

CONVERSATIONS ON THE EDGE:
BETWEEN COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTION
IN AN ELDERLY PERSON'S HOUSING UNIT

A Thesis
Presented to The Faculty of Graduate Studies
of
The University of Manitoba
by
Caroline Harkins
in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
December, 1994



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ISBN 0-612-16151-X

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BETWEEN COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTION IN AN
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BY

CAROLINE HARKINS

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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ABSTRACT

Conversations on the Edge: Between Community and Institution in an Inner-City Elderly Person's Housing Unit

This 26 month ethnographic study at an inner-city seniors' apartment block features local discourses and descriptions. Set at the interface between a small population and the agencies for which it formed a target group, the research generated a set of testable hypotheses:

1. The population of tenants at 450 Jemima Avenue constitute a small but real and functioning community.
2. Communicative action as described by Jurgen Habermas and as observed in this study is a necessary element of human social life. It is in this intersubjective space that community is generated.
3. The tenants in the community housed in this Elderly Person's Housing Unit resist organization by others and keep their mutual aid and other community activities "low profile" in order to avoid the invasive power of outside forces, such as institutional forces.
4. Government and non-government agencies, on reflection, might find it less that necessary to be as nonconsensual as they are.
5. The Friendly Neighbour Program was successful because it created the kind of space and time between people in which community could actually be generated, not by trying to make it happen but by setting up the possibilities and allowing it to happen and by participating in the process in uncoercive ways.

Dedication

To the seniors at
St. John's Place

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INTRODUCTION

This piece of inner-city ethnographic research has been designed to utilize the knowledge and methods of traditional Anthropology and also the current streams of thought: post-modern reflexivity, culture generation in the intersubjective spaces of small informal groups and the concerns and inquiries into the workings of very large politico-economic groupings. The special interest here is how these entities of extremely different scale and power impinge on each other at the interface between them. The particular focus of this research is the conversations, activities, concerns, efforts and social structures witnessed and experienced in an inner-city Elderly Person's Housing unit (EPH) in Winnipeg during twenty-six months of fieldwork.

I tried to remain self-reflective especially about my own ethnocentric biases and the nature of my status in the larger society as well as that of the people with whom I was working. Fortunately, the self consciousness was intermittent. It was generously interspersed with experiences of immersion in culture, of shared personal and social time and space. The seniors and I talked and laughed and worked together. In many instances we came to appreciate and trust one another.

If I can clearly describe this social context and interpret its meanings so that the people involved in it including myself are able to see the present situation and where different possible choices lie and something of the roads and futures that go with them, then I will consider my efforts to have been worthwhile. Hopefully others can also see in these descriptions and evaluations concepts and empirical evidence that may be useful in their own lives and work.

My aim has been to test out and to experience anthropological methods connected with ethnography: to learn about community from community, using a specific community as teacher. In a second phase I was able to focus and refine my interpretations by the consideration of demographic data, grounded theory analysis and the interpretation of answers to questionnaires and responses given during a set of semi-structured interviews. The purpose of the research has been to understand the life of a

small inner-city population that lives in a seniors' apartment block. I informally called this group of people a community from the first. After the first coding of fieldnotes it was decided that there was enough support in the data to hypothesize that this population does constitute a functioning community. Interview questions were designed to obtain more information and opinion in this area. As applied anthropology, this study maintains a mindfulness throughout of human values and ways in which individual and community life may be enhanced. It strives for both theoretical understandings and practical insights.

Chapter 1

THEORETICAL GROUNDING AND METHODOLOGY

The research is set against the background of political and methodological awareness and Angst in the discipline but also examples of increasingly complex understandings of social processes and some optimistic new scholarship. New analyses of historical material by writers such as Eric Wolf (1982), Edward Said (1978) and many others have broadened our appreciation of how we have arrived socially at our present state. The criticism and methodological concern of researchers such as James Clifford (1988), Vincent Crapanzano (1992), Johannes Fabian (1983), Sylvia Yanagisako (1987), (among others) are taken as cautionary advice in research design and execution. The exemplary research and scholarship of Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault are a continuing inspiration. Habermas' theory of communicative action is tried as an explanatory model of why the Friendly Neighbour Program, in which I participated during much of my fieldwork was so successful and why struggling communities such as the one studied deserve recognition and encouragement.

I will take time here to describe the important threads of theoretical and methodological influence in social/cultural anthropology and related disciplines that have formed the context for this research.

RESEARCHES AND IMAGES: SOCIETY AND CULTURE

My study of society and culture has been largely through reading and listening to ethnographic accounts and the interpretations distilled from them. This has led to a respect for social process, a sympathy for the social agents or players involved and an affinity for hermeneutic inquiry. In this inquiry one enters the field as fully as possible, making interpretations and striving for understanding. The importance of empirical techniques is not denied, but neither are the advantages of studying within ones own species and in ones own environment.

Even though early ethnographers such as E. E. Evans-Pritchard worked in the

employ of colonial powers, the nature of their work led them over time to develop broad understandings of the social dynamics at work in populations under consideration. This understanding could expand to include insights into the effects of the colonial regime of which one was, in fact, a functioning part. Evans-Pritchard's 1926 fieldwork among the Nuer (1940) was acclaimed for its "new ethnographic method, novel presentation and original analysis" (Seligman, 1941, p 92). Two decades later his work among the Sanusi of Cyrenaica (1968, pp 226 - 228) demonstrated both broad and deep understanding of the devastating effects of outside interventions on a local culture.

Towards the end of his career Evans-Pritchard characterized anthropology as having much commonality of content and project with the humanities. He could see them moving closer together (1962). J. D. Hill comments on Evans-Pritchard's later theoretical position:

Over forty years ago, Evans-Pritchard (1962[1950]) presciently argued that synchronic functionalist and socio-structuralist modes of interpretation artificially removed the subjects of anthropological research from the historical processes of colonialism and nation-state expansion. But the majority of anthropologists continued to work within the frameworks of relativist, functionalist, structuralist, or neo-evolutionary theories that tended to perpetuate rather than critique the symbolic removal of anthropological subjects from the historical time of anthropological observers. (Hill, 1992, p 811).

Evans-Pritchard's fieldwork that began as a peripheral accessory to colonial suppression eventually informed him, the anthropologist, of the nature and effects of the suppression itself. The possibility of this kind of transcendence is currently a productive theme in anthropology and social philosophy and one of my theoretical and practical interests.

Clifford Geertz began his career in ethnography trying to establish law-like statements that would hold cross-culturally and which could be built into social theory. His later work emphasized the ways that what is true about a society is tied into its on-going life.

Geertz's manipulation of companion concepts such as ethos and world-view encourages the recognition of social life as a generative and interactive process. These two halves of the social whole weave into and out of each other complimenting and reflecting each other. They are an analogy for an organic whole that operates in society.

Ethos is the approved style of life suggested by and demonstrating world-view: the assumed structure of reality. They fit together by a common congruence. They complete each other and lend each other meaning. Geertz explains:

"In itself, either side, the normative or the metaphysical, is arbitrary, but taken together they form a gestalt with a peculiar kind of inevitability...(an)...air of naturalness and simple factuality.... What all sacred symbols assert is that the good for man is to live realistically; where they differ is in the vision of reality they construct" (Geertz, 1957, p. 306).

Still it was the form as well as the content of his assertions that helped me to grapple with contemporary and social theory on the microscopic and the macroscopic levels. Reading Geertz one gets the impression of real people struggling and building their own lives in social action and the idea that culture grows out of this human social dynamic which it at the same time limits and shapes. He says (1968, p. 5) that if man is suspended in webs that he spins for himself then culture is those webs. In his book, *Islam Observed* (1968), Geertz carefully describes how Islam fits into and also shapes the social ambience and the styles of interacting in Morocco. He also saw an interplay between local culture and larger world forces. In his development work for the U. S. government in the South East Asia of the 1950's he wanted to understand, ".... what contributions parochial understanding can make to comprehensive ones" (1968, pp. IX,X). Eleven years later Geertz declared that modern society has a "dynamic" and that "....microstudies of contemporary social phenomena that are not conducted with a sense for the nature of that dynamic and directed towards clarifying it are reduced to academic exercises" (1979, p 233).

The study of Geertz prepared me for some of the major current trends of the discipline: questions concerning the holistic, discursive and made-in-action nature of culture as context, simultaneously container and content: correspondingly society as people living together interacting in community, making and made by culture. But the interactive nature of society does not stop there. It is also necessary to understand and experience the local as a generative and corresponding part of a limiting world-wide politico-ecological context. New data and new analyses threw ideas into sharp focus for which Geertz had provided a preview.

In *The Predicament of Culture* (1988), James Clifford illustrates what he sees as the surrealistic nature of post-World War I society/culture in France. He says that this sense of surrealism is characteristic of cultural groups that have had their basic foundations severely challenged over extended periods. "Pure products go crazy" in such times and the survivors construct and learn to construct meaningful worlds from among the rubbles of memory, hope and surrounding social and ecological resources. Clifford claims validity as well as necessity for this kind of social construction. It can be seen that even in times other than crisis or disaster society is reinvented over time so that the 1994 English are not the same people as the Elizabethans were. And "We the people of the United States in order to form a more perfect union..." (American 1776 "Declaration of Independence") are understood as sharing a limited and questionable number of attitudes, attributes and proclivities with their descendants of twentieth century Boston.

But this self-understanding: that we must build our lives and society from what we have to work with this is not always recognized in others. Clifford gives the example of the Mahspeer of Boston who in their land claims trial were required to prove that they were the same group as their ancestors. They had to show continuity of religion, customs, institutions, residence and physical genealogy. It seems that cultural evolution in such instances is recognized as following one set of rules for "us" but is required to follow another for "other people."

These and similar considerations focused the questions in my mind about how culture is generated and maintained. What might it look like on the ground, in process? It seems that every people is a "We the people" and it is "We" who decide on and effect how we will proceed and under what banners. That, "Your grandmother was Irish but now you are just 'poor white trash,' may be a statement of domination or arrogance or of idle opinion but it can not be recognized objectively as the only real or practical statement of the person in question. One does not have to posit such a thing as a radical free will in order to wonder what is involved in on-going community building and culture generation. Is it the province of formal systems, of dominant societies, or is it something that happens all the time whether or not it is recognized or even allowed? This question was given greater depth for me with the study of Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault.

Pierre Bourdieu's densely-packed yet elegant exposition drove me to a more thorough examination of anthropological theory and practice than anything I had seen before. I will delineate here only a few elements from Pierre Bourdieu's *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977) and some of his later writings (1984/5/8).

To begin with, in constructing a theory of practice, Pierre Bourdieu insists on the central necessity of the scientist's objectifying his own sociocultural system, his position in it and the relation of these to his object of study. This includes the social conditions necessary for the very existence of a social science and the relations between this science and the construction of the object of its study. Bourdieu (1977) puts it succinctly:

Hence it is not sufficient for anthropology to break with native experience and the native representation of that experience: it has to make a second break and question the presuppositions inherent in the position of an outside observer, who, in his preoccupation with interpreting practices, is inclined to introduce into the object the principles of his relation to the object... (1977, p 2).

Bourdieu rejects theories of society in which agents choose their actions to accord with a model or a set of rules. He says that this tendency "constitutes practical activity as an object of observation and analysis, a representation" (1977, p 2). This makes the main object of inquiry, not the action on the ground as it happens but the action as a symbolic reflection of the theoretical object of science. He insists that social life is not like a road map or rule book constructed by the outside observer but more like the spontaneous and strategic action in a sporting match. It is played with a "sense of the situation", a "feel for the game." He would try to construct the generating principle of social action by situating the observation and analysis "within the very moment of their accomplishment" (1977, p3). Bourdieu states as his aim "to make possible a science of the dialectical relations between the objective structures to which the objectivist mode of knowledge gives access and the structured dispositions... (such as a sense of honour)...within which those structures are actualized and which tend to reproduce them" (1977, p 3).

