

Recovering Communities:

Resident Led Alternatives to Contemporary Trends
in Public Housing Redevelopment

Sheryl-Ann Simpson

May 2008

A Thesis

Submitted to the faculty of Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Masters of Arts in Community Development and Planning

and accepted on the recommendation of
Miriam Chion, Chief Instructor

Abstract

Current professional explanations the deterioration of public housing in Canada center on the physical design of public housing, and the clustering of low-income people. Many residents of public housing have very different explanations focused on government abandonment and a lack of control over their homes. This thesis examines four resident led initiatives developing markedly different analysis, and strategies for addressing the challenges of public housing. The key findings of this thesis are that while these initiatives differ they all address key ideas missing from professionally led development, including changes in the institutions governing public housing, a focus on equity and justice, and more nuanced spatial thinking. They are also forging equal partnerships with outside organizations. All these factors put these residents in better stead to deal with larger problems of economic disadvantage, and civic and social isolation. These initiatives are also proving the ability of public housing residents to control their own homes.

first reader: **Miriam Chion**

second reader: **Kiran Asher**

Name: Sheryl-Ann Nora Simpson
Academic History
Date: May 2008

Place of Birth: Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Date: March 25, 1980

Degrees Conferred: B.Sc. (Ag) Animal Biology; McGill University 2006

Occupation and Academic Connection since date of
baccalaureate degree:

Community Development and Planning Program, Master's Student
Community Leadership Fellow 2006-2008
Clark University; Worcester MA

Difficult Dialogue Fellow 2006-2007
Clark University; Worcester MA

Literature Review Specialist
Worcester Advisory Food Policy Council 2007
Worcester, Massachusetts

Outdoor Education Resource Coordinator 2005-2006
Withrow Ave. Public School
Toronto, Ontario

Urban Agriculture Assistant 2004-2006
The Stop Community Food Centre
Toronto, Ontario

Acknowledgment and Thanks

First to the people whose stories this paper tells, I hope I come even close to doing justice to the amazing work going on in Toronto to save structures and recover homes.

Of course to my parents who have encouraged the curiosity that enabled me to even conceive of the idea of taking on such a project. (Whether or not they want to take credit for it.)

To the Foundation for Community Association Research whose generous financial support, through their Byron Hanke Fellowship, assisted in my field work.

Thanks to Miriam Chion whose intellectual generosity will never cease to amaze me, and who has guided me through this research process. None of the glaring errors are her fault, but all of the good bits she had a hand in.

Thanks also to Kiran Asher for being an incredibly intelligent reader, both brutally honest and personally generous, and for helping me to untangle the unintelligible bits and pieces.

Also thanks to the countless friends, family members, classmates, and strangers who have endured my endless babbling about this research; each of your questions, thoughts, and ideas have been invaluable as I worked through this piece.

And finally a special thanks to the brilliant ladies who not only endured the babbling but also slogged through the product. Thank goodness for peer pressure!

Table of Contents

Chapter one | Introduction

1

Methods
 Housing and Planning
 Places and People

Chapter two | Elements of Change

18

Social Movements and Organizing Community
 State, City, and Citizen
 liberal democracy?
 the others
 city scale
 Sustained Success
 institutions
 justice and equity
 landscapes
 production of space
 fine spatial difference
 boundaries

Chapter three | Canadian Public Housing in Context

51

1990s Current Crisis and New Opportunities 1980s A Growing Divide
 1960s and 1970s Lost Opportunities
 1940s What Started as a Compromise

Chapter four | People and Places

72

Crisis
 Politicization
 Networks

Chapter five | Conclusions

91

Literature Cited

96

List of Abbreviations

104

Introduction | one

“Sometimes people do not have enough money to pay for a home.
Public housing projects help people pay for their homes.
This way they can have a place to live.
The government uses money from the **public**
to build and run apartment buildings.
They also help people to pay their rent.”
From: *Who's Who in a Public Housing Community*, PowerKids Press¹

Public and social housing in Canada is at a critical moment with widely held consensus that the current model is failing on many fronts. This provides an opportunity to develop new models that can enable improvement in the lives of residents of public housing. In Ontario, recent changes in legislation have shifted the administrative and fiscal responsibilities for public housing to municipal governments and their agents. In Toronto, where the infrastructure of many public housing buildings is quickly deteriorating, this transfer is exacerbating a crisis with insufficient funding and political willpower at the local level to facilitate needed capital repairs. Additionally, services and programs to move public housing residents out of poverty, thus reducing the need for public housing, are few and far between. In Toronto, where there is also a critical shortage of affordable and below market rate housing, public housing is also one of the few housing options for low-income households. Because of these factors, public housing continues to be isolated, allowing an increase in concerns about safety inside public housing, and stigma about public housing from the outside.

¹ Miller, Jake (2005) *Who's Who in a Public Housing Community*. The Rosen Publishing Group's PowerKids Press: New York.

Out of these failures there is also an opportunity to create new models for producing and supporting housing. Focusing on Toronto, this thesis tells two interrelated stories about decision making in public housing. The first is the story of public housing's professional production, and the developments that led to the current deterioration of public housing structures, and separated public housing residents from decision making processes. The second story focuses on contemporary resident led initiatives working to reconnect residents and the decision making process. These initiatives are also redefining success in public housing to address issues such as ensuring there is a secure housing stock, and looking at levels of resident engagement—civic, social and economic—within public housing and with the city-at-large. The core questions of this thesis are: 1) how are residents organizing to gain this new access; 2) how the decisions and initiatives they undertake differ from contemporary trends; 3) what are the prospects for sustained success through these initiatives; and finally 4) what can planners and other space making professionals take away from these examples? In the midst of this public housing crisis, and out of necessity, resident groups are becoming politicized, organizing around their homes to enact change at the scale of the household and beyond. As they organize, residents are using and strengthening networks of relationships both within and outside of public housing to recover their communities. These changes are poised to create lasting and significant changes because of the ways in which these initiatives address the needs of residents at multiple scales. Needs are addressed through changes to the institutions governing residents' lives, a focus on equity and justice, and a production of space which is procedural, making visible the specificities of place and the fluid political nature of space.

There is little question that over fifty years into Canada's experiment with public housing a great deal of work needs to be done. There were over 400,000 maintenance requests made between 2004 and 2006 for only 58,500 units of housing and while the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) has spent CAD\$500 million dollars in capital repairs since 2002, there is a CAD\$300 million backlog in repairs yet to be done (SOS 2007, 2). In the last tenant survey commissioned by TCHC there was marked disappointment with the physical structures of public housing. Only 45% of residents surveyed described the overall building/complex conditions as good or very good.² Aside from the physical issues that the survey highlights there is also a large disconnect between residents' perceptions of the helpfulness and effectiveness of TCHC staff, and between information and involvement in terms of community activities and resources. 81% of respondents felt that they knew how to contact a staff person, and 62% reported that staff were helpful, but only 54% reported that the service provided actually helped with the problem they were trying to address. In terms of participation, respondents showed that they had a great deal of knowledge about services available within public housing; 65% of respondents knew both who their tenant representative was and about community consultation/information meetings, but only 38% have attended TCHC meetings

In Toronto, governments and planners are beginning a process of "revitalization" set to sweep through the city's public housing stock, which is the largest in Canada and the third largest in North America. With 164,000 residents in 58,000 units and 2,000 buildings around the city, the population of public housing in Toronto is larger than the entire population of

² All survey data in this section comes from the TCHC 2006 Tenant Survey prepared by Decima Research Inc.

Prince Edward Island. There are a variety of suggestions and ideas for improving public housing. One common suggestion is an increase in resident involvement and control over the management of public housing (Milner 1969; Dennis and Fish 1972; Anderson 1992; Sewell 1994; Vale 2002; Purdy 2003; Bennett, Smith, and Wright 2006; Sousa 2006; Baranski 2007). In addition to its popularity, this is also a suggestion that continues to hit up against great resistance from governments and professions involved in the production, and now re/production, of public housing. The continued resistance to true resident control in public housing is evident in contemporary professionally led initiatives.

Regent Park was Toronto's, and Canada's, first large-scale public housing site, located in the central city, it is also the site where the revitalization process in Toronto is beginning. A multi-phase, twelve year process when complete, the new Regent Park will be a mixed-income, mixed-use 'community.' More than 3,000 additional units will be added to the site and less than a quarter of these are below market rate units. While no below market rate housing will be lost, many of these units will be moved off-site into the surrounding neighborhood (TCHC 2007). Many of the individuals involved in this process have genuinely good intentions for the revitalization process, discussing it as an opportunity for communities to grow and succeed. However, once again the production of public housing is not primarily for or by residents, hinging instead on market needs, and on highlighting the problems of public housing. Because of this, the revitalization process becomes, for many residents, not a solution to the crisis of public housing, but instead adds the new concern of

losing their homes through revitalization.³

Methods

This research officially started shortly after I began the Community Development and Planning program at Clark University, but my knowledge of and engagement with many of the ideas and elements discussed began quite a bit earlier. My first encounters with public housing design came from visiting my grandmother in her public neighborhood in Etobicoke during the 1980s. My memories of these visits are filled with her small food gardens in front or backyards, the safety I felt inside the neighborhood protected from busy roads, and the excitement at being allowed to go to the neighborhood playground by myself. Although I would later realize that adults were always surreptitiously observing these trips from kitchen windows. Coming from my own suburban neighborhood dominated by cars, and with the nearest playgrounds several blocks away, too far to travel by myself, these were all exciting novelties. As I grew older so did the buildings in my grandmother's neighborhood, and as with public housing sites across the city, repairs became fewer and further between. With the disrepair came an increase in the perception of blight and the stigma attached to living in public housing. In addition to these early observations, my work in Toronto with a local food security organization, The Stop Community Food Centre, as well as political involvement and activism, introduced me to many of the initiatives and people described in this thesis.

Beginning my research in earnest I started with the materials presented in Chapters two and three. These are secondary sources that describe the history and development of

³ See Cid 2008 for a broader discussion of the impact of stress caused by the specter of losing homes and community to redevelopment. Cid focuses specifically on the health impacts of development on the Chicano/Latino population of West Sacramento.

public housing primarily in a Canadian context, with some trips to the United States and United Kingdom, examining the policy, design, and social aspects of public housing's professional development. Additionally, I collected theories on community organizing and social movements, and the connections of local actions to the idea of citizenship⁴ and the state. Finally, I explored ideas that helped me to shape my model for success in public housing, looking at ideas of institutional change, justice and equity, and the production of space. In this last section I draw largely from contemporary thinkers who wear the influence of more canonical thinkers such as Gramsci (McKay 2005), Said (Kirby 1996), Marx (Bannerji 2000), or Wacquant (Crump 2002) on their sleeves. However, the authors I use are often specifically addressing Canadian or public housing examples, and so are more compatible with the specific place and time examined in this research. For the contemporary stories I began again by reading: reports, newsletters, and PhD theses written by professionals and residents involved in the initiatives described. Finally, I moved to speaking directly with those involved, conducting nine more formal interviews combined with more casual conversations with a variety of actors, including Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) board members, community organizers, employees of various agencies involved in the process, and residents themselves. Instead of taking a single case to examine in length, I choose to draw from several examples to highlight the need for a variety of strategies to address the challenges of public housing, and as a way of triangulating data,

⁴ I use the term 'citizen' throughout in several ways but generally, unless specified, I am referring to a kind of substantive rather than legal citizenship, with a focus on community based rights and duties. This is in keeping with my own belief leaning towards the idea that 'no one is illegal' and citizenship is more complex than the law and involves questions of residency, culture and history, responsibility, and attachment to and agency within space and place.

confirming the unique aspects of these cases, but also seeing where they overlap. Both the commonalities and the conflicts of agendas are important in teasing out the transferable qualities of these initiatives.

Housing and Planning

One aspect that saturates this research is my own feminist stance, which informs my political, as well as spatial, understanding of these processes. In many ways it was this stance that influenced my decision to use housing and planning to explore the power dynamics and connections between marginalized people and the professions meant to serve them. Housing, because it offers an opportunity to examine both isolation and organizing at a variety of scales and for a variety of communities, and planning, because of the potential for this professional craft to work across many specializations and coordinate positive change.

In addition to reestablishing the importance of the home as a scale for serious inquiry, feminist researchers (Hayden 1984; Leavitt and Saegert 1990; Wekerle 1993; McDowell 1999; Williams 2004; Wright 2004) have also focused a lens on the hybrid public/private nature of housing. These researchers look at how housing serves as an isolating site where gendered divisions of labor serve to perpetuate uneven capitalist development. But they also highlight the ways in which organizing around housing has been a stepping-stone for other political, social, and economic engagement. This is particularly true of public housing (Williams 2004, Wright 2006), where homes are intricately and explicitly linked to larger state and economic processes, with the real estate owned by and the social policies set by governments and government agents.

In addition to this purely feminist perspective, I continue to believe that design

matters, and this belief, combined with a lingering admiration for the Bauhaus' whole house project, makes me susceptible to the idea of a match between 'form' and 'function.' The importance of this match is made particularly visible when looking at housing. As Dolores Hayden puts it:

“The house is an image of the body, of the household, and of the household's relation to society; it is a physical space designed to mediate between nature and culture, between the landscape and the larger urban built environment.... housing carries so many aesthetic, social, and economic messages, a serious misfit between a society and its housing stock can create profound unrest and disorientation” (Hayden 1984, 40).

In thinking about the matches and disconnects in housing it is important to ask whose ideal function housing forms should fit. The cases described in this thesis, as well as other empirical examples (Wekerle 1993), also highlight the importance of a certain amount of skepticism at the possibility, ease, or desirability of separating or compartmentalizing these two elements.

What is apparent from looking at the development of public housing is that when residents are removed from decision making processes it is less likely that their ideal function will be taken into account. Planners can play an important role in addressing these concerns and preventing the misfits. In Ann Markusen's (1998) essay on planning practice and philosophy, she claims four philosophical tenets for planning: foresight, the notion of the commons, an emphasis on equality, and an appreciation for the quality of life as a social outcome (Markusen 1998, 295). In this way she distinguishes planning from other fields, such as economics, which are by their very nature based on competition. These are some of the characteristics of planning which led me to focus on this space making profession. Another is its ability to bridge the social and the physical. Planning is neither social work nor

architecture; it is instead a craft that in some ways combines the best qualities and questions of both. In this way planning is an excellent candidate for the reintroduction of the social to the production of space, and for identifying what James Holston (1999) refers to as insurgent spaces of citizenship; spaces where people are acting and living, sometimes in spite of, sometimes in opposition to, the architectural design of the spaces they occupy and use. Holston calls for planning to support these spaces by facilitating a process that would build in response to what already exists. But as Leonie Sandercock (2003) points out, the task of bridging is not an easy one. It requires planners to take a great deal of time, and cost, to truly work with and within communities, moving towards changes which explicitly acknowledge and privilege difference in urban spaces.

Places and People

In this thesis I explore four examples of resident led initiatives to address my questions about decision making in public housing. They are the development of community gardens in Lawrence Heights and the conversion into a co-operative at The Atkinson Housing Co-operative, which are both site-specific initiatives, as well as the more broadly political campaigns of the Save Our Structures (SOS) and Basics groups.

Lawrence Heights

Lawrence Heights is the next public housing site officially slated for redevelopment in Toronto. Built in the 1950s, Lawrence Heights' 1,208 housing units sit on 100 acres of land in the perisuburban neighborhood of North York. The homes in Lawrence Heights are primarily low-rise apartment buildings organized in large courtyards around concrete parking lots and often underutilized grass fields. The surrounding neighborhood is an example of

Toronto's suburban sprawl, and in contrast to the human scale inside Lawrence Heights, the neighborhood immediately outside is dominated by wide roadways and on-ramps to the Allen Expressway, a major north-south highway that divides Lawrence Heights itself in two. Branching off of the larger roads are tree-lined streets and lanes with small single family homes. Also a product of development which took place thirty and forty years ago, these homes are increasingly shadowed by newer condominium buildings going up near Lawrence Heights and moving east towards the affluent Forest Hill neighborhood.

Lawrence Heights is physically isolated from the rest of the neighborhood, significantly set-in from the roads with buildings facing inward. In addition to physical barriers there are also social and economic divides between the residents of Lawrence Heights and the surrounding neighborhoods. The population of Lawrence Heights is predominately West Indian, East African and Latin American, while in the surrounding neighborhoods⁵ Jewish is the largest self-identified ethnicity, with Italian as a close second. In terms of household income the average income in Lawrence Heights is CAD\$15,000, and 2,080 households in the Lawrence Heights neighborhoods fell into the income range of CAD\$10,000-CAD\$19,999 in 2001. In the same year 1,695 households fell into the CAD \$100,000 or more range, an increase of 38.64% from 1996. This increase in households with higher household incomes runs in opposition to another economic trend in North York and the other perisuburban areas in Toronto. The economic downward shift in Toronto's

⁵ The City of Toronto uses Statistic Canada data aggregated at the census tract level to define a neighborhood (City of Toronto 2008/a/c). The Allen Garden Freeway, which divides Lawrence Heights, is one of the features used to separate two neighbourhoods and so Lawrence Heights data falls into both the Englemount-Lawrence neighbourhood to the east, and the Yorkdale-Glen Park neighbourhood to the west. In total there were 12,640 households in these neighborhoods in 2001; with its 1,208 units, Lawrence Heights made up 9.56% of the households in this combined neighborhood.

perisuburbs is described in a joint United Way of Greater Toronto and Canadian Council on Social Development report entitled *Poverty by Postal Code* (MacDonnell et al. 2004). In this report the authors identify the trend, from 1981 to 2001, towards larger numbers and higher concentrations of households living in poverty in suburban settings. In North York they identify five neighborhoods that are extremely impacted by these changes, and the area around Lawrence Heights was one of these neighborhoods. There is an increasing polarization between public housing residents and residents of the surrounding neighborhoods as the numbers of non-European immigrants in Lawrence Heights rises and as the economic differential between the two groups continues to increase.⁶ This polarization leads to increased misconceptions and increased tension between these two groups, and the increased reliance on media representations to describe these communities to each other.

Community gardens and urban agriculture have become popular tools for addressing numerous urban concerns;⁷ in Lawrence Heights residents are using community gardens as a tool to offset limited access to healthful foods (Koc et al. 1999) and to build stronger intra-community ties (Stuart 2005). Started as an informal project in the early 2000s, when groups of residents, primarily East African and West Indian women, took the lead in starting small

⁶ Whitzman and Slater (2006) end their discussion of Toronto's Parkdale neighborhood by noting that this increased polarization is an important and under-researched aspect of gentrification processes.

