthly reports.

David reports that some residents volunteered to work in the Food Pantry Program because they assumed they could give preferential treatment to themselves, their family and friends. Moreover, some of the new board members assumed that special influence would be a right

Fig. 2 - Drawing from participant in surveys.

of board membership (interview, January 1998). Amid charges of corruption, these assumptions were shared by many non-member residents in the community. One local store owner, for example, stated in an individual interview his belief that food pantry workers give food d only to their friends and family. Furthermore, he believes that Blanca owns a big house and drives a "luxury car" (Interview, March 1998). Current food pantry volunteers report their difficult struggles to overcome perceptions of corruption and self-interest by the community and are demoralized by the lack of gratitude from community members for their unpaid efforts.

One of the positive outcomes, however, is the great source of pride in the Food Pantry Program as one of the important amenities of Las Lomas and services of Colonias Unidas. The volunteers are proud of their work and see themselves as professionals, albeit unpaid. They are not interested in participating in the management decisions for the program; they want to leave that to Blanca. They simply want very clear rules for allocating the food and to be recognized for carrying out their tasks in strict compliance with the rules. Any exceptions to the rules for recently arrived relatives, families facing emergencies such as illness or accident, or other reasons must be made by Blanca and that is the way the volunteer workers like it (Focus group, March 1998).

An on-going project of Colonias Unidas that has generated much animosity is the street paving and storm drainage project. Because of delays in engineering studies, contacting, and funding disbursements the project has generated many accusations of mismanagement and corruption and much anger at the inconvenience, dust, and inaccessibility created by the partially completed project. Blanca invited the three most outspoken critics of the project to meet with the student research team for a focus group. They freely expressed their anger about the impact of the dust and inaccessibility caused by the street work on their own particular properties, and felt that CU was part of the problem rather than the solution. Exasperated by the street situation that so directly affected their properties, they responded in the negative to a question about whether CU had had an overall positive impact in the community.
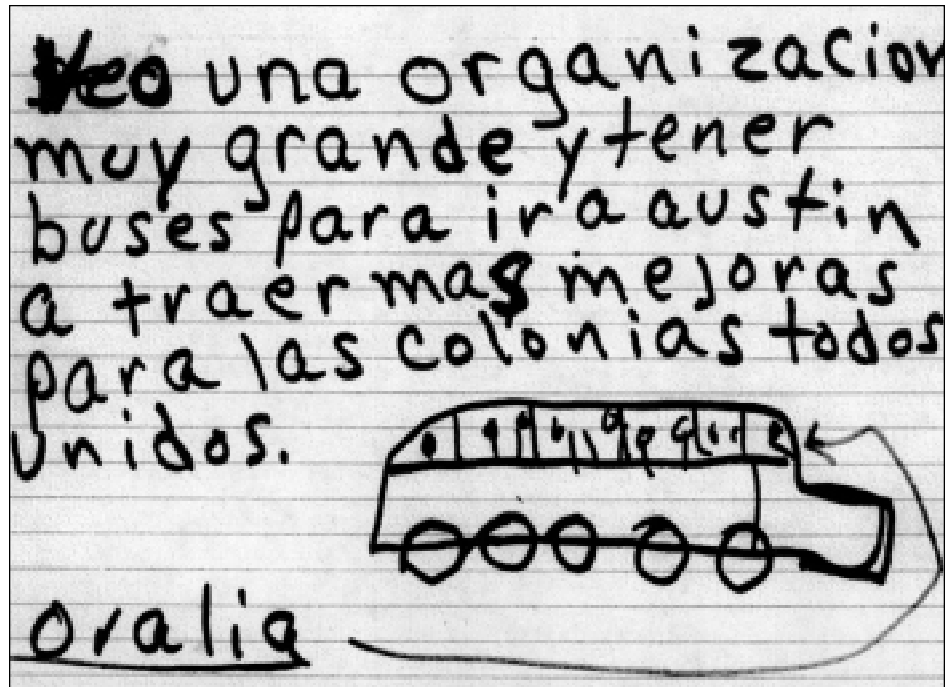
THE PARTICIPATORY SELF-EVALUATION WORKSHOP

Following the whole systems approach to participatory workshops (Bunker and Alban

1997), the students designed the event to bring not just the most committed and active member so Colonias Unidas into the room, but rather a broad cross-section of the community's stakeholders, including non-members and inactive members. Sandwiched between the weekday work schedule of most of the *colonia* residents and their weekend visits home to Mexico, the three hour workshop was held on a Friday evening with twenty-four residents attending, three-fourths of whom were women. Three additional residents, all non-members known for their vocal criticism of Colonias Unidas, did not stay for the workshop when they found out about its structured nature.

They primary purpose of the dialogue was not to extract information from the participants, but to foster individual and group reflection and learning about the 'invisible' issues that David had identified as his primary interests: the sense of individual empowerment and personal capacities, the sense of community progress and cohesiveness, and the view of Colonias Unidas in terms of its clout, organizational capacity, and ownership. To encourage openness the students created a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere. The only 'rules of the game' given to the participants were intended to ensure a dialogue as opposed to a discussion: (1) everyone speaks, (2) everyone listens, (3) no one judges. Table 2 lists the differences between a learning dialogue and a typical discussion. Signs with the three rules were posted around the break-out group areas for easy reference.

Each of the four dialogue groups was facilitated by one of the Spanish-speaking members of the UT team. As they introduced each of the six dialogue themes, the facilitators asked participants to take a moment to form their own thoughts and write or draw them on a large index card. Then each person pinned his or her card on a bulletin board and expressed to the group what he or she had identified as the most important changes or vision for the future, often to rounds of supportive applause, encouraging remarks, and friendly laughter. The groups then entered into dialogue on the themes, using the cards a s a point of reference. As each group finished the six themes, they continued talking over a buffet dinner. Then one of the members from each group reported back to the plenary the results of his or her group, again with much laughter, a high energy level, and many new ideas emerging for future action.

A CLOSE-UP VIEW

The nature of the dialogue is best conveyed by a close-up view of one of the breakout groups. The group of inactive members was composed of six women, all residents of Las Lomas, except for one who is from a nearby colonia where Colonias Unidas is also active. The information about the participants was taken from data sheets that each woman filled out as she registered for the workshop. The individual responses, translated below into English, were taken from the large index cards each wrote or drew on during the breakout group. The original Spanish is included in parentheses when it adds richness or clarity to the translation. One woman wrote her responses in English; those are compiled verbatim and put in quotation marks. Some women chose to draw their responses and talk about their drawings. Their verbal; descriptions of the pictures are included.

PARTICIPANTS

Guadalupe, a woman in her late forties, recently completed the citizenship course that Colonias Unidas offers and successfully passed the test to become a citizen, although she has not yet voted. A resident of Las Lomas since 1990, she is a member of Colonias Unidas, but has done no volunteer work for the organization. She has taken advantage of the job skills courses offered at the Self-Help Center, as well as the citizenship course.

Odilia, a woman in her thirties, is a non-citizen. A resident of Las Lomas since 1986, she is a member of Colonias Unidas and has done occasional volunteer work for the organization. She has also taken the citizenship course and received food from the food pantry program.

Diana, a woman in her thirties who speaks English, is a citizen by birth and has voted all her adult life. A long time resident of Las Lomas, she is an inactive member of Colonias

Unidas.

Socorro, a woman in her thirties, recently became a citizen after taking the citizenship course, but has not yet voted. A resident of Las Lomas since 1989, she is a member of Colonias Unidas and has participated as a volunteer in some of the street cleaning campaigns.

Oralia, a woman in her late forties, is a lifelong American citizen, having voted here all her adult life. Since 1965, she has lived in a nearby *colonia*, La Puerta Subdivision #2, where Colonia Unidas has also bee active. She is not a member of Colonias Unidas nor a prior participant in the organization's activities.

Rosalinda, a woman in her fifties, is a non-citizen and a resident of Las Lomas since the early 1990s. A member of Colonias Unidas, she does occasional volunteer work in whatever is needed.

THEME 1: MOST IMPORTANT CHANGES THAT YOU HAVE NOTICED IN THE COMMUNITY

Odilia: Th*e most important change is that there is a school nearby for the kids and a bus that comes to pick them up. Before they had no way to get to school. We also have a better water supply. Before we had to do our clothes washing and bathing late at night because it was the only time we had water. We will soon have a storm drainage to prevent floods and more streets will soon be paved. AI also want to mention that before we didn't have the food pantry.*

Guadalupe: *The most important change in this community has been the formation of Colonias Unidas. Now we are listened to ("se nos escuchan"). Because of Colonias Unidas there has been progress in our community, like the street paving. Colonias Unidas has provided opportunities for self-improvement ("superacion personal") for anyone who wants to take the opportunity. Colonias Unidas has helped us by allowing us to become members and to benefit from the various programs—citizenship classes, English, education programs. And now the progress with water and drainage and the program to motivate the children to do their homework; also the nutrition program and the food pantry.*

Socorro: *The most important change for m e is the citizenship program, because now I am a citizen ("me hice ciudadana"). I have built my house. I have learned to make cabinets ("me ensene hacer gabinetes"). And I collaborate with my community. When I arrived here, there were not many houses, just a lot of brush fields. Now there are many houses I can go for a walk without a problem because the streets are better. People know each other better and I have a lot of friends. Now I can take a bath as often as I want and whenever I want because we have water.*

Diana: (Diana wrote her card in English as follows) *"In 1982 we move to Las Lomas they were very few homes We had few natives But now the Lomas change We no grid box no phone now we do now most important we have a school for our children"*

Oralia: *In 1985 my community was a hill full of nopales, mesquites, and very few houses. Now it is full of houses. There is water, electricity, telephone, cable, mail boxes in front of each house, school buses, stores, and a 'taqueria' (taco shop). The most important change recently is the numbering of the houses to help the 911 to give us better emergency service.*