One of Bourdieu's central explanatory mechanisms is what he calls habitus. It shares much with Geertz's "culture" but it is extremely tightly drawn and illustrated. He explains:

practical evaluation of the likelihood of the success of a given action in a given situation brings into play a whole body of wisdom, sayings, commonplaces,

ethical precepts ("that's not for the likes of us") and, a deeper level, the unconscious principles of the ethos which, being the product of a learning process dominated by a determinate type of objective regularities, determines 'reasonable' and 'unreasonable' conduct for every agent subjected to those regularities. (1977, p 77)

Habitus is the historically constructed and regulated improvisations in which the individual lives in society. Their structures are necessarily unknown and compliance with them is unconscious. Social agents thus engaged in strategic actions over and over again, if they are successful, accumulate from others symbolic capital, debts of prestige, money, favours etc. In this way, favourable positions in the social hierarchy are secured.

In small societies without apparatuses of State, the person of much symbolic capital has a high status and can command deference, work tribute and material goods from others but s/he must work diligently and continuously to keep these relations refurbished. As societies grow, self-reproducing institutions are established to carry on this conservative work of social definition, social nomination, distinction and "the right." Underlying it all is unequal access to the material goods and resources of the social and physical environment. Bourdieu (1984) has devoted much work to delineating details of how social structures are effectively constructed to define, produce and reproduce hierarchies of dominance.

Pierre Bourdieu insists on an intelligent and energetic reflexivity in social research. He presents a very interactive yet strongly determined model of culture and society. He demonstrates the extreme tenacity with which the established order holds the system together. The result necessarily employs misrecognition of the underlying structural relations. Thus it is difficult for any agent, including an anthropologist, to attain a self-conscious awareness of how it all works. Still he remarks that societies and the habituses generated within them as products of history "can be changed, with more or less difficulty, by history" (1985, p 739).

My work at St. John's Place is different from the fieldwork of Pierre Bourdieu which was done with a traditional society in Algeria and in social groups such as peasants, trade unions, political parties and academics in France. He states, "Indeed, social action has nothing to do with rational choice, except perhaps in very specific crisis

situations when the routines of everyday life and the practical feel of habitus cease to operate" (1988, p 783). The research that I am presenting here was positioned in a population put together from members of many other groups: individuals and fragments of peripheral groups for whom life has of necessity been more socially inventive and less secure than for agents of more settled conditions surrounded by their habitus and with "a feel for the game."

Michel Foucault was an very prolific historian and analyst of Western social institutions. He has sought to study power through inquiry into how it works. He considers power as not a thing in itself but rather as a relation, an imposition of governing actions upon other actions. His studies have centred in the presentation and analysis of local historical discourses which tell how, since the eighteenth century, Europeans have experienced governing power as an increasingly subjugating influence.

Foucault is interested in illuminating struggles which question the status of the individual: on the one hand, they assert the right to be different and they underline everything which separates the individual, breaks his links with others, splits up community life, forces the individual back on himself and ties him to his own identity in a constraining way (Foucault, 1980, pp. 210-1). In Clifford's (1988) account, this is what the Boston court was legally doing to the Mahspee, tying them to their identity in a constraining way. Foucault notes two ways that a person is made into a subject: "subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to" (Foucault, 1983, p 212). Specifically, he wants to analyze an historical technique of the governing of individuals (Foucault, 1984, p 380). He wants to link together "as tightly as possible the historical and theoretical analysis of power relations, institutions, and knowledge, to the movements, critiques, and experiences that call them into question in reality" (p 374). Thus he features local and discredited discourses, kind of a minority opinion on "what happened in history."

Foucault insists on delineating precisely the power that is the focus of his inquiry. It is not violence, it is not struggle, it is not domination or constraint (though any of these may be used in power). Power, in Foucault's sense, is that action upon the action of

others designed to structure the possible field of their actions. It is a governing force. In the middle ages, the sovereign occasionally exerted raw power on local individuals and groups: impressively, but also at great expense. Since then, through colonizing local systems and engaging them in its service, state level power has become very efficient. It is not that people have become more obedient but that "an increasingly better invigilated process of adjustment has been sought after - more and more rational and economic - between productive activities, resources of communication, and the play of power relations" (Foucault, 1983, p 219). In recent centuries power relations have come more and more under state control, for instance, in educational, judicial, economic and family systems (Foucault, 1983, p 224). The modern state was not developed above and in spite of individuals but conversely, it has developed many categories that individuals can fit into, once they have been suitably reshaped (Foucault, 1983, p 214). The assimilation of stigmatized groups and individuals is one of the more visible example of this shaping which comes under the auspices of education, the pastoral type care of welfare programs, scientific normalization, deviancy control and health care. Thus, power relations have been "progressively governmentalized, that is to say, elaborated, rationalized, and centralized in the form of, or under the auspices of, state institutions" (Foucault, 1983, p 224) and "certain power relations function in such a way as to constitute, globally, an effect of domination...." (Foucault, 1984, p 378). Foucault submits that the problem of our days (political, ethical, social and philosophical) is to gain liberation not only from the state but from the type of individuation which for several centuries has shaped us to fit the patterns and needs of the state (Foucault, 1983, p 216).

In his protracted study of power, Foucault located his inquiries at the extremities of the techniques and effects of power "at its ultimate destinations, with those points where it becomes capillary, that is, in its more regional and local forms and institutions" (Foucault, 1980, p 96). He wanted to understand "how things work at the level of on-going subjugation, at the level of those continuous and uninterrupted processes which subject our bodies, govern our gestures, dictate our behaviours etc. In other words, rather than ask ourselves how the sovereign appears to us in his lofty isolation, we should try to discover how it is that subjects are gradually, progressively, really and

materially constituted through a multiplicity of organisms, forces, energies, materials, desires, thoughts etc." (Foucault, 1980, p 97). At this place, for instance, it becomes visible that "The individual which power has constituted is at the same time its vehicle" (Foucault, 1980, p 98). His practice was to start at the "infinitesimal mechanisms" of power, where its technologies were relatively autonomous, and then to conduct an ascending analysis (Foucault, 1980, p 99). Here could be seen how and by what mechanisms local power began to become "economically advantageous and politically useful" (Foucault, 1980, p 101).

Foucault's topic of the invasive and controlling nature of large power systems is germane to one side of my theoretical interest. However, my research was not designed to empirically test his assertions, nor is his work used as a jumping off point for my own. Foucault focused on a specific range of relations that he called power relations. I have chosen to focus inductively on relations as I see them and to note local categories for analysis. I used Foucault as a part of the theoretical context, a part of the tenor of the times in which my research would be done. More specifically, I have followed certain of his methodological suggestions as to where and how to conduct research: the need for and the potential in publishing local discourses and the advantages in situating research at the interactive edges where powerful institutional influence, individuals and small informal social networks meet.

I identified the population living at the senior's block at 450 Jemima Avenue, marginal in many ways but especially as a target group of several government and non-government agencies and apparently as a last enclave of independent living for many. It would be a potentially productive place to situate research into the interactions at the periphery, an informal community on the one hand and government agency staff and various other outsiders on the other. Even though I would not be studying power as such, as Foucault did, the place of final juncture between government and non-government agencies and their staff members and a small "target population" could be expected to highlight strategic and possibly other kinds of social actions and interactions.

So listening to and noting discourses of local knowledges at what should prove to be a highly illustrative social boundary would be the specific emphasis of this

ethnography.

One can say that Bourdieu's work is a careful re-examination of questions of how social structures produce and reproduce the hierarchical relations of society with the tacit approval of those of high status. He showed the extreme difficulty with which the relative positions can be effectively changed. Foucault's work shows the pervasiveness of state and supstate domination of individuals and local groups by colonization and the enlistment of local energies and systems. Neither of them focus on solutions. Foucault, perhaps because he is more political suggests a vulnerable point in the system, the position of the specific intellectual at the interface between government institutions and local conversants (Foucault, 1980, p 128), and he suggests that the question of consensuality might be posed within a system or of a system. He phrases it negatively: "it is perhaps a critical idea to maintain at all times: to ask oneself what proportion of nonconsensuality is implied in such a power relation, and whether that degree of nonconsensuality is necessary or not, and then one may question every power relation to that extent" (Foucault, 1984, p 379). It strikes me that there may be an assumption hidden in Foucault's question. In speaking of nonconsensuality Foucault implicitly posits the existence of consensuality. The nature of this possibility describes the other half of my theoretical interest. If there is such a thing as consensual culture generation, where in society is it found and what is the nature of its operation? But one must look beyond both Bourdieu and Foucault for this kind of focus.

Johannes Fabian in Time and the Other (1983) uses concepts of time to explore the nature of human relationships especially as they impinge on anthropological theory and practice. He has coined the term, "coeval," to describe the state of two or more people sharing the same time: a state that is active, interactive, mutually created and practical. "Allochronism," conversely, is a distancing device that denies coevalness (1983, p 38 ff). Fabian compares fieldwork (coeval experiences) in anthropology characterized by rapport and intersubjective understandings to the later analysis and presentation of the professional anthropologist. He believes that the latter can deny the reality and validity of the former. By the time that the data are analyzed and reported, the people and their existence have been somewhat magically transformed out of real time and

space and into a never-never land of formal ethnographic present. Thus political actions such as, for instance, arms sales or economic sanctions are as perpetrated on some distant and abstract reality. Fabian considers this social/mental flip flop to be a cognitive and human mistake. Spivak uses stronger words, "cognitive failure" to describe such lapses (1987, p 199ff).

Fabian's book must be seen as a step towards the kind of self critical understanding that Pierre Bourdieu demands from social scientists. Bourdieu expresses a methodological interest compared to Fabian's rather moral one but the two projects converge on the same territory. Fabian spends most of the book setting the context for his concepts and arguing them. The German social philosopher, Jurgen Habermas has concentrated most of his career on exploring the nature and implications of human interactions at this juncture: the point of mutual and consensual communicative action.

As a young man in post-war Germany, Jurgen Habermas tried to find out if the social horrors of the Twentieth Century were the inevitable results of modernity as Weber and Critical Theorists such as Horkheimer and Adorno (Bernstein, 1985, p 7) concluded. He said of his early work, "Already at that time, my problem was a theory of modernity, a theory of the pathology of modernity from the viewpoint of the realization -- the deformed realization - of reason in history" (Habermas, 1985, p 4). What Habermas, in fact, has done is to rework the philosophies of Kant and Hegel, update Marx with Freud and Piaget and modern sociology and economics. Then, with the aid of linguistics, especially speech act theory, he describes the very interactive point of culture generation and social solidarity, the intersubjective space of conversations for the purpose of reaching an understanding, the familiar (everyday) friendly conversation.

Two thirds of the way through my fieldwork I read articles by Habermas and commentaries on his theory of communicative action. The elements of this theory seemed to fit remarkably well what I was seeing on the ground, especially the element of community/culture generation that I was sure was happening all around me. I will lay out its essentials here to use as a theoretical context for the second half of my main theoretical interest: how community/culture is generated among individuals in society.

Habermas' scholarly aim can be stated in a number of ways. For instance, he

wondered whether we must *arbitrarily* choose the "ultimate norms that guide our lives": our gods and demons. Are there no rational means for filling the voids left by the destructions of traditional world views? The enlightenment thinkers promised human freedom through science and rationality but what social philosophers such as Max Weber saw was the triumph of *Zwecksrationalität*, the positivist rationality that, instead, has created an iron cage of modern power systems (Bernstein, 1985, p 5). However, rather than turning to the negative dialectics of Critical Theory, Habermas attempted a to construct a critical social science, one that would be both analytical and interpretive and would incorporate reflectively the promising developments in social science. He would rationally and reflectively study how rationality had gone wrong.

As a lead-in to Habermas' theory of communicative action it is helpful to posit as he does, following Weber, three cultural value spheres, each with its own inner logic, its own type of rationality: The technical/empirical value sphere is interested in facts about objects that facilitate purposive instrumental decision making. It is interested in ends/means relationships: prediction, production and control. This form of rationality is necessary to the production and organization of goods and services in society, but it cannot reasonably be used, as it sometimes is, as "the model for all legitimate knowledge" (Bernstein, 1985, p 5, Habermas, 1985, p 199).

The moral/practical value sphere which includes law as well as informal discussions between friends, has more in common with disciplines used in the historical/hermeneutic traditions in which, "Access to the facts is provided by the understanding of meaning" (Bernstein, 1985, p 9). Knowledge in this sphere concerns consensual decisions about meaning, justice and the good life.