⁷ Benefits of urban agriculture include environmentally the reduction of resources for food transportation, increased accessibility to fresh foods, which are higher in nutritional levels, and increased flexibility and responsiveness in terms of what food is available to cities. It has also been reported that people who grow their own food are more likely to eat more fruits and vegetables. Growing food closer to the city is also an educational tool that helps to change behaviors in healthful ways. Community gardens can also be an important tool in health treatments and to increase social capital (Koc et al. 1999; Brown, Andrew, and Jameton 2000; Stuart 2005; Levkoe 2006).

garden plots around Lawrence Heights. While encouraged by community workers at the Community Center and Community Health Center, these workers did not have the skills to further support the initiative. It was at this point that AfriCan Food Basket became involved. AfriCan is a grassroots food security and urban agriculture organization focused on reintroducing agricultural traditions and food primarily to the African Diaspora population in Toronto. AfriCan, which already had a successful track record of starting and maintaining gardens, was able to provide technical support, materials, and connections to other organizations in the city. In 2004 TCHC officially announced their support of the gardens at the second annual spring garden festival in the community. The gardens are still in operation and are proving successful in connecting residents and increasing food security. Establishing the gardens has also been an important part of bringing residents and TCHC into closer contact and deeper conversation⁸.

Atkinson Co-operative

Ten kilometers (six miles) almost directly south of Lawrence Heights is Atkinson Co-operative, which until 2003 was Alexander Park, a traditional rent-geared-to-income (RGI) public housing site. Atkinson is the first, and to-date only, Canadian example of a public housing site converting into a resident managed co-operative. This emerging community association is a new type of institution, a non-equity co-operative where the buildings are still owned by TCHC but the day-to-day and mid-term operations are run by residents (Sousa and Quarter 2004). Built soon after Regent Park, Atkinson's 401 units of townhouses and low-rise apartment buildings are arranged in labyrinthine courtyards cut off from the city.

⁸ For another exciting example of health partnerships with and within immigrant communities see Parmenter (2008).

While there was some common or unclaimed space within Alexander Park, much of it is concrete or asphalt with little green space (Lapointe 2002). Alexander Park also held a similar place in the discourse of the city to other larger scale public housing neighborhoods; newspapers, for example, seldom reported on it except in reference to drug related violence or complaints about garbage.

Located in downtown Toronto and in the heart of the city's main Chinatown, Atkinson is also close to a traditionally Portuguese neighborhood and the Queen West neighborhood, increasingly gentrified, but historically home to artists and other low-income individuals. Unlike Lawrence Heights, Atkinson in many ways reflects the demographics of its surrounding neighborhood, with a large number of Chinese and Vietnamese residents as well as large Portuguese and Black, both West Indian and African, populations. The neighborhood as a whole also has a larger number of households living below the poverty line than the rest of Toronto, at 40% in 2001 (Toronto 2007). Because of the combination of the spatial and demographic characteristics of the larger neighborhood, there are a wide variety of services located nearby. Both Queen and Dundas Street, the major east-west streets that bound the Atkinson neighborhood, have 24hr streetcar service; and Atkinson is located nearby to Kensington Market, Toronto's major open air food market, giving residents ready access to a wide variety of foods vendors. There are also social services nearby, such as immigrant and refugee settlement offices, arts centers, and a community center. Atkinson's location in a downtown neighborhood is in some ways an advantage, but it is important to note that much of the perceived disorder in the city also occurs downtown. For example, as one former resident pointed out, drug trading within Atkinson is in many

ways influenced by, and a result of, the drug trade in the surrounding neighborhoods.

The conversion process was a direct outcropping of residents' perceptions of their homes. While there is no question that residents saw the disorder in their homes, they also had a very different analysis than professionals of the key problems facing their community. Residents focused on the need for greater resident control in the management of the site, and because of this, the co-operative model was identified by resident leaders. It is also important to note that because of the lack of affordable housing in Toronto, residents did not have the luxury of simply abandoning their homes (Sousa 2006). In 1995, after significant community organizing, the first vote was held on conversion; 64% of residents participated in the vote and 72% of those voted yes to conversion (Sousa 2006). It was almost ten years before the conversion would actually take place, and during that time the process was assisted by a partnership with the Canadian Housing Federation of Toronto (CHFT), a co-operative housing organization that continues to support Atkinson both financially, through technical assistance, and advocacy. Government involvement was in many ways more problematic, and the doubts and concerns of various government agencies added a great deal of time to the process. Additionally, rifts between the residents themselves, often along cultural lines, were brought to light during the process, and insufficient support for community building and education made mending those rifts more challenging. Atkinson has operated as a co-operative now for just under four years and some of the outcomes of this conversion are already being felt, with improvements in management and physical amenities on site as well as some important increases in social ties both within the community and between the community and the city at large.

Save Our Structures

In May 2007 a group of residents from across the public housing system arrived at Queen's Park⁹ with broken sinks, pipes, and bits of rotting walls and floorboards. The residents were demanding that the provincial government pay out the estimated 300 million dollars in capital reserves funding that were not transferred to the municipal government with the responsibilities for administering public housing in 2002. This was the first public action of the SOS campaign. SOS is supported by TCHC through funding for the organizers of the campaign, staff at Public Interest Strategy and Communication. Formed in 2002, Public Interest is a for-profit Toronto-based organization that works to support social change through research and campaign organizing. Residents involved in the SOS campaign come from throughout the public housing system, and there are currently about twenty-five core members of the group who meet regularly with the staff organizers to plan and strategize around the campaign. Most of the residents involved are women, many of whom were involved in some tenant organizing before joining the campaign. While the campaign has not succeeded in getting the provincial government to transfer the funds to the city, they have mounted a successful media and lobbying campaign, with several important educational moments for organizers, residents, and the city at large.

The SOS campaign began by issuing a survey to all Toronto MPPs.¹⁰ The results of the survey were publicly distributed, and a curriculum for a summer school was developed

⁹ Queen's Park is Ontario's legislative building.

¹⁰ Member of Provincial Parliament

for those MPPs whose skills were found lacking. Courses included ‘Talking with TCHC Tenants’, ‘Talking with TCHC Board Members’, ‘Staying Overnight in TCHC’, and ‘Lobbying for Decent Homes: Practicum’. The last course was described as a practicum placement “providing MPPs/students with an opportunity to put their learning into action by pressing their parties to make decent homes for TCHC tenants an element of their party platform” (SOS 2007, 3). The information collected during the survey process was also used to inform potential voters during the fall 2007 provincial election. In the winter of 2008, with the spring budget again around the corner, the campaign is contacting MPPs and reminding them of the commitments made during their election campaigns. Residents involved are getting a crash course in a variety of media and lobbying skills, and one of the goals of the staff organizers is to leave a group of residents who will be able to carry on the campaign at a similar level after their contract has ended.

Basics

When the revitalization of Regent Park began many residents were able to stay in the neighborhood while others were dispersed to various parts of the city and many are now living in other public housing sites including Lawrence Heights and Atkinson Co-operative. In May 2007 TCHC and the City of Toronto officially announced that Lawrence Heights was next in line for revitalization; shortly before the official announcement, Basics began work to educate residents about the impacts of the redevelopment of Regent Park. Basics is a group of organizers who came together late in 2006 from inside and outside public housing who are developing a political and educational campaign in direct reaction to the perception of being excluded from the process of development in public housing. Starting with the

proposed ‘revitalization’ of Lawrence Heights, the organizers of Basics are focusing on reframing the process as ‘gentrification.’ They are using the lived experiences of residents who have already been through the process, as well as their own more radical political thinking, to voice the demands of those who want to see their homes improved, but not lost.

Basics has started a free community newspaper, accessible in hardcopy as well as in a blog format (Basics 2008), which reports on the concerns of residents of public housing and connects these concern to global political issues, such the 2007 declaration of independence of the Lakotah Sioux, the organizing of immigrant workers, and even climate change. Basics also supports a local legal firm engaged in a class action lawsuit against TCHC for inadequacies as a landlord, and is working with groups such as the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) to create legal clinics where residents are informed about, and taken through the process of, filling out complaint forms to the Ontario Landlord and Tenant Board. Complaints, which if successful, force landlords, in this case TCHC, to carry out repairs. Through campaigns such as these Basics organizers are aiming at the conscientization of everyday residents, helping to connect the dots between daily manifestations of disorder and processes at multiple scales. While a new campaign, Basics’ work is already beginning to bring groups within and between public housing sites together to ask challenging questions in raised voices about the institutionalized violences enacted upon them.

These contemporary stories are small windows into possible worlds where public housing residents, professional community developers and planners, and the processes of decision making are brought together. It is through these convergences that exciting

possibilities are emerging to create much needed positive change within public housing.

Elements for Change | two

This chapter begins with a body of literature about community-based social organizing and situates these ideas within the larger context of access to decision making processes by connecting local actions to questions and ideas of citizenship, the city, and the state. This first section highlights the ways in which community activism around housing can also act to address issues of inclusion, and can become a part of performing citizenship and increasing democracy. It also highlights the tension within the Canadian city between a lingering liberalism and burgeoning multi-cultural communities. In the second section I look at the literature that has helped me develop a model for success in public housing, a success which focuses on the needs of residents. Three key elements are identified: changes in institutions with authority in the lives of public housing residents, how justice and equity can be addressed and modeled, and the ways in which landscapes can be changed, looking particularly at how to deal with the processes of the production of space, fine spatial differences between places, and the ways in which boundaries are perceived and utilized.

Social Movements and Organizing Community

The contemporary initiatives I examine in this paper are examples of social movements making their insurgent spaces visible (Holston 1999). Within Canada there is a strong history of social movements, and in a volume edited by Quebec social scientists Juan-Luis Klein, Pierre-André Tremblay and Hugues Dionne (1997), the authors explore the continued strength of social movement action. The essays in this book focus on highlighting

the effects of a shift to more market based and globalized economies, which prefaces the needs of the economic markets over justice for citizens, a shift seen for example in the clamor for private management, as simply a cost cutting measure, in public housing. This shift has not, however, caused social movements to disappear. As the editors note in the introduction:

From our point of view, it is not social movements who are disappearing, but their interlocutor. It is the state who is making itself invisible and redeploying, it no longer unifies social aims and is only able to focus on one small aspect of social life. This does not, however, mean that social movements are absent. Indeed, the new structures of power combine with newly available techniques to modify the strategies of collective action.¹¹ (Klein, Tremblay, and Dionne 1997)

In addition to creating new strategies, the cases in this paper are also examples of an idea put forward by Tom Slater (2004) that it is because of this government retreat and the ensuing crisis that individuals and groups who were previously silent are becoming increasingly politicized.

As I describe in the introduction, housing is an important site for social movement organizing and there has been a great deal of recent research from jurisdictions outside of Toronto documenting this work. Rhonda Williams (2004) uses oral histories to explore the activism of women living in public housing in Baltimore.¹² Williams describes the ways that these women, marginalized and heavily stereotyped by the public outside of their communities, were able to organize learning how the system worked and how to impact

¹¹ À notre avis, ce ne sont pas les mouvements sociaux qui disparaissent, mais bien leur interlocuteur. C'est l'État qui, se rendant invisible et se redéployant, n'unifie plus la revendication sociale et n'agit plus comme facteur de «centration» des rapports sociaux. Mais cela ne signifie pas que les mouvements sociaux soient absents. Certes, les nouvelles instances de structuration du pouvoir combinées aux nouveaux moyens techniques disponibles modifient les modalités de l'action collective.

¹² For an exciting example of oral history used as both a tool for documentation and action see Anderson 2007 and her study of the techniques of participatory oral history.

upon it. As with the work of other researchers (Leavitt and Saegert 1990; Wright 2006) looking at multi-family housing activism,¹³ she highlights the importance of the community ties between residents of public housing as well as the ways in which crisis in their homes was a key factor in mobilizing residents. Two other studies look at housing activism in San Francisco and describe the work of communities perceived as marginalized to gain access to housing and the control of their homes. Both highlight the strength of connections within these communities. The first looks at tenant activism in public housing in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Baranski 2007) and the second examines community-based activism and development in the contemporary South of Market district (Walczak 2008). Both of these studies also focus on the ways in which the work of resident activists fits into larger social movement activity in their times and larger economic processes in terms of urban and real estate development. Baranski (2007) also highlights the ways in which public housing tenants were able to work within the prejudices and conservatism of the housing authority to create progressive moments. For example, legislation to increase access to tenant management and ownership was facilitated by the underlying notion “that low-income residents would be less likely to burn down homes they owned” (Baranski 2007, 426). Walczak (2008) also highlights the importance of education and capacity building within the organization she describes.

A more extreme example of action around housing comes from Manuel Castells’ 1983 piece *The City and the Grassroots*. In this book he describes and analyzes several historically important grassroots social movement moments where individuals worked collectively to change the spaces and institutions of various cities. One of his examples is the

¹³In the context of the United States post-suburban flight and pre-condo craze multi-family homes are often synonymous with low-income housing.

squatters' movements in Latin America in the 1970s. Castells highlights the fact that within these settlements "social organization seems to be stronger than social deviance...and political conformism seems to outweigh the tendencies towards popular upheaval" (Castells 1983, 175). He hypothesizes that these characteristics can be explained by the idea of urban popularism, which he defines as "the process of establishing political legitimacy on the basis of a popular mobilization." (Castells 1983, 175). He also notes that these movements were focused on delivering such daily necessities as land, housing, and public services not provided by the state or the market. The initiatives currently developing in Toronto's public housing in many ways intersect with these earlier movements. While the crisis in public housing is not as extreme as in the case of Latin American squatter communities, with the basic housing infrastructure already in existence, residents are still working to provide daily necessities which neither state nor market are providing in adequate quality or quantity. The initiatives in Toronto are also focused on gaining their political legitimacy through popular mobilization and popular education, building on existing networks within their communities and even, as in the example of tenant organizers in the 1970s (Baranski 2007), manipulating popular representations of their homes for their own uses.

State, City, and Citizen

In Canada, until very recently, public housing was part of the Federal government's responsibility and so social organizing around public housing is taking place within institutions heavily influenced by the state, and the ideologies and stories that construct the form of Canadian cities. Because of these processes, social and community organizing in

public housing is directly linked to ideas and ideals about the state, cities, and finally citizenship.

Canada is often described as a settler state—along with Australia, Aotearoa/New Zealand, and the United States. The inherent tension of these states is that they were and are at once colonized and colonizer. As a colonizer state Canada is experiencing contemporary immigration patterns through the phenomenon that Kathleen Kirby (1996) describes of a state being sensitized to its borders through the arrival of a true other. However, as a colony the processes that bring people to Canada are more complex than described in a slogan popular among immigrant rights groups in Europe: “we are here because you were there.” Migrants do not simply come to Canada because it was the colonial authority of their own Nation; instead a web of connections, including ties to old empires, language, hemispheric proximity, family connections, and even U.S. immigration laws, draw people into Canada. The reaction of the traditional institutions of the Canadian state to this now present ‘other’ focuses on the question of the state’s responsibility to these newcomers, and in terms of citizenship, the question of what if anything turns a ‘New Canadian’ or even the ‘Canadian-born’¹⁴ into a ‘Canadian.’

liberal democracy?

Both philosopher John Ralston Saul and historian Ian McKay have very specific ideas and analyses of the Canadian project. Saul (1998, 2005) describes Canada as a liberal postmodern democratic state, and credits this liberal democracy for what he describes as Canada’s ability to incorporate difference. He baulks at the commonly held idea that Canada is a new country, and instead points to Canada’s longstanding and uninterrupted democracy

¹⁴ See Mallick 2006 for one example of how these words are used.

without civil war, separations, or reunifications, to demonstrate the established nature of the Canadian state. He also refers to Canada as the first postmodern state, by which he means the first nation-state that did not fall back on a singular Ur-text for its national formation. Saul instead reminds his audience of the triangular nature of the foundation of Canada which came together through a compromise between French, English, and First Nations. Further, he highlights how this postmodern formation created a scenario where negotiation and compromise became founding ideas of Canadian democracy. Finally, he highlights how all of this leads to an inclusive nature in Canadian democracy. For Saul, Canada is a work in progress where change happens through the Democracy, a state where, through compromise, new individual citizens are simply grafted onto the larger democratic body politic. While Saul claims to be highlighting the inclusive nature of Canadian democracy, his work underscores the ways that Canadian democracy tends towards the collapsing of difference into a modern liberal project, where multiplicities become simply component parts in the Democracy.

Ian McKay (2005) has a decidedly different analysis than Saul of the processes that are forming Canada. For McKay the liberal nature of the Canadian state does not foster democracy, but necessarily limits it. He claims that this is because of the grounding of liberal thinking in the idea of individuality. McKay describes the ways in which the narrow definition of an individual, in addition to excluding huge swaths of the population, originally constructed residents of northern North America as subjects rather than citizens. Additionally, he points to liberalism's reliance on the capital market as another important part of limiting the possibility for democracy in the Canadian state. For McKay the liberal project

of Canada was in many ways an idea directly “counterpoised to the democratic experiment in the United States” (McKay 2005, 54). For McKay the necessarily undemocratic nature of liberal Canada means that democracy is something which must be *made*, not given, and the needed changes to truly democratize the state cannot come through the orderly channels of good governance. His own writings on the history of the left in Canada are meant to highlight the various movements in a ‘war of maneuvers’ which have made, or attempted, radical change towards what McKay would see as a more democratic Canada.