Rosalinda: *I have seen much change. Before there were no streets and it was just open fields. But now I feel proud to have received the support from Colonias Unidas and the staff that work there and I thank them. We now have paved streets, drainage, and water, ad a program that gives us food. The most important thing is that now people from outside come and advise us ('nos dan orientacion') and understand us.*

THEME 2: MOST IMPORTANT CHANGES THAT YOU HAVE NOTICED IN COLONIAS UNIDAS AS AN ORGANIZATION

Guadalupe: *The most important change is that Colonias Unidas is now involved in the education of our children, in motivating the (to work hard in school).*

Oralia: *The most important change is that Colonias Unidas got the dump sites cleaned up.*

Odilia: *The most important changes of Colonias Unidas are (1) getting police patrols in the neighborhood, (2) English classes for adults, and (3) the program to motivate our children to get ahead in their studies.*

Diana: *The most important change is the cleaning of all the trash left on the street and on empty lots. Now they are all clean. And now we have some stores in Las Lomas.*

Socorro: *Colonias Unidas was a small group but we began to grow with Blanca's support. Now assistance ('ayudas') has come that benefit us: citizenship classes, clean-ups, police patrols, cabinet-making classes, English classes, electricity classes, and the food pantry.*

Rosalinda: *Schools, clean streets, storm drainage, Colonias Unidas staff and their assistance, food distribution program, and police patrols.*

THEME 3: MOST IMPORTANT CHANGES THAT YOU HAVE NOTICED IN YOURSELF AS A PERSON

Guadalupe: *Before I felt less capable ('mas incapaz') and now I feel more able to do things ('mas superada') – because whoever wants to get ahead here can.*

Oralia: *Before I was very shy ('reservada') and stayed to myself. Now I am unashamed and confident ('muy desenvuelta'). I feel a real part of the whole neighborhood ('convivo con toda la vecindad').*

Diana: (card written in English) *"When I moved to Las Lomas I had no nabors or friend Now I have very good friend and nabor that I can say we are a family"*

Socorro: *When I came I didn't know any English. I had to work as a manual laborer in the fields. I felt sick a lot. Now I speak enough English to work in Macdonald's serving customers. I wear a dress to work and look nice. I feel good. I feel useful to others.* (See Figure 1).

Odilia: *I know more people in the community. I am learning English, I have improved myself ('superacion personal'), and, most important, I feel more useful.*

Rosalinda: *When I got here I was alone and sad; I had lost my husband. Now I am happy that I have progressed so much and grown as a person ('superada').*

THEME 4: YOUR DESIRED VISION OF THE FUTURE OF THIS COMMUNITY

Odilia: *All the streets are paved, there is enough water, there is no flooding, and there is a lot of greenery.*

Guadalupe: *The storm drains are connected, there is never a shortage of water, the streets have all been paved and are all well lighted. And Colonias Unidas is supporting ('apoyando') us as before.*

Oralia: *I see a peaceful community where there are no robberies or crime, the streets are good, there are doctors' clinics, the streets are will lighted, and there are many trees and greenery.*

Diana: *"There is lots of water because in summer we don't have water Park, streets, and a better living for all of us. I hope to see Las Lomas like a city and beautiful."*

Socorro: *I see paved streets, plentiful water, places where people can go to exercise in safety, sports programs for youth and adults to avoid crime and delinquency ('vicios'), good public lighting, and many trees.*

Rosalinda: *Nice streets, plenty of running water, plants and flowers, attractive street lights ('faroles'), no crime.*

THEME 5: YOUR DESIRED VISION OF THE FUTURE FOR COLONIAS UNIDAS

Guadalupe: *Colonias Unidas is better than before. Everybody is contributing ('apoyando') to the organization, including the men.*

Diana: *"If we all work together we can make Colonias Unidas a better organization."*

Odilia: *The community center is finished, Colonias Unidas is helping others to improve ourselves ('superarnos') more and more ('cada dia mas'), to learn new skills and jobs ('oficios'). And there are more programs for the education of our kids.*

Oralia: *I see a very large organization that has buses going to Austin to bring back more improvements for all the colonias ('todos unidos'). I am driving the bus!*

Socorro: *All the members of Colonias Unidas meet more often and bring more programs that can benefit us. We can solve all our problems together ('en conjunto'). The voice of Colonias Unidas is heard in important places.* (Her drawing contains the following inscription: *"Junto podemos! La union hace la fuerza').*

Rosalinda: *I want to be an active member of Colonias Unidas. Colonias Unidas will continue bringing in more people from the outside to support us. Everyone will be more supportive and friendly to each other ('mas companero').*

THEME 6: YOUR DESIRED VISION OF THE FUTURE FOR YOURSELF AS A PERSON

Guadalupe: *I am a happy, smiling woman because I live in Colonias Unidas.*

Oralia: *I have been a member of Colonias Unidas for fifty years and am chose Woman of the Year ('Dama del Ano')!*

Diana: *"I am happy here in Colonias Unidas but I am not old!"*

Socorro: *I am a manager at MacDonald's and a leader of Colonias Unidas. In the drawing I am beautifully dressed and made up. I'm running a meeting of Colonias Unidas and telling the others that all of us can achieve many things in life when we decide to.*

Rosalinda: *I am flying high and free. I have a beautiful house. I am chosen Lady of the Year by Colonias Unidas.*

Odalia: *I am a happy woman and my children are professionals.*

When asked specifically if the people with economic and political power pay more
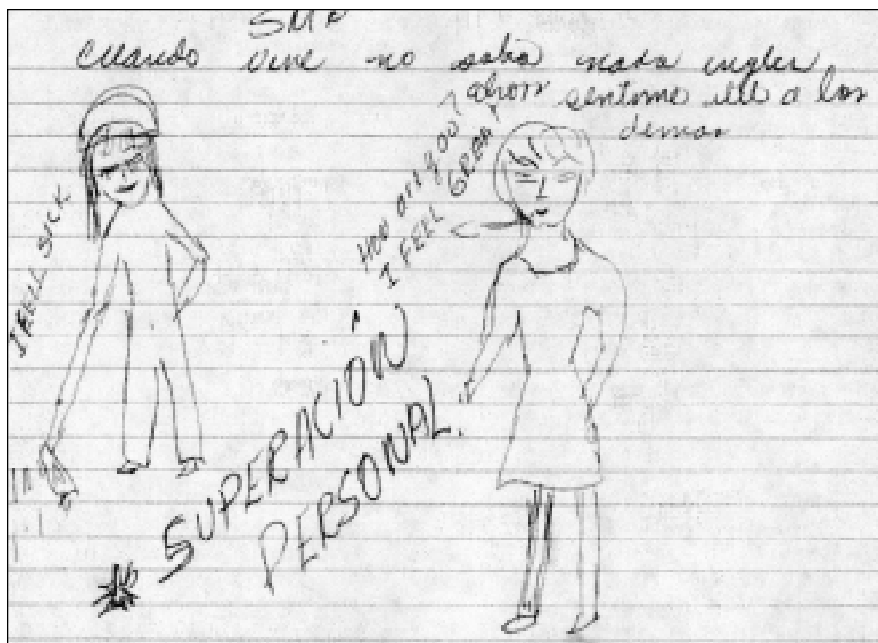
Fig. 3 - Drawing from participant in surveys.

attention to Las Lomas now than before, Socorro and Guadalupe heartily agreed and said that they treat us with more respect. The others agreed with them.

OVERALL WORKSHOP FINDINGS

1.   Changes in the community

The two principal changes in the community that were identified by all the breakout groups were both positive: improved infrastructure and a greater sense of community. Participants recalled the early years of Las Lomas, when the community was nothing more than a brush field with some isolated houses, little infrastructure, and no sense of community. They recall in the not very distant past having to bathe and wash clothes in the middle of the night, since the private water supply was diverted to the large ranchers in the day time. Now they point to tangible improvements in the infrastructure. The most frequently cited were streets, lights, dependable running water, and the new school.

Many of the participants also brought up the importance of the less tangible community improvements. An increased sense of interconnectedness, belonging, and community appeared as a theme across breakout groups, especially among the women. Referring to the early years of Las Lomas, participants pointed out the lack of community: "there was no communication," "there was no unity between people," "we didn't know our neighbors." Now "I know my neighbors;" "I feel a real part of the neighborhood;" "there is better communication among people;" and "I collaborate with my community."

There were several negative comments about the community's "growing pains" evidenced by slow progress, particularly the street paving project, which has torn up existing unpaved roads and worsened the dust problem. See Table 3.

2.   Changes in Colonias Unidas

Each of the breakout groups found that Colonias Unidas had grown in terms of programs and services offered to colonia residents. The most frequently cited programs were the food pantry, street cleaning campaign, and the *Si Se Puede* program for school children. Some comments identified the improvement of the organization's physical facilities. Others noted an increased ability of the volunteers to work together. The positive tone of most comments stood in sharp contrast to one dissenting voice who said that "there have not been many changes and there is still much to do." See Table 4

3.   Personal changes

Across breakout groups there was a widespread sense of individual progress. Many residents referred to improved ability to speak English, to learn new skills, to become a citizen, and to be a valued contributor to the community. Participants felt a greater sense of opportunity in the colonia for improving oneself. Responses varied sharply by gender. Most of the women spoke in more abstract terms about a higher level of self-awareness,

growing self-confidence, increased skills and capabilities, and overall feelings of increased usefulness and effectiveness. One of the women on the Colonias Unidas board of directors declared, "In the past, I was a person who always stayed in my house…I never went out or worked outside the home. Now I am a person who has contact with many people…I have become much more confident and self-assured." Another woman who is an active volunteer commented that "since I arrived in this community, I feel different….I do volunteer work…I feel important in helping other people. Being a volunteer worker has helped me to understand everything happening within the community." The male participants focused on concrete changes for themselves: "I have a home," "I got a job."