The aesthetic/practical value sphere (not explored in this study) features validity claims concerning unity/harmony and authenticity (Habermas, 1985, p 199).

In the course of our daily activities we go into and out of situations requiring these different types of reasoning: purposive-instrumental for analytic and production decisions and moral-practical for decisions about norms, about aims and practices. Purposive-instrumental decision making has been an extremely successful scientific and organizing force in Western civilization. It has facilitated the harnessing of natural forces and

resources and the organizing of tremendous political power. Moral-practical rationality, correspondingly, has retreated to positions on the peripheries of social influence. The result is that our large and institutionalized systems of analysis, production and organization lack self-understanding, direction and moral authenticity. Our moral-practical facilities have rather atrophied. Habermas' focus, as that of this paper, is the sphere of everyday interactions and activities which he calls the life-world and which he counterpoises to the system: the local, state and international scale institutions of socio-economic production and government.

The theory of communicative action is an example of reconstructive science, more like linguistics, psychology and theories of moral development than analytic sciences such as chemistry and biology. "It seeks to isolate, identify, and clarify the conditions required for human communication" (Bernstein, 1985, p 16). Habermas' basic model locates and describes communicative action as the generative centre of human society: two or more people together sharing time and space between them, speaking to each other and listening for the purpose of reaching an understanding. Habermas asserts that in this kind of interaction people the world over implicitly understand the same rules. Each participant in this type of conversation speaks and when needed supports his claims with reasons which the other listens to and evaluates as to their reasonableness, accuracy, normative rightness and sincerity. As one person extends himself/herself in an effort to be understood, the other extends him/herself in an effort to understand. Thus, a common ground of self-identity, mutual understanding and solidarity are built.

But Habermas sees rationality itself as social, and he sees no internal logic which necessitates a *particular* balance between systems of instrumental-purposive rationality and those of practical reason/communicative action. Thus, he lays claim to human society as an area characterized by rationality and by human choice. He does not espouse a cynical fatalism but counsels reflection, empirical enquiry and political action.

This may be a case for optimism but not for giddiness. A glimpse of the difficulties can immediately be gained by imagining a scenario in which Bourdieu's person of distinction (1984) sits down for a friendly conversation with one of Foucault's discredited and subjugated individuals. The difficulties for establishing some

intersubjective space for communicative action are immediately apparent. Bourdieu would say that the last thing the person of distinction is looking for is immediate knowledge of the implications for himself of the others situation. Still, given this as a possibility (as perhaps in an extended snow storm or a long drunken weekend), would the participants remember afterward and find within themselves the needed resources to carry out the personal and political actions appropriate to the normative decisions (about what is real, good and fair) that they made together in the intersubjective space of their conversation for the purpose of reaching an understanding?

The value of Habermas to anthropology as well as providing heuristically useful theoretical concepts with which to try research experience is that his interpretations may also prove useful methodologically. Through communicative action with people in community and reflection on these experiences we may accomplish Bordieu's aim of an increasing understanding of our mutual and respective places in informal life-worlds and in formal systems.

Methodological Concern and Criticism

I consider the foregoing a statement of the main theoretical context against which my ethnographic research was conducted. Still, there is the important body of antistructuralist and post-modern concern that is quite necessary to address in some manner. I believe that I can condense the elements most necessary to the methodology of this study into concerns for two theoretical and practical cognitive mistakes that scientists and politicians, among others, may make.

1) The Ethnocentric Fallacy:

Pierre Bourdieu urges us as social scientists to be aware of our own position in society, especially to note the conditions necessary to scientific research itself. He warns that we must guard against introducing the nature of our relations to our theoretical object into our descriptions of that object (Bourdieu, 1977, p 2). Habermas simply says "the ethnographic fallacy looms large" and that it is necessary to demonstrate that ones principles are not "just a reflection of the prejudices of adult, white, well-educated, western males of today." (Habermas, 1990, p 197). This fallacy establishes an indistinct

but effective independent variable as a standard for comparison: the "we" the "us" of our culture. This is the "we" in contrast to which the "Orient" is described as essentially different (Edward Said, 1979). This is the "Europe" in comparison to which others are "people without history" (Eric Wolf, 1982).

2) Dogmatic, Unreflective Structuralism

As human beings we proceed empirically by constructing models of reality that enable us to control our environment. To carry out an action we must act as if we have all the facts: "I tested this board for strength; I will use it as a bridge to cross the river." For intellectual freedom and continued success we must continuously admit new information on old and new questions and projects: "When did you test it? The termites have been bad lately." The acknowledgement of the shifting nature of the natural environment and of the social world demands a flexible and open mind, constant attention and enormous energy. At some point it becomes easier to defend old analyses and decisions than to keep open to new ones. When we do this unconsciously our model is practically transformed into a given, an independent variable against which to test reality. This is the structuralism (Derrida, 1987), the essentialism (Carrier, 1992) the fundamentalism (Crapanzano, 1992, Introduction) attacked by critics and researchers with methodological concern. Yanagisako and Collier simply but pointedly challenge us not to make assumptions where we should be asking questions (1987, p 34).

Two well known works are illustrative of these fallacies. Edward Said in *Orientalism* has demonstrated historically the practical social effects, especially the political and economic effects, of the institutionalisation, over time, of these two cognitive mistakes. Eric Wolf in *Europe and The People Without History* shows the weakness of these positions. He has effectively laid to rest the notion that Europeans have been the "really" active element in history, playing to the passivity of the many "others."

These concerns are utilized to guide methodology. In practice, an ethnographer must steer a course between the paralysis of over-concern and uninformed action and interpretations.

METHODOLOGY

Here is a summary of the stages of the research and the techniques and activities that contributed to better rapport, increasing understanding and appreciation of the population and finally interpretations of the meaning of field observations and experiences.

A decision was made to undertake an ethnographic study in inner-city Winnipeg, to learn about community from the one immediately surrounding me. Every opportunity was taken to gain knowledge about this neighbourhood, to gain entry into various levels of its social life and to gain practice as an observer and learner. Observing and challenging my own cultural assumptions was practiced as an integral part of the research methodology. The first opportunities were gained by simply changing my attitudes and style of movements and interactions in the neighbourhood outside my house.

I was not going to move to a distant and unknown culture, but in order to really learn, (to see clearly in my field situation), my neighbourhood would have to become *new* for me. I would have to be alert to "what's out there" as well as "what's in here", inside myself and to all the material in between. I had lived in a house at the corner of Bannatyne Avenue and Gertie Street for seven years, in the centre of Winnipeg. Now all these surroundings assumed new meanings for me. Where I had been mildly afraid and generally shy and a bit self-defensive on the street, I would now shift into a mode of more frank and objective openness. For example, where previously I would avoid meeting the eyes of strangers for fear of being pan-handled or of appearing forward and wanting something, I became more flexible in my attitude. If the approaching person looked dangerous I would avoid his or her glance or cross the street as seemed prudent. Otherwise I would speak and smile as a friendly neighbour and fellow citizen. Immediately my old neighbourhood opened up and in fact, did become new to me. Suddenly it had a lot more people in it. People tend to walk and to ride buses here and to visit back and forth. There is much activity on the street.

I did some scouting and some mapping. The mapping did not go well. People

looked at me very suspiciously. One man of late middle age and considerable dignity called me up to his porch to explain myself. He didn't speak English very fluently and every time I would pause he would ask, "Why?" and again, "Why?" Finally I left, not knowing quite what was wrong or what to do. He didn't understand why someone would want to take down information about his house and his lot and his yard, which were extensive: more like a homestead than an ordinary house. People didn't want to be observed and I didn't feel comfortable trying to objectify my neighbours and myself in that way. Luckily, other opportunities presented themselves.

It was the summer of 1990. Elijah Harper, speaking in the Manitoba Legislature, had just said the famous "No!" that killed the Meech Lake Constitutional Accord. There was much social ferment in the neighbourhood. Many country people from Aboriginal communities were visiting in the city. There was an air of exploration and celebration. Whenever I had the presence of mind to do so, I took the opportunity of adopting more flexible attitudes. I was sometimes able to challenge my own prejudices by trying out different responses in social situations. The instances were numerous. They were all around me, daily testing my made-up mind and, when I was able to honestly muster a different response, feeding me with new data. New information, showed me a new and different neighbourhood, one that had been there all along but that I had not been privileged to see. The only difference that I can verify was a personally declared intention to learn, to honestly and energetically inquire, outside myself, of my surroundings and, inside myself, of my own personal and cultural resources and excess baggage. A course in native issues provided me with practical and theoretical material with which to exercise and interpret my surroundings.

During the campaign for provincial elections that fall, I canvassed voters for George Hicks, the NDP candidate from Churchill, Manitoba who was running for a seat in the legislature for our riding (Winnipeg North Centre). This was a recognised role that did not look strange or menacing to people. It brought me face-to-face with many more of my neighbours. People talked to me on their front steps and porches and invited me into their homes. I encouraged people to get out and vote on election day and if they hadn't been enumerated, I explained where they should phone to get their names on the

voter's list. Many were not enumerated. I observed that whole sections of streets had been left off the list. Someone made complaints to the newspaper about this and enumerators were sent around again. Still on election night, in our ward where 60% of the voters turned out to vote, almost one third of the voters had to show identification and to have their names entered on the list at the polls because they had not been enumerated. Were the enumerators having much more trouble than I finding people at home, or were they working hurriedly through this neighbourhood that was foreign and not very valued to them?

In the summer of 1991 I worked on a Canada Census crew which put me into many homes and a wide variety of circumstances. I kept learning and occasionally seeing my own attitudes suddenly thrown into sharp relief against what became quite obvious social realities.

A local group of government and non-government employees, working independently, called the Seniors at Risk Network (SRN) had designed a community development project to explore issues such as isolation, loneliness and victimization among seniors. I was very fortunate in being offered one of the three staff positions. Starting in February, 1991, this would be my livelihood and the position of participant observation on which I would base an inner-city ethnography.

The Friendly Neighbour Program (FNP) consisted of nineteen months of friendly conversations and neighbourly relations with the tenants at St. John's Place and the accompanying discussions and evaluations with my two fellow staffers, our management committee and the Seniors at Risk Network as well as other agency people. There were some semi-formal activities: we participated in events sponsored by local agencies; we did a language survey in the EPH's in which we worked. I administered an evaluative questionnaire designed by the program evaluator to fifty-five of the one hundred and eight tenants. I was relatively free to define my own style of approach to people, to explore friendships and situations as I saw fit and to try to understand the possibilities for fuller and more satisfying lives for the tenants of the building. I wrote down people's answers when doing the FNP Questionnaire and I kept notes on observations and conversations (which I jotted down privately) when I got a chance. Over time fair to good rapport was

established with nearly everyone. The senior's block was generally a very congenial place to be.

At the end of the Friendly Neighbour Program in the fall of 1992 I did some preliminary evaluation of my fieldnotes and experiences. There were many notes on subjects such as "how I get along," "who helps me," "who I spend time with" and how people feel about themselves and their neighbours. In designing questionnaires for some semi-structured interviews I focused on these areas hoping to evaluate the question: in what ways does this group constitute a community? Interviews were held with the tenants and with fourteen agency staff and administration asking their experience and opinions in some of the same areas. Analysis of the "outside" interviews were not completed for this thesis.

In Chapter 2, introductions to the Friendly Neighbour Program and to the building and the population at St. John's Place are presented. In Chapters 3 and 4, a summary of conversations and experiences based on fieldnotes are assembled in a multi-voiced narrative account of the population and the surrounding neighbourhood.

I began analysis of the data by numbering items of information from fieldnotes and drawing up 291 analytical slips. I open coded them in a Glaser and Strauss grounded theory analysis (Glaser, 1978, pp 3-5). This helped me to assess the type of information that I actually had recorded. It also helped me to question intelligently the answers recorded on the FNP Questionnaires and the responses to interview questions. These were then tabulated and summarized. Techniques of multiple triangulation were not formalized, but it was my practice to record information from several different points of view on a particular matter as far as possible, for example: my observation, a local experiential report, a third party report, later local interpretation etc. This was not difficult in the field situation because people tended to talk to me and use me as sounding board. Interpretations of these data make up Chapter 5.