Which analysis of the processes forming Canada is accurate? In some ways, as is to be expected in any discussion of Canada, both and neither. Saul and McKay are both stymied by their own positions: Saul as a progressive liberal advocate of democracy and ‘responsible individualism,’ McKay as a leftist historian of, and advocate for, ‘radical concrete utopias.’ Because of this, it is important to examine the validity of both of their claims, and to see if something which approximates a lived experience of Canada can be extracted from them. It is true that Canada is neither simply an outpost for recycled British Protestantism nor an American appendage. These points become apparent when one looks at how traditionally Canadian ‘common sense’ tended to be decidedly communitarian, as reflected in state policies such as health care programs and bilingualism. On the other hand, while it is true that Canada has had a long stretch of uninterrupted constitutional representative democracy, this democracy has served to marginalize, silence, or at least neuter many groups, as well as many important potential policies such as a right to housing. In discussing the Canadian state and particularly in a discussion of the state’s role in public housing, it is useful not to dismiss either Saul or McKay’s analysis outright, or to try and

collapse them into an unhappy marriage. Instead it is of greatest utility to hold the tension contained within the phrase 'liberal democracy' and to use that tension to ask questions about who is and is not counted as a citizen, and so who has the ability to access decision making institutions.

the other

One idea that both Saul and McKay are able to agree on is that whatever the current nature of the Canadian state, it began as the project of a handful of elites (McKay 2005; Saul 2005), and while both address ideas of diversity in different ways neither deal explicitly with that most Canadian of words 'multiculturalism.' Recent demographic changes resulting from immigration to Canada, and particularly Toronto, have radically shifted the population profile.¹⁵ In the years before 1961, 52.1% of people who immigrated to Canada were from Northern Europe, and the UK alone contributed 24.3% of those New Canadians (Stats Can 2007). After the 1970s there was a drastic change in Canadian immigration law, which meant there was a large increase in the number of immigrants entering the country; additionally this meant large changes in the countries of origin of immigrants. Between 1991 and 2001 only 5.5% of immigrants came from Northern Europe, while the numbers of people from regions such as Africa, the West Indies, Southeast and East Asia coming to Canada have steadily increased. None of these regions contributed more than 2% of the immigrant population before 1961 and, in fact, Southeast Asia, which contributed 10% in 2001, was only 0.3% of the overall immigrant population before 1961. No one region, much less a

¹⁵ It is important to note that while immigration is playing a large role in reshaping the population makeup of Toronto, migration from more rural areas, and in Western Canada particularly from First Nations reserves, are playing larger roles in shifting the demographics of these cities. See Peters and Starchenko 2005.

single country, contributed more than a quarter of all Canadian immigrants in 2001. In general, this means that people coming to Canada are now as different from each other as they are from the population that they are entering (Stats Can 2008). Institutionalized multiculturalism is one of the official responses to this increased diversity. Multiculturalism is a complex arrangement, and like so many liberal passive revolutions it both enshrines leftist progressive notions into the fabric of the state, and at the same time cuts off more radical initiatives.

The increase in the population's diversity, the state's reaction to it, and the possibility for multicultural citizenship are the focus of sociologist Himani Bannerji's (2000) work. Bannerji takes what she refers to as an antiracist, feminist, Marxist lens to the idea of multiculturalism, and particularly 'multiculturalism from above.' She differentiates between the state project of multiculturalism and culture used in resistance, or popular multiculturalism. The former she sees as a method of diffusion as part of the project of co-option and selective absorption referred to by McKay. It also serves, Bannerji asserts, to fix political actors into docile cultural objects. Through multiculturalism:

[w]e are encouraged to forget that people do not have a fixed political agency, and as subjects of complex and contradictory social relations can be summoned as subjects and agents in diverse ways.
(Bannerji 2000, 6)

This ideology of multiculturalism serves both to obfuscate the "idea of the malleable nature of political subjectivity or agency" (Bannerji 2000, 7) and to pit different ethnic and cultural groupings against each other.

[Multiculturalism] results in fractured cultural communities, each with its ethnicized agents hooked into the ruling apparatus of the state and social organization of classes. Defined thus, third world or non-white people living

in Canada become organized into competitive entities with respect to each other. (Bannerji 2000, 7)

Thinking about this reaction to diversity spatially, Sherene Razack (2002) describes how through environmental determinism, the racialized nature of bodies and places are co-constructed. In Canadian cities, based more on Victorian notions of cities as the seat of civilization—rational, ordered, and modern (Carter 1997; Peters 1998), and less on U.S. frontier mythologies where cities are foreign, unhealthy, and immoral (Cronon 1991; Hayden 2004), there continues to be the fear of the possibility for contamination from bodies that do not conform to the ideal standards of the city, bodies which need to be contained (McClintock 1995; Campbell 2004; Purdy 2005). Spaces for containment, what Gerald Newman (1996) calls anomalous zones, are created within cities, both through social norms and physical structures. The bodies within these spaces are often racialized and the violences enacted on them are often ignored, if not explicitly sanctioned (Newman 1996; Razack 1998a). The existence of these spaces, Razack asserts, provides a frontier outlet for colonial bodies, as well as protection from certain types of violence and disorder, which are mapped onto racialized spaces and bodies. While she is dealing specifically with prostitution and the spaces occupied by street-based sex workers, it would be fair to say that, for example, the problems associated with the illegal drug trade within public housing could be described using the same ideas. Many of the consumers of this trade do not reside in public housing, but they are free to enter these spaces and leave unscathed by the effects of their actions.

Sean Purdy (2005) brings a spatial awareness to his historical discussion of public housing, pointing out the ways in which these processes in addition to sequestering people physically also create distinct representations of public housing, the place, and the people.

Purdy looks specifically at two films that became major parts of the public discussion of Regent Park, looking at the ways in which these represented the people in Regent Park and the surrounding neighborhood “as social and cultural deviants,” and how these representations both “[r]eflected and reinforced real spatial and social divisions in the city” (Purdy 2005, 524). He ends with a discussion of the ways in which these ideas of environmental determinism necessarily tie people to place without any discussion of ‘why.’ Why are there no jobs with living wages in this neighborhood? Why is there no state protection from violence in these places? Instead these popular images and professional ideas continue to lend “credence to the common-sense idea that tenants themselves are individually responsible” for disorder in their lives and homes (Purdy 2005, 541).

Tijen Uguris (2004) addresses the impact of ideas and images of confinement and the freezing of political identity in her critical feminist examination of so-called participatory planning processes in public housing in London. Her key questions and criticisms surround the ways in which these projects frame the idea of community and how they serve to flatten important differences between residents within public housing, and how that flattening serves to further marginalize particular groups—specifically ethnic minorities and women—further isolating these groups from the decision making processes within and beyond public housing.

All of these studies point to the ways in which liberal notions of individuality mask the imbrications of social groups, and the people within them, as well as the power relations created by these relationships. The spatial results of this power imbalance results in the marginalization of particular groups. Physically sequestered into anomalous spaces and

through environmental determinism their bodies are tied socially to these spaces and their identities are fixed and removed from the greater polity. These notions also map the settings in which community organizing takes place, and influence the strategies resident groups develop.

None of these researchers, however, dismiss the idea of a possibility for a positive utility for multiculturalism and culture. Bannerji (2000), for example, promotes the idea of popular multiculturalism, where subjectivity remains malleable, and is defined by groups and individuals, can be a useful tool for political action. Additionally, groups within anomalous spaces are not simply victims but also actors, and within these spaces work takes place to create and strengthen networks that recreate geographies and allow residents to perform citizenship.¹⁶

Public housing in Toronto has examples of both of these phenomena where the people and the place of public housing are being neglected and made invisible in the larger discourse of the city, but where residents are working to perform citizenship and bring their homes out of anomaly and back into the public sphere.

city scale

Because of its density and its thickness of networks and interactions (Hanson 2003), the scale of the city is one where the tensions within liberal democratic institutions, such as multiculturalism, are highlighted. Because of this, the city becomes a key scale from which to

¹⁶ Ian Skelton (2002) discusses the ways in which First Nations women in Winnipeg's inner city are redefining this space for themselves, perceived as blighted, through cultural and personal connections, and Luisa Veronis (2006) discusses the use of space and multicultural citizenship in her discussion of the Canadian Hispanic Day Parade in Toronto.

discuss these ideas of space, marginality, and citizenship. The scale of the city is key for observing the formation of citizenship in this time, both “text and context of new debates about fundamental social relations” (Holston 1999, 171). This is because a wide variety of lived trajectories are brought together, and new ways of performing citizenship are constantly being created and negotiated. Because of this concentration cities are also a site where dominant classes struggle to maintain norms (Holston 1999).

The shift to the city as the primary scale for discussing citizenship brings into focus the theme of the strange bedfellows made by neo-liberal policies and progressive initiatives. As neo-liberal agendas co-opt the idea of a Canadian ‘common sense’ the connections to, and protections provided by, the state are eroding. This can be seen in the case of public housing with the increased downloading of responsibility onto municipal governments. From the standpoint of insurgent citizens, as described by Holston (1999), these policies often have the effects of both highlighting the cracks and fissures in larger systems, and amplifying insurgent actions and the spaces they create. The cases in this paper are exciting examples of people working within these cracks to create new spaces, physical and social, from which to enact citizenship, taking advantage of the tensions created by new policies to experiment with what public housing could be (Hackworth and Moriah 2006). But as Holston also points out spaces of insurgent citizenship can, however, be created just as easily by ‘elites’ as the ‘subaltern’ and because of this it is important, when thinking about who will have access to decision making powers, to consider whether or not institutions are being turned more towards justice and equity alongside insurgence. In other words, how residents are gaining their seat at the table is an important question.

Sustained Success

What would a successful initiative within public housing look like? Over the years there have been many different ways to define success within public housing, from production that did not interfere with private development, to the production of housing for all. The literature I examine below points towards some ideas for identifying a type of success in public housing where the quality of life of public housing residents is at the center of the process. Instead of simply evaluating terminal outcomes of these initiatives, I am instead looking at their possibilities for continued impacts and changes in process that can sustain these projects in the future. The literature below helps to identify some key factors necessary for these positive sustainable changes.

Two very different studies that develop similar concrete ideas for moving public housing towards success are Lawrence Vale's (2002) *Reclaiming Public Housing* and the Ministry of Housing and Ontario Housing Corporation's (1992) *Planning Together: Improving the Quality of Life in Public Housing*. Vale has been writing and thinking about public housing for decades, and *Reclaiming Public Housing* is an in-depth case study evaluating three public neighborhood revitalization processes that began in Boston during the 1980s. *Planning Together* is the result of surveys conducted in the early 1990s by the Ontario Ministry of Housing and the Ontario Housing Corporation (OHC) while the New Democratic Party (NDP)¹⁷ government, led by Bob Rae, was in power. Residents in all public housing in Ontario were surveyed and this research was itself an attempt to include residents in important decision making processes. Despite being separated by a decade, four common

¹⁷ The NDP are Canada's National left of center political party who generally run on a social democratic platform. This was the first NDP government of Ontario.

themes arise from these two studies: 1) a need for increased resident control and an institutionalization of that involvement, 2) improvements in the maintenance and management of buildings, 3) increased safety and an increased perception of safety within housing complexes, and 4) increased socioeconomic status of residents, which in the case of public housing in Toronto has often been facilitated through social services. Equally important are two ideas that only arise in one report or the other: concerns about discrimination from the residents in Ontario, and a focus on design excellence from Vale. These highlight the ways in which professional and resident perceptions can differ, but also the idea that those viewpoints do not have to be put in opposition, and if used in the right combination can help to build a stronger analysis, stronger strategies, and ultimately stronger communities. In this thesis I focus on the first common theme of increased resident control, and examine ways in which resident leadership in decisions addresses the other thematic concerns.

In addition to the concrete ideas above, there are some more abstract ideas about what is needed for successful change within public housing. While less tangible, these ideas are also an important part of putting residents at the center of public housing development, and of creating change that can be sustained. These ideas also help to link the local events described in this paper to the larger processes they are embedded in, and give a better sense of what might be transferable from these examples. These ideas focus on the role and configuration of institutions, a vision of justice and equity, and the ways important spatio-social elements are addressed. All of these relate directly to the ways in which residents can and do access decision making processes.

institutions

Institutions are formalized structures, organizations, and documents with the power to impact daily lives. It is also important to keep in mind that formalized institutions are malleable, even government institutions, often thought of as monolithic, there are shifts that occur as key actors and groups whirl around each other (Hall 1980). The central question of Peter Hall's 1980 piece, *Great Planning Disasters*, addresses how large-scale urban failures continue to be produced. He focuses on three groups of actors—citizens, bureaucrats, and professional politicians—and draws on a wide variety of literature, from economics and political science to psychology, for his explanation. Not placing the blame on any one actor, he describes the process in which decision making becomes unstable. Specifically he highlights 1) the ways in which citizens are generally more concerned with losing rather than gaining services, 2) the conservatism of bureaucracies, 3) the professional politicians' need to maximize votes by playing to the center, and 4) the temporary organizing abilities of small but vocal groups of citizens to get special initiatives pushed through. Hall's recommendations focus on challenging the institutional culture of city planning, trying to push planners and cities to be more procedural in their planning, and to rely less on forecasts and more on citizen needs. While there has been a move for some time on the part of planners to step away from a pure modernist vision, production of public housing continues to be a part of governments and markets and so the cultures of the institutions involved are not often amenable to processes that are not scientific or verifiable, even when these rigorous forecasts continue to contradict resident experience or opinion. Another question that Hall brings up is which citizens' needs are addressed, and describes the ways in which

generally the citizens who are most vocal and visible tend to be middle class citizens.

Therefore, another hurdle for public housing organizing and improvement is whether residents can become citizens before they become middle class. The next section addresses the types of institutions that are needed to make that shift.

justice and equity

One of the key findings in the empirical studies mentioned above is the desire for an increase in tenant capacity for control in public housing (Vale 2002; Ontario 1992). Political philosopher Iris Marion Young (2004) bases her ideal of a just democracy very much on this tenet of citizen control. While her argument is primarily directed at legislative bodies, she also encourages expanding its use to other institutions saying, “[p]ersons should have the right to participate in making the rules and policies of any institution with authority over their actions” (Young 2004, 98). At the heart of Young’s just democracy argument are two ideas: first, that there must be official spaces for the disadvantaged to voice their own agendas; and second, that just democracies must embrace heterogeneity. A “democratic public should provide mechanisms for the effective recognition and representation of the distinct voices and perspectives of those of its constituent groups that are oppressed or disadvantaged” (Young 2004, 95). In this way, there should be a built-in method for voices, which are often suppressed, to speak for themselves and to gain a share in control. Additionally, Young argues “that a just polity must embrace the ideal of a heterogeneous public. Group difference of gender, age, and sexuality should not be ignored, but instead publicly acknowledged and accepted” (Young 2004, 91). This is a move away from what she calls “the normative ideals of the homogeneous public” (Young 2004, 91). In her argument,

the control over institutions with authority is a matter of survival, as she says, “self-annihilation is an unreasonable and unjust requirement of citizenship” (Young 2004, 90). In Young’s description that self-annihilation is in many ways symbolic, individuals live on while cultural or social groups cease to exist. There are, however, examples where the results of this disconnect between authority and subject causes more material and quotidian losses.¹⁸ Public housing is one concrete example of this phenomenon. Public housing has isolated the poor as a class, women, and ethnic and racial groups socially and civically, as well as physically pushing these populations into what became marginal and even dangerous housing. Public housing is an example that points towards a need to move towards the type of just democracy described by Young.

Importantly for Young, the needed institutional spaces must be for marginalized groups to speak in their own voices, while simple representation or consultation is not enough.

The privileged usually are not inclined to protect or advance the interests of the oppressed, partly because their social position prevents them from understanding those interests, and partly because to some degree *their privilege depends on the continued oppression of others.*
(Young 2004, 97; emphasis added)

Sherene Razack (1998, 2002) takes up this theme throughout her work and highlights the ways in which Canada’s status as a settler and colonial state, combined with a national amnesia about this status, generally reproduce rather than reduce barriers, and keep marginalized peoples from accessing power positions. She describes the ways in which this is

¹⁸ Thomas King’s 2003 Massey Lecture and particularly the chapter entitled “What is it About Us You Don’t Like” is an exceptionally clear example of the ways in which a lack of control over governing institutions has threatened the survival—symbolic, cultural, and material—of North America’s Native Peoples.

at least partially caused by the tendency to erase histories of oppression “problems of communication,” for example, “are mere technical glitches... misunderstandings that arise because the parties are culturally, racially, physically, mentally or sexually, *different*” (Razack 1998, 8; emphasis in original). Again, a liberal dependency on individuals and changing individual behavior is the focus, without looking at the interlocked relationships of social groups and people within them. Acknowledging these histories is an important part of moving forward. Razack states that “[w]ithout an understanding of how responses to subordinate groups are socially organized to sustain existing power arrangements, we cannot hope either to communicate across social hierarchies or to work to eliminate them” (1998, 8). So again there is a need for dominant groups not to ask how subordinated groups can change to conform to current institutional norms, or to find ways to represent groups within current institutions, but for the institutions themselves to be radically altered to support this elimination of hierarchies. In the case of public housing residents are not simply waiting for managers of housing authorities to hand change to them. Instead residents are working to organize their communities and create the needed changes in their homes, creating increasingly just democracies (Young 2004; McKay 2005).

landscapes

While the initiatives I describe are inherently social it is also important to remember that public housing sites are also physical places, and one of the most exciting aspects of the initiatives described in this paper are the ways in which actual landscapes are being transformed through resident actions. Some of the key spatial elements that are overlooked in contemporary redevelopment processes are a production of space that prefaces the users of space, the acknowledgment of fine spatial differences in planning and redevelopment, and

a more nuanced thinking about the boundaries that surround public housing neighborhoods. These elements all come together to create a vision of space which is fluid and, as Doreen Massey (2005) describes, it is this “conceptualiz[ation of] space as open, multiple and relational, unfinished and always becoming, [that] is a prerequisite for history to be open and thus a prerequisite, too, for the possibility of politics” (59). Massey advocates for the idea of space not simply as a container, and its production not simply as a ‘natural’ process. The ideas below, which help to highlight space’s fluid characteristics, are important to the creation of successful public housing spaces.¹⁹

production of space

Planners, public housing administrators, staff, and residents are currently dealing with the question of how best to re/produce the space of public housing. Many of the solutions being adopted align with HOPE VI styled development,²⁰ tending to simply replicate the modernist “central premise of transformation” where “the new architecture/urban design would create set pieces within existing cities” (Holston 1999, 160). In many ways modernist design dovetails with liberalism, mimicking the desire to collapse difference into a single, now physical, form. The single form is linked to the single liberal function, and to the economic backdrop of production.

Henri Lefebvre (1991 [1974]), in his work *The Production of Space*, is critical of modernist movements such the Bauhaus, stating, “what the Bauhaus’s audacity produced in

¹⁹ Kenneth Robert Olwig (2002) provides a truly fascinating review of the English term ‘landscape,’ its etymology and history, and the fact that this word, now so exclusively associated with physical features, is also intimately associated with political and social processes. An early quote describes the Danish idea of *Landschaft* from the 1500’s: “The *Landschaft* as a place was thus defined not physically, but socially, as the place of a polity. The physical manifestation of that place was a reflection of the common laws that defined the polity as a political landscape.” (10)

²⁰ I give a more detailed discussion of HOPE VI on page 51-54.

the long run...[was] the worldwide, homogenous and monotonous architecture of the state” (126). Lefebvre also makes the same critique of their socialist counterparts, the Russian Structuralists. In short, Lefebvre claims that neither of these groups were able to produce truly innovative spaces because they were both trapped within larger modes of production, which, whether capitalist or Soviet, are tied to larger markets and economies. In the case of public housing in Canada the initial production, and in fact current re/production of housing, is also heavily imbedded in the liberal and capital, state and economy. Even Albert Rose—a strong early supporter of Regent Park, the first public housing site in Canada—acknowledges the limitations put on designers and planners by state and economic systems. As an example of the singular vision of the worthy poor, Rose describes the rejection of one architect’s suggestion to build a larger number of ‘single person family dwellings.’ The families this architect had in mind were widows and widowers and not, for example, single men. His suggestion was still rejected (Rose 1958, 75).