4.   Future vision for the community

The participants evidenced positive aspirations for the community: greater safety, comfort, and beauty. Each of the breakout groups envisioned a more attractive community, with paved streets and a low crime rate. "There are more stores…new streets…no gangs or violence, and everything is well organized." A long-time resident of Las Lomas envisioned "lots of water…a park, streets, and a better living for all of us." One enthusiastic board member exclaimed, "My community is the most beautiful in all of Starr County, perhaps in all of Texas. Many people are jealous of our community!"

Many participants, especially the women, also envisioned a more cohesive community with greater mutual respect, trust, communication, and collaboration. One participant stated in her vision for the community, "I esteem the expressions and feeling of other people," while another expressed a vision in which her opinion would "be heard and…feelings…appreciated." "I would like to have respect for each other, and the right of expression," stated another participant in her vision of the future. One of the volunteers spoke of "a special community…(with) a positive attitude. We have a community without barriers. We respect each other."

5. Future vision for Colonias Unidas

The vision for Colonias Unidas was one of an organization with greater participation by the residents, an organization with significant political clout and respect in local and state government, and one that provides leadership opportunities to serve and empower others. There was some blurring of distinction between the future of the community and the future of the organization. Many of the references for the future of Colonias Unidas referred to more and better physical improvements and services. Three of the four breakout groups envisioned Colonias Unidas as a unifying force in the community, providing residents with greater political and economic access. "We want our people to be more united," said one active volunteer. Another participant expressed a desire for "an organization endorsed by all the people." Some of the female members also expressed a vision that included more participation by the men. The group of non-members, on the other hand, envisioned more services benefiting more residents. "There are more benefits," "Colonias Unidas is helping more people," and "more volunteers help," were some of their comments.

6. Personal vision for the future.

Individual outlooks for the future signaled a high degree of optimism: the expectation of better education and job opportunities for oneself and one's children; opportunity for contributing more to the community and developing one's leadership skills; and visibility, respect, and influence in the community. Responses on the theme of personal vision varied sharply by gender. The women were more expressive about their personal visions and likely to include their role in the community. The expressed visions of themselves as being happy, accomplishing goals, being leaders and role models in the community, and having the skills and ability to work well with others and be of services to the community: "I'm running a meeting of Colonias Unidas and telling the others that all of us can achieve many things in life when we decide to." "We have more buses going to Austin to bring

back improvements, and I am driving the bus!" The women also spoke about the future of their children: "My children are professionals." Many of the men did not respond to this topic. Those who did expressed more concrete visions, such as earning their high school diplomas or getting a good-paying job.

7. Perceptions of those in power

When asked to comment on how those in power perceive Las Lomas and Colonias Unidas, there was a strong feeling among all the breakout groups that the organization had become very influential and effective. The participants generally agreed that both the community and the organization had grown in influence. One member felt that "the most important change in this community has been the formation of Colonias Unidas… Now we are listened to." A board member commented that "Las Lomas used to be seen as the 'ugly ducking' of Rio Grande City…but now leaders take notice of us…We took them by surprise…now the come to us!"

IS COLONIAS UNIDAS A GRASSROOTS LEARNING ORGANIZATION?

To be a grassroots learning organization, the residents must feel a sense of ownership of Colonias Unidas. As a reflective practitioner, David Arizmendi does not want the residents to see the organization merely as a service provider. The workshop dialogue yielded useful evidence on that issue. In talking about past achievements and current programs most of the workshop participants, even active volunteers and board members, frequently said 'they' in referring to CU. Many statements indicated that the participant did not identify him/herself with the organization. A board member commented that "CU has changed in…the programs it offers," and an active volunteer stated that "The association helps families." Some of the participants, while referring to themselves as members, also referred to CU as a service provider separate from themselves: "they've helped us," "Colonias Unidas got the dump sties cleaned up." Some referred to CU as though it were a territorial jurisdiction. Only a few used the self-inclusive "we" when speaking of the organization in the past or present: One of the men on the board of directors stated that, "We are working on…(the road)." One woman in the inactive members' group commented that "CU was a small group, but we began to grow."

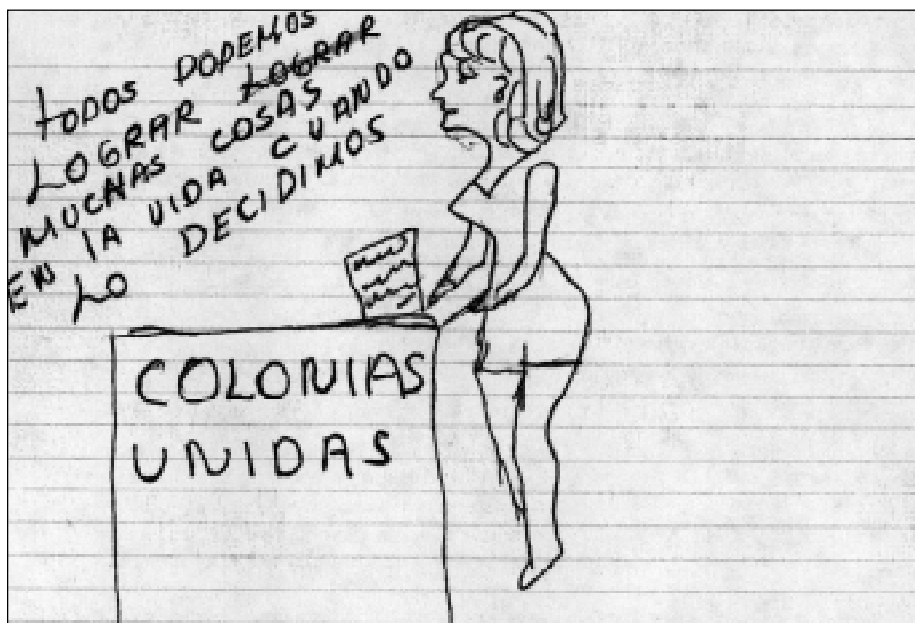Another requirement for a learning organization is that the members of the organization

Fig. 4 - Drawing from participant in surveys.

participate in problem solving and priority setting through dialogue. While there was very infrequent reference to Blanca in the workshop, the results of individual interviews and focus groups showed that many volunteers and board members consistently defer to Blanca to interpret the technical issues, set the priorities, make the decisions, and speak for the group. David emphasized the difficulty in training the board to accept responsibility for decision-making.

These findings could be interpreted to mean that CU is more like a successful service provider, akin to a government agency, than a successful grassroots learning organization with a broad-based sense of ownership and collaboration by the community. However, there were other factors at play that made this obvious conclusion too facile. Consider the following indicators of the local cultural milieu:

* the fact that early efforts to involve the community in setting priorities resulted in mistrust, impatience, miscommunication, and lack of interest,

* the fact that David and Blanca had to have training programs with board members to instill the idea that a position on the board of directors was not a license for special favors,

* the fact that many of the women volunteers said their husbands would not let them go to meetings or travel to Austin without a strong leader who the husband trusted (Blanca),

* the fact that the home day care providers were experiencing problems with their husbands because the woman's earning capacity had become a threat to the man,

* the fact that all the volunteers in the food pantry program were glad that they had no discretionary decision-making power and proud of the fact that they were strictly carrying out the rules in a professional manner.

The path to grassroots organizational empowerment must be adapted to the needs and timetable of the local culture. In the case of Las Lomas, as with many Hispanic colonias in the border region, it may be necessary to first build an effective hierarchical, rule-based, business-like organization, following the modernist values still dominant in our society. Such an organization may serve as an incubator for a new cadre of leadership, one better positioned for creating a participatory leaning organization.

There are two important indicators that CU is serving as an incubator for a new cadre of leadership that can take the place of the charismatic leader and develop a more participatory organization. A series of interview with individual volunteers and board members detected four or five empowered women with strong leadership potential – what David calls the "second tier" of leadership. Moreover, their vision for the future of CU echoes the workshop findings: While CU has been seen as a successful service provider for the community, the future vision of the organization sees it as bringing people together, providing a place where residents can be heard and understood, creating opportunities for leadership and cooperation, and increasing the community's political clout. In other words, there is a shifting vision of CU from 'they' to 'we.' This vision for the future reflects current attitudes and desires, and thus the substantial progress that Colonias Unidas has made towards building a grassroots leaning organization in Las Lomas.

CONCLUSIONS

This inquiry shows a widespread sense of both individual and community empowerment among the residents of Las Lomas. There is a palpable sense of growing pride in the community. The residents share positive aspirations for the future of the community: greater safety, comfort, and beauty, and a greater sense of community cohesion, trust, and collaboration. There is a strong sense that because of Colonias Unidas the community has

more clout with those who hold power. The members, board members, and volunteers of CU envision the future of their organization as an empowered and empowering organization, building social capital with the broad-based participation of the community.

The results of the inquiry caused the class to reconceptualize the view of what it means to be a reflective practitioner. There is no linear strategy for building a participatory empowered learning organization. The reflective practitioner must work within the local cultural context and suspend judgement as to what the trajectory should look like. Colonias Unidas began with a series of training programs whose by-product was enhanced individual self-esteem and self-efficacy for the many graduates. From those graduates a number of volunteers and eventual board members emerged. Led by a respected, trusted, charismatic woman, Colonias Unidas provided a culturally acceptable context for these residents, primarily women, to participate in and build their sense of public identity as trustworthy, respected, professional contributors tot he community. From this current situation, new leaders are already beginning to emerge who will be able to replace Blanca as she enters the political arena and gains regional and national visibility as a successful grassroots community leader. This cadre of leaders will be tasked with carrying CU to the next level: realizing the vision they have already articulated for an organization that is 'owned' by the community and empowers others to collaborate.