In this thesis, I introduce individuals as such and also as citizens of a loose but definite community. The ways in which this population functions as a community, why it is important to its members, how it protects its integrity, and some of the challenges it deals with comprise the conclusions which are built up through the narrative and data

sections. In Chapter 6, with the help of Jurgen Habermas, I suggest some resolution to the three questions that were left at the end of the Friendly Neighbour Program: why was the FNP so successful? Why did many "natural helpers" wish to remain unrecognized? How can the agencies such as those at St. John's Place encourage the "natural helping networks" when people don't want to get involved in formal activities?

Beginning Premises and Definitions

This study focuses on the population of tenants in an Elderly People's Housing Unit (EPH) in downtown Winnipeg as individuals and as members of their own society/culture. Interactions with outsiders will be described mainly for their effects on the community. The interactions of staff of agencies and other groups coming from outside the building or between groups and agencies, their histories or how they function have not been a focus.

In the title of this study a dichotomy: community and institution, is presented. A simple definition of community is used: a body of people living in a specific place and subject to the same laws (Merriam-Webster, 1974, p 154). Added to this definition is the assumption that there is a place in society where local definition and authenticity prevail. And this is what I refer to as community. As John McKnight put it, "...Community is the space where citizens prevail" (1994, p 2).

For institution I generally use the definition: an organization or establishment devoted to a cause or program especially of a public, educational or charitable nature (Webster's College Dictionary, 1991, first entry). Erving Goffman's (1959) pioneering concepts of the total institution is used in Chapter 6 to help delineate and clarify the nature of the social juncture in question. It was realized as the study progressed that in some instances and to some extent the effective institution exerting force on the population studied was of a different nature.

No assumption is made in this study of the superiority of certain kinds of relationship over other kinds, for instance, that relations between consanguine or affinal relatives are necessarily of a higher calibre than relations between informal acquaintances or between recipients of government service and paid employees members of agencies.

Examples of attitudes implied by such a premise would be: an elderly person cut off from contact with his or her family is by definition an object of pity (or worse); the care given by a home care worker or a tenant relations officer or an acquaintance cannot be of as high a quality as that given by a spouse or relative; friendships developed between paid staff and paying tenants won't be friendships in the fullest sense of the word. I would prefer to be free to look at these relationships and to interpret them as they appear in the field context.

Textual Conventions

The ethnographic present is between February 16, 1991 and May 31, 1993.

Quotation marks in the text set off near paraphrase as well as quoted remarks. Conversations were generally recorded from memory as soon as possible after the fact because note taking during conversations would have been self-defeating. Exceptions were during the administration of the Friendly Neighbour Program Questionnaire, the semi-formal interviews, the recording of autobiographies and during my work as secretary to Native Mediation Representative (NMR). No attempt was made to keep conversations and observations in chronological order.

Local terms and local categories are used throughout the text whenever possible, to evoke the tenor of the exchanges. But also a certain logic and validity can be tied up in people's usage and names for things. For ease of reading and also for authenticity of expressions such words or phrases are enclosed in quotation marks only the first time they appear in the text unless there is some other reason to do so. An example is, "the building" which is the local term everyone uses to refer to the physical and also the social locus of the action inside St. John's Place.

Abbreviations are generally used for long and often repeated titles and names such as FNP for Friendly Neighbour Program and HAC for Health Action Centre. For anonymity, fictional names and initials are used.

Ethics

Ethics will be considered to include the confidential and saving from harm as

outlined in the Society for Applied Anthropology in Canada's Ethical Guide-lines for Applied Anthropologists in Canada (1983). I believe that the interests of the people in this research should be protected considering their long term and political interests as well as their short term and personal interests. Considering the extremely disproportionate balance of power in their relationship to the larger community, I feel that great care must be taken not to jeopardise their sometimes tenuous and contingent positions. In community studies not all data is publishable. Normal discretion with an extra bit of consideration has been taken guided by friendship, personal trust, and the particular situation. Informed consent forms were signed by tenants being interviewed. A feedback session on the thesis is planned at St. John's Place but may not be held in time for the results to be included in this thesis.

Chapter 2

FIELDWORK IN INNER-CITY WINNIPEG: SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND A COMMUNITY NEAR HOME

INTRODUCTION TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Passengers

Riding the # 17 Northbound

Front of the Bus

"Bye, Little Guy," she waved, weaving slightly in her seat. The lady with the child had gotten off and a tall handsome woman with white leather boots and a package of pampers for toddlers took her seat. "I like kids," the first lady continued, fixing the second in her glance, "Do you have any kids?" The second lady smiled modestly with big round eyes looking mostly straight ahead. "I have a little girl," she said. The first lady kept on talking loudly, "I have two kids: a little girl, four, and a boy, three. But the white people took them away from me. They stole them from me, said I couldn't handle them. Funking bastards. I bet they can't handle them either.... Hey, I'm going to the bank. Do you want to come with me? We could have some fun." "No thanks," smiled the other. "Hey," said the first, "I think people are staring at me! I'm going to just stare right back," And she peered around with emphasis. "Hey, Perch, do you want to go with me?" She nailed the man sitting across the aisle from her and just beside me. He was a bulky guy with a cap and thick glasses, heavy jowls and a four-day stubble. He neither looked away nor changed his expression.

I was touched but also unable, embarrassed at the unseemly public display of emotion. The loud drunk woman was like a billboard or a red flashing sign proclaiming, "Malfunction! Malfunction!" with nobody to take responsibility. The red flashing light is a human being suffering and deadening the pain in order to proclaim it. We other passengers get the message in personal ways. We are both fellow sufferers and the

oppressor's accomplices.

It is the next day and I am remembering. And what about her kids?

How dare I wonder about them when I didn't dare speak to their mother?

Centennial Neighbourhood

This part of town, sometimes referred to as the Centennial Neighbourhood, is rather a small residential pocket. It is flanked to the east and south by the main downtown business districts and on the north by the railroad tracks. Housing is considerably less expensive than in other parts of the city. Per capita income is low. Many city destinations are within easy walking distance: doctors, dentists, schools, the Eagle's Hall, a shopping mall, churches, beer store, hotels, supermarkets, pharmacies etc. The bus service is good.

A few blocks away, across Main Street the first European settlers arrived by York-boat in 1812. They settled on long narrow river lots that stretched from Point Douglas westward. These had, by 1874, been surveyed and divided into the street plan that prevails today in this neighbourhood (see map p.29). The main economic base for the city up until then had been the fur trade and supporting that, the buffalo hunt and the rice harvest. Then in 1881 the railway was built across the Red River into Point Douglas and straight through Centennial Neighbourhood. The city's elite soon left the area for quieter locations along the Assiniboine river to the south leaving this part of town to the railway, other commercial interests and the growing inner-city population.

The first St. John's Church, a wooden structure on the corner of Jemima Avenue and Eden Street, was replaced by a stone and brick church which was a land-mark until it burned in 1972 (see map p.30). By that time urban renewal programs were underway in this part of town. The old Midland Railway tracks had been taken up and the space filled in with new streets and low-income housing. The old freight house was converted into a City Parks and Recreation facility and community centre. Most of the church congregation members had already relocated in newer, more affluent neighbourhoods to the south and the church was rebuilt in that part of town. The church board decided to erect a seniors apartment complex on the site of the burned building. It was designed as a

facility that would serve community needs and itself be a part of the community. They enlisted financial support from the three levels of government and built a structure with a wide central hall that would allow free access to and from the street. A non-profit management company was established to run the affairs of the building, St. John's Place. It was housed on the first floor along with the church offices of the small congregation that would continue to hold services in the spacious multi-purpose room on the first floor.

As one of Winnipeg's first EPH, St. John's Place was enthusiastically received. Its new bachelor suites were reasonably priced and compared very favourably with one room situations and shared accommodation that was not uncommon for the inner-city elderly at that time.

The building management company did well, expanding its operations to include numerous city properties. It has sustained flexible attitudes and capabilities over the years, adjusting to the changing local housing market and has thus maintained a reasonable occupancy rate and its significance in the community.

I had lived in sight of the building for several years, but I had been inside it only on voting day in 1990 when I acted as an election scrutineer at the polls that were located in the multi-purpose room. Once I had stopped and talked to a tenant who was sitting on a bench outside and had felt quite brave for it. In February of 1991 the Friendly Neighbour Program (FNP) sponsored by an inner-city agency group advertised discretely and locally for three staff members.