All of this speaks to Edward Soja’s reminder that “the spatiality of social life extends far beyond physical forms and directly measurable surface appearances” (Soja 2001, s1.4). Social and political elements are always a part of physical development, but are often difficult to measure. Gerda Wekerle (1993) takes a more empirical examination of the production of space, reviewing efforts of women’s groups to build their own housing on their own terms. Her main findings are that these women’s groups were looking for new ways to develop housing that was designed to fit more closely to their needs. In terms of physical characteristics she highlights the inclusion of additional public spaces and community rooms throughout the buildings, especially at the fronts of buildings so that the entrances could be

surveyed, and laundry facilities placed on the first floor of buildings where women could also supervise children at play in outdoor areas (Wekerle 1993, 102). Along with these physical innovations another exciting feature of these co-operatives was the ways in which the managing organizations blurred the definitions of services, and “incorporate[ed] essential service components including childcare, life skills training and participatory housing management” (Wekerle 1993, 95). Within these initiatives the non-physical aspects of the spatiality of social life were made more visible through conscious efforts. Returning to Lefebvre, his ideas remind us that no matter how technically it is framed, the production of space is at once dialogic and procedural, and mediated through processes at larger social, political, and economic scales. In terms of public housing in Canada the larger scales and modes of production are increasingly globalized, and as Klein, Tremblay, and Dionne (1997) point out, the state is becoming increasingly invisible, increasingly embedding public housing production in a larger process focused on the economic well being of a capitalist market.

For Lefebvre the characteristics of spaces, produced for capital and the state, include visual fetishization and sanitization. Spaces are created where codes and images are more valued than the use value of space itself, and are more valuable than the interactions shaping the space. So in the case of public housing, the design focus has been on the appearance of order, regardless of the challenges for daily life that these designs might create.

Lefebvre’s idea of production of space is particularly useful in thinking about and advocating for resident control of public housing redevelopment. His thinking also helps to explain many of the weaknesses of professionally driven development. Lefebvre asks “Can a social group be expected to recognize itself in space merely because that space is held up

before it like a mirror? Certainly not.” (Lefebvre 1991 [1974], 417). Simply placing people in a particular type of building did not have the social consequences desired by the original framers of public housing, but there is the threat that this logic will be reanimated in the new redevelopment process. Without looking beyond façades to the social aspects of design and planning there is little reason to believe these new design interventions will be any more successful than their predecessors.

Architecture produces living bodies, each with its own distinctive traits. The animating principle of such a body, its presence, is neither visible nor legible as such, nor is it the object of any discourse, for it reproduces itself within those who *use* the space in question, within their lived experience. Of that experience the tourist, the passive spectator, can grasp but a pale shadow.
(Lefebvre 1991 [1974], 137; emphasis in original.)

In this description many planning professionals experience the places they have control over as, at best, tourists. Unfortunately these ‘pale shadows’ have been and continue to be the driving forces informing public housing production. For Lefebvre the knowledge of a place and the model for a new way of producing space requires a prefacing of the ‘user’s’ experience of space. This experience should inform the ways in which lived spaces are materially produced instead of using space making professionals’ conceived representations of space. In other words places, and perhaps homes in particular, should be created based on the needs and experiences of the people who use those places, and not on abstract plans and visions of professionals in isolation. Because of the variety of households and individuals living within public housing, resident led productions of space have a greater possibility for acknowledging the need for different forms to fit different functions. These different forms and functions, it should be noted, will sometimes be complimentary, but at times they will be in conflict. The type of planning that prefaces resident experiences to this extent would

necessitate a move away from rational plans to a planning process based on compromises that are not compromising but instead dialogic,²¹ an insurgent planning practice. Fortunately, contemporary public housing redevelopment is not only embedded in processes of capital markets and reductions of state involvement. While state institutions are receding, social movement groups are developing new ways to organize and address the new or shifting geographies being mapped for them. Public housing re/production is embedded in both the increasingly globalized capital market-above-all networks, and the increasingly place-specific, local, and transnational networks.²² This leaves resident led development in a stronger position to address a second important spatial-social issue, the idea of fine spatial difference.

fine spatial difference

In 1992 George Anderson, president of Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) from 1986-1990, delivered a lecture entitled *The Great Housing Policy Debates: What Have We Learned?* One of the key points he makes is about the importance of acknowledging fine spatial difference in Canadian planning and policy around housing:

We have learned that even when problems are similar they may need different approaches because the contexts are different. We must be cautious in favouring any broad-based panacea in an era where treatment of most housing problems need sharp well-directed instruments.
(Anderson 1992, 22)

There is a need in housing development to take the time to properly examine and analyze the spatio-social context of different public housing sites. Beyond just looking at the differences, it is also important to build these differences in context into any plan for

²¹ For a discussion of this way of thinking about compromises see for example John Ralston Saul's Inaugural Lafontaine-Baldwin Lecture (2006). One of his favorite topics is the ways in which the formation of Canada necessitated this type of compromise between English and French settlers.

²² Cynthia Cockburn (2007, 12 n4) explains this term as referring to connections across several national boundaries between individuals and organizations rather than 'international' which she uses to refer to intergovernmental interactions.

interventions into public housing. In examining three public housing redevelopment initiatives in Boston from the 1980s, Lawrence Vale (2002) highlights the ways in which the relative successes and failures of each initiative were greatly impacted by differences on the scale of the neighborhood and even the household.

In the examples Vale cites the Boston Housing Authorities (BHA) did take the time to assess the various sites, along with their neighborhood context, individually. Some of the factors taken into account in their assessment included accessibility to transportation, shopping, recreation, and health care, as well as the residential real estate market of the surrounding neighborhoods, and the tenant characteristics such as the number of female headed households and numbers of adults who were working. However, the interventions the BHA developed for all three were very similar and did not give the type or quantity of extra support to the site that, according to their own metrics, would be the least likely to succeed. In the end this intervention was deemed a failure on many counts.

In addition to not following an equity framework in their redevelopment process, there were important factors that BHA did not take into account. These factors related to human geographical networks, the links between any given site and the larger scales within which that site is embedded (Hanson 2000). Vale identifies indicators related to these networks, including political influence at the neighborhood level, the mix of residents and particularly the racial mix, and finally the strength of the resident organizations involved in the redevelopment processes. The most successful site is described as having strong neighborhood-based political support, while the least successful, in addition to having little outside political support, was tagged onto the larger redevelopment initiative after an outcry

that a predominately white site was being redeveloped while no predominately black site was. This racial profile was also important in terms of the success of the initiatives. The fact that the most successful site was a mixed race site had some bearing on its success, particularly due to the strength of BHA's emotional investment in the process. BHA saw this site, and its success, as an exemplar for racial harmony in a city that was in the middle of racial transition and disagreements. Finally, a huge amount of the success or failure of each initiative was tied to the prior levels of organizing by residents. Vale discusses the ways in which the residents of the most successful site were able to intervene in the professional process, influencing decisions about the rate and direction of development and even hiring their own architectural consultants, when needed, to further explain proposed processes. At the least successful site there was an attempt by management to organize residents in a very top-down fashion, which, aside from generally being a questionable organizing strategy, was problematic because of the existing confrontational relationship between residents and management. All of the differences between sites relate to a much finer scale than the nation or even the city, but the results of ignoring these differences created a wide variation in the success of these redevelopment initiatives. From Vale's research we see the importance of taking context into account not just in measuring and analyzing initiatives, but also in terms of actual plans and strategies.

Resident leadership, in redevelopment initiatives, is both a critical and convenient strategy to insure that place-specific theorizing and analysis happens. While I have been referring to a single Toronto, in some ways it would be more accurate to refer to many Torontos. The physical surroundings of, for example, Atkinson Co-op as compared to

Lawrence Heights are very different. Atkinson sits in the middle of the city surrounded by many needed amenities and services, while Lawrence Heights is in a more isolating perisuburban neighborhood. Kathleen Kirby notes, “[s]pace and where we are in it...determines large portions of our status as subjects, and obversely, the kinds of subjects we are largely dictates our degree of mobility and our possible future locations” (Kirby 1996, 12). With regards to resident led public housing redevelopment these future locations are shaped by the priorities residents set for their homes, and those priorities are greatly influenced by the surrounding context of where they are in space.

boundaries

I have referred quite a bit to the idea of public housing being a site of sequestration, marginalization, or isolation, but I have also tried to problematize these descriptions. This section looks more specifically at the possibilities for thinking about boundaries, both social and physical, and how different groups can conceptualize and use the same boundaries in very different ways. Many of the examples used the closed community of public housing to mobilize their initiatives. This is in direct opposition to the professional idea that opening public housing to the rest of the city is a key aspect for improving public housing.

John Sewell, a former mayor of Toronto and now prominent housing activist, wrote a booklet in 1999 entitled *Redeveloping Public Housing Projects*. In it he sets out what he believes are the key strategies for improving public housing; he begins with a five-point plan for how this should be achieved:

- Public housing should have public streets.
- Green space should be front and back yards not open space.
- Residents need to be able to receive public services.

- There is a need for more income in public housing, and so public housing should move to mixed income housing to increase revenues.
 - Where appropriate there should be neighbourhood shops and services.
- (Sewell 1999, 14:15)

Sewell's solutions are still in many ways what George Anderson (1992) referred to as "broad-based panaceas," but are at least focused on the needs of people living in public housing. Sewell does not advocate for the inclusion of higher income households as part of a social uplift of blighted bodies, but instead as a pragmatic strategy to bring needed income into public housing sites. In fact, he insists that any redevelopment plan must include at least the same amount of low-income housing as it had in the past, and also argues for the right to return for any former residents. But at the same time, he is often preoccupied with the idea of the importance of 'opening up' public housing to the city. Again, he seems to have the best interests of public housing residents at heart, but at the same time his argument collapses the two interrelated elements of boundaries, the visible physical elements and the invisible social elements. For example, Sewell's insistence on the importance of public roads is based on his belief that people in public housing are being denied public services because of a lack of these roads.²³ While the labyrinthine layout of many public housing sites does make some service delivery more challenging, this simple formula completely ignores the social aspects of service provisions and boundaries. Gated communities often have private roads, and while this may mean they have limited access to certain public services the residents of these projects can also afford to purchase these services in the market. They also

²³ One example that Sewell (1994, 157) cites as a successful case of the type of redevelopment he advocates for is Uniacke Square in Halifax, Nova Scotia, redevelopment which took place in the late 1980's. He sites the construction of through roads connecting Uniacke to the city as an important aspect of improving this neighbourhood. However Uniacke is still a struggling community and despite the presence of through roads, from my experience of living in Halifax in 2001, Uniacke Square was still social isolated and still perceived as a no-go zone.

have the capacity to organize to do so. While this is a somewhat simplistic comparison, these are none-the-less examples of the same physical, but very different social, scenarios leading to very different outcomes.

Sean Purdy (2005) makes the argument that it is necessary to look at the importance and effects of both the social and physical barriers erected around public housing. Purdy highlights the ways in which the moral overtones of the original ‘slum clearances’ that created public housing in Canada necessitated the imagining of these spaces as ‘outcast spaces’ in the minds of the middle class residents of Toronto, whose votes and tax dollars were needed to initiate and sustain public housing. Purdy illustrates not only that this mindset has carried forward into current redevelopment initiatives, but that it has also been transferred onto the bodies living in public housing. The people become the problem as much as the places, and in terms of redevelopment the focus is often on “changing tenants themselves and not government, social, and economic policies that have generated problems in the project” (Purdy 2005, 544). There is a masking of the social, geographical, and historical realities and contexts of the people living in Regent Park and other public housing sites. No examinations of the causes, of systemic racism, lack of jobs with living wages, or a lack of state protection from violence are necessary if these places and people can be sufficiently isolated and contained. One of the most exciting aspects of the initiatives described in this thesis are the ways in which they are working to tear down these invisible boundaries, bringing their places and bodies into the larger civic, social, and economic spheres.

None of this is to dismiss the existence of or importance of the physical walls, but there is a need to step back and look at boundaries from new perspectives and to ask new questions. The prototypical public housing site closed-in on itself, with wide swaths of communal open space and a single economic demographic, was the fulfillment in many ways of the late 19th century ideas of Ebenezer Howard's Garden City. Additionally, these design qualities and demographics were intended to promote health, including freedom from violence, as compared to surrounding neighborhoods. While there is no shortage of critics who are now willing to cite the design of public housing as the main deficit of public housing, many neighborhoods in North America, and around the world, continue to be developed with these exact design and demographic specifications. Now we tend to call them condos or gated communities. In 1965 there were about 500 community organizations, or "private neighborhood governments" (Webster, Glasze, and Frantz 2002, 315). According to the Community Associations Institution (CAI), in 2006 there were 286,000 associations representing 57 million residents. Further, 52-55% of the associations were planned communities, 38-42% were condominiums, and 5-7% were co-operatives (CIA 2007). The point here is that neither the problems nor the solutions are as simple as are often presented. Again the very different social position of the new Garden Cities residents and the fact that these residents have a very different level of control over their homes has led to very different results, particularly in terms of the quality of their housing and their relations with the world outside of their projects. There is no need for physical isolation to lead *a priori* to civic isolation or community unrest; in fact, in a report on Lawrence Heights commissioned by the city, it was reported that "for some community members, this isolation facilitates the

development of community” (Toronto 1998, 7). Additionally, within Atkinson Co-operative one of the motivations for conversion to a co-operative has been the right to stay in the community (Lapoint et al. 2002, Sousa 2006). Unfortunately these are not threads picked up by the report on Lawrence Heights. Instead the report goes on to say, “for the elected politicians [interviewed]...geographic and social isolation from the surrounding community ...is seen as a liability and issue to be addressed. All four elected representatives spoke of the need for redevelopment of the site” (Toronto 1998, 7). In this situation we see an example of residents and professional outsiders having seemingly diametrically opposed viewpoints, but in this case the voices of those professionals are unduly prefaced over those of the residents. The report does not again mention, much less ask questions about, what elements of the geography of ‘isolation’ foster community. From a historical perspective Sean Purdy notes (2003):

A 1965 survey found "a high degree of socialization and mutual aid. The corridors were meeting places for friendly talk." Paul Ringer, a long-time housing research officer in Toronto, exclaimed that social workers were "horrified" to find one family on welfare in the housing development sharing food with a family next door who needed assistance (Purdy 2003, 23).

Purdy (2005) quotes a scene in the 1994 National Film Board (NFB) film *Return to Regent Park*, where one female resident declares “The invisible wall which surrounds the Park must be torn down and a brand new image be made into a reality. For once we can say, ‘We live in Regent Park’ and not be ashamed to say it.” This resident in many ways encapsulates the difficulties of dealing with borders, marginalization, and isolation in cities, since these are all terms that carry both spatial and social meaning. The statement by this tenant was made in the context of a discussion about the need for access to material amenities and jobs, but

her statement also reminds one that a consideration of both spatial and social characteristics of boundaries are necessary, and that a consideration of one without the other is not sufficient to properly develop strategies for successful public housing initiatives.

These attempts to connect space's physical, social, and political emanations lead back to Doreen Massey's (2006) proposal of conceptualizing space as fluid. In many ways her theory is the antithesis of modernist ideals, and is spatially equivalent to Iris Marion Young's (2004) thinking about just democracies. Massey also advocates for the acknowledgment and acceptance of heterogeneity and defining space as 1) the product of interrelations, constituted through interactions, 2) the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity, where multiplicity and space are co-constitutive, and 3) always under construction, a simultaneity of stories-so-far (Massey 2005, 5). Space as a political element produced through procedures focusing on the needs and lived experiences of the users of space is a very different and more delicate process than simply carving out new roads and erecting new types of towers. This process requires an attention to the differences at a fine scale, which are social and physical. It requires a move away from only looking at walls from one side, and importantly, it requires the deep involvement of the primary users of space, in this case residents of public housing. Through community organizing around house and home, as well as the use of the thickness of relations within cities, the residents involved in various public housing initiatives in Toronto are performing citizenship, reaching out across cultural groups and impacting the institutions with authority in their lives, and revealing the complicated and sometimes messy nature of insurgent spaces.

In thinking through the idea of success I have focused on literature that moves beyond a '*centeration*', an isolated focus on individual elements. Instead I think it is important to first put residents at the center, and from there to ask the questions that link different scales: daily needs, local design, and root causes of disorder. Without a focus on the users of space and an examination of history and causality solutions for public housing will continue to come up short. Because of this I now move to an analysis of the history of public housing in Toronto using the ideas presented in this chapter about the possibilities for a resident centered production to examine key moments in public housing history that impacted on its current production.

Canadian Public Housing in Context | three

The position of public housing in space and in public discourse is not a coincidence or part of a natural process; this chapter traces key moments and changes in the configuration of public housing that have worked to produce the current circumstances within public housing in Toronto. This geographic and historical context is important because it can help to analyze, and hopefully shape, planned redevelopment decisions.

Current proponents of the redevelopment process often advocate for redevelopment in very general terms for example by focusing on the benefits of mixed-income housing. On this point advocates will often reference the densely populated and vibrant St Lawrence neighborhood of Toronto as an example of a positive development and a model for their proposals. The comparison of St Lawrence to contemporary redevelopment plans lacks both spatial and historic sensitivity. The St Lawrence neighborhood was developed, beginning in the 1970's in an underutilized industrial area, and much of its design and production was advocated for by that small group of middle class citizens described by Peter Hall (1980), and these middle class citizens would also become the primary user of the new space (Gordon ND). Instead the redevelopment currently underway are focused on areas already densely populated, with populations marginalized from the centers of decision making, and the interventions are not being primarily shaped by the experiences of these marginalized primary users.