Is a hierarchical organization dominated by one charismatic leader to whom the members defer a sign of failure for a reflective practitioner? Only if the new cadre of leaders successfully nurtured and empowered fails to claim the opportunities to exercise its leadership responsibilities as the charismatic leader moves on. Otherwise such an organization can be a useful incubator of new leadership and an agent for cultural change toward a more participatory learning organization.

The story of social learning in Colonias Unidas shows that the reflective practitioner exhibits patience, love, and the sensitivity to discern the appropriate trajectory without judging it against his or her own desires. The reflective practitioner fully embodies the words of LaoTse:

<div align="center">

GO TO THE PEOPLE

LIVE WITH THEM.

LOVE THEM.

LEARN FROM THEM.

WORK WITH THEM.

START WITH WHAT THEY HAVE.

BUILD ON WHAT THEY KNOW.

AND IN THE END

WHEN THE WORK IS DONE

THE PEOPLE WILL REJOICE:

"WE HAVE DONE IT OURSELVES."

</div>

Paticia Wilson is a professor who's interests focus on urban environment and local economic development. Her work on Latin American issues has attracted such agencies as the United Nations Habitat and USAID to seek advisement on important programs.

ADA ON CAMPUS
ISSUES OF COMMUNICATION AND UNDERSTANDING

Maureen Meredith

In the course of the research necessary for this paper, a great deal of miscommunication and misunderstanding between the University of Texas at Austin (UT) administration and students related to the topic of disability issues was discovered. Ultimately, the main point of contention seemed to be the University's accessability to disabled persons - as perceived by the students versus as affirmed by the University. Although UT officials admit that the campus is not one hundred percent accessible, since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act many ramps have been constructed that provide access to important areas on campus. Examples include the ramps from 21st street to the south mall by Littlefield Fountain, from inner campus drive to the plaza in front of the tower, from the plaza to the tower, and, most recently, a ramp that provides access to the Student Affairs Office in the Main Building. However, when these improvements were pointed out to students in interviews, they did not acknowledge them. Instead, they continued to list areas on campus still in need of improvement and accused University administrators of being insensitive to their needs. According to one student, "UT says it has spent millions of dollars in accessibility retrofitting but that is garbage. UT is only interested in making money so they put all their money into athletics. The University of California at Berkeley is accessible and they have a successful football team."

Constrained by limited funds, structural limitations on historic buildings, and a sprawling hilly campus and confronted with approximately five hundred sites that could be improved, UT representatives admit 100% accessibility on campus is not financially possible nor required by law. Given these constraints, are these accusations against UT justified? This paper will present the different sides of some of the parties involved in hopes that a better understanding among the participants can be reached.

> Though institutions of higher education seek to provide opportunities to all people. Some groups are left behind when history and traditions get in the way.

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990

In 1992, The University of Texas at Austin conducted a self-assessment study of the University campus in response to the legislative mandates of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. This act was a direct result of studies conducted in the 1980s from which Congress learned that there were 43 million people in America with disabilities. One national study, conducted by Louis Harris and Associates, reported that two-thirds of all Americans with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 64 were not working and that two-thirds of these said that they wanted to work. Many of those polled who wanted to work believed that discrimination figured greatly in their inability to find employment. The poll concluded that people with disabilities are much poorer, are much less well-educated, have much less social interaction, have fewer amenities, and have a lower level of self-satisfaction than other Americans (Stolman 1994, 5).

Armed with this information, the National Council on Disabilities, an independent federal agency, recommended that Congress enact a comprehensive law providing equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities and prohibiting discrimination on the basis of handicap. Congress agreed. The Americans with Disabilities Act passed by overwhelming margins in both the House and the Senate, and President Bush signed it into law. Financial independence was a primary goal of the ADA. Freeing people from discrimination and opening up job opportunities was hoped to greatly reduce the need for government to spend billions of dollars providing services for people with disabilities (Stolman 1994, 5).

The ADA mandates that services, programs, activities, employers, benefit providers, and other public opportunity providers may not discriminate against individuals who have disabilities yet are otherwise qualified (Rothstein 1992, 18). This legislation consists of five titles: Title I addresses jobs and outlaws job discrimination against people with disabilities, sets rules of application and testing procedures, and provides enforcement mechanism. Title II addresses public entities and requires accessibility to public accommodations operated by public entities. It involves public programs and services as well as public transportation. Title III addresses private business and regulates public accommodations

and services operated by private entities. It requires every public facility to take readily achievable steps to make its goods and services available to people with disabilities. Title IV addresses telecommunications and requires telephone companies to provide services to enable people with hearing and speech impairments to communicate with non-disabled people. Title V addresses several miscellaneous categories ranging from architectural regulations to transvestites (Stolman 1994, 6-7). Since The University of Texas at Austin is a public, state-run institution, the regulations under Title II will be the main focus of this paper.

It should be noted that the ADA was considered a legislative extension of two previous laws that expanded the civil rights of people with disabilities. The first was the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, and the second was the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Of particular importance was Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act which prohibited discrimination on the basis of handicap by recipients of federal financial funds. Because virtually all colleges and universities receive federal financial assistance, Section 504 has had a major impact these institutions. According to one disabled student, however, UT had not done anything in response to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and only began accessibility retrofitting after the 1990 act. To him, this inactivity was another example of UT's insensitively toward the needs of students with disabilities. Although the number of students with some form of disability enrolled at the time of the Rehabilitation Act is not available, there is a possible explanation for UT's perceived inactivity. It was not until the mid-1980s that the number of students with disabilities on college campuses began to increase dramatically. When this happened it put pressure on university administrations to make accessibility improvements. Possible explanations for this increased enrollment are: first, because of mandates concerning special education in public schools, more students were identified as having disabilities and began receiving special education at an earlier age. Those students began reaching college age in the mid 1980s. Second, there was an increasing awareness of disability issues. As a result, students who might not have been identified as disabled previously, such as students with learning disabilities, were being evaluated to identify possible disabilities. Third, there was an increase in the awareness of legal rights for students with disabilities, and this may have spurred more students to identify themselves as disabled as well as to seek higher education. Finally, the late 1980s and early 1990s saw a significant increase in the amount of litigation involving the legal rights of students with disabilities (Rothstein 1992, 184).

Given the historically low numbers of students with disabilities enrolled, the University had little impetus to pursue barrier-removal. Further, the previous legislation did not set deadlines for compliance. Thus, it was not until the number of students with disabilities increased and ADA mandated accessibility changes that the University began retrofitting its facilities. The specific date for ADA compliance, January 26, 1992, was a wake-up call for UT as well as other public institutions and private businesses that are opened to the public.

Public institutions are held to higher accessibility standards than private businesses. Not every inch of private buildings and grounds need be accessible. Public institutions, however, are required to make provisions for its programs, services, and activities to be accessible for people with disabilities by other means as necessary if not by physical retrofitting. The ADA mandates rigorous accessibility requirements for new construction and alterations of commercial facilities - in essence it has established new building codes. It requires that establishments offering goods and services to the general public make their facilities physically accessible. It also prohibits the setting of eligibility requirements or other criteria that discriminate against individuals with disabilities, although admissions standards for students with disabilities into universities can not be lowered (National Legal Center for the Public Interest 1996, 60).

DEFINITION OF "DISABILITY"

Who is legally disabled under the ADA? The ADA's definition of disability is "1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; 2) a record of such an impairment; 3) or being regarded as having such an impairment" (Stolman 1994, 14). An individual must have at least one of these characteristics to have a disability. Major life activities are functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working (Stolman, 17), and participating in community activities (National Legal Center for the Public Interest, 86).

The term physical or mental impairment includes any condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sensory organs; respiratory (including speech organs); cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; and skin and endocrine. Mental or

psychological disorders include conditions such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities (Stolman 1992, 14-15).

At the University of Texas at Austin, a student may voluntarily provide the University with his or her disability status, but UT cannot ask a student to disclose disability status during admission procedures, nor can UT request this information once the student is admitted to the University. As a result, UT must rely on self-reporting and requests for special services to track the total number of disabled students at the University. In order to recieve special services or accommodations, students must submit documentation of their disabling condition to the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office which operates under the direction of the Dean of Students (The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities 1997). According to Michael Gerhardt, Student Affairs Administrator in the SSD office, the number of students using the SSD services in Fall 1997 was 906 (see table below).

Planning for accessibility can mean different things to different people. For students with disabilities at the University of Texas at Austin, access to decision-making committees is as important as access to buildings and to the programs provided. Access to committees provides students' input into designs needed to improve a campus they feel is inaccessible. However, many UT administrators feel the campus is very accessible and add that 100% accessibility is not required by law. This paper explores what is required by law and what is expected from students in addition to providing suggestions to improve communication between students and administrators.

The 906 students who use SSD services represent approximately 2% of the total student body of over 48,000. However, the SSD office estimates there are probably twice as many students on campus with disabilities (4% of the total population). According to the ADA, approximately 20% of the population of the U.S. are disabled (National Legal Center for the Public Interest 1996, 59). Even after doubling the number of students reporting some disability, the UT student body has a much smaller percentage of disabled persons than the U.S. population. This suggests that there is considerable room for improvement in matriculating students with disabilities into higher education.

Once a student's disability is verified, the SSD office provides services including special registration, reader and taping services, note-taking supplies (carbonless paper), test-taking assistance, extended test-taking time, sign-language interpreters, mobility assistance, wheelchair maintenance and repair, SSD newsletter and accessibility information, support groups, and referrals to other campus and community services. The SSD office employs seven full-time staff members providing and coordinating these services.

WHAT STUDENTS WANT VS. WHAT THE LAW REQUIRES

After discussing disability issues with both students and administrators on campus, it was amazing how the opinions varied on each side of the accessibility issue. When asked to rate campus accessibility on a scale from 1 to 10, students rate it a 5 while administrators rate it a 9. One student said UT is not accessible, despite administrators claim that UT is one of the most accessible campuses in Texas.