Figure 1: Winnipeg's Early Commercial District

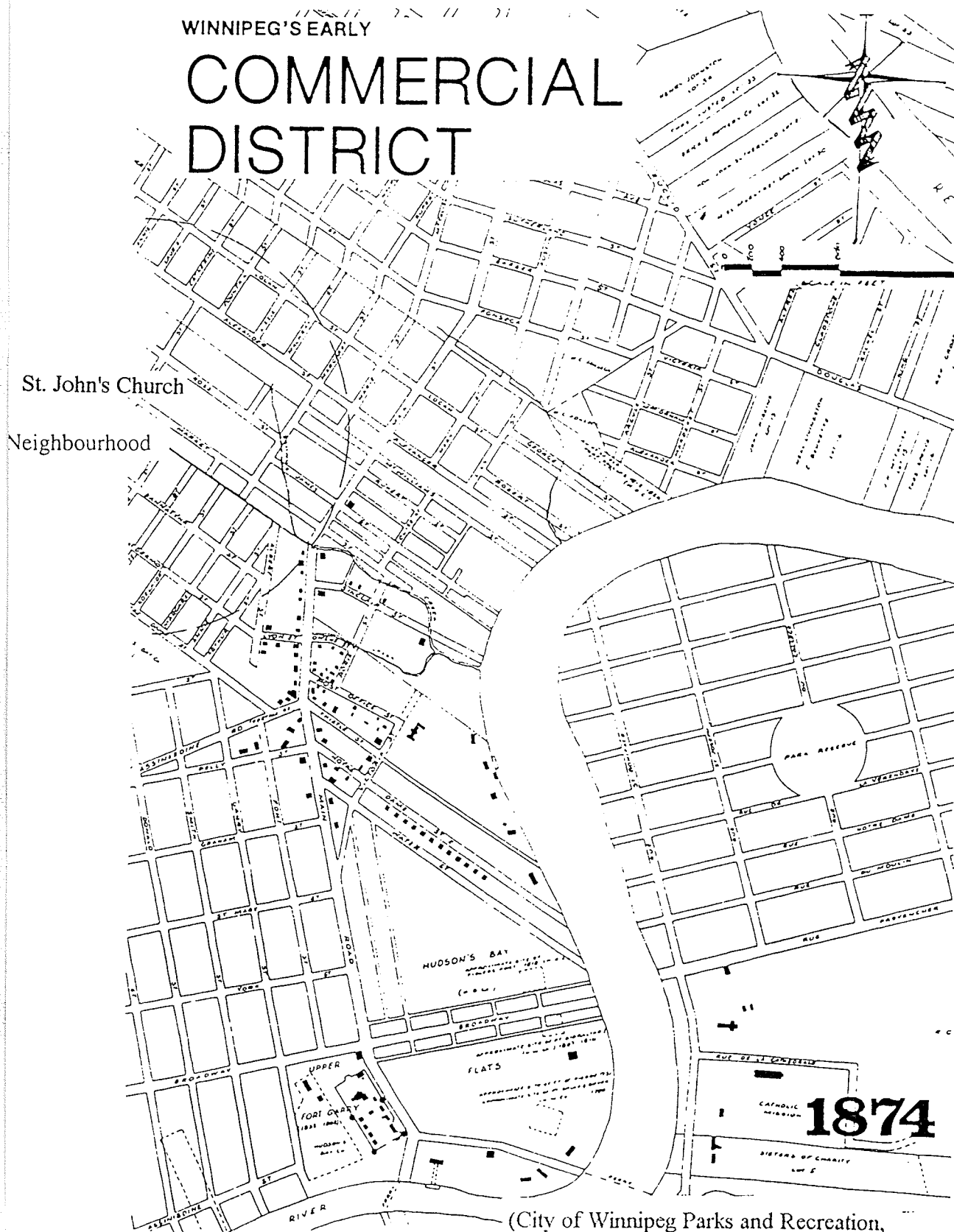
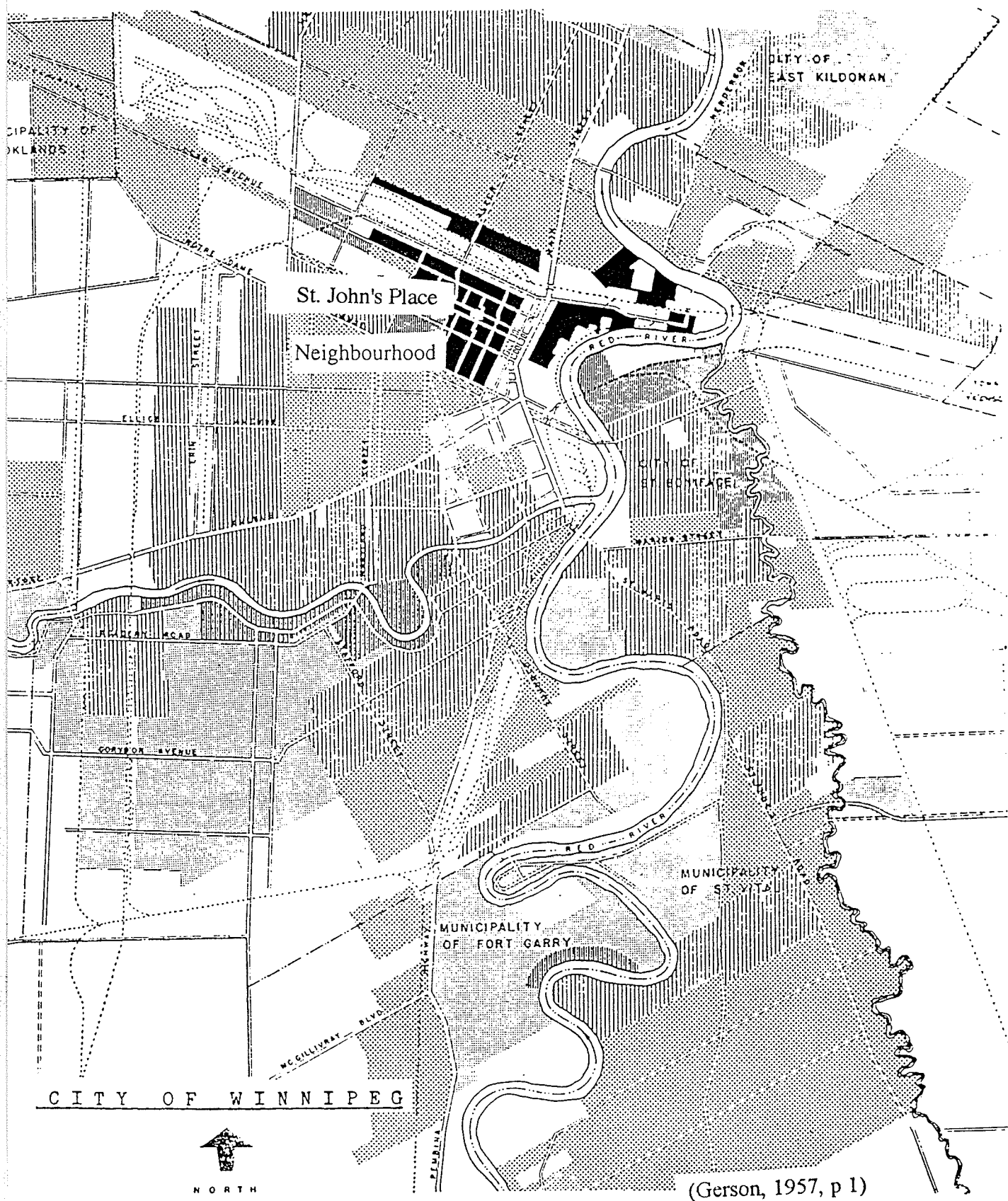


Figure 2: The Early Commercial District and Later C



(Gerson, 1957, p 1)

THE FRIENDLY NEIGHBOUR PROGRAM

In their proposal for funding, excerpted and edited below, the Seniors at Risk Planning Group (1993) described the changing needs of the aging population in Winnipeg and some particular problem areas. The Friendly Neighbour Program was designed to address isolation and issues surrounding it.

The City of Winnipeg is home to a growing number of senior citizens. (The elderly [65 plus] as a proportion of the total population rose from 10.2% in 1976 to 12.3% in 1986. This proportion is expected to continue to increase and reach 21.9% by 2006 (Seniors, 1993, p A-8). The circumstances for the elderly residing in the inner city are more severe than those residing outside the inner city. Representing approximately 17% of the inner city population they have a very high percentage of one-person households. Slightly more than 45% of inner city elderly households are below the low income line compared to 38% of other inner city households and to only 14% of elderly households outside the inner city. (p A-26,27)

In June 1990, representatives from organizations/agencies that "affect the lives of seniors (i.e.) social service, housing, recreation and health" began meeting as the Seniors at Risk Planning Group Network, to collaborate on possible ways to augment their ongoing efforts to respond to seniors needs.

After assessing needs, the Network decided to consider a possible initiative that could address the issue of isolation which would enhance and increase the self-esteem and sense of empowerment of seniors residing in the targeted public housing blocks. A "Friendly Visitor or Neighbour" model was adapted for three targeted seniors blocks. Staff would be between the ages of 50-65 years and would be culturally representative of the community.

Project staff would be hired with experience in working with seniors and awareness of seniors issues. Staff would make individual contacts with the seniors in the blocks to identify interest, hobbies and cultural issues. Staff would identify and recruit volunteer Friendly Neighbours from within the blocks, surrounding community and various volunteering organizations (Seniors, 1993, pp A-14 to A-20).

A friend had dropped a job description in my mailbox. This was my chance: a paying job and an opportunity to work for nineteen months in a seniors apartment complex two and one half short blocks from my home. As luck would have it, I got one of the three positions

Orientation

The three new staff, The Friendly Neighbour Workers, met for the first time on February 18, 1991. We gathered around the large table in the boardroom on second floor

of St. John's Place with K and P, our management committee for the project. We would work seventeen-and-one-half hours per week, mostly inside our buildings, but our movements would flow into the surrounding neighbourhood as did the activities of the seniors and middle-aged persons who were tenants of the EPH. It was left up to us to decide in which of the three EPHs of the program each of us would work. My work-site would be St. John's place, the large multipurpose structure that had been built after St. John's Church burned.

This was the first of our more than seventy staff/management meetings. They were to provide half of the double-nucleus centre of the Friendly Neighbour Project: the mandated institutional side that formed a counterbalance to the personal and exploratory connections the Friendly Neighbour Workers made with the tenants living in the blocks. The conscientious grappling with ideas, feelings and experiences in these intent and levelling staff/management meetings were vital to all of us and important to the program.

A practical and intelligent orientation and training program had been developed for us. It started with a week of workshops at the Winnipeg Volunteer Centre on the development and management of volunteer programs. Then Network members and some EPH staff joined the Friendly Neighbour Workers as participants in a series of workshops led by experienced and innovative inner city health and social service workers. Various topics were covered:

- The Helping Relationship and Peer Counselling
- The Aging Process: A Holistic Overview
- Personal Safety
- Landlord/Tenant Relations
- Addictions
- Voluntarism
- Codependency: Family and Professional
- Healthy Communities/Mental Health
- The direct and energetic presentations and the interactive character of these

sessions made them unusually helpful. Through them the FNP staff gained knowledge and perspective that would have been very difficult to achieve through trial and error, alone.

St John's Place: a Tour Through the Building

After that first staff meeting we were given a tour by Z of our management committee, with the help of tenant, SI, in his wheel chair. They took us around and showed us the different floors and locations, introducing us to people and explaining the services and procedures that formally make up the building and its activities.

To introduce the reader to the building and its people I will conduct a hypothetical tour. SI and Z in person could do it better but this will give the reader some idea. Let us say that it is about 10 a.m. on an ordinary Monday in the spring of 1992. The Friendly Neighbour Worker is going about her business of trying to learn about community and trying to be of help to the seniors who live here. Please follow along and I will describe the building in action as it generally appeared to me.

Between the building and the sidewalk on Jemima Avenue there are cement walkways and comfortable benches for sitting on. Planters and some beds for flowers and shrubs are arranged here and there in between. Some of the tenants are sitting and visiting on the benches. They nod and speak as we pass on our way inside. Two of the building management office staff are having their coffee break outside, making good use of the spring sunshine. In the centre front of the building are large floor-to-ceiling windows looking in on the multi-purpose room that houses St. John's Jemima United Church and other activities. This window-wall overlooking the street reflect the church's aim to have a ministry that will ebb and flow into and back from the neighbourhood.

I hit the switch and the automatic door swings open. Inside, stairs to the left lead down to the Health Action Centre (HAC). To our right, non-automatic doors lead into the building's first floor. Inside, immediately to the left, the door is open to the St. John's grocery. S is waiting on a customer, a man with a walker. He hangs his small bag of groceries on one of the hand grips of his walker and goes out just saying "hi." S offers several services to the building customers. She will deliver to peoples' rooms and take orders by phone when needed. She sells groceries on credit to some, collecting when the cheques come in the mail. S says the seniors accept her and miss her when she is away.

She enjoys working with the seniors and likes to help them. She says "I can't help my old parents back home (in India) so this way I can help someone else's parents."

Going back out of the store we can see the glassed-in offices of the Manitoba Association of Rights and Liberties immediately to our left. On the right is a suite of offices that are shared by the United Church Minister and the management head office. Straight ahead are the double doors leading to the multi-purpose room/church area. The hallway widens out in this area to accommodate the five tables and chairs for the customers of R's Canteen. His kitchen opens through a serving window into the widened hall. R serves a limited menu at the lowest prices I know.

Coffee, Tea, Milk	\$.55
Toast and Coffee	1.00
Muffins	.50
Sandwiches/ Plain or Kaiser	1.50
Fried Eggs/Toast	1.20

The sandwiches are generous and delicious. Several regulars eat breakfast here every morning. The small canteen is sometimes quite busy. RT, the most elderly lady in the building, comes down for coffee or a glass of milk most days and sometimes two or three times in a day. She is generally accompanied by BA, the younger-age friend who shares her one-bedroom suite and helps the older lady to keep it all together. Staff occupy two or more tables at coffee break time and tradesmen working in the building, and others from outside drop in periodically for coffee as well. R also delivers pots of coffee and trays of sandwiches, on request, to meetings held in the building. R seems rather quiet and serious but soon I started to be aware of his intelligent and good-natured, if cryptic, participation in the life of the "building." R is seventy-something and speaks with a good strong Greek accent. "No, I don't make much, but what you gonna do? If I stayed home I would spend money. I come down here and I make \$20.00. Also, I don't spend \$20.00. That's \$40.00, not too bad. I'm here to do my job; I don't find fault; I'm friends with everybody. What you gonna do?"

To the left of the canteen area is another suite of offices that make up the rest of the management's head office. A, the receptionist and information person can be seen

through the glass doors talking to someone. The management company has more than 1,500 tenants in seventeen locations across the city. And they all have A's number.

Here the wide hall turns right, and straight ahead you can see the light from the large glass doors opening onto Eden Street. On the left in this section of the hall are washrooms. Past them the hall divides. Glass doors to the elevators, open to all in the daytime, are on the left. Beyond them is the tenants' mail box alcove. The hall on the right is quite wide here. The walls on both sides are generally lined with twelve or so stackable chairs. This wide hall by the Eden Street entrance is the main general gathering place for tenants in the building. The chairs are usually the fullest around mail time, but all day long smaller or larger groups sit here by the doors. People sit and watch to see who is coming in and going out of the building, and who is going up or coming down on the elevators. People sit and talk to each other and to passers by joking and exchanging news and opinion. People passing through may stop and talk to those seated in the chairs. Conversation is sometimes enthusiastic and funny. It can become caustic. At other times conversations are quiet. Two or three wheelchairs often form a part of the line-up. I was made to feel welcome in the chairs by the doors. It was a good place to sit and catch up on the news, or just to be in the warmth of people's company.