Rather than the development of the St Lawrence neighborhood, revitalization in Toronto largely parallels HOPE VI, a program developed in the United States to address the

challenges of public housing in that country. HOPE VI begins with the premise that the two key problems for public housing are the design, which cuts public housing off from the city, and the concentration of poor households in one location. From this base, HOPE VI initiatives aim to deconcentrate people living in poverty, and to impact residents socially through design that follows the neo-utopian New Urbanist model. Common features of HOPE VI developments include the demolition of the original site, followed by the construction of mixed-use and mixed-income communities which focus on walkability, connectivity, traditional neighborhood patterns, and an emphasis on beauty and aesthetics (New Urbanism 2008). These tenets are direct reactions to the Garden City model many large public housing sites follow. While both models share a claim to a focus on strong design and aesthetics, the Garden City model explicitly aimed to build self-contained neighborhoods to keep the city out, and because of these factors, the notion of what constitutes good design is very different. For example, the original designs for early public housing sites were intended to keep out cars, and featured buildings turned inward away from roads, with numerous courtyards that intentionally broke up city street patterns. HOPE VI projects, on the other hand, are fixated on returning through-roads to neighborhoods and to a design which creates façades that mimic the surrounding neighborhoods.

A decade into HOPE VI there is growing doubt about the model's ability to achieve its stated goals of redistributing people living in poverty, building community solidarity between households at different incomes, or even simply of housing low-income people. Rachel Garshick Kleit's 2005 study takes an interesting look at New Holly Phase I, a HOPE

VI site in Seattle. She explores the extent to which a social community was created between various types of occupants. Her findings were that there was little interaction between groups, and that a variety of factors, including the physical design of the site, inhibited the possibility for these interactions. Both Krohne (2006) and Bennett et al. (2006) examine the question of where former residents of redeveloped public housing are now living. They find two major problems. The first is that the voucher program, meant to subsidize former public housing residents choosing to rent in the private market, does not seem to be deconcentrating poverty to any great extent, as there are no incentives or requirements for landlords outside of the inner-city, or other areas of high poverty concentration, to rent to these tenants. Additionally, many former residents find themselves unable to return to public housing because of more stringent requirements for tenancy, particularly employment requirements. Additionally, HOPE VI removed the requirement for one-to-one replacement of affordable and below market rate units, so subsidized housing units were lost through these redevelopment processes. Finally, communication about redevelopment initiatives is often quite poor, leading to the situation described by Patricia Wright (2006) where residents in Chicago attempted to mount large-scale resistance to the planned redevelopment of the public housing stock in that city. Their resistance came in large part because of the ways that they were shut out of the decision making process and the ways in which plans were miscommunicated to residents. Whatever the stated goals, the observed outcomes of HOPE VI developments are proving to be a reliance on community building primarily through design, a restoration of the ideas of the deserving and undeserving poor, and the rampant devolution of responsibility within governments and to

the private sector (Peterson 2005; Bennett et al. 2006; Krohne 2006). As urban planner and U.S. public housing historian Lawrence Vale commented, “The problem we have as a nation is that policymakers and city officials tend to be better at mixing out the poor than mixing them in” (quoted in O’Connor 2008).

The ideas informing HOPE VI hint at the causes of these failures. Proponents of HOPE VI identify the two key problems with current public housing development as design that closes off public neighborhoods, and the high concentration of households living in poverty in public housing. The representation of public housing as degenerate is also an important aspect of HOPE VI developments, which in addition to ignoring root causes also masks out the assets of public housing communities. HOPE VI focuses, once again, on “changing tenants themselves and not government social and economic policies that have generated problems in the project” (Purdy 2005, 544). Or as Henri Lefebvre put it, the “phraseology” of space making professionals “suggest[s] the idea that they are in effect ‘doctors of space,’” which promotes the idea that these ailing spaces are “a product not of the capitalist or neocapitalist system but rather of some putative ‘sickness of society’” (Lefebvre 1991 [1974], 99). Rooted in environmental determinism, and the idea that design alone can “cure” social problems, the simplistic responses developed through HOPE VI mask the root causes of the challenges within public housing, as well as the related root causes of poverty (Crump 2002; Kleit 2005; Peterson 2005; Purdy 2005; Bennett et al. 2006). So the questions becomes why mimic a program that is not proving itself successful in its own context?

Another important question that needs to be addressed if residents and planning professionals can move forward is how did Toronto's public housing stock get where it is today, to crumbling buildings and seemingly disenfranchised residents? This chapter focuses this question and the impact of four key moments in the history of public housing in Canada: 1) legislative changes of the neo-liberal provincial government of Mike Harris in the late 1990s and early 2000s, 2) the demographic changes in Canada and public housing in the 1980s, 3) the lost opportunities for progressive change in the 1970s, and 4) the initial development of Canadian public housing in the 1940s. I explore these moments because at each of these stages the circumstances shifted in ways that further disenfranchised public housing.

1990s Current Crisis and New Opportunities

“The general acceptance of a federal presence in housing is no longer even debated, except by the uninformed.”

George Anderson²⁴

Much of the current state of crisis in public housing in Toronto can be traced back to 1993 when the federal government, led by the Liberal Party, declared that housing in the country was no longer its concern by cutting federal funding to public housing and placing this responsibility in the hands of the provincial governments. This decision coincided with the so-called “Common Sense Revolution” in Ontario. When Mike Harris' Conservative government was elected in 1995 the new government used the recent federal decision as a reason to cut provincial involvement from social housing and to again download its responsibilities, this time to the municipal levels of government, a level of government that is

²⁴ Anderson 1992, 47

least able to raise its own revenue. In 2000 the Social Housing Reform Act (Bill 128) was passed. It officially transferred all social housing to 47 municipalities and their designates. The act was meant to simplify the administration of social housing, and provide more opportunities for private partnerships and revenue. As Hackworth and Moriah (2006) describe through their interviews with affected housing providers, the act has actually caused, in many cases, more complications and many providers find themselves heavily constrained in terms of possible revenue earning ventures. Additionally, due to the cuts in funding providers also find themselves, particularly in smaller jurisdictions, scrambling simply to keep up, and with no resources to take on needed new initiatives.

Hackworth and Moriah (2006) point out that one underexplored consequence of social housing reform is the “creation of space for experimentation.... This ‘space’,” they continue, “holds great promise (for creating more affordable housing) but also contains much danger for the further privatization of the stock and the development of a highly uneven system” (Hackworth and Moriah 2006, 516). In 2002 the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) was formed to consolidate the roles of the various former housing authorities and in some ways as an attempt to create some space for experimentation. TCHC is a housing authority, once again, organized as a corporation instead of, for example, a government department or a member-run organization. While it is a non-profit organization, with the city as the sole shareholder, this organization repeats the idea that housing is a marketable commodity rather than a right, whose application should be administered directly by governments or by residents themselves. Additionally, as a corporation the balance of accountability is to government shareholders first and to citizens

only in a secondary way. Also, despite being a non-profit organization, and so not directly concerned with profit *per se*, there is still the corporate pressure for efficiency and a tendency to readily rely on private services as a cost cutting measure. There are already examples of this pressure coming from the shareholder.²⁵

Despite possible conceptual problems with TCHC, it is a new institution with the possibility for and demonstrated desire to build a new and unique institutional culture. An important factor in this pursuit, as described by an informant attached to TCHC is the appointment of many board members whose past work is evidence of a commitment to the idea of public housing as a stepping-stone, as opposed to a holding tank. Another key factor is the focus and commitment of the new CEO to both resident involvement and to spatial justice.²⁶ TCHC has started programs to educate management and senior staff on the idea, and importance of resident participation, as well as attempting to address issues of discrimination, and focus on accountability to residents. Additionally, as a new institution this is the moment when it will be most easily influenced, and where bold experimentation is still possible.

These dialectics embedded within TCHC illustrate historian Ian Mackay's (2005) idea that in looking at the history of the left in Canada one cannot simply look at it as a series of defeats, but must also necessarily look at the ways in which "[t]hanks to the left, the

²⁵ Some city councilors have started to call for TCHC to start selling off some of its more valuable properties. Due to Toronto's inflated housing market TCHC owns many single family houses that are now worth over CAD\$500,000 and one that is apparently worth almost 1 million dollars (CAD). To his credit Derek Ballantyne, the CEO of TCHC, has been quoted as saying, "[t]he fact that gentrification has pushed prices up ... doesn't lead us to the conclusion that low-income people do not deserve to live in vibrant, mixed-income neighborhoods and should be condemned to living where real estate values are low." While he is not completely ruling out the option, it is refreshing that he is at least aware of the spatial justice issues involved. (CBC 2007)

²⁶ 1 on this page

definition of “Canada” must now include, at least in some aspects of life, the notion of the ‘social democratization’ of northern North America” (McKay 2005, 76). While he is looking at historical moments the reorganization of TCHC and its interactions with initiatives described in this thesis are contemporary examples of how the cracks and fissures in even the most neo-liberal agenda can be used to create new spaces.

1980s A Growing Divide

“In every headline we are reminded that this is not home for us”²⁷

The fact that governments in the 1990s and early 2000s were able to retreat from public housing in the ways that they did was in part a product of the political and economic climate which shifted sharply to the right in that moment. Another factor that put public housing in the position of having so few advocates was the large divide between public housing residents and middle class voters, whose largess public housing had originally depended on; much of this divide developed during the 1980s with the changes in the demographics of public housing to include more refugees and non-European immigrants.

New immigration patterns in Canada that started in the 1970s and became most apparent in the 1980s increased the number of non-British and non-European immigrants. This diversification of the countries of origin of immigrants has drastically changed the human features of the Canadian landscape. This change has not been distributed evenly across the country. Almost a third of all new immigrants continue to come to Toronto (Murdie 1994), and of all people who lived in Toronto in 2001, 43.7% were born outside of Canada. The only other city in Canada that comes close to that statistic is Vancouver, with

²⁷ Bloc Party (2007) Where is Home?

37.5% of residents born outside of Canada (Stats Can 2008a). There are significant differences between the people entering Canada through Vancouver and Toronto. Vancouver is intimately involved in the Pacific Rim economy and three times as many people enter Vancouver under the “Other Economic” immigration admissions class as Toronto (Mendez, Hiebert, and Wyly 2006). This class includes the Business Class, generally a wealthier group of immigrants who often come as independent entrepreneurs. On the other hand, Toronto takes in a much larger number of refugees. In the Mendez, Hiebert, and Wyly (2006) study they found that for Toronto and Vancouver, respectively, the most common form of housing for immigrants after six months was high-rise apartments (49% of immigrant households), versus single-family houses (37%) (97).

Since the 1980s many of those families in high-rise apartments described in the Mendez, Hiebert, and Wyly (2006) study are housed in public housing apartments. One of their major findings was that in addition to the economic differences between those entering Canada, the question of social capital also played a large part in determining which households were able to purchase a home within six months of arrival or not, and so many of the families moving into public housing in Toronto are also households with the least social connections. For public housing in downtown areas this meant that the neighborhood as a whole saw an increase in the numbers of larger households, households with lower education statuses, and lower economic status (Purdy 2003). For suburban public housing this meant that in the 1980s the differences between residents of public housing and the surrounding neighborhoods grew, with the addition of ethnic and cultural aspects to class and economics.

As the production of housing and particularly affordable housing slowed down during this period, finding housing in the market became increasingly difficult. Additionally, racial and gendered biases of landlords and employers also worked to contain new residents within public housing and out of participating as full civic, social, or economic citizens (Purdy 2003).

Finally this divide worked increasingly to create an image of public housing which was both criminalized and racialized, a representation that through environmental determinism was written on both bodies and buildings (Razack 1998a, 2002; Purdy 2003). The idea of public housing as a ghetto in Canada is not new; as early as 1969 the large size of public housing developments was already being described as ghettoizing the poor (Milner 1969, Sewell 1994). One important shift in the 1980s was the racialization of the space of public housing and the ways in which people and place were increasingly conflated. Jeff Crump (2002) looks at the concept of the ghetto in the United States through a design and planning lens to analyze the assertion that the concentration of people living in poverty is a key root cause of inner-city social disorder. Additionally he examines the strategy that flows from the assertion that the deconcentration of poverty is the solution to inner-city problems. He describes this idea of simply diluting the numbers of poor people in neighborhoods, as part of a larger neo-liberal project of social reforms, and highlights the ways in which the language of poverty concentration masks social causalities of poverty, shifting the burden for a solution onto individuals. He also highlights the ways in which masking social causalities masks the historical realities of *how* terms like ghettos are formed and function. Citing Wacquant, he speaks about how “one of the most problematic aspects of recent research on

urban poverty lies in the way ‘concentrated poverty’ was operationalized and used as a proxy for the term ‘ghetto’” and goes on to discuss how, in an American setting, “[s]uch an adulterated definition serves to disguise the racial dimensions of urban ghetto formation and hides the institutionalized racial oppression that created the ghetto in the first place, leading to the misguided conclusion that urban ghettos are caused by the presence of poor people” (2002, 584). The changes of the 1980s meant that people were no longer represented as being ghettoized by public housing but were now the main cause of the ghetto.

These aspects came together to increase the importance of media and popular representations of the people and places of public housing. Returning to the cut and run policies of the government in the 1990s, Peter Hall’s (1980) idea that in general it is the active middle class minority that effects the most change is evident. As governments dismantled their commitment to public housing middle class citizens did not see this as their concern. Distanced by class, as well as increasingly by geography and ethnicity, and with media reports perpetuating the dysfunctional nature of public housing residents, there was little incentive for middle class citizens to rally around this cause. And for public housing residents increasingly separated from their ability to enact citizenship, there was little room to advocate on their own behalf. The actors in the initiatives described in this thesis are all grappling with how best to reinsert residents into the economic, social, and civic flows of the city. Another challenge brought on by these altered demographics is the increased need to build solidarity across culture, to un-fix identities so as to engage politically.

Could new Canadians have been introduced to the polity in different ways, through a stronger institution more capable of facilitating their connections to the city at large? The

next section examines some of the policy decisions that set the stage for much of the isolation of public housing in the 1980s.

1960s & 1970s Lost Opportunities

It is remarkable, that public authorities are prepared to pay professional consultants for advice, but are unwilling to accept free assistance from the people who are most familiar with the projects.²⁸

The 1960s and early 1970s in Canada were in many ways progressive and exciting times legislatively. Many of the social programs that Canadians now identify with were created during this time. Unfortunately, public housing was not handled with the same creativity as other social services. In 1964 the National Housing Act (NHA) was amended to encourage the production of public housing. From 1964 to 1974 the stock of public housing rose from 10,000 to 115,000 units as compared to 12,000 units in the preceding fifteen years (Sewell 1994, 155). Housing stock was added both through the remodeling of older buildings and the creation of new stock (Sewell 1994; Murdie 1994). After 1969, following the recommendations of the 1969 Report of the Federal Task Force on Housing and Urban Development (The Hellyer Report), released that year, much of the housing built in Toronto was built in smaller clusters, or built outside of the city center. In many ways this represented the first experiment with deconcentration and was a direct response to the report's findings that large public housing sites were ghettos of the poor (Milner 1969; Sewell 1994). From the beginning there was criticism of this recommendation. A contemporary review of the report described it as being "more anxious to report early than thoroughly" (Milner 1969, 437).

²⁸ Dennis and Fish 1972, 224

Additionally with these shifts those large-scale public housing sites were already seen as failed communities; however, there were no mechanisms built into further development to support or improve them.

From 1953 until amalgamation in 1998 Toronto had an additional tier of government the Metropolitan (Metro) level, which was an administrative collection of originally thirteen, and later six, municipal governments. Metro's original intent was to provide physical infrastructure to the growing suburbs. The Metro level also bound the central city to the suburban municipalities administratively, and is often cited as a key factor in Toronto's reputation as a city that works. Some characteristics which are often cited are the continued economic success of Toronto's downtown core, a relatively uniform quality of social services and public goods, and a strong transit system (Friskin et al. 1997). In terms of public housing the existence of the Metro government meant that in contrast to many American cities public housing was distributed more evenly throughout the Metropolitan region (Donald 2002). Again, idealistically this was meant to deconcentrate the poor, creating the option for affordable living in more desirable areas of the city. However, many of these neighborhoods, such as Lawrence Heights' suburban home, are ill equipped to support large numbers of people living in poverty. These are neighborhoods that were instead designed primarily for residents who could easily pay for services. There is a need, in light of the emerging impacts of its policies, to reexamine the successes of Metro and to begin to ask questions about what types of communities have been created by its processes of diffusion.

The partnerships that came together to administer housing in Canada, and Toronto, were seldom simple during the 60s and 70s. There was already an uneasy balance between

the different levels of governments as well as their various adjunct corporations. The alphabet soup of organizations involved in the creation and administration of public housing in Toronto included four levels of government: Federal, Provincial, Metro, and Municipal. The administration also included housing corporations and authorities at three governmental levels: the CHMC, OHC and MTHC.²⁹ Roles were poorly delineated, with the federal arms generally financing the bulk of the production, the province being involved in terms of land acquisition, and the Metro and Municipal agencies left with the daily administration. This left the MTHC as what John Sewell (1994) referred to as “an authority without authority.” Charged with running public housing, these agencies in fact had few large-scale decision making abilities. This disconnect, between decision making, funding, and administration, was evidenced in the municipal reaction to public housing. Many municipalities rejected the housing built in their jurisdictions in part because of various stigmas attached to public housing, but also were also reacting to the increase in necessary municipal services they would need to provide to new residents in public housing, an increase for which the municipalities had had little say in directing (Sewell 1994).

In addition to the disconnect between various levels of government there was a complete separation between decision makers and the people who would actually live in public housing. In fact these residents seemed to disappear even as constituents to the politicians involved in the process. The consequences of this disconnect were well documented in the now infamous 1972 Report entitled *1972 Programs in Search of a Policy: Low income housing in Canada* (The Dennis Report). Written by Michael Dennis and Susan Fish, and funded by the

²⁹ Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation, Ontario Housing Corporation, Metro Toronto Housing Corporation

federal government through a grant administered by CMHC, the report was ultimately published by the authors as the Corporation chose not to release it to a larger audience. More specifically CMHC was instructed not to release it by the Minister of Housing and Liberal government of the day (Dennis and Fisher 1972, Publisher's Note). The chapter on public housing reveals the depth of the compromises made by the federal government in favor of capital and against popular calls for housing as a right.

It seems worthwhile here to quote directly, and at length, from some of the memos and letters Dennis and Fish were able to uncover, as they do the best job of truly articulating the deep disregard members of the federal bureaucracy had for those who would live in public housing. These communications also highlight the notion that the interests of people living in poverty were perceived as somehow outside of, or even in contrast to, the interests of communities and cities as a whole.

In a 1957 letter written to the President of the CMHC, a senior government official wrote:

I feel that the construction of any particular public housing project should be based on economic and urban development consideration primarily and that the needs of individual tenants should be secondary...It seems to me that public housing projects should also be a minimum standard as far as accommodation is concerned. In other words they should be deliberately used not only to achieve economy, but to make clear that we are not competing with private enterprise who we assume will be building a more attractive product intended for those who can afford it.