The strong opinions students hold about campus inaccessibility and their activism have served an important role in improving accessibility on campus. Without this activism, it is doubtful UT would invest as much time and money into accessibility projects as they have, since the law states that the campus does not have to be 100% accessible. On the other hand, the needs of students with disabilities are varied, so there is no one-size-fits-all solution to accessibility problems. Perhaps waiting for specific input from students helps to improve accessibility designs and retrofitting. However, this "wait until asked" behavior bothers students and gives them the impression that UT administrators do not care about accessibility issues. When speaking with UT administrators, this author was convinced that administrators do care and that the main problems and frustrations result from miscommunication or lack of communication.

To obtain the variety of viewpoints deemed necessary for this paper, the author conducted interviews with representatives from the Assistant Dean of Students, the Assistant Dean of Students for Students with Disabilities, two members of the Services for Students with Disabilities staff, a representative from the Physical Planning Architectural Services Office, members of the disabilities rights group GUARD (Groups United Against Rights Discrimination), a representative from the Students with Disabilities Agency of the Student Government, and two former UT students who use wheelchairs. (Note: The views of the students interviewed do not necessarily represent the views of the +906 students on campus with disabilities.)

some students' complaints -
The new Student Services Building (SSB) is inaccessible.
The dorms have too few choices of accessible rooms.
The campus needs accessibility improvements such as ramps into buildings.
Accessibility improvements do not happen quickly enough.
Students with disabilities lack a voice in the planning phases of new buildings on campus.

THE STUDENT SERVICES BUILDING (SSB)

The new Student Services Building (SSB) is considered inaccessible by students with whom I spoke. They feel that UT should not have built the new SSB on Dean Keeton Street because of the hill and the four lanes of heavy, fast moving traffic. This wide street has long pedestrian walkways which make crossing difficult for students with mobility and visual impairments. When the new SSB opened, no powered doors were installed and Braille signs were not in place until months later. In addition, there are an inadequate number of accessible parking spaces for people with disabilities. Students claim that if they had had a voice in the planning stages of this building, these mistakes could have been avoided.

So how did the new Students Services Building pass regulations for accessibility if the building was truly inaccessible? The problem seems to be in the Americans with Disabilities Act Architectural Guidelines (ADAAG) and also in the lack of information that students may have. Let's begin with the building itself. The fact that the new SSB building did not have powered doors does not mean it is entirely inaccessible according to the regulations. The Americans with Disabilities Act of Architectural Guidelines (ADAAG), which acted as a template for the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAG), the code adopted for buildings in Texas to meet accessibility regulations does not require powered doors. A door is considered accessible if it meets the following requirements: adequate opening space for wheelchairs to clear, a special type of hardware is installed, the amount of force it takes to open the door is not excessive, and if clear floor space exists on both sides of the door. UT later added powered doors to the SSD building, not because they forgot to do so in the first place, as several students thought, but because they realized powered doors are expected and considered "user friendly". After admisnistrators realized that users expect powered doors, they changed their policy to require powered doors on all new buildings - in addition to retrofitting current buildings with powered doors as their funding permits.

Braille signs were not forgotten, as several students commented, but installation was delayed because of the independent contractor outside of UT's control. The Braille signs were contracted outside of UT to a company who took particular care with the signage since UT was standardizing all the Braille signs on campus to improve consistency and quality. The question is: Should UT have delayed the opening of the new building for three months because everything but the Braille signs were in place?

Disabled parking spaces around the new SSB are indeed few, but regulations state a disabled parking space cannot be situated on an a grade of more than 20%. There is very limited space around the SSB that is under the maximum grade. To arbitrarily add more spaces could expose UT to fines, as what happened to the University of Houston for violating this regulation. UT administrators are researching alternatives, but cannot hastily add parking places to meet the immediate demands of students. To do so would expose UT to regulation violations and they do not want to pay over $700,000 in fines as were imposed on the University of Houston.

Finally, the University of Texas at Austin campus is in the heart of the Texas Hill Country, consequently, the campus is very hilly. The decision to place the SSB on Dean Keeton Street (which is hilly) was more a result of space available on a dense campus rather than poor planning. To deal with car traffic, at the students' request, interim President Peter Flawn wrote a letter to the Austin City Council requesting a school zone be created on Dean Keeton Street beginning from Guadalupe to San Jacinto. The intent of the school zone is to reduce car speeds to 15 or 20 miles per hour. (The City Council has yet to vote on this request.) Students with disabilities feel this will be safer for students with mobility and visual impairments when crossing the street than is the

Students With Disabilities		
Attention Deficit (AD) Disorder		179
AD/Hyperactivity Disorder	52	
Deaf/Hard of hearing		56
Mobility Impaired	68	
Psychological		75
Visually Impaired	53	
Other health1		46
TOTAL???????????????	906	

current situation.

ACCESSIBLE DORM ROOMS

Another request is for all dorms to be accessible to students with disabilities and to provide more choice in housing. According to UT's self-evaluation study completed in April 1993, housing and food services equips 54 rooms (108 spaces, i.e. two students per room) for persons with mobility impairments and 14 rooms (28 spaces) for persons with hearing impairments. These are located in Kinsolving, Jester East, Jester West, and Moore Hill (The University of Texas Self-Assessment Study from the Executive Vice President and Provost's Office 1993). Currently there are 68 students with mobility impairments, and 56 students who are deaf or hard of hearing, who are registered with the SSD Office. Clearly, the number of students with mobility impairments is far below the number of spaces available, yet the number of students with hearing impairments is above the 28 spaces available. Unfortunately, the numbers provided by the SSD office does not break down the exact number of students with hearing impairments into those who are completely deaf versus those who may not require a fully adapted room. However, it was noted by an SSD staff member that rooms for students who use wheelchairs may need extensive retrofitting to suit a particular student's disability needs. This is an example of how difficult it can be for UT to make specific areas accessible when there is diverse needs of the student population.

According to the regulations, the ADA and the Rehabilitation Act does not require that every residence hall or room be accessible. What is required is that housing be available in sufficient quality and variety to give disabled students a choice of housing that is comparable to that available to non-disabled students (Rothstein 1992, 118). At present, the students with whom I spoke felt this selection was inadequate. Unfortunately, many dorms are in older buildings that are physically and structurally impossible to be retrofitted to meet ridged accessibility standards. As long as supply exceeds demand, it is doubtful that UT will spend additional money on accessible dorm rooms.

OVERALL CAMPUS ACCESSIBILITY

The third main request is for the University to improve the overall accessibility of the campus. Ironically, students commented that it was only very recently that a ramp was completed to allow wheelchair accessibility into the office that deals with Section 504 regulations of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

After the ADA was passed in 1990, all institutions were required to perform a transition plan to note all areas in need of improvement and how these improvements would be instituted. UT hired independent consultants to assess campus accessibility and to note all areas in need of improvement. Taking all buildings and areas in-between buildings into consideration, the report concluded that it would take approximately $30 million to make structural improvements on campus. The Physical Plant Office, which deals with these improvements, was allocated only $3 million to make accessibility improvements. This is only 10% of the total needed to make the campus close to 100% accessible (which, you remember, is not required by law). In the structural modification report, a matrix was created with all the buildings on campus prioritized by frequency of use, then prioritized by ADAAG requirements beginning with the most important ones such as exterior ramps, curb ramps, interior corridors, doors, bathrooms, Braille signage, etcetera. UT has since worked from this matrix to make structural improvements to buildings in addition to ad hoc requests made by students.

As mentioned earlier, UT has many older buildings designed and built long before accessibility was a social or legislative issue. Unfortunately, architects in the past rarely thought about accessibility issues when building on campus. A good example of this is Calhoun Hall where you walk into the front door greeted by steps leading up to the first floor or downstairs to the ground floor without a ramp in sight. Today, the crux of the problem with buildings is whether or not the architect who designs them knows the universal design principles for building accessibility. (It is assumed they do, or else the building would not pass the building inspection). Nevertheless, to what extent architecture students are taught accessibility design was something to be considered if buildings were to be improved. To answer this, an interview was conducted with the Dean of the School of Architecture, Dr. Larry Speck. Dr. Speck said architects at UT learn the general principles for accessibility but the school feels students should be taught at UT what they cannot learn in the marketplace. Since ADA building requirements can be found in resource books, there is no pressing need to teach accessibility designs extensively in classes. Still, students are exposed to accessibility design principles in the first and second year studio

classes so they are aware of these principles in the early stages of their coursework.

REPRESENTATION ON COMMITTEES

The last main request is for a stronger student voice on decision making committees. Currently, there is a committee called the President's Standing Committee for Students' with Disabilities. It is comprised of 5 students, one faculty chairperson, two faculty members, and one administrator. This committee meets once a month to discuss disability issues and also serves in an ad hoc advisory capacity with other committees that deal with buildings and facilities. However, many students feel this ad hoc advisory function is not meeting their needs and they would like a permanent subcommittee that specifically deals with buildings. This request was submitted to Provost Ad Interim Stephen Monti but was denied. Student's feel this ad hoc position they are currently in undermines their power and weakens their voice. They feel their opinions are not being listened to or taken seriously. But in discussions with able-bodied administrators and faculty who serve on similar committees, some said even their views were not listened to by other committee members. To them, this was considered common among on committees in large institutions rather than disrespect for a particular group. One UT administrator said the students with disabilities serving on the building committee for the new SSB building were shown plans that clearly indicated no electric doors were planned for the building. Still, no student expressed his or her concern. He admitted that the students may have assumed electric doors would be added, since most people assume TAG regulations require electric doors.