It is very busy in the lobby just now. Clients are arriving for the Elders Health Program, locally referred to as the "Day Hospital." Two large vans have pulled up outside, beside the curb on Eden Street. Staff are helping the drivers to get people out of the vans and onto the sidewalk. Most need some assistance in getting themselves to the building. They cluster as a group, chatting and getting organized. Many have wheelchairs and walkers. TQ, a St. John's tenant who volunteers at the Day Hospital, is holding a door open by the time members of the group get to the building. Suddenly the lobby is full of people and sound. They slowly make their way into the elevator alcove and in time find places on the elevators and disappear on their way to the second floor.

The people participating in this program live in the neighbourhoods within a reasonable range of 450 Jemima Avenue. They live in their own homes or in rooms or apartments, in this and other seniors blocks. They need various kinds of personal/physical support that Elders Health can provide: physiotherapy and other

medical procedures, bath (and sometimes laundry) facilities, dietary and other assessments and advice or a hot meal. Group exercise, crafts and other social activities are designed to stimulate and benefit people who, in times of diminishing capabilities, have been too much alone.

Beyond the elevators is a maintenance and supply closet that is often open during the day time, with Q or another of the care-taking staff going in and out in the course of a cleaning or maintenance project. Q, the caretaker, is a compact ball of determined energy now in the midst of an important task for which he has too little time. He is responsible for the cleaning and upkeep of the residential towers: third floor and above. In addition, he trains and supervises the maintenance staff for their work in the basement and on the first and second floors. He lives in the special caretaker's two-bedroom suite on the third floor. When the office is open, tenants' requests and complaints are supposed to be directed to the building management office staff, who generate work orders for any extra tasks needing Q's attention. After 4:30 pm and before 8:30 a.m., weekends and holidays, Q is left to field complaints and requests that people can't contain until the office is open.

On the elevator going down to Health Action Centre we speak to the repair man who has been working on it, "There must be a lot of difference in elevators. This one, for instance, takes its time. "Well," he said, "It's just like with cars -- you've got your Mercedes Benz and you've got your Volkswagen. This elevator, here, is the Volkswagen."

The Health Action Centre, "a community health centre," occupies the whole of the lower level of St. John's Place. It aims at providing health care to inner-city residents of all age groups. A complete renovation of the space and facilities has recently been completed. The lighting and the decor are calm and quiet. Two people sit in the quite spacious waiting room. Two staff can be seen behind the high counter and a nurses' station and examination rooms are visible down the hall. A few offices, a board room and an employees' lounge are also tucked discreetly here and there. HAC started as a grass roots community clinic in this neighbourhood in the 1970's. It has been through several metamorphoses. In 1981 it became amalgamated with The Health Sciences

Centre, but it still retains a significant amount of self-direction and identity. There is a walk-in clinic twice a week but clients are encouraged to make appointments at all times. Staff include doctors, nurses and other therapists, out-reach workers, a dietitian and a dentist. These resources of HAC can also be augmented by those of The Health Sciences Centre.

The philosophy here is that this clinic is especially suited to community and geriatric practice because the doctors, being salaried rather than paid per patient visit, can take the time required to understand the patients' whole condition, can do more effective follow-up. And lab work can be ordered on an "as needed basis" rather than be limited to the "one procedure per visit" required by the Manitoba Medical billing system.

Second floor at St. John's Place is kind of an institution in itself. Getting off the elevator one can see straight ahead a sitting area near large windows looking out on Eden Street and to the left of them, a door into the stairwell. Back towards the elevators and on the left, is a door marked "Tenants Lounge." This small, nondescript room has an unlived-in feel to it. There is a storage room, a sink, a large refrigerator, an unused library of old books, some long folding tables (one with a phone) and chairs. A window looks out onto the back lane.

Across the second floor open space, behind a glass door and tall window, is the board room. A large table with chairs all around, a coat rack and a side table quite fill the space. This room, whether from lay-out or from frequent activity, seems open and full of promise. Through the double doors marked "Elder's Health" the space is defined by a battery of rooms: medicine room, supply room, tub room, wash rooms, an examination room, physiotherapy room, kitchen and offices all surrounding a large open area used for the day hospital Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 pm and in the evenings, by prior arrangement with the office and maintenance staff, for tenants' activities. A large pool table in one corner is a daytime reminder of this dual usage.

Just now about fifteen elderly people are sitting around the open space between the Eden Street windows and the day hospital door in chairs and wheel chairs. They are waiting for the noon meal to be served. One or two are talking but most are sitting quietly and watching. F, the dietitian is speaking to a rather frail looking man: "I'm going to give

you a real good drink in a minute....Here, I've brought you a vanilla milkshake. There, isn't it good? I think they're real tasty. Drink that and then I will give you two more to take home with you. If they go all right you can buy them at Riedigers. You should drink two or three a day because you're losing weight. They will help you. They're very good food. Just like eating a sandwich."

The floors above the second are of a standard pattern. There are large windows at the Eden Street end with sitting space, a small table and three chairs. West, down the hall, are aligned the eleven bachelor suites. The halls are fairly wide with good lighting and angled walls, creating a slightly baffled effect that avoids the dull sameness of many apartment hallways. Looking back west from the windows, the elevators are ahead and to the right with the laundry alcove beyond. Two one-bedroom suites flank the sitting area near the windows.

The space by the windows is used somewhat, but not heavily for sitting and visiting or for just looking out. The windows let in a lot of light and small sections can be opened for fresh air. On Victoria Day, fireworks from the Forks are watched from fourth floor on up.

The local term for all this space is simply "the building". Approximately 110 people live here. More than thirty people work here on a full or part time basis in the businesses and agencies mentioned above. Besides that service people such as public health and VON nurses, Envoy Medical Services, home care workers and social workers and other institutional and agency representatives as well as families and friends and informal social and ecological networks come into the building regularly. It can be a busy place, yet sometimes it is very quiet.

A Brief Population Profile

At this point some simple statistics may help to consolidate a picture of the population. There are 115 suites in the residential tower at St. John's Place. These consist of ninety-eight bachelor suites, seventeen one-bedroom suites and the one two-bedroom suite of the caretaker. In March of 1992, 110 tenants lived in the building:

More than half (68%) of the tenants were considered to have moderate to high

mobility. They move around the building and out into the neighbourhood without noticeable difficulty. They walk and they travel in buses, "handi-transit" and cars. For thirty-five of the tenants, mobility is a limiting factor. They may use a wheelchair or a walker or a cane(s), or may tire quickly or experience pain when walking. They may be afraid of falling. Limited vision also affects the mobility of some tenants.

Direct questions were not generally asked about age, peoples' place of birth or ethnic origin because such questions were found to make people uncomfortable. This information often came out in conversation, but in any case was not crucial in the study. For the tabulations in Tables 1 and 2 the few cases, where age or ethnic origin were not known, the judgment of the FNW was considered adequate to establish a general picture of the group.

Numerous people living in the building came from Native reserves and Metis communities. Some grew up in Winnipeg and elsewhere of Aboriginal parents. Sorted roughly along lines of ethnic background the population is approximately 52% Euro-Canadian, 44% Native and Metis and 4% Chinese. The results of a language survey was conducted as an integral part of the FNP in which direct questions were asked can be seen in Table 3.

The proportion of men to women sixty years of age or older in the building, 62:38% is similar to that of the surrounding neighbourhood, 64%:36% (Profile of Census Tracts in Winnipeg. Part A, 1992, p 22). These figures contrast markedly with the city-wide proportions of men to women in the same age range, 42:58% (p 88).

The men of the building tend to be a bit younger than the women: 21% of their number being over seventy-five years of age compared to 38% of women. The men also tend to be more mobile: 75% being of medium to high mobility compared to 64% of the women.

Looked at in terms of the younger and fitter part of the population: those under the age of seventy-five years of age and of medium to high mobility: seventeen (28%) are women and forty-four (72%) are men. Of the younger and fitter group, an ethnic sort reveals that 54% are Native and Metis, 43% are Euro-Canadian and 3% are Chinese.

These figures demonstrate the atypical nature of this population. The Community

is not only predominantly male, but even more predominantly younger, fitter males. If the women are older and more infirm it may be that men, in comparison, are here for social and economic reasons in comparison to the women who are here for reasons of age and infirmity. This view is actually suggestive of the apparent character of the building. It is noticeable in the halls and outside in the summer that men are present in much greater numbers.

Also noted in the population survey is that during the twelve months observed, of the original 110, nine people died and sixteen moved elsewhere. In March 1993, 108 tenants were counted. Thus, the turnover of population in the year was 20%. A Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation official informed me that St. John's Place maintains a noticeably higher occupancy rate than many EPHs in the city and province.

Table 1

Age, Sex and Mobility at St. John's Place

Number of Persons

(Medium/high mobility in brackets)

	Males	Females	Total
Under 60 years	12 (9)	7 (5)	19 (14)
60-75 years	42 (34)	19 (13)	61 (47)
Over 75 years	14 (8)	16 (6)	30 (14)
Total	<u>68 (51)</u>	<u>42 (24)</u>	<u>110 (75)</u>

Table 2

Ethnic Background at St. John's Place

Euro-Canadian	57
Native/Metis	48
Chinese	5
Total	<u>110</u>

Table 3

The Results of The Building Language Survey

Respondents : 59

No English: 5

English Only: 26

English Plus:

Saulteaux 8

French 7

Cree 3

Icelandic 2

Norwegian 2

German 2

Swedish 2

Ukrainian 2

Total Bilingual

28

The Friendly Neighbourhood Worker Starts Out: People and Activities

It was Day #1 of fieldwork. Introductions, orientations and tours were over. I had a position from which I could learn about community by participation in it. The "field" was all around me but here I stood afraid, frozen. I couldn't start. For refuge I fled to the tenant's lounge on second floor. Ten minutes of dumb indecision was enough. There was nothing for it but to do it. I headed to the tower where the seniors of the building actually live. On the fourth floor a man was sitting in the space with the chairs by the east windows. I joined him looking out on the grey and cold March day.

Below in the courtyard nervous sparrows disturbed the too calm afternoon. Bent on snatching bread crumbs, alarmed at every sound or movement they flew down to the ground for greedy pecks. Then startled by a sound or movement they flew back to the spruce tree in a v-shaped pack and disappeared into the branches. Up and down they flew, in distracted rhythm. A bit calmer, I spoke to the man and then, I opened the door to the stairwell and climbed up to the next floor. My fieldwork had begun.

During the first three months of the Friendly Neighbour Program we three staff were encouraged to spend time getting acquainted with the tenants of our buildings. This was a challenge in itself. I was an outsider of uncertain origin and purpose, just hanging

around. We were given Health Sciences Centre identification badges to enable us to verify our legitimacy. Early on in the program I had an experience with a very elderly lady who was sitting beside the windows on fourth floor hanging onto her walker for support and leaning towards the windows. It was late afternoon and she was watching the unloading of a large number of modular office shelf and file units. HSC had them to spare and sent them here where they would be very useful. EN was saying, "Boxes! Boxes and more boxes! Why are they bringing all those boxes in here?" We talked. This was a charming lady living curiously balanced between the past and the present. But she wanted to know who I was and what I was doing. I tried to explain and she tried to understand. "Are you a gu'ment person?" she asked. I tried again to explain and she still looked puzzled. Then I thought of my badge with my picture and my title: Friendly Neighbour Worker and I showed it to her. "Yeah, you're a gu'ment person," she chuckled. EN had gotten her answer. Chagrined, I shoved the badge into the bottom of my purse where it stayed.

I felt shy about introducing myself. Yet I had to force myself to do it: "Hello, I'm the Friendly Neighbour Worker. I am meeting people in the building to see if you and your neighbours are doing alright. Are there particular things that you need and don't have? We're especially interested to find out if people are lonely or isolated." Often before I had gotten out three words let alone my whole speech the person at their door would have said "I don't want any," and closed it, sometimes gently, sometimes firmly. As I got acquainted with people I also told them that I wanted to write a history of the building and the people in it. Later on I even said I would write a book about the building and people would smile and say, "Yeah, we've heard that before!" I soon met FD who was pleased with the prospect of a bit of variety, something out of the ordinary in his life. He invited me to his room for a talk.