(Letter, to President of CMHC Feb 12, 1957 as quoted in Dennis and Fish 1972, 174 ellipsis in original)

A 1962 internal memo, developed by CMHC's Board, lists traits to be incorporated into public housing included: higher density, limitation of room sizes to minimum, cement

or cement brick partition or wall exposed as interior finish, fenestration functional to design and light requirements but not to fashion, use of fairly uniform color and finally,

[n]ot too convenient relationship of unit location and parking space or arrangements for garbage collection. Public housing projects do not compete with private enterprise to increase the liveability of apartment type projects.

(CMHC Memorandum, November 3, 1962 as quoted in Dennis and Fish 1972, 175)

These design innovations took as their examples existing housing which the same memo refers to “as not blighted but obsolete” (175). The list of design traits ends with a note about siting which states:

[u]se should not be made for public housing of sites as private industry would develop for the purposes of expensive residences or luxury apartments. In combined land assembly and public housing projects, the most valuable or advantageous site should be left to be developed by private enterprise.

(CMHC Memorandum, November 3, 1962 as quoted in Dennis and Fish 1972, 174-175)

So while a huge amount of new public housing stock was built in the period between these memos and The Dennis Report it is important to remember the standards to which the housing was built.

The report’s authors begin their recommendation by stating, “[n]ew and radical solutions need not be developed to deal with low income housing. Very few new proposals are put forward in this study. The necessary changes have been recommended time and time again over the last three decades” (Dennis and Fish 1972, 14). Their main recommendation in terms of public housing was to stop producing new large scale sites, but not to abandon existing sites or the people living in them. Instead they advocated for the rehabilitation and conversion of existing stocks of housing for this lowest income group, and they insisted that

the federal government retain its role in fully financing these programs. They also insisted on greater control and choice for municipalities and residents. “It is remarkable,” the authors state, “that public authorities are prepared to pay professional consultants for advice, but are unwilling to accept free assistance from the people who are most familiar with the projects” (Dennis and Fish 1972, 224).

In 1973 the NHA was again amended, ending the urban renewal program, and the government moved to a policy of encouraging third sector housing. This model is Canadian social housing where an organization, usually a non-profit, was charged with developing and administering affordable housing (Sousa and Quarter 2004). Social housing evolved primarily into co-operatives and non-profit housing. While this is in many ways a progressive and interesting solution to an increasingly complicated problem, it also highlights several trends in Canadian thinking. First, through the promotion of co-operatives and non-profit housing the federal government was promoting a policy that no longer made the needs of those who were most disadvantaged its primary concern, and rendered the existing large-scale public housing sites relics. It was also a major concession to the private market in the name of choice. The Dennis report had recommended a devolution of decision making powers, but with the retention of responsibility and particularly fiscal responsibility by the federal government. Instead the federal government began a process of devolution, taken up in a more extreme fashion in the 1990s, that also involved a shift in fiscal responsibility and a government retreat from its responsibilities to housing. Finally, this policy illustrates what Ian McKay describes how liberals in Canada have been “master[s] of the arts of co-optation and selective absorption” (McKay 2005, 75). He goes on to use Gramsci’s framework to

describe the ways in which liberals have been able to enact a series of “passive revolutions,” making far-reaching concessions at the same time as restoring liberal order by requiring that “grassroots democratic movements edit out their radical leaders, soften up their politics, and learn how to play the liberal game” (McKay 2005, 75:76). The Dennis Report could hardly be called radical but its criticisms and suggestions still leaned too far to the left. The introduction of a policy which focused on the idea of individual choice without government responsibility, and that also hinged on seemingly progressive ideas such as cooperative housing, was another example of a liberal passive revolution.

One of the greatest lost opportunities of this time was the loss of momentum for the idea of a greater and deeper involvement of residents in the administration of public housing. Even the Hellyer report had as one of its major criticisms of public housing that decisions were not taken by the housing consumers (Dennis and Fish 1972). And in 1970 the Canadian Welfare Council convened a large meeting of technicians, administrators, and tenant activists to discuss a total redirection of the management of public housing, focusing on creating spaces for tenant involvement and control (Canadian Welfare Council 1970). While there was not a larger shift to resident control in public housing, there are still some remnants of this period including community centers and community health centers within public housing sites across Toronto. These institutions and the groups that administer them are part of the paradoxical Canadian liberal democracy, as they are at once part of the old institutions that have limited democracies in public housing and hubs for organizing around new initiatives.

1940s What Started as a Compromise

“It is not a question whether we shall pay or shall not pay
it is a question whether we shall pay for better housing
or for the damage done by that which is worse”³⁰

As important as the three time periods described above are, in many sad ways the contemporary failures and confusions of public housing in Toronto and Canada were built into the system from the beginning, and many of the current challenges are the payment, hinted at in the epigraph of this section, for that which was worse. Public housing did not come out of a single vision for housing in Canada; its initial advocates came from any number of corners—unions demanded housing for workers, veterans’ organizations demanded housing for those returning from war, the Canadian Communist Party and other socialists demanded housing be produced as more than simply a commodity. These combined with more moralistic reformers working towards slum clearance, and liberal desires to control workers and maintain markets. In the end public housing’s initial production was an uneven compromise between these actors who were often at odds with each other (Purdy 2005). The plan to build Regent Park in Toronto was approved through a general vote in 1948, and at that time the requirements for voting in Toronto were property ownership or long time tenancy (Purdy 2005). In this way the final decision to build Regent Park was put not in the hands of those living in the area, primarily new Canadians and renters, but instead in the hands of people for whom the needs of public housing were far removed.

³⁰ Citizens Committee Halifax Nova Scotia 1932, Quoted in Sewell, 1994

Sean Purdy (2003; 2005) argues it was necessary, for the production of Regent Park, for liberal politicians to construct the Regent Park neighborhood as ‘outcast space,’ or deviant space, to which the modern/ist designs of public housing could bring order. An appeal was made to voters’ sense of charity and morality, as well as playing on a fear of further contamination of the city-at-large from this deviant space. Additionally, while the changes in demographics in the 1980s created a greater distance and a stronger sense of racialization in the context of the Canadian colonial condition, it is important to acknowledge that the people living in the slums being cleared were also raced by dominant representations. Regent Park, as an example, is located in a neighborhood known as Cabbagetown. The neighborhood received its name because of a high number of Irish and Eastern European families living in the area. Irish or Eastern European, as opposed to English or Canadian, which in the context of Canada’s colonial history was no small difference.³¹

Regent Park and public housing in Canada began as an act of benevolence, instead of as part of a move to solidify the right to housing. When the Dennis report (1972) was released it was not surprising that the federal government would have an interest in suppressing it. Aside from the general disregard for those households most in need of support, the report also highlights a fundamental rift in ideology between the Liberal government and the voters they wished to court. The voters in Toronto who were enticed to vote in favor of public housing in 1948 did so as part of a moral project to uplift the bodies of those living in slum conditions. It was a project to bring into modernity blighted people,

³¹See Anne McIntock’s *Imperial Leather* for a further discussion of the processes of racialization without the convenient markers of skin color

and these were the premises under which this privileged class continued to support the project. What the Dennis Report highlighted was the ways in which the federal government's focus was not on moral uplift, but on making economic concessions both to austerity and to private housing developers.

Additionally the Dennis report highlights a point made by Jeff Crump (2002), that it isn't simply the design of public housing so much as the intent behind, and ultimate execution of, public housing that created the greatest problems. Built as a temporary way-station for the working poor the details of daily life were intentionally substandard, and another important aspect, especially considering the current plans for interventions in public housing, the concentration of the poor was in many cases the goal of the original planners, wanting to minimize the loss of developable land to non-market purposes (Crump 2002).

Especially considering all of the imposed and imbedded challenges, it is important to acknowledge the dialectics of public housing. There are exciting and creative places developing within public housing, and interesting links being forged between public housing residents and members of the wider urban community. It is these conjectural moments at Lawrence Heights and Atkinson Co-operative and with Save Our Structures and Basics that provide the empirical settings for this thesis. These residents are working to shape their homes, homes so often thought to shape them.

People and Places | four

In the introduction I give a brief factual description of each initiative I researched for this thesis: community gardens in Lawrence Heights, the conversion from a public housing site to a co-operative at the Atkinson Housing Co-operative, the campaigns to gain access to provincial funds of SOS, and Basics' campaign to confront gentrification. In this chapter I tie those descriptive stories to the ideas presented in chapters two and three, beginning a comparative analysis of these cases, drawing out the common and conflicting threads in each. I focus on three themes to explain the actions of residents, first looking at the ways in which different groups are theorizing the crisis in public housing, then looking at the nature of politicization and analysis of these groups, and finally looking at the networks developing to facilitate the strategies each initiative undertakes.

Crisis

In the introduction I described some aspects of the system-wide crisis in public housing in Toronto, the deteriorating infrastructure, the lack of opportunities for residents to move out of situations of poverty, and increased isolation which creates greater concerns about safety within public housing and greater stigma about public housing from the general public. In addition to these aspects there is a critical lack of affordable housing in Toronto, which leaves public housing as one of the few housing options for low-income households in the city. From this crisis there is a general consensus over the necessity for change in public housing. Where the actors involved diverge is over the nature of the crisis and so how best to address it. The challenges of public housing stem from a variety of sources and, depending on their position in space and society, resident groups focus their efforts for

change on the issues they theorize as most relevant and most urgent for them. In many cases the ideas of different groups complement each other, but there are instances where their work clashes and I will also describe these clashes because of their importance as learning moments.

Lawrence Heights-access and service

The key necessity residents involved in Lawrence Heights' community gardens program address is a lack of health promoting services and infrastructure, and particularly a lack of access to acceptable foods. Additionally, the shifting demographic of this community creates a relationship with the neighboring community that is not simply disjointed but at times outright hostile, which pushes residents to work within their bounded community to enact change.

Atkinson-a question of control

At Atkinson Co-operative, Alexander Park at the time, resident leaders focused on the related issues of poor building management, increased safety concerns, and lack security of tenure within the community. Government mismanagement was identified as the source of many of these issues, particularly after many futile attempts to work with government agencies to develop solutions to the worsening situation. Because of this thinking, residents began to look for solutions that would transfer greater control of the neighborhood into their hands.

Save Our Structures-infrastructure and citizenship

The residents and organizers involved in SOS are focusing on the deterioration of many public housing units brought on by a lack of repairs, which these residents theorize is connected to the financial crisis caused by the provincial government's downloading of the

responsibilities for administering public housing without a capital funds transfer. By directly lobbying the province they are linking the crumbling infrastructure of public housing buildings to the eroded citizenship of public housing residents.

Basics-institutional violences

The residents and organizers involved in the Basics campaigns tread similar ground to those in SOS, connecting failed infrastructure to residents' position within the state. However, Basics frames the crisis in very different ways, looking at institutional violences enacted against residents. Specifically those involved in Basics are reframing the discourse of 'revitalization' as a government sponsored 'gentrification.' They highlight the ways in which current redevelopment plans are adding to the stress of residents through the specter of losing their homes, without any clear communication as to why that might be the only solution.

Politicization

Out of these crises comes the increased politicization of individuals and groups within public housing (Slater 2004). People are rallying around the erosion or impending loss of this critical government service (Hall 1980). But why now? The circumstances in public housing have never been ideal, so what else is fuelling this increase in political action? Earlier activism around public housing in Canada as well as in the United States and the United Kingdom has often taken place as part of greater social mobilization around issues of justice—class, ethnic, and economic. (Purdy 2003; Stone 2003; Ugurin 2004; Williams 2004; Baranski 2007). Additionally, in Canada much of the radical edge of activism was softened through liberal policies (McKay 2004). While the conjectural nature of public housing development facilitated many progressive moments, including the creation of community

centers and resident organizations, by-and-large these served in many ways to placate resident organizers. More recently the work of organizing around public housing is taking place in a political climate that has swung to the right and where government disregard for public housing residents and other marginalized groups is increasingly blatant. Even more progressive and well-intentioned institutions at the local level, such as city government and Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC), are limited in their ability to act in the best interest of residents by the pressures of a market focused on efficiencies (Lefebvre 1991 [1974]). An exciting aspect of these contemporary political actions is that in each of these initiatives residents are moving beyond simply advocating for the status quo, as perceived from the outside; instead they are using their positions as users of space to effect change that more closely aligns the production process with their lived experiences.

Lawrence Heights-bringing the institution to you

The community garden initiative is the most obliquely 'Political' case in this group of initiatives; however the work of residents involved does tie into questions of power, and the organizing around results of this initiative have fed into other aspects of relating to the ways in which residents and TCHC are working together. That the community gardens initiative started with the residents and is now enthusiastically supported by TCHC makes this a successful case of professionals producing with insurgent spaces in mind. It is not however a case of a purely anthropological discovery, but instead a case of residents working to bring the institution to them and identifying and explaining the insurgence for the professionals, in this case creating new infrastructures to improve health and food security.

Atkinson Co-operative-removing institutions

Politicization came first out of continued neglect and the frustrated realization of how much residents could achieve on their own. From there the process was a conscious effort on the part of strong leaders within what was then Alexander Park to organize the community around the idea of forming a co-operative. The key aspects that mobilized early leaders and that caught the attention of other residents stemmed from the city and state scale, but it was their manifestations at the scale of the household and even individual bodies that were the true catalysts for action. Property mismanagement by government agents, police forces, and security agents who often re-victimized residents rather than actually providing for their safety, and a lack of security of tenure within the community were noted as the key complaints of residents (Sousa 2006). Beyond simply complaining, residents of what is now Atkinson Co-operative began to organize and advocate for a new vision of their home as a co-operative, which in many ways removed them from government processes.

Save Our Structures-rational citizenship

SOS is an institutionally supported conduit for the political actions public housing residents who were already politically engaged or at least aware. Members of SOS are self selected leaders who see the connections between neo-liberal legislative and economic policies, and the deterioration of their own homes. Almost 150 residents from across the public housing system have been involved in at least some aspect of the campaign and there is a core group of about 25 residents who are driving the campaign. The focus on a single issue gives these residents an opportunity to hone the skills of liberal democratic citizenship and to enact change through rational institutional routes. While the organizers of SOS, staff at Public Interest Strategy and Communication, come from outside of public housing, one of

their goals is for residents to be able to continue this work at a similar level of engagement once their contract is complete.

Basics-radical citizenship

Organizers for Basics come both from public housing, Lawrence Heights in particular, and a larger activist community. This campaign is in large part a reaction to the revitalization process at Regent Park. Some of the residents involved come from Regent Park and so carry a unique perspective on the process. They are highlighting the ways in which the process is serving to permanently fix an impression of dysfunction in public housing neighborhoods and then to disappear these communities. In spite of the claims of the city and the intentions of TCHC to be inclusionary and to communicate better with residents, there is still little acknowledgement of historical damage done in public housing and so communication across power relationships becomes virtually impossible (Razack 1998). Residents and supporting organizers are attempting to perform a type of citizenship that does not come with the price tag of self-annihilation (Young 2004). The Basics campaign is also working to politicize other residents through the production of their newsletter and on the ground campaigning.

Networks

The scale of the city is an exciting scale from which to examine citizenship, in large part because of the thickness of relations that construct cities (Holston 1999). The dense networks created within cityscapes move between, and connect various scales, from individuals and households to the state and beyond, creating social, civic, and economic relationships. Through these initiatives public housing residents are enhancing networks

within public housing, as well as reinserting themselves into the civic, social, and economic flows of the city at large. In many ways these networks are the most important procedural outcomes of these initiatives as they enable residents to organize to change institutions and secure housing, as well as building links to partners who are able to work with residents toward these goals. These networks help to reframe boundaries, insert place-specific details into space, and impact on the production process. It is these connections that enable residents to perform citizenship and to impact the decisions made about their homes.

Lawrence Heights-new spaces for connection

The gardens at Lawrence Heights started as an initiative of residents addressing their own needs and acting to produce spaces that focus on use-value, providing important tangible benefits for residents with an increase in the availability, accessibility, and cultural appropriateness of food. There are already anecdotal reports of elderly residents who once spent their time alone and indoors coming out to visit with gardeners at work, of youth demanding their own garden spaces, and of neighbors greeting each other more often.

In terms of outside connections, AfriCan Food Basket is a key partner in this process and the trajectories that connect it to the initiative are both at the scale of race and ethnicity as well as personal and even familial connections. AfriCan became involved in the gardens in large part through the cultural and community ties to Lawrence Heights. This culturally based tie is an example of characteristics often read from the outside as disorder—in this case a high proportion of new immigrants and people of color—used as an asset.³² The connection to AfriCan also opened up other connections for the residents involved. One of the key organizers of AfriCan also worked with FoodShare, a large food security

³² See also Asher (forthcoming) for a discussion of the possibilities of using racial and cultural ties to bind communities across boundaries and around land issues.

organization in Toronto, and a staff member there had a family connection to a TCHC board member. Through the AfriCan organizer FoodShare was connected to the initiative and through FoodShare staff the importance and capacity of the initiative could be translated to TCHC. It is also important to remember the importance of the switch to TCHC in this process. This new institution is more malleable and better able to integrate new standpoints and ideas. In this way the opinions of residents are filtered from the ground level of community members working in their own yards to board members and even city councilors.

Beyond those directly attributable to the gardens there are other outcomes developing at Lawrence Heights which are part of the increased relationships and the ways that the attitudes embodied in this initiative are feeding into the larger institutional culture of TCHC. One example is that youth from Lawrence Heights will be involved alongside youth from other public neighborhoods such as Regent Park and Jamestown in an employment program to run the city owned Black Creek urban farm. This creates a concrete economic and social bridge to the city at large and brings together youth who are increasingly divided geographically. With territorial violence becoming an increasing feature of the city's landscape, just the act of having youth from Lawrence Heights or Jamestown go to Jane and Finch in a protected role plays an important part in improving the stability of the city.

The resident led process and positive outcomes of the community garden initiative at Lawrence Heights is also feeding into the institutional culture of TCHC and is a reminder that resident perspectives cannot be ignored when framing decisions and new initiatives. Additionally, this new realization also means that TCHC is able to help legitimize this

perspective for other organizations. One initiative unique to Lawrence Heights is the involvement of a local synagogue, taking the lead in establishing multi-faith community safety meetings where residents of Lawrence Heights and residents of the surrounding neighborhood sit together as neighbors to discuss the issues affecting them. This creates a new network, strengthening residents' connections to other citizen groups with higher levels of civic influence, and so potentially increasing their access to decision making institutions and their ability to advocate. Because of the spatial proximity, the members of this synagogue feel they have an interest in engaging with Lawrence Heights, with the aim of preventing further violence and disorder. However, the endorsement of TCHC and the increased media attention about the work of residents plays a large roll in enabling the synagogue members to see public housing residents as viable collaborators.