Several students pointed out various problems with these committees that may have undermined their effectiveness. One problem is that student turnover is high because they either graduate or switch to other universities. Consequently new students are added which causes inconsistency in representation and loss of institutional memory. In addition, accessibility needs of students vary greatly from student-to-student so one or two students may not adequately represent the range of needs for ALL students with disabilities. And finally, there is a long timeline for the planning and final construction of new buildings that can take up to four years from conception to completion. Because of these problems, some administrators felt that students being on a permanent subcommittee dealing with buildings may not be the best solution to improve representation for students. One suggestion was to have a permanent staff member from the SSD office serve on these committees and to provide consistency since it is presumed this person would be at UT over a longer period of time. While this may sound like a good solution, students felt they might lose what ever control they currently have if this plan were to be implemented.

CONCLUSION

What can planners learn from this? Since planners frequently must arbitrate between differing groups, the first lesson is that maximum use of communication avenues must be used from the start. Once misunderstandings and misinformation are propagated these perceptions are difficult to quelch and can linger from one student generation to the next. Ironically, students sometimes held on to misconceptions even after they were given more up-to-date information. After the new SSB was equipped with electronic doors and Braille signs, students still felt that the building was inaccessible as if these improvements were never made. Maybe this reflects how the students felt they were being mistreated (or opinions not valued) in the design process versus the mere physical facts as relates to accessibility. In addition, maybe after-the-fact information provided by UT (for example, delayed Braille signs due to a contractor) is simply considered suspect by students. Perhaps a better approach would be for UT to include student input during the course of a project instead of after a project is completed.

Second, there is a need for improved listening skills, especially on the part of some UT representatives. One UT representative admitted it was his job to attend meetings but to not really participate in discussions or to volunteer information unless he was asked. In other words, he hears but sometimes does not listen. Hearing is passive, listening is active and usually requires feedback and participation from the listener. This may be another reason why students feel UT is not interested in their issues. Instead, if UT actually listens to students in committees and asks questions to anticipate problems instead of waiting to be asked, maybe misunderstandings or incorrect assumptions (as with the powered doors on SSB) can be detected earlier in big projects. Another suggestion is to provide a checklist and hard copies of agendas in meetings so all parties can understand what is happening on

a particular project and which will also serve as a past record for future students who serve on these committees.

For this project it was considered important to get a copy of the Vice Provost's Self-Assessment Study of the University campus that was conducted in 1992. Officials contacted by the author were reluctant to hand this out and it took almost a month to acquire it. This seemed unusual and the question as to 'why?' was in order. This was answered after several interviews with members of GUARD who were very critical of UT's accessibility improvements on campus. Perhaps after all the criticism UT has received concerning campus accessibility, they simply did not want this comprehensive report detailing their weaknesses adding fuel to the fire. Yet, it is this kind of secrecy with information that makes students suspicious. Perhaps more openness from UT with information will show the students they are valued so if problems arise, such as construction delays with ramps, students won't feel their needs are ignored and may be less likely to criticize UT.

Overall, this report has shown that it is not a good practice to assume that minimum requirements for accessibility are good enough to achieve. This is the difference between fulfilling the letter of law versus the spirit of the law which is to provide a comfortable and safe environment for people with disabilities and, in the end, for everyone. Sometimes we forget real people use the built environment and static regulations may not provide this comfortable and safe environment - even if it meets code.

Finally, patience is necessary when working with an administration attempting to make a large campus accessible. As one former student who uses a wheelchair wisely commented after hearing about my experiences researching this paper: "Some people with disabilities are just too unrealistic. UT cannot snap their fingers and 'poof' the campus is accessible. These improvements take time and students must learn to be lenient and patient."

an informal survey...
On a scale of 1 to 10, how accessible is the UT campus?
Administrators   -   9
Students   -   5

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POINT / COUNTER-POINT
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Edited By: Joseph Cahoon & Leslie Oberholtzer

Planning Forum sent three questions to individuals, agencies, and organizations that utilize participatory methods in the planning process. We present the replies of five respondents, including three from academia, one from a state agency, and one neighborhood activist.

Norman Krumholz is a Professor in the Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University and former (1969-1979) Planning Director for the City of Cleveland. His equity planning practice and research in behalf of poor and working class communities has become a national model for planners in other large cities working to make their neighborhoods more liveable.

Patricia Wilson is an Associate Professor of Planning at the University of Texas t Austin. She received a BA in economics from Stanford and a Ph.D. in planning from Cornell. She teaches community and economic development planning, participatory methods, and planning in Latin America.

Ken Reardon is an Associate Professor in City and Regional Planning at the University of Illinois where he pursues research and teaching in the areas of neighborhood planning, community development and municipal reform. He has served as the Faculty Coordinator for UIUC's East St. Louis Action Research Project which involves five hundred students in credited community research, planning and design projects identified by community-based development organizations in East St. Louis.

Sharon Barta is the Advanced Project Development Engineer for the Austin District of the Texas Department of Transportation. Her section is responsible for all the public involvement and environmental analyses for project development in our 11-county district. The section also does the conceptual design for major freeway and divided highway projects. Ms. Barta has been a professional engineer for 25 years.

Sabrina Burmeister is a neuroscience graduate student at UT who was first inspired to civil action when she learned of a proposal to build a strip mall in her neighborhood. During the ensuing debate, she was variously accused of being a socialist, graduate student, outsider, and charismatic leader. To everyone's surprise (including her own), she succeeded in mobilizing the community and transforming the development from a placeless strip mall into a mixed-use neighborhood.

QUESTION 1: TO WHAT DEGREE SHOULD A NEIGHBORHOOD/COMMUNITY BE INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS? WHY IS THIS LEVEL PREFERABLE AND WHAT DOES IT ACCOMPLISH?

Norman Krumholz: I think the neighborhood should be involved in the planning process to the maximum degree possible—openly and completely. Without such participation and the advocacy that arises from that participation, poor and/or working class neighborhoods would get little or nothing from the business and downtown-oriented "rational" planning that now dominates. Such participation is also necessary to put a more human face on what might be an overly technical and bureaucratic planning process. To the extent that information is power (and it is) efforts toward inclusion will tend to redistribute power and resources.

Patricia Wilson: That's easy. To the degree they want to! Any coercion, even guilt tripping ('should'ing upon), creates resentment and defeats the purpose. If you have in mind a planning process run by someone other than the neighborhood or community

QUESTION TWO: WHAT ARE SOME METHODS USED TO INCORPORATE, REFLECT, OR INTEGRATE COMMUNITIES'/NEIGHBORHOODS' INTERESTS INTO THE PLANNING PROCESS?

Wilson: Every planner should master the toolkit of participatory methods. Many Master's programs in planning now require a course in participatory methods. It is no longer enough for the planner to be an analytical or technical expert. He or she must be equally skilled in the process of collaborative planning, decision-making, and evaluation.

One set of methods deals with how to design participatory workshops for large groups. Some of the workshop formats currently being used include Open Space Technology, Future Search, ICA Strategic Planning Process, and Participative Design.

Another set of methods deals with how to facilitate dialogue for collaborative learning and decision-making in small groups. A particularly interesting subset of these facilitation tools is focused on situations of cultural diversity, when the speaking and writing skills of the participants differ greatly from each other and where disempowering cultural beliefs may have been internalized in the participants themselves.

A course that I teach in participatory methods deals with both sets of tools. We do a lot of role playing in class, and you hear a lot of laughter. We also do field projects. Last spring (1998) my class assisted a community group in a low income *colonia* in South Texas to conduct a participatory self-evaluation (see related article in this issue: *Amor y Vigor*). This spring (1999) the class is preparing to conduct a training workshop on participatory methods for thirty outreach workers (*promotores*) at El Buen Samaritano, a non-profit organization in Austin.

Burmeister: The Triangle development saga had several stages that illustrate various methods, and each of them served a different purpose. The first stage involved public outrage that took the form of protests and public events, which helped to engage the public. The second stage involved public discourse over alternatives to the proposed development. We held monthly meetings and a design charrette. This was a critical period for the neighborhoods because it was here that we educated ourselves and developed a vision for the Triangle development. This process was similar to many 'visioning' exercises, except that it was much longer. The last stage involved an intense planning process that involved all the stakeholders—developer, state, city, and neighborhoods. Instead of a blank-page approach to a design charrette, the planner prepared concrete alternatives to which the public could respond. This was a very constructive and focused way of incorporating input. When ideas were rejected, reasons were always given. In the end, people felt that they had been heard, respected, and responded to. It was essential that the community was part of the decision-making process, and that the public input was not merely a courtesy.

Krumholz: The most useful methods of incorporating community concerns into planning include well-publicized public meetings in which planners would solicit resident visions for their neighborhood; obviously interactive sessions in which planners would suggest and modify their ideas subject to neighborhood input, focus groups, mailings, etc. In pursuit of the most democratic process possible, planners engaged in this process must be aware of who attends their meetings, who speaks and what interests they represent.

Reardon: At our first meeting in a community, we ask residents to create a cognitive map of their area that show boundaries, key districts, important landmarks, community assets, problem areas, and untapped resources. We were inspired to do this by both Kevin Lynch's work and John McKnight and Jodie Kretzman. It is a great way for planners who are new to an area to get a "lay of the land" from an insider's point of view. It is also a marvelous way to get residents actively involved in the planning process from the very start.

Once we have collected the Community Maps created by the residents, we ask all those present to help us carefully document these conditions by taking a disposable camera with twenty-seven exposures home. During the two weeks following the meeting, we ask them to shoot nine sites in their neighborhood that they love, nine shots of sites that they

view as problematic and nine shots of sites/areas that represent untapped resources. We collect the cameras, develop the film and bring all of the images to our second community meeting where we divide into small groups. We then give each small group four shoe boxes and ask them to divide the photos into shots that depict strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. From this analysis we create a community display of our preliminary analysis of conditions. This display is hung in a public area in the community for people to visit and comment upon.