Walking into FD's place was a bit of a shock. It was quite stark. There was a bed with a figured spread or sheet on top and two new pillows with no cases. There was a bedside stand of new, light wood, a chest of drawers of the same material and a colour TV on top of that. The floors and windows were bare and the heat was turned off. I sat on the bed for a while and then switched to the floor by the window sitting on my note-

pad pad against the cold of the floor. When I complained FD tossed me a pillow and I was comfortable after that.

FD liked to talk and told me about himself. He was living here because of poor health (heart problems and trouble with his legs) and because of a family breakup that had left him stranded and sad and on his own. He didn't like the building...or the people, really. He didn't feel they were in his class. But here he was and he would make the most of it. He tried to be neighbourly and as helpful as possible. He said that if I'd meet him on second floor at 3:45 he would treat me to a cup of coffee.

The Congregate Meal Program: "Meals on Wheels"

FD found me in the tenant's lounge where several tenants were getting help filling out their income tax returns. "Coffee's ready," he called out. I followed him into the large room on second floor: the Day Hospital/Meals On Wheels dining room/tenant's recreation and meeting room. It struck me as odd that this room does not have a name. It is Day Hospital in the day time and otherwise it is called "second floor."

The space was just now being set up for the Congregate Meal Program, for which dinners are brought from HSC. FD very gallantly and effectively took me around and introduced me to each participant. There were sixteen men and two women.

A few days later I came again for the "meal program." I took over from FD the task of passing plates of food around and he sat down to eat his dinner. Staff from Health Action Centre do the serving and they go at it non-stop. A said to FG, "There's not much coffee in the urn and there's no more on the shelf. You'll have to add water for Bingo tonight." SI said I shouldn't come to talk to him today because the painters had just done his suite. So I set up an appointment for next Wednesday instead. FD gave a little valentine box of candy to me and one to A. I took a piece and passed the box around. Some people were very pleased and some refused. FG was setting up everything for Bingo.

This is the way I started getting acquainted with the tenants, attending the organized activities and talking to individuals in their suites. I went to the "Meet your MLA Night," the Sunday church services, I shopped at the store, I went to the tenant

elections. I made up a set of questions and interviewed FD:

Age: 63
Time here: 4 months
Mobility: Walks short ways. Agile but no endurance. The cold is difficult.
Health: Circulation problems. OK if medicine is taken regularly.
Independence: Rides buses all over.
Help required: \$ for medication.
Services used: Meals on Wheels.
Friends & Relatives: Left friends back in Toronto. No real friends here.
Visitors: No.
Hobbies: Likes dancing.
Special interests: Would like to live in pleasant, congenial surroundings and make friends.
Special abilities: Has time.
Economics: Difficulties making ends meet. Expensive medicine.
Needs: Relief from anxiety.
Wishes: Pleasant company and surroundings.
Volunteers: At Meals on Wheels and Tenants Association activities.
Activities: Building recreation. Limited ability to exercise.
Interviewer's Comments: This man is trying to sort out his future.

After FD and I completed this rough questionnaire he said, "Now read it back to me." I did so and he listened intently. When I finished the last item, (the interviewer's comments) he looked at me and said, "I'm going to leave here; I'm going to find a better place. You're right. I'm trying to sort out my future. And this isn't it."

FD wasn't joking. He began inquiries into alternative housing. He sold and gave away his belongings and flew to Toronto. I used to get news about FD from a friend who he phoned once in a while. He continued to suffer from marginal health and lack of funds, but at last account he had found a congenial spot in Rainy River Ontario.

I feel that I should make a statement about FD. He was a very puzzling and contradictory character. He called people and groups of people disparaging names behind their backs. Around people he was ever the gallant, smiling and serving them, swinging the Friendly Neighbour Worker around the dance floor on his agile but pained and swollen legs. I never believed half the tales he told me. But he seemed to sense a truth about himself and the tenants here, at least the ones who attended the functions on second floor. He felt that colour and action were needed. He had some to give and he gave it. After FD left, he was remembered by many with appreciative enthusiasm.

Chapter 3

NEIGHBOURS IN THE BUILDING: OBSERVATIONS AND CONVERSATIONS

To provide a more immediate impression of the people of the building, as I met them, as they presented themselves to me. I have put together a series of sketches of some of the people that I met at 450 Jemima Avenue. Here are the neighbours in the building, along with some description and commentary and a few anecdotes. Here is what the people were like and what it was like to be there among them.

"I sit where I can see them all; I know them all by name."

I consider him a fellow student of human nature and social life.

"What's the biggest problem in building?" I asked HD once.

"It's loneliness. It's just like me. I've been sleeping in to shorten the day, but that only ends up lengthening the night."

HD came from St. John, New Brunswick. He spent thirteen months on the Niagara Peninsula deciding where he would start with his life. Then he came to Manitoba and got married. He always made a living cutting wood. He and his wife worked together as a team and they did quite alright. She died recently after being sick for some time. He grieved considerably but didn't give up on life. He went on a diet at that time because he didn't feel like eating. He needed to lose weight anyway, he told me. He uses weights and exercises in his apartment because he doesn't want to get too far out of shape, but he doesn't go outside very much.

This man is always making jokes and wisecracks. Attitude seems to be important, coming back with a smart remark. It means that you are on top of the situation rather than the other way around.

He said to me one day, "I've been thinking and I decided that I'm going to cut another 1,000 cords of wood before I die."

"That's great, I answered enthusiastically, "Does that mean you will be going off to get a job?"

"Not now, he replied, "I'm going to cut the 1,000 cords of wood *just* before I die."

NT (80 years)

At 7:30 pm on a warm evening I am on my way home. There is NT sitting on a bench outside the building. He is feeding the sparrows from a sack of bread crumbs on his lap. They move towards him and away from him like an ocean wave ebbing and flowing. When he moves his long arm and hand out to scatter crumbs the sparrows on the ground startle and fly up. When he brings his hand in again for more crumbs they fly down again as a body, alighting and pecking furiously. NT moves his hand out with more crumbs and they startle and fly up once more. His movements are rhythmic with no break or hesitation and the sparrows follow. He is playing the birds as a musician plays his guitar -- calmly, with sureness, with effectiveness in some kind of seamless and unremarkable whole: Mr. T and the birds and summer.

He told me about how he kept missing people wherever he went, in Vancouver and in Peguis at the Pow Wow. But NT has lots of family and friends. He found other relatives in Vancouver. A grandson took him down the new highway, from Hope, British Columbia to a small town, a long way down the mountainside. At the Manitoba Pow Wow he helped make coleslaw until he had "had enough of that." Then he sat down and enjoyed the proceedings.

Mr. T has lived in building for seventeen years. " Things are better since a night time security guard has been on duty. You used to find people sleeping and peeing in the halls - never knew when you'd run into them." Mr. T. grew up on the Pequis Reserve. He joined the army in the Second World War and served guard duty at the barracks at what is now the University of Winnipeg. After the war NT was not shy about getting what was due him as a veteran, even though he had to come all the way to Winnipeg sometimes to demand things that he was quite obviously entitled to as a veteran and a farmer. NT worked as a carpenter for many years. He says he did everything except lay carpets. Mr. T's kids are doing fine. They have education and stable homes and they remain a caring and close-knit family. He visits them and they do projects together. He

goes to the nearby Eagles Hall for activities. Up to now he hasn't socialized much in the building. Mr. T. is a handsome man, straight and strong with tired, proud eyes.

TC (under 60 years)

A pretty woman and quiet, TC has multiple serious ailments which she talks about. She told me about an upcoming trip to the hospital for gall-bladder surgery. There was concern about possible complications because TC also has diabetes. When the time came, her surgery had to be rescheduled because "the machine broke." TC lives alone but her son comes to visit and sometimes brings his little boy along as well. I liked her and she always spoke to me in her shy way. Twice she initiated a different kind of conversation.

When I went to visit a tenant as a Friendly Neighbour Worker I always said that I was there to help. People not always but often took me at my word. One day TC saw me in the hallway on the first floor and asked me to come to see her later in her room. When I went up and knocked she asked me in and as we stood in the doorway she told me her problem. Her brother had died and was going to be buried out in the country on her reserve. She wanted to go but had no money. Was there any place or any person to help her find the \$20.00 she needed to catch the bus? TC neither smokes nor drinks, but considering her active role in her extended family and her very small income it was not hard to understand how she could have run short of money. I told her that I would think about it and see if I could find someone to whom TC could apply for the \$20.00 she needed today and I was successful in that case.

Another time TC asked me to visit and hear about a problem. In her room she asked me to sit down and then she showed me a letter from the building management threatening eviction. The complaint was that TC was misusing the laundry facilities to do loads of wash for members of her family.

TC asked if I would put in a good word for her in the office, which I did. I argued that TC was extremely peace loving and very anxious to stay in the building and that if she understood the rules exactly she would definitely abide by them. TC was not evicted.

I asked TC the questions in the FNP Questionnaire. Her answers seemed designed to avoid trouble while remaining as positive as possible. She didn't want the building to change in any way. She did not want to increase her involvement in building activities. She said that there are no problems in the building, that it's "good the way it is." She feels safe in the building and thinks the surrounding neighbourhood is "not bad."

I considered TC to be a working woman, carefully using her resources in support of her extended family. This is a person who, I believe, the system would want to support more fully if they could manage to see her as the FNW was able to do, as a very conscientious and able provider, stretching small funds and marginal energy to serve the needs of her family.

FS (about 70 years)

FS's mother died when she was very young. Her dad died when she was at the residential school at Elkhorn, Manitoba. Her brother was allowed to go home for the funeral but she was judged too young and kept at school. She says that as she was young she didn't mind at the time. But when FS was finally allowed to return home for a visit she and her sister found that they could not talk to each other. This was kind of horrible for them and for FS's auntie who was looking after them. At school FS had been forbidden under "threat of the strap" to speak Saulteaux and was allowed to speak only when she spoke English. By the end of that summer FS understood and could speak some Saulteaux. After that FS was resolved not to lose her own language again and she would covertly speak Saulteaux to friends when no matrons or teachers were around.

FS learned home maintenance skills at school and got some experience working in a minister's home before her graduation. She married a German immigrant and they had a farm beside a railroad track. They kept cows and horses and always had a big garden. People came to buy milk and cream and in the fall they bought large bags of potatoes.

FS's husband was always kind and good to their boys. He died suddenly of a heart attack and FS misses him very much. FS plans her life very carefully. She does

not like to be around drinkers and worries about her friend who drinks. FS goes out a lot but is afraid of falling on the ice in the winter. She enjoys good stories on TV, "really gets into them." On weekends FS sees her sons and their families and visits them either in person or by phone. She raised one grandson from age seven to age eighteen. He comes to visit every week. FS went with her daughter-in-law to a meeting on native spirituality and enjoyed it very much.

FS is careful not to take too many risks or let things get out of hand.

NU (70 years)

NU is an energetic and socially active woman. She has lots of friends in the building. Her cheerfully decorated apartment reflects the energy and varied interests of NU's busy life. NU knits socks and mitts for her grandchildren, ripping out old sweaters to use for wool. She cooks for various friends in the building. For example, if someone is hungry for bannock they will ask her to bake some for them. If someone has been in the hospital, NU will cook a few meals for them while they recuperate. She puts up pickled beets in the summer time and gives them away over the year as gifts to her friends.

NU had numerous ailments: diabetes, arthritis and bronchitis trouble her regularly. NU is a sharp dresser; she knows how to look good in her clothes. She plays bingo and enjoys being with her friends.

NU was moving into a one-bedroom suite on her floor the last time I saw her. She was delighted. NU loves to decorate and with the extra space and the privacy of a one bedroom apartment she will be able to enjoy life and to express herself more fully and more naturally.

FN (81 years)

FN has been in the building eleven years. She is a well-built, fine looking woman. When she bakes bread the halls fill with a wonderful aroma. Several of her neighbours told me about "the day she brought me a fresh loaf." Her grandson, a clean-cut teenager, comes by on bread baking day. FN grew up in an oppressive home

situation. She married young and found more of the same. She was forced to work extremely hard. Eventually she brought her girls to town for a better life. Here in Winnipeg things have worked out "not too badly." FN is a pleasant and warm lady.