While this is an exciting moment and the efforts of TCHC should be recognized, there are two related issues that will be challenges to moving this process further. First, while TCHC is taking some great leaps including, for example, two tenant board members, it is still not directly addressing the issue of governance in public housing on a large scale. Second is that as it stands today much of the work to bring in residents' voices is being mandated from the top. While there are currently people in executive and board positions who believe in including resident voices. What happens when these individuals move on. At Lawrence Heights one of the questions is, will residents be able to permanently influence the culture of the new institution so that this progress is not reliant on individual champions?

Atkinson Co-operative-a tripartite partnership

The product of the conversion process at Atkinson is a tripartite partnership between the government, an independent co-operative housing organization, and residents, now co-operative members (Sousa and Quarter 2003, 187). But en route to this partnership these three actors played very different roles. The first step in the process was to begin to build community support for the idea of the conversion. Not all residents were immediately in favor of the idea of a conversion to a co-operative; some common concerns were that rents would be raised, or that payment for repairs and services would be out of pocket (Sousa 2006) and as one informant described the reasonable fear of the unknown. There was over a year of community development work that went on before the first successful vote took place. The tenant board hired a skilled community organizer with experience advocating for housing to knock on doors and engage residents, educating and building solidarity around the idea of a co-operative.

More ambiguous was the role of government and government agencies. Much of the time involved in the conversion process was caused by government concerns. For example, while the member of city council for Alexander/Atkinson's ward was very supportive, the provincial Ministry of Housing required an excess amount of documentation and business and planning reports, and the housing authorities of the day continuously expressed uncertainty at the ability of the residents to manage a property of this size and complexity. This doubt was a large part of the reason why the second referendum needed to be organized to re-convince government and government agencies that the support existed for the project (Sousa 2006). Additionally, the government's lack of financial support for this project and particularly the lack of support for community development work also slowed

the process of conversion, particularly in the last two years before residents took control of the complex. In this critical stage, while there was the highest level of resident involvement, the rifts between residents often long held but submerged, many of which fell along ethnic and racial lines became apparent (Sousa 2006). Beginning to mend these rifts was part of what stalled the process, but residents' willingness and commitment to doing so, along with the support of the CHFT was important in seeing the conversion happen.

The third key third part in this arrangement is CHFT, which in many ways bridges the gap between the first two groups by providing needed capacity building support and advocacy. CHFT joined the process in 1998 through a personal connection where one individual providing professional support to the residents had previously worked at CHFT and was able to bring this campaign to the organization's attention. The spatial location of Atkinson and its proximity to a variety of service agencies was one factor in facilitating these types of connections. CHFT worked to provide educational opportunities for the residents on topics ranging from what a co-operative is, to the needed managerial skills to manage a property of this size. CHFT was also instrumental in organizing the second referendum where the yes vote was 79%, even higher than in the first referendum. As it does with all of its member organizations, CHFT continues to support Atkinson in terms of professional and technical support for the co-operative. It also plays an important role in helping to connect Atkinson to the larger city through scholarship programs to support students completing high school, as well as to attend university. Through supporting residents to attend postsecondary education, CFHT is directly addressing the issue of continued poverty in the community, helping to break down social borders around Atkinson, and

demonstrating an organizational effort to not underestimate the residents of Atkinson, as compared to other member co-operatives.

CHFT is a well organized and established institution which is also explicitly interested in promoting the creation of just democratic institutions as described by Iris Maion Young (2004). Because of this it is able and willing to assist the residents of Atkinson to gain access to different levels of decision making power and to sustain the project. From the perspective of CHFT this has been an expensive and labor intensive process but it is a “labor of love”. Organizationally, CHFT is committed both to this community and to this form of organizing, to the importance of not abandoning this community which has been ignored by so many. Additionally CHFT has been open to learning from and this community and experience. This means that mistakes were made during the process, but organizationally CHFT has tried to learn from these mistakes and move forward continuing to work with and learn from the residents. Finally, the organization connects Atkinson to the network of co-operatives around the city. CHFT is a member driven organization funded in part by member fees, so in many ways the other co-operatives of Toronto are supporting this emerging community association during this time when it requires a large amount of financial support. Additionally by building this system-wide support and awareness it ensures that this support does not become the project of a single champion.

There are some very concrete results of this conversion process; for example, there is a general consensus that many aspects of the property management have improved in the past three years. Additionally, while new residents come from a common waiting list for public and social housing the co-operative has the authority to evict households and

residents' tenancy is more secure. Another outcome, the retention of the youth worker at the Alexander Park Community Centre, is an example both of how residents are using their now greater controls over their social surroundings and infusing the social space of others. The community center has been a social focal point in the community, and when the city cut funding for the youth worker position this was experienced as an unacceptable gap in community service by residents. With this gap identified by residents, CHFT was able to act as a partner in working with the city to reinstate the position. Or as one employee of CHFT put it, they were able to shame the city into reinstating the position. CHFT has gone as far as to fund part of the salary of the youth worker. This is an example of the importance of outside partnerships that are genuinely interested in the needs of the residents first. It shows the ways in which these relationships bring the voices of residents outside of their community and into institutions that do not yet have the structures to enable residents to speak for themselves. There is also a spatial citizenship component to this example in that one of the greatest concerns that public housing residents often cite is a concern over safety and the perception of safety in their homes. During the summer of 2005 a young man living in Atkinson was shot and killed. In other cases, of this type of violence, there had been a shockwave of retaliatory violence within the community, leading to other shootings and in some cases other deaths. At Atkinson, that summer the youth worker, who had developed close relationships with the youth in the community, including youth involved directly or peripherally with the drug trade in Toronto, was able to connect with these youth to do a great deal of mediation and prevention work. Because of this work within the neighborhood and community there was no retaliatory violence in Atkinson that summer. In this way the

youth worker was able to directly increase the safety of the members of that community.

This is a concrete example of how the spatiality of the social extends beyond simply the physical (Soja 2001) and also speaks to the ways in which structures and services are, in many cases, intricately linked. One interesting fact is that while the media covered the shooting itself, quite extensively, as part of a larger narrative around the idea of a 'summer of the gun' in Toronto, there was no coverage of the work done by the youth worker at the Alexander Park Community Centre to prevent further violence, and certainly no reporting on how residents and the CFHT had worked to keep that position alive in the first place, and so these narratives are not being woven into city and national stories about this place.

There are also challenges to the new connections at Atkinson, one of them being the continued connections to government. TCHC continues to own the property at Atkinson and to have a final say over the property budget. There are three important limitations set up by this arrangement. In a certain tragic irony, especially considering TCHC complaints to the provincial government, TCHC has not turned over any capital funding to the resident managers of Atkinson. Instead capital repairs are put on the list with all other public housing in Toronto. Additionally, because TCHC owns the property, Atkinson is not eligible for the Goods and Services Tax (GST) refund, which is one of the major revenue sources for other co-operatives. Finally, as Atkinson is still RGI housing, TCHC sets the rent caps for the housing which means that, while with a new security of tenure no one can be kicked out of Atkinson, they could see their rent raised to levels at or above market rates (Sousa 2007). In this way Atkinson has been left with the crumbling infrastructure of an old public housing system, but without the means used by other community associations to raise revenue.

Atkinson cannot take advantage of tax credits like other co-operatives, and the disincentives of a poor infrastructure and high rents will make it difficult for Atkinson to build its own mixed-income community internally.

Save Our Structures-official contacts

Through SOS, webs of connections are being created, bringing residents into the democracy on rational terms. First, there is the connection between the employees of Public Initiatives and the residents. The intentions of the staff involved in SOS are both to produce a successful campaign and to do the skill building work that will allow residents to carry on after their contract ends. Through this connection residents are gaining access to the knowledge and skills needed to perform liberal citizenship at a high level. Staff organizers are also adamant that it be the residents' voices that are heard, and the residents' priorities, within the limits of the campaign, that are expressed. As the campaign moves along residents are facilitating meetings, conducting lobbying calls, beginning to organize their own media events, and to take a larger role in producing publicity and monitoring materials. The second important connection is between residents. While many of the active members of SOS are women they are also a reminder of the diversity of that term. These are residents from across the city, some with disabilities, some older residents, building this project together.

The province has not yet agreed to hand over the capital repair funds but there are other outcomes arising out of this campaign. The first is the connections being made between residents and political representatives. By lobbying government officials directly, as well as through their work to educate public housing residents, members of SOS are bringing themselves out of civic isolation and doing the work of being recognized as citizens

before being middle class (Hall 1980). While not run by the housing authority, the initial broad framework for the campaign was established by a TCHC Request for Proposals, so the connection between TCHC and SOS is a complicated one. This connection does leave the initiative open to accusations of being a co-opted process, and there are residents that have made this claim. This connection also gives residents unique access to TCHC leadership. The Board of directors of TCHC has a parallel program of governmental lobbying, and as the SOS campaign grows there have been opportunities for these residents to sit with the Board to develop strategies for both of their campaigns, creating another opportunity to bring the standpoint of residents into the institution. This engagement could be a disempowering process of tokenism, but alongside the work initiated through Public Interest there is a greater chance for residents, now more familiar with the language of power, to work with board members in a way that begins to approximate equality.

Basics-radical connections

Basics is also doing the work of creating an exciting web of connections, but this web is very different from the one built by SOS. First, there are connections being created between residents, but these are not self-selected leaders interested in participating in official processes. The residents involved are already keenly aware of their own systemic marginalization, or are those who are being brought into the initiative through on-the-ground community organizing, specifically aimed at involving residents who might not otherwise be politically engaged. Additionally, there is a great deal of work going on to bridge the rifts between multi-cultures. Specifically, West Indian and East African residents at Lawrence Heights, and in Toronto at large, are often at odds, separated by culture,

religion, and even political tactics; these groups are also pitted against each other through official multiculturalism (Bannerji 2000). A key early outcome of Basics is the work of beginning to connect these groups, to begin to create a popular multiculturalism, through community organizing focusing on the common conditions of residents within public housing and connecting those conditions to processes at larger economic and political scales. In addition to attracting a large number of women participants, Basics is also attracting a large number of youth, especially as work continues on a newer campaign against police violence. This organizing work brings youth from a variety of public housing sites into contact, and as I mention above, this is an important achievement in contemporary Toronto, in terms of creating greater stability in the city.

Through Basics residents are also being connected to outside resources, but again these are very different resources than SOS. Rather than the centers of power of liberal citizenship, residents are connecting with professionals and activists—groups that are also not always mutually exclusive—linked to the struggle for a more radical democracy. While not in official positions of power these are groups that are able to get things done. Basics is engaged in some projects with long term goals but is also acutely aware that people are in need today. Both strategically—to bring more people into the initiative—and as an end in itself—to address needs— Basics is exploring strategies such as the legal clinics, which will lead to tangible results in the short term.

SOS and Basics mirror each other in many ways: both are focused on repairs to public housing, both work to increase the political engagement of public housing residents, both rely on the work of women residents, both even support campaigns to expose through

photo documentation the deterioration of public housing units, and both are creating dense networks of relationships within public housing and the city at large. But those networks do not overlap, in part coincidentally and in part intentionally. One example of this is that residents of SOS are circulating a letter requesting support for some of their work and are soliciting a wide variety of community organizations to sign this letter. They have, however, specifically decided not to solicit OCAP (the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty) for a signature. According to a staff organizer the reasons are OCAP's radical tactics, including supporting the lawsuit against TCHC. SOS as an organization is not aware of the work of Basics, but because of their support of this lawsuit and other more confrontational tactics SOS would likely be wary at best of soliciting Basics' support. The lack of overlap does have the potential to weaken both of these initiatives, and while I do have a temptation to say that these two groups must find a way to work together there is another way to analyze the situation. Mirroring the discussion of John Ralston Saul and Ian MacKay's ideas about the Canadian project in chapter two, there is a great utility in not trying to collapse these two groups and instead to hold the tensions between them. Working on parallel planes, SOS and Basics are able to employ very different strategies and tools. Basics is able to call for radical change and use more confrontational tactics that might be unpopular in the TCHC board room or at Queen's Park, and SOS is able to communicate directly with current office holders, but the extent of their ability to make uncompromised demands is limited by these official connections.

McKay might describe positive changes taking place in public housing in Toronto through these initiatives as victories for the left in a war of maneuvers, and Saul might

identify them as examples of the ability of the liberal democracy to compromise dialogically, and no doubt SOS and Basics will have different and possibly seemingly opposing explanations of successes. While the specific analytical framework is important in explaining and learning from these initiatives, in this moment what is more important—and evidenced by the more developed processes at Atkinson and Lawrence Heights, different both from each other and from these two initiatives—is that the change will happen.

Conclusions | five

While the structures of public housing may be crumbling, the communities within them are not. The initiatives in this paper are examples proving the competency of people living in poverty. Organizing within public housing, partnering with other organizations and working to challenge and change the perceptions and policies that impact their homes. Residents are working at a variety of scales from securing their own food sources to organizing against government processes, and from managing their own homes to becoming their own lobbyists. The residents involved in these initiatives are making visible the positive qualities of these communities, and disrupting the representations of disorder that were so much a part of producing public housing in Toronto (Purdy 2005). Through these initiatives residents are bringing the skills and assets of their communities to the forefront and others are listening, with an increase in more nuanced media coverage of these communities.³³ Residents are becoming politicized through the crises in public housing (Slater 2004), and residents are legitimizing their efforts through popular mobilizations (Castells 1983). Each of the initiatives described works to create and strengthen networks, increasing the social, civic, and economic involvement of residents, both within public housing and with the rest of the city. This engagement is also facilitated through partnerships with non- and for-profit organizations, and even TCHC, to alter institutions, and in the case of Atkinson Co-

³³ Soon after the announcement of the planned revitalization at Lawrence Heights Metro Morning, the flagship morning program of the Toronto branch of the CBC (Canadian Broadcast Company) did a morning-long profile of the Lawrence Heights community. www.cbc.ca/toronto/features/lheights/ last accessed March 8 2008.

operative to create new ones (Hall 1980). The success of these partnerships depend on how willing outside organizations are to humble themselves to learning from historical imbalances, and then from residents (Razack 1998). Additionally, these initiatives are creating new networks within public housing. In the case of Lawrence Heights' community gardens, new social spaces are being created based on residents' lived experiences (Lefebvre 1991 [1974]). In the case of Atkinson and Basics, residents are beginning work to close rifts that often fall along cultural lines and develop a popular multiculturalism; working to 'un-fix' cultural identities and subjectivity (Bannerji 2000). Through SOS residents from around the public housing system are coming together to perform citizenship and to be included within the Democracy (Saul 1998). Particularly in terms of youth, another exciting outcome of many of these initiatives is the repositioning of boundaries that had begun to create circumstances of violence in the city. Initiatives are facilitating this change by involving youth in work and activism that introduce youth from different neighborhoods not as 'other' (Kirby 1996) but as colleagues, comrades, and co-citizens. All of these initiatives are working to make a democracy which is more just, where residents are engaging the general polity as a group to perform citizenship (Young 2004; McKay 2005). As a spatial production process, development in public housing will continue to be complicated, interwoven, and always under construction (Massey 2004). The ability of residents to connect and organize, both inside and outside of public housing, has been strengthened through these initiatives, and these connections will be an important part of maintaining and increasing their influence over their homes.

All of the cases examined deal in intricate ways with social and physical space and are also all concrete examples of situations where the tools of the planning craft could be useful. The first place where planners could learn from these examples is the ways in which partnerships, which are true partnerships were formed between residents and professionals. These are partnerships that enable residents to perform citizenship, rather than disempowering or further isolating them. Each of these cases has benefited from professional assistance and it is where that assistance has been on terms that have been most clearly communicated and that serve the residents first that the assistance has been most helpful. To communicate in this way requires taking the recommendations of both Leone Sandercock (2003) and James Holston (1999) seriously. First from Sandercock, the advice to take the time and exert the resources to approach each place in ways that address fine differences, both spatial and social. From Holston, an urban anthropologist, comes the recommendation for planning practices to become more ethnographic. Not for planners to become anthropologists, but to be better trained at observing a space and building a practice that both recognizes and responds to the actual uses of the space and the visions of the users, to insurgent spaces, rather than building set pieces for social actions envisioned by modernist planners. In my own research I have attempted to model these practices by relying on observation and prefacing sources that express resident perspectives. Additionally, I have tried to always keep in mind the complexity of space, not searching for simple operational models, but attempting to articulate various tensions and their utility. In terms of Toronto and public housing actions, such as financially supporting community development and education, and initiating asset assessments to allow residents to explain their experiences

of public housing and identify the often invisible qualities, of these places, homes, and communities are examples of small steps in this direction.

The actions of these residents are particularly important because they address issues that move beyond simplistic formulations of the problems or solutions in public housing. First by breaking down the binary of ‘problems and solutions,’ adding and inserting the assets and abilities of these communities into the process. If public housing development continues to be simply an outside search for solutions, a series of public forums and consultations, there is little hope that it will succeed in repairing much beyond façades. The possibilities for success in these initiatives come from the potential for improving buildings, but also from the promise of increasing citizenship through networks of relationships both within public housing and between public housing and the city at large. These networks strengthen residents’ ability to impact the institutions and decisions that regulate their homes. Additionally, and importantly, residents and their partners are not flattening difference to build these connections; but are constructing a popular multiculturalism where groups are no longer pitted against each other in competition and can instead collaborate. There is a need for change in public housing in Toronto, but what the initiatives describe in this thesis provide are alternatives to the blunt tools of contemporary redevelopment. These are George Anderson’s (1992) sharp well-directed instruments, addressing fine spatial difference and prefacing the experience of users. Through their work to change the space of their homes residents are also touching on the broader root causes of marginalization, forcing a change on the discourse around public housing redevelopment, and opening new possibilities for housing production more broadly.

To repeat the Dennis report, the greatest recommendation that comes out of this study is not new and has been suggested now for decades—simply to let people take the lead in their own lives. I am not, however, advocating a cut-and-run scenario; instead I am recommending both that government and professional institutions first recognize the deep structural disadvantage that people living in public housing have been placed at, and then take steps to work with and for residents to provide the financial and institution building support needed so that these communities can truly succeed. Business as usual is not enough. The great advantage I have in making this recommendation at this time is that residents of public housing have not waited all these decades for governments or professionals to move. The examples in this thesis are just a few of the examples of residents finding a different way of doing public housing, succeeding to make their own democracies and beginning to recover their communities from the processes that have marginalized them. Lawrence Heights' community gardens, Atkinson's conversion to a co-operative, and the political campaigns of SOS and Basics are all examples of people bringing to the forefront the complex, fluid, and political nature of their homes.