We then train residents to evaluate local land uses, building conditions, and site conditions using the 'bubble sheets' most people are used to completing. Our sheets are adopted from the UIUC Standard Student Evaluation Forms. Residents work with a UIUC student to complete an evaluation of the physical status of each building parcel in the study area. This information is recorder on the bubble sheet. By using a machine-readable format, we can get our campus-based Computer Servicers Center to convert this information into a digital form where it can be imported into a spreadsheet or GIS program for analysis and display. Using this technology, residents can see the results of the field research in less than a week. This technology saves time and increases resident motivation because they are not waiting two to three months to see the results of their field research activities.

QUESTION THREE: HOW EFFECTIVE ARE THESE METHODS? AND, WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES INHERENT IN THE PROCESS?

Reardon: We have used these and other collaborative planning methods in our work in East St. Louis during the past eight years. Student and resident interest in planning has increased dramatically during this time through the use of these methods, which have produced plans that people have confidence in and ownership over. This "sense of ownership" which residents feel, along the knowledge they have acquired about housing and community development through first-hand involvement in the planning process, have led these residents to organize their neighbors to put political pressure on local and regional officials to implement these plans. As a result of this dynamic, dozens of increasingly complex community development projects emerging from this cooperative planning approach have been implemented in this distressed city during the past eight years. The success of this ongoing community/university partnership, called the East St. Louis Action Research Project, has led to its selection as a model participatory planning process by the United Nations Research Institute on Social Development.

This approach requires both students and residents to be trained in basic participatory action research, direct action organizing and critical education theory and practice. This requires planning schools to expand their curriculum—it may also require students to increase the time they spend in graduate planning programs. Finally, if the partnership between residents and planners is to be genuinely reciprocal, local residents must also receive training in these various substantive areas. Towards this end, we have established a full-time Neighborhood Technical Assistance Program in East St. Louis with four full-time staff members. This center runs a free adult education program in housing and community development for grassroots leaders called the UIUC Neighborhood College.

Barta: The methods have greater or lesser degrees of effectiveness that vary among the projects that are the subject of these various public involvement techniques. It is very hard to predict attendance and feedback. Sometimes something unrelated to the project occurs to cause people to provide negative feedback that previous to the incident did not exist. We also have a problem explaining our process (such as the legal process required under the National Environmental Policy Act). People think we are hiding something when we say that the issue will be developed more fully at a later stage in the process. Also, the techniques can easily have non-representative results when a small group of people who do not understand our process dominate a meeting and generate a letter-writing campaign. Other challenges we have are related to whom we should pay the most attention. Most of our projects serve more than just one neighborhood, city, county or state. We have to take into consideration a larger community but we get in trouble with a specific neighborhood when we cannot satisfy their concerns because there are larger issues when must be addressed.

We are asking for consultants that we hire for project development to try to provide us with new techniques for public involvement. We are open to ideas because we realize that we must continue to find new ways that will be more predictable in their rate of success in giving and receiving input on our projects.

Krumholz: The effectiveness of these methods varies with the participants and how carefully the planners listen to the sometimes loud and conflicting voices of the neighborhood. Sure, there are challenges, ambiguities and delays possible in an open planning process, but that's what democracy is all about. The delays and ambiguities that might occur represent not just confusion but also opportunities to improve planning decisions so that they better serve human needs.

Burmeister: One of the biggest challenges, in my opinion, is to balance the sometimes competing desires to compromise ("cooperate") and to maintain one's principles. At every stage of the game in the Triangle development, we were urged to compromise. The goal of mediators, politicians, and some planners appeared to be a solution, any solution, when our goal was the best solution. For the majority of the time, we were considered recalcitrant because of this position. However, any other victory would have been a political victory only and would not have transformed the Triangle development, the development's neighbors, or the developer.

I believe that one of the measures of our success is that the developer of the Triangle is in some way thankful to us for beating him over the head. We have both mused over the thought that we could not have gotten here any other way. I really believe that the long and brutal fight was a necessary prerequisite for the solution that we reached. That doesn't mean, of course, that every situation requires a fight. However, it is important to understand the role that such a battle can play.

Wilson: Acquiring the tool-kit is not enough to effectively promote participatory planning. Each of us must also learn to model the attitudes, behaviors, and values of participation. Only then will the tools become effective. I am talking about cultural change starting with each one of us. Take, for example, your *modus operandi* in a graduate seminar. Do you go into the discussion assuming that you have the best answer? Do you defend your position and your assumptions as the truth? Do you look for flaws and weaknesses in other positions and attempt to prove the other side wrong? Do you ask questions aimed at catching another in a contradiction or mistake? Are you happiest when the professor or the class ratifies your position over others? Don't be embarrassed to say yes. These are typical graduate seminar behaviors that get richly rewarded.

In my spring graduate seminar, in contrast, we learn to model collaborative behavior. We turn the typical discussion based on competing positions into a learning dialogue. We assume that everyone has a piece of the answer and that together we can craft a better solution. We listen deeply to each other to understand and find meaning, strength, and value in the contributions of each person. We reveal our assumptions and hold them up for reevaluation. We admit that others' thinking can improve our own. We ask questions in order to explore new possibilities together. We are happiest when we leave the classroom feeling the synergistic discovery of greater understanding and new options.

So the real challenge to effective participatory planning starts right here with each of us everyday.

PLANNING FORUM / BOOK REVIEWS

Submitted by: Robert Mugerauer, PhD.

THE INFORMATION AGE: ECONOMY, SOCIETY AND CULTURE, 3 VOLUMES

MANUEL CASTELLS, MALDEN, MASSACHUSETTS, BLACKWELL PUBLISHERS. VOLUME I: THE RISE OF THE NETWORK SOCIETY, 1996; VOLUME II: THE POWER OF IDENTITY, 1997; VOLUME III: END OF MILLENNIUM, 1998. ALL AVAILABLE IN PAPERBACK.

The book reviews in Planning Forum are intended to expose readers to some of the ranging sources of information and ideas that influence the discipline of planning. From novels to picture books, business strategies to social theory, planning educators, students, and professionals can draw on a wealth of sources to inform their actions to improve their communities.

These three volumes are a staggering accomplishment, ever for so prolific a writer as Manuel Castells. They do no less than provide the best coverage to date of the major theoretical and practical issues emerging from the impacts that current information technology is having on our global economy and world-wide social-political relationships. Perhaps just as importantly, Castells manages both a powerful, grand social-economic analysis and detailed attention to specific cases studies in critical places.

Since there is no way to cover the whole of the three volume series (a total of 1435 pages!) in this brief review, I will begin by briefly indicating the contents of the three volumes, so that the reader may decide if there is enough content of interest to pursue the review further. It should be said that in many ways these three volumes are as an encyclopedia or other reference work in that very few readers are likely to actually read them through from first page to last. Most readers probably will browse a bit, then read the chapters with the biggest, leading ideas (which I will discuss below), next read those chapters that deal with the subject matter of greatest relevance to their own interests, and then set the work aside knowing enough about what else is in the series so that they can return to the other sections when appropriate. To briefly indicate how the work might satisfy at all these levels, here is a very brief outline of the contents of the three volumes:

VOLUME I: THE RISE OF THE NETWORK SOCIETY
PROLOGUE: THE NET AND THE SELF
       1. The Information Technology Revolution
       2. The Informational Economy and the Process of Globalization
       3. The Network Enterprise: the Culture, Institutions, and Organizations of the Informational Economy
       4. The Transformation of Work and Employment: Networkers, Jobless, and Flextimers
       5. The Culture of Real Virtuality: the Integration of Electronic Communication, the end of the Mass Audience, and the Rise of Interactive Networks
       6. The Space of Flows
       7. The Edge of Forever: Timeless Time Conclusion: The Network Society

VOLUME II: THE POWER OF IDENTITY OUR WORLD, OUR LIVES
       1. Communal Heavens: Identity and Meaning in the Network Society
       2. The Other Face of the Earth: Social Movements against the New

Tired yet? Feeling overwhelmed? That is why I remind you that few will read the series all the way through. But, given the importance of the topic and Castells' ability to powerfully move giant amounts of data through rigorous quantitative and theoretical analysis and simultaneously to treat detailed empirical case studies sensitively—ranging from the Zapatistas. America's militia movements, Japan's Aum Shinrikyo, lesbian and gay communities in Taipei and San Francisco, and Bolivia's electronic populism, to name just a few from Volume III—there actually is something worthwhile here for most everyone.

Readers already familiar with Castells can be assured that he picks up and develops themes on which they already appreciate his insights, but goes substantially beyond that work in both content covered and information analyzed. In Volume I, Castells takes a broad historical view of the development of information technology, focusing especially on ways it has transformed capitalism, labor, and corporate organization, leading to today's phenomena of globalization. In doing so, he provides both wide geographical coverage and substantial theoretical engagement with the subject matter. As to the former, he covers a genuinely international set, drawn from countries and regions including the Pacific, Latin America, Africa, Russia and the ex-Soviet republics, east Asia, the G-7 countries. At the level of theoretical analysis, he develops the ideas of the networked society and flows introduced in The Informational City: Information, Technology, Economic Restructuring (Blackwell, 1989). Readers who already have mastered the author's ideas about the "space of flows" may not find new, blinding revelations here, but the restatement and development move substantially beyond his earlier work, even adding specific examples from the built environment of interest to both planners and architects. At the same time, readers as yet unfamiliar with these ideas will find all that they need here without having to go back and read the previous work first. With the theory "that our society is constructed around flows: flows of capital, flows of information, flows of technology, flows of organizational interaction, flows of images, sounds, and symbols" Castells "propose[s] the idea that there is a new spatial form characteristic of the practices that dominate and shape the network society" (pp. 411-412). I can not say whether or not Castells' inclusion of the physical implications are the result of his presentation of the keynote address he presented to the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning hosted by The University of Texas a few years ago (when we asked him for such a focus), but, in any case, most of us will welcome his points on urbanization, the architecture at the end of history, and urban places.