Literature Cited

- Anderson, Erin** (2007) *Change Starts Here: Participatory Oral History for Community Development*. Masters Thesis, Community Development and Planning. Clark University, Worcester MA.
- Anderson, George** (1992) Lecture #4 The Great Housing Policy Debates: What Have We Learned? in *Housing Policy in Canada: Lecture Series* prepared by Centre for Human Settlements UBC for CMHC. Ottawa:CMHC.
- Asher, Kiran** (Forthcoming) *Black Social Movements and Development in the Making in the Pacific Lowlands of Colombia*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Bannerji, Himani** (2000) *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press.
- Baranski, John** (2007) Something to Help Themselves: Tenants Organizing in San Francisco's Public Housing, 1965-1975. *Journal of Urban History* 33:418-442.
- Basics** (2008) *Basics Free Community Newsletter*-web edition
<http://basicsnewsletter.blogspot.com/> last accessed March 21, 2008.
- Bennett, Larry, Janet L. Smith and Patricia A. Wright** (2006) Introduction in *Where are Poor People to Live?, Transforming Public Housing Communities*. Larry Bennett, Janet L. Smith and Patricia A. Wright eds. Armonk: M.E.Sarpe.
- Bloc Party** (2007) *Where is Home? A Weekend in the City*. London:Vice Music.
- Brown, Kate; H Andrew, and L Jameton** (2000) Public Health Implications of Urban Agriculture. *Journal of Public Health Policy* 21(1):20-39.
- Campbell, Jonah** (2004). *'Beyond the Vale of the Flesh': Body Politics and the Legacy of Colonial Medicine*. Unpublished undergraduate paper, University of Prince Edward Island.
- Canadian Welfare Council** (1970) *Who should manage public housing? Report of a Workshop*. Ottawa: Canadian Welfare Council.
- Carter, Sarah** (1997) *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada's Prairie West*. Montreal : McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Castells, Manuel** (1983) *The City and the Grassroots : A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social*

Movements Berkeley : University of California Press.

- CBC News** (2007) *City Asked to Sell off High-Value Public Housing*.
<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/toronto/story/2007/11/20/tto-housing.html?ref=rss>
 last accessed December 18, 2007.
- Çelimi**, Isil (2006) Public Housing Redevelopment and the Chicago Housing Authority's Changed Role: From a Provider of Public Housing to a "Facilitator of Housing Opportunities" *Critical Planning*. 13: 25-38.
- Cid**, Amar Azucena (2008) *Health of a Community Trying to Undergo an Economic Renaissance in West Sacramento California: Who is in and who is out?* Masters Research Paper, Community Development and Planning, Clark University, Worcester MA.
- Cockburn**, Cynthia (2007) *From Where We Stand: War, Women's Activism and Feminist Analysis*. London: Zed Books.
- Community Association Institute** (2006) *Facts About Community Associations*, Community Associations Institute, <http://www.caionline.org/about/facts.cfm> accessed November 25, 2007.
- Cronon**, William (1991) *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*. New York: Norton.
- Crump**, Jeff (2002) Deconcentration by Demolition: Public Housing, Poverty, and Urban Policy *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20(5): 581–596.
- Dennis**, Michael and Susan Fish. (1972) *Programs in Search of a Policy: Low Income Housing in Canada*. Toronto: Hakkert.
- Decima Research Inc.** (2006) *TCHC Tenant Survey 2006*. Toronto: TCHC.
- Donald**, Betsy. (2002) Spinning Toronto's Golden Age: The Making of a 'City that Worked' *Environment and Planning A* 34(12):2127–2154.
- Friskin**, Frances, L.S. Bourne, Gunter Gad, and Robert A. Murdie (1997) *Governance and Social Well-Being in the Toronto Area: Past Achievements and Future Challenges*, *Research Paper 93*. Toronto: University of Toronto, Centre for Urban and Community Studies.
- Gordon**, David L.A. (ND) *Directions for New Urban Neighbourhoods: Learning from St. Lawrence, The City of Toronto*. Canadian Institute of Planners / Association of Canadian University Planning Programs Case Study Series. Calgary: University of Calgary http://www.ucalgary.ca/ev/designresearch/projects/2001/CEDRO/cedro/cip_acu_pp_css/pdf/st_lawrence.pdf. Last accessed March 21, 2008.

- Hall**, Peter (1980) *Great Planning Disasters*. London : Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
- Hackworth**, Jason and Abigail Moriah (2006) Neoliberalism, Contingency and Urban Policy: The Case of Social Housing in Ontario. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30(3): 510-527.
- Hanson**, Susan (2000) Networking. *The Professional Geographer* 52(4): 751-758.
- Hayden**, Dolores (1984) *Redesigning the American Dream, the Future of Housing, Work, and Family Life*. New York: Norton.
- Hayden**, Dolores (2004) *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820-2000*. New York:Vintage Books.
- Holston**, James. (1999) Spaces of insurgent Citizenship in *Cities and Citizenship* James Holston ed. Durham and London: Duke University Press. Pp155-173.
- Kirby**, Kathleen M (1996) *Indifferent Boundaries: Spatial Concepts of Human Subjectivity*. New York:The Guilford Press.
- Klein**, Juan-Luis; Pierre-André Tremblay and Hugues Dionne (1997) Présentation les Mouvements Sociaux et l'Alternative: Quelles Perspectives? in *Au-Delà Du Néolibéralisme: Quel Role Pour les Mouvements Sociaux?* Juan-Luis Klein, Pierre-André Tremblay and Hugues Dionne eds. Sainte-Foy:Presse de l'Université du Québec.
- Kleit**, Rachel Garshick. (2005) HOPE VI new communities: neighborhood relationships in mixed-income housing. *Environment and Planning A* 37(8):1413–1441.
- Koc**, Mustafa; Rod MacRae, Luc J.A. Mougeot and Jennifer Walsh. (1999) Introduction: Food Security is a Global Concern..in *For Hunger-Proof Cities: Sustainable Urban Food Systems*. Mustafa Koc Rod MacRae, Luc J.A. Mougeot and Jennifer Walsh eds. Ottawa:International Development Research Centre. Pp 1-10.
- Krohe Jr**, James. (2006) Displaced and Replaced: Where are All Those Public Housing Residents Now? *Planning*. Dec:44-48.
- Lapointe**, Linda et al. (2002) *Converting Alexander Park into the Atkinson Co-operative: an Evaluation of the Process* Ottawa:CMH/SCHL.
- Leavitt**, Jacqueline, and Susan Saegert (1990) *From Abandonment to Hope: Community-Households in Harlem*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Lefebvre**, Henri (1991 [1974]) *The Production of Space*. Donald Nichoson-Smith trans. Oxford:Blackwell.

- Levkoe**, Charles (2006) Calaloo & You. *Alternatives Journal*, 32(3).
- MacDonnell**, Susan (2004) *Poverty by Postal Code: The Geography of Neighbourhood Poverty City of Toronto, 1981 – 2001*. Toronto: United Way of Greater Toronto and The Canadian Council on Social Development.
- Mallick**, Heather (2006) *The Subtlety of words: Are you Canadian or Canadian-born?* CBC News Viewpoints June 16, 2006. http://www.cbc.ca/news/viewpoint/vp_mallick/20060616.html. last accessed November 13, 2007.
- Markusen**, Ann (1998) The Future of Planning: Gains for the Craft, Threats to the Philosophy in *Fifty Years of City and Regional Planning at UC Berkeley: A Celebration of Faculty Essays*. Bekeley: NSQP Press.
- Massey**, Doreen (2005) *For Space*. London: Sage Publication.
- McClintock**, Anne. (1995) *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Global Contest*. New York: Routledge.
- McDowell**, Linda (1999) *Gender, Identity, and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- McKay**, Ian (2005) *Rebels, Reds, Radicals: Rethinking Canada's Left History*. Toronto: Between the Lines.
- Mendez**, Pablo, Daniel Hiebert, Elvin Wyly (2006) Landing at Home: Insights on Immigration and Metropolitan Housing Markets from the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 15(2): S 82-104.
- Miller**, Jake (2005) *Who's Who in a Public Housing Community*. The Rosen Publishing Group's PowerKids Press: New York.
- Milner**, J.B. (Summer 1969) Report of the Federal Task Force on Housing and Urban Development, Review *The University of Toronto Law Journal* 19(3):437-445.
- Ministry of Housing** and Ontario Housing Corporation (1992) *Planning Together: Improving the Quality of Life in Public Housing*. Toronto: Government of Ontario.
- Murdie**, Robert A. (1994) Blacks in near-ghettos? Black Visible Minority Population in Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority Public Housing Units" *Housing Studies* 9(4):435-457.

- Neuman**, Gerald L (1996) Anomalous Zones (Surveying Laws and Borders). *Stanford Law Review*, 48:1179-1234.
- New Urbanism** (2008) <http://www.newurbanism.org/newurbanism/principles.html>. Last accessed March 4, 2008.
- O'Connor**, Siobhan (2008) Two Tales of One City. *Good Magazine* 8.
- Olwig**, Kenneth Robert (2002) *Landscape, Nature, and the Body Politics: From Britain's Renaissance to America's New World*. New York:University of Wisconsin Press.
- Parmenter**, Sarah (2008) *Enhancing Health Promotion through Community Collaboration: Working with Ghanaian and Liberian Immigrants in Worcester MA*. Masters Research Paper, Community Development and Planning. Clark University, Worcester MA.
- Peters**, Evelyn J. (1998) Subversive Spaces: First Nations Women and the City, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. 16:665-685.
- Peters**, Evelyn J. and Oksana M. Starchenko.. (2005) Changes in Aboriginal Settlement Patterns in Two Canadian Cities: A Comparison to Immigrant Settlement Models. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 14(2):315-338.
- Peterson**, Rachel (2005) HOPE VI in San Francisco, *SPUR Newsletter*, March 2005.
- Purdy**, Sean (2003)"Ripped off" by the System: Housing Policy, Poverty, and Territorial Stigmatization in Regent Park Housing Project, 1951-1991. *Labour/Le Travail* 52:45-68.
- Purdy**, Sean (2005) Framing Regent Park: The National Film Board of Canada and the Construction of 'Outcast Spaces' in the Inner City, 1953 and 1994. *Media, Culture & Society* 27(4):523-549.
- Razack**, Sherene H. (1998) *Looking White People in the Eye: Gender, Race, and Culture in Courtrooms and Classrooms*. Toronto.University of Toronto Press.
- Razack**, Sherene H (1998a) Race, Space, and Prostitution: the Making of the Bourgeois Subject. *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* 10(2):338-376.
- Razack**, Sherene (2002) Gendered Racial Violence and Spatialized Justice: The Murder of Pamela George In *Race, space, and the Law : Unmapping a White Settler Society*, Sherene Razack.ed. Toronto : Between the Lines Press.
- Rose**, Albert (1958) *Regent Park: A Study in Slum Clearance*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

- Sandercock**, Leonie. (2003) *Cosmopolis II Mongrel Cities of the 21st Century*. London:Continuum.
- Save Our Structures** (2007) *Everyone Deserves A Decent Home: Summer Newsletter August 2007*. Save Our Structures:Toronto
<http://www.saveourstructures.ca/PDF/979BSummerNewsletter.pdf> last accessed September 4, 2007.
- Save Our Structures** (2008) *SOS official website* <http://www.saveourstructures.ca/> last accessed March 21, 2008.
- Saul**, John Ralston (1998) *Reflections of a Siamese Twin: Canada at the End of the Twentieth Century*. Toronto: Penguin Canada.
- Saul**, John Ralston (2005) Inaugural Lafontaine-Baldwin Lecture. in *Dialogues on Democracy: The Lafontaine-Baldwin Lectures 2000-2005*. Rudyard Griffiths ed. Toronto:Penguin Canada. Pp 1-24.
- Sewell**, John (1994) *Housing and Homes: Housing for Canadians*. Toronto: James Lorimer and Company.
- Sewell**, John (1999) *Redeveloping Public Housing Projects*. Ottawa : Caledon Institute of Social Policy.
- Skelton** ,Ian (2002) Residential Mobility of Aboriginal Single Mothers in Winnipeg: An Exploratory Study of Chronic Moving. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 17: 127-144.
- Slater**, Tom (2004) North American gentrification? Revanchist and Emancipatory Perspectives Explored. *Environment and Planning A* 36:191-1213.
- Soja**, Edward (2001) Different Spaces: Interpreting the Spatial Organization of Societies, in *Proceedings of the Third International Space Syntax Symposium*, J. Peponis, J. Wineman and S. Bafna eds. Atlanta, Georgia, URL (accessed November 17, 2007)
undertow.arch.gatech.edu/homepages/3sss/papers_pdf/s1_Soja.pdf
- Sousa**, Jorge (2006) *Building a Cooperative Community: The Conversion of Alexander Park to Atkinson Co-operative*. PhD Thesis. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto.
- Sousa**, Jorge (2007) *Building a Co-operative Community: Assessing Member Satisfaction in The Atkinson Housing Co-operative*. Edmonton:The University of Alberta.
- Sousa**, Jorge and Jack Quarter (2004) Converting a Public Housing Project into a

Tenant-Managed Housing Co-Operative: A Canadian Case Study". *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 19: 187-198.

Sousa, Jorge and Jack Quarter (2005) Atkinson Housing Co-operative: A leading Edge Conversion from Public Housing. *Housing Studies* 20(3):423-439.

Statistics Canada (2008) Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration (10A) and Place of Birth of Respondent (260) for Immigrants and Non-permanent Residents, for Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations, 2001 Census - 20% Sample Data
<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01>. last accessed March 14, 2008.

Statistics Canada (2008a) Immigrant Status by Period of Immigration, 2001 Counts, for Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations - 20% Sample Data <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01>. last accessed March 14, 2008.

Stone, Michael E. (2003) *Social Housing in the UK and US: Evolution, Issues and Progress*. London: Centre for Urban and Community Studies Goldsmiths.
<http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/cucr/pdf/Stonefinal.pdf>. last accessed March 14, 2008.

Stuart, Susan M. (2005) Lifting Spirits: Creating Gardens in California Domestic Violence Shelters. In *Urban Place: Reconnecting with the Natural World*. Peggy F. Barlett ed. Cambridge: MIT Press. Pp 61-88.

Toohey, Tannis (2007) A Tenant Revolution but, is Anyone Listening? *Toronto Star*. September 15. <http://www.thestar.com/printArticle/256804> last accessed January 25, 2008.

Toronto Community Housing Corporation (2007) *Regent Park: A place to call home*.
http://www.regentparkplan.ca/pdfs/revitalization/a_place_to_call_home.pdf accessed April 29, 2007.

Toronto, City of (2007) Toronto Neighbourhood Profiles: Kensington-Chinatown neighbourhood. http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/cns_profiles/cns78.htm. accessed Nov 27, 2007.

Toronto, City of (2007a) Toronto Neighbourhood Profiles: Engglemount-Lawrence neighbourhood profile. http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/cns_profiles/cns32.htm accessed Feb 10, 2008.

Toronto, City of (2007b) Toronto Neighbourhood Profiles: Yorkdale-Glen Park neighbourhood profile. <http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf3/cpa31.pdf> accessed Feb 10, 2008.

- Toronto**, City of (1998) *The People, Place, and Priorities of Lawrence Heights: Conclusions from the Community Quality of Life Project*. Toronto:City of Toronto.
- Uguris**, Tijen (2004) *Space, Power and Participation: Ethnic and Gender Divisions in Tenants' Participation in Public Housing*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Vale**, Lawrence J (2002) *Reclaiming Public Housing : A Half Century of Struggle in Three Public Neighborhoods*. Cambridge:Harvard University Press.
- Veronis**, Luisa (2006) The Canadian Hispanic Day Parade, or How Latin American Immigrants Practice (Sub)Urban Citizenship in Toronto. *Environment and Planning A* 38(9):1653–1671.
- Walczak**, Johanna (2008) *Redefining Development: Community Power in the South of Market District, San Francisco*. Masters Research Paper, Community Development and Planning. Clark University, Worcester MA.
- Webster**, C, G. Glasze , and K Frantz (2002) The Global Spread of Gated Communities *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design* 29(3):315-320.
- Wekerle**, Gerda (1993) Responding to Diversity: Housing Developed By and For Women. *Canadian Journal for Urban Research* 2(2):95-113.
- Whitzman**, Carolyn and Tom Slater (2006) Village Ghetto Land: Myth, Social Conditions, and Housing Policy in Parkdale, Toronto, 1879–2000 *Urban Affairs Review*. 41: 673:696.
- Williams**, Rhonda Y. (2004) *The Politics of public Housing: Black Women's Struggles Against Urban Inequality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wright**, Gwendolyn (2004) Women's Aspirations and the Home: Episodes in *American Feminist Reform in Gender Planning* Susan Fainstein and Lisa Servon eds. New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Wright**, Parricia A. (2006) Community Resistance to CHA Transformation: The History, Evolution, Struggles, and Accomplishments of the Coalition to Protect Public Housing Chapt 5 pp125-167 in *Where are Poor People to Live?, Transforming Public Housing Communities*. Larry Bennett, Janet L. Smith and Patricia A. Wright eds. Armonk: M.E.Sarpe.
- Young**, Iris Marion (2004) Justice and the Politics of Difference in *American Feminist Reform in Gender Planning* Susan Fainstein and Lisa Servon eds. New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press.

List of Abbreviations

BHA-Boston Housing Authority

Bill 128- Social Housing Reform Act

CAI-Community Association Institution

CHFT-Canadian Housing Federation of Toronto

CHMC-Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation

The Dennis Report-1972 Programs in Search of a Policy: Low income housing in Canada

The Hellyer Report-1969 Report of the Federal Task Force

on Housing and Urban Development

HOPE VI- Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere

GST-Goods and Services Tax

Metro- Metropolitan Tier of Government

MPP-Member of Provincial Parliament

MTHC- Metro Toronto Housing Corporation

NDP-New Democratic Party

NHA-National Housing Act

OCAP-Ontario Coalition Against Poverty

OHC-Ontario Housing Corporation

RGI-Rent Geared-to-Income

SOS-Save our Structures

The Stop-The Stop Community Food Centre

TCHC-Toronto Community Housing Corporation