Just as Volume I shows Castells as the master of historical and current economic data gathering and analysis, Volume II makes clear how often we focus on that profile when thinking of him and forget that he is a first-rate sociologist—after all, he not only is Professor of Planning at the University of California, Berkeley but also Professor of Sociology. Against the broad economic and technological forces that shaped both industrial capitalism and industrial statism, Castells the challenges to globalization and cosmopolitanism that have been mounted by highly diverse, often very localized movements that, in one way or another, aim to reassert collective identity and a sense of place. To treat these counter-

trends, he presents interpretations not only of feminism and environmentalism, but " a whole array of reactive movements that build trenches of resistance on behalf of God, nation, ethnicity, family, locality, that is, the fundamental categories of millennial existence now threatened ... (p. 2). Again, by treating an interesting variety of case studies from around the world, Castells develops the ways in which the tension between the more localized and globalizing tendencies call into question the currently reigning form of the nation-state. He concludes the chapter with an analysis of the current situation in which the decrease in the nation's states' powers and the collapse of their welfare states is generating a crisis in democracy. He argues that the challenge to democracy of the nation-state can not be successfully met by simply basing legitimacy on a given collective identity because this tactic, often tried and found wanting, unavoidably excludes other values and minorities identities. Though he remains true to his promise to refrain from presenting normative prescriptions, he does end the volume by citing some successful practices that have resulted in democratic reconstruction since the mid-1990s.

In Volume III, Castells allows himself a fuller scope of vision, helpfully looking up from where we have been and are now, to where we may be going. Rather than coming across as groundless speculation, this volume impresses me as having a firm foundation both in the previous two volumes and in its own content and also as being confident enough to deal with "the big picture." By moving from the collapse of the Soviet Union and industrial statism, the staggering changes taking place in Africa and the Pacific, as well as the U.S. and Latin America, the author is able to imaginatively focus not only on the dimensions of society and economy that we expect, but on those that are just as powerful, but often left in obscurity for reasons of social delicacy: child abuse, exploitation, and even murder; or, criminal networks (remember, this is about flows) ranging from the Sicilian and American Mafias to the Chinese Triads, the Russian Mafiyas, ethnic mobs, and the Medellin and Cali cartels in Columbia and Tamaulipas and Tijuana cartels in Mexico. Castells not only properly concludes that a new world is taking shape at the end of this millennium, but refrains from futurology, instead wisely—and I use that word carefully, contending that it genuinely is due in respect to the author—only arguing that we need to move beyond meta-politics: "The most fundamental political liberation is for people to free themselves from uncritical adherence to theoretical or ideological schemes, to construct their practice on the basis of their experience, while using whatever information or analysis is available to them, from a variety of sources" (p. 359).

In summary, I highly commend all three volumes. This is a successful project that is not likely to be repeated nor replaced by anyone in generations and certainly will become a standard reference work, not only because of the sheer volume of careful empirical information, but because of the subtlety and depth of the interpretations and analyses. We can be grateful to Castells for the enormous effort this book cost and for the material it provides us to become self-critical for a long time to come.

Robert Mugerauer is the School of Architecture's Sid Richardson Professor and is one of the most prolific readers around.

Submitted by: Susan Handy, PhD.

A NEIGHBORHOOD NIGHTMARE

A CIVIL ACTION. JONATHAN HARR. NEW YORK, NEW YORK: VINTAGE BOOKS. 1995.

Imagine this scene: You take your three-and-a-half-year-old son in to see the doctor for what appears to be a bad cold and find out he has not a cold but acute lymphocytic leukemia. It's 1972 and leukemia victims no longer face imminent death as they did just a few years before. Instead, your son faces a three-year regimen of chemotherapy and, if the

leukemia goes into remission after the first round of treatment, he has a 50 percent chance of surviving until his ninth birthday. The nightmare begins.

Over the next few months, as the treatments progress, you learn of another child in your quiet, working class neighborhood that has also developed leukemia. At first it is something of a comfort to have another family to share the nightmare with. Then you learn about a second child, then a third, and then another in the next neighborhood over, and eventually twelve children and adults who have developed the same killer disease. Suddenly your misfortune is a part of a larger pattern, not a random, unexplainable, unblamable occurence. The nightmare grows.

What is it about your peaceful neighborhood that has become lethal for its children? You naturally suspect the water, which as been a problem since the city drilled two new wells a few years back. The water does not taste right, look right, or smell right. It causes leaks in your plumbing, stains your clothes when you wash them in it, and gives you rashes when you shower with it. But the city engineer has periodically tested the water and assured the city council that the water is perfectly safe and convinced them that the hot dry months of summer necessitate the continued use of these wells. The nightmare goes on.

So begins the story of the residents of the Pine Street neighborhood in Woburn, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston, and their struggle to find the cause of the leukemia cluster and hold those responsible for it accountable. As told by Jonathan Harr in A Civil Action, winner of the 1995 Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction, the story becomes a long, messy legal nightmare when the attorneys take on the struggle on behalf of the residents. Although the legal battle stretches over nearly a decade, from initial filings through export reports, the discovery phase, jury selection, a sixth-month trial, numerous motions and appeals and settlement attempts, Harr's account of it is a thriller - not in the vein of a Grisham novel, but in the even more gripping mode of peek into the frustrating realities of the U.S. legal system. I couldn't put it down.

The temptation is to read this as a David versus Goliath story, the residents taking the role of David and two national conglomerates playing the role of Goliath, but it's really much more complicated than that. Despite the city's assurances for many years that Well G and Well H, from which the Pine Street neighborhood drew much of its water, were safe, contaminants were eventually found. When Woburn police found 184 barrels of industrial waste in the vicinity of the wells, a quick-thinking state environmental inspector had the well water tested, even though the barrels had been removed before they leaked. These tests showed heavy contamination of the well water by trichloroethylene (TCE), an industrial solvent and known carcinogen, and the state quickly ordered the city to close the wells. But the barrels had not contained TCE, so where did the TCE in the wells come from? Two nearby plants, owned by W.R. Grace and Beatrice Foods, seemed the likely culprits - and the companies seemed the perfect bad guys.

Attorney Jan Schlichtman and his colleagues played the role of good guys in taking on a civil lawsuit on a contingency basis for the eight families who decided to go after the culprits. But here's one place where nonfiction proves significantly more ambiguous than fiction. Although the attorneys spend millions in their quest to hold the companies accountable and bring some restitution to the families, their motives often seem muddled. Do they really have the families' best interests at heart, or are they driven by the potential for fame and glory in winning a lawsuit that attracted the attention of 60 Minutes, the Washington Post, the New York Times, Time Magazine, Newsweek, and Businessweek, among others? Not to mention the financial rewards of a potentially "astronomical" settlement.

The legal system comes across as more of a bad guy than a good guy in A Civil Action, thanks especially to the actions of Judge Skinner, at least as Harr presents them. But in many ways the system worked as it should. We've been trained by TV, movies, and fiction to expect justice to eventually prevail, but the legal system rightly demands a high burden of proof to get there. Schlichtman's challenge was to prove, first, that the the companies used TCE, that they dumped it in the area, and that the TCE then made it into the wells, and to prove, second, that TCE was the cause of the leukemia. But what even constitutes

proof is open to interpretation in a case such as this, where cause and effect relationships are demonstrated through statistical analyses and probabilities and remain more than a little theoretical. Each side can bring in respected scientists to counter the arguments of the other side's respected scientists. As much as the reader may believe Schlichtman and the families should win, the system doesn't guarantee they will, and the outcomes in such cases are generally painted in shades of gray rather than black and white.

Where was the public sector while all this was going on? A Civil Action focuses on the civil case brought by the the families against the companies but does periodically mention the simultaneous efforts of the Envrionmnetal Protection Agency (EPA) to find the cause of the contamination and to clean it up. At first, the EPA attempted to trace the contamination back to its source without much success. But it did put the site on its Superfund list, and later undertook more tests to determine whether or not W.R. Grace and Beatrice Foods were responsible for the contamination. The EPA refused to get involved in the civil action, however, but moved ahead with its own efforts to clean up the site. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) also began an investigation early on into the apparent leukemia cluster and concluded that the incidence of disease in the neighborhood was at least seven times greater than expected but could not conlude that the TCE had been the cause. Their conclusions were critical to the civil action. And the state environmental department clearly played a small but critical role in bringing the contamination to light.

The City of Woburn, on the other hand, comes out looking both incompetent and indifferent. Certainly their lackluster response over the years to the concerns of residents about the quality of the water coming from the two wells appears in hindsight to have been highly negligent. Once tests showed high levels of TCE contamination, the city closed the wells as ordered but did essentially nothing to inform residents (other than to assure them that the city's water supply was perfectly safe) or address the possible impacts of the contamination. The city's guilt may have deeper roots, too.

As in many industrial towns, the city actively promoted industrial development, especially after the local economy nose-dived in the 1960s, by clearing many acres of land and developing industrial parks in the northeast part of town, near the wells. From the opening of the first tannery in 1648, the city had depended on dirty industries, including one of the largest chemical plants in the U.S. at the turn of the century. When international corporations bought up local businesses, city leadership almost certainly saw this as a blessing for the local economy, rather than a threat to local control. Harr doesn't say much about the city's role, but it is clearly an important part of the story.

A Civil Action is, fundamentally, a book about the civil justice system. It is an absorbing look at the complexities and frustrations we citizens face in holding accountable those parties responsible for the degredation of our environment and the impacts of that degredation on our health. We are privileged to have access to such a system, and when it works it's an amazingly powerful system. But as A Civil Action shows, whether or not it works depends not just on the facts of the case but also the certainty of the facts, the costs of determining the facts, the availability of funding to support the effort, the commitment and determination of those involved, their personalities and egos and the ways they interact, and so on. In the end, it's a sobering story.

Dr. Susan Handy's research focuses primarily on transportation. However, she is an unstopable reader of fiction, especially that which relates to our society and environment.