FN does her own work and looks after Mr. T's apartment when he's out of town. She says she has "no problems of my own and I don't bother with other people's business."

FL (50 years)

FL has lived three-and-one-half years in the building. He suffered a very debilitating stroke in which his speech and mobility were severely affected. He uses a walker to get around. He exercises conscientiously trying to regain capacity. Friends sit with him inside the building and, in good weather, outside on the benches.

"I would keep it to myself if I had a complaint but I don't have any," he said on the tenant questionnaire. FL's family and friendship network are supportive and attentive. He experienced a personal tragedy during the year. One of FL's brothers killed another brother while they were drinking.

DT (55 years)

DT has lived in the building for two years. He is large powerful man with blond curly hair and sharp blue eyes. DT raised his kids up north in the construction camps where he worked. He sustained awful injuries in colossal falls while working on dams and other installations, but he always recovered against whatever odds. DT says he never could drink much. He carries a lot of excess weight. He is now in the process of getting heart surgery done. He is hoping to get his health back together and go back to work. I told him that my son-in-law had built me a closet. He responded that recently he had built twenty-seven closets in three days, "....for the nuns. You have your stack of wood and your saw and you do all the cutting. Then you get some help to put things together...no problem." I read him a poem that I had written for a friend and he made a good suggestion for improving it.

CW (about 68 years)

CW lives quietly. He used to be a fisherman up north. He has a friend outside the building whom he meets everyday for a coffee and then a stroll "and another coffee." When the Friendly Neighbour knocked on his door he said he didn't want to talk but later when his neighbour, SI, introduced us, CW became quite open and cordial. CW is a very nice man, cheerful and caring. When SI was unwell, CW checked in on him and helped him when he could.

NB (55 years)

NB has lived in the building for three years. She has multiple health problems. Her brother says she's "hooked on prescription drugs." She helped two brothers and two others move into the building and then she helped them furnish their suites. For a year NB helped an elderly cousin to manage her financial affairs. NB is alert, interested and active. She is involved with friends and family inside the building and out.

IA & SBA (late middle age)

This couple were very heavy social drinkers. Their drinking activities were too extreme for this building. After a few months they were asked to leave. I never talked to I very much but I got better acquainted with RA. She attended my exercise classes a few times. SB was quite charming even when drunk.

EM (87 years)

EM has lived in the building for seven years. She takes treatments for an internal cancer. She is tall, slim and straight, an immigrant from Germany. She is proud and self-reliant. She has trouble sleeping at night, especially when her neighbour has long drinking parties. She is afraid of getting hooked on sleeping pills. She keeps up social contacts with friends and relatives outside the building. EM keeps her apartment in quite elegant shape. She bakes ahead and invites her family in for a dinner or a luncheon

around Christmas time. She sometimes visits with people in the halls and in the elevators. One day at the chairs by the Eden Street entrance she stopped and talked to W, asking him about his smoking habit. She told him how hard it had been for her to quit.

FS (54 years)

FS is the son of a tenant. He is staying here temporarily while a badly injured ankle heals and to help his mother who is aging and needing more support. This is a very difficult time for this man because he is facing the prospect of having to take an early retirement. He has been well-paid and well-thought-of as a master roofer, but Workers Compensation will help him only if he promises never to climb on a roof again. This seriously curtails FS's earning power and employment opportunities especially in an uncertain job market. This is for him a time of serious life crisis.

RA (age 68)

"I stayed on the farm thirty years too long," RA said philosophically as he cruised back and forth in front of me. I was pinned in, sitting in the chair that he had offered me, the kitchen table to my right and the living room sofa immediately to my left. He paused for a swallow of beer from the bottle on the table. Back and forth he went punctuating his words with another sip. I was scared. I couldn't have gotten out easily and RA is a very large man. The drinking made me uncomfortable. My friend, JB, the native out-reach worker for HAC, says that she is less afraid of drunks than of other people, "Sober, you're sharper and faster. You can tell from their eyes what they're going to do." Here in RA's apartment, it was the situation and not what RA was saying that was frightening. He was telling me about his life.

When his parents died in the Manitoba Interlake district other relatives came back to the farm to get their share of the land and goods. RA left the whole thing to them rather than dicker over what rightly should have been his since he had invested his whole life in it. After that he travelled around working in lumber, mining and fishing camps as a cook or carpenter. Now unwell, RA sits in a wheelchair, his very swollen bare feet resting on the floor. He doesn't want to talk about his health. He is knowledgeable

about news and politics claiming as relatives well known Manitoba politicians.

As I left RA said, "Come back and see me any time." And I did. I took him some National Geographic and Canadian Geographic magazines which he enjoyed. "I might have been a wildlife biologist," he told me. He likes outdoor things.

I frequently stopped by to tell RA what I was doing in the building. His comments were often quite helpful. He knows the building and he has a calm and thoughtful outlook. RA's room is a gathering place for informal social activities. He is referred to as "Daddy Paul" by some of the regular visitors. It is his raucous parties that keep EM awake at night.

GKB (age 76)

GKB has trouble with her eyes. Recent surgery didn't work out and she can't see at all out of the treated eye. Now the other eye needs attention. She is a tall, straight and handsome woman, a private person with her own circle of friends and not really looking around for new ones. The Friendly Neighbour Worker didn't see her very much.

FE (age 58)

FE has lived in the building two years. She is a large lady with arthritis that is sometimes quite debilitating. This is difficult because keeping fit has been a value and also an enjoyment for FE. She used to work out at a commercial gym with her daughter.

It takes some thought and attention to communicate with this lady. She doesn't say much and speaks with a clipped speech in the back of her mouth. Her short, pinched sentences seem like a verbal shorthand, but the effort required for getting acquainted is well worth it. FE is a very nice person. She is thoughtful and witty and knows what is going on. She gave me a shrewd piece of political advice once when I needed it and didn't know that I needed it.

FE worked with the Tenants Association for several months, helping with dinners and refreshments for functions and collecting and counting money at bingos. I used to go and help her sometimes. She also brought her daughter in to help. It was a chore that she didn't get much praise for but she seemed proud of the responsibility. FE

was an active matron in her family. She disliked it when the caretaker told her grandchildren that she had sent to the store across the street to "Go back to your grandmother's room and *stay there!*" "They weren't running up and down the halls or making noise or anything," she said, "just going to the store."

FW (age about 50)

FW is a quiet and pleasant man. He is away up north working for long periods. He has relatives in the building. When his Dad, also a tenant, died, FW raised money to pay for his large funeral.

AT (age 58)

I called on AT. He said he recognized me and asked me to come in. He was drinking with a young friend, MP. He isn't well. His voice goes away sometimes and he can't speak. He has asthma and has to go to the hospital for oxygen. He has an ache in his side. He loses his breath sometimes. His ears get plugged up and he can't hear. He doesn't see too well. He had seven kids. His wife died of massive cancer two years ago in St. Boniface Hospital. "My kids say I killed her," he grieves (he was always drunk). He says that one time he went to church and after that didn't drink for five years. One son has come to visit him recently. After his last trip to the hospital, MP, a young woman who visits in the building, came in and cleaned up the place and coaxed him eat some food.

AT is not a totally unsympathetic character. He cried when he was thinking and talking about his wife. He got frustrated when he lost his voice and couldn't express himself. He plays cribbage with MP. I asked her my dad's duck riddle (A duck in front of two ducks; a duck between two ducks; a duck behind two ducks: how many ducks?) and she got it right away. Another day when I stopped by AT was sitting at his table by the window with Mr. AD. He was looking out at the rain and enjoying the cool wet breeze.

AT speaks English only. He used to speak Polish, Icelandic and Ukrainian as well but it all fell into disuse. AT meant well. He wanted to make friends. He invited

me to come the next day for lunch. He said that we'd make pancakes.

Mr. AT is a sick and debilitated drinker with an edge to him. He can't remember things. He can't make any plans. Some building people drink with him, but he's not generally well-thought-of. PR says he stole money from RT while drinking at her place. That is just about unforgivable around here. RT is the oldest woman and the second oldest person in the building and held in high esteem. AT was finally evicted.

(Answer to duck riddle: three ducks.)

IM (age 94)

Mr. IM is the oldest person in the building. He is hard of hearing. (To be understood I have to put my face close to his and with low voice tones enunciate clearly using my lips with energy.) Mr. M has been beaten and robbed. He carries a sport bag around with all his Chinese medicine in it. He left it somewhere and it disappeared. It had \$2,000 in it.

Mr. M fell in his suite and bruised his face badly. He told me about it. "I was standing in front of my fridge and I lost control and fell down on the floor, just wiped right out. If a child falls down it is no problem. He springs up again. If an old man falls he is helpless; he can't spring up. This was the first time I knew what it was like to feel old. I fell down and couldn't spring up. Well, nothing can be done about it. Ninety-four is ninety-four."

Until two or three years ago Mr. M walked a mile to the Sherbrooke swimming pool every day, where he swam a mile and then walked home. More recently he has waited for a ride from a fellow swimmer and he goes less often. FG remembers that when she was a child in this neighbourhood in the 1930's Mr. M had small grocery business. He bought fruit and vegetables from the wholesalers and delivered them door to door using a handmade carrier. The last I heard, IM had gone back to China to his natal village for a visit. It may be that "ninety-four is ninety-four" but Mr. M is a delight and inspiration to all of us who know him.

PR sometimes came across the hall and helped Mr. M clean his place which needed it badly.

PR (age 71)

PR moved into the building after a personal disaster. The rooming house that she was caretaking, two blocks from here, burned in an awful fire just before Christmas of 1990. PR was quite devastated. She lost everything. She and her son were barred by the police from going back in after the fire even for their personal things. When they were finally allowed to go in, the place had been sacked. Over time she recovered some optimism. PR is a small woman, in good health and very active. She has a commercial sewing machine in her room. She is an active matriarch in her family. Her kids and grand kids came in to visit and to sleep over at night. Complaints were raised by the caretaker about her family activities. This was hotly resented by PR. She is a very spunky lady trying to understand how to arrange for her future in a way that is workable, helpful to her family and that seems amenable to conviviality.

AD (Age about 68)

Mr. AD took me at my word when I said, "I want to know how you are getting along." He told me all about his health and general condition.

Mr. AD has not been feeling well. He has no energy at all. He had a second heart attack in November. He says he had not been taking his medicine. "I don't quite know what to do with myself in this condition. I don't have my normal strength and I'm constantly in danger of getting sick." His son goes to the reserve for a day or so but won't take AD along because he "might get sick." He could go back to the reserve for a month in the summer but doesn't really want to because it is so very quiet and lonely there. It is two miles from his house to the next neighbour.

Mr. AD used to keep cattle and also about thirty horses which ran free on his land. They were medium size animals that stood the winter well. When a neighbouring Icelander wanted a horse he would catch the one he liked and then come by and pay AD for it.

AD says he gets depressed sometimes. He wonders about going to church. He has nine kids and twenty grandchildren. His daughter works next door at an alternative

school run by the R.C. Church. His son who has worked at a similar institution for ten years was featured in a newspaper article recently. There was a large picture and a story about him. Mr. AD has a steady girlfriend. Around the room pictures of family, especially children, are featured.

This is a fine man, gentle and dignified.

Later when I saw Mr. AD he had nearly always "been drinking," at home or in the halls or downtown on the street. He was still his same self, looped or not. Mr. AD was very pleased when I gave him a house plant. He looked after it carefully and later gave a cutting to his neighbour. He then asked me to get her some soil and a pot for it, which I did.

I saw him in an apartment sale in the building one day. He was taking home bargains in great, good humour, joking with Barb Whips from the Age and Opportunity Elder's Abuse program who was also attending the sale. Always the same Mr. AD.

NH (age, about 70)

NH uses a walker due to weakness in her legs. She is an intent woman and an inspired housekeeper. When she first moved in she didn't rest until she had obtained cleaning supplies and cleaned her apartment thoroughly. She worked on her stove for three days, until finally it shone like new. And she kept improving her house furnishings until they suited her and also make a guest feel quite comfortable. She has an eye for interiors.

NH lived up north as a child. When she was 14 her uncle advised her to go to Winnipeg because "there was no future on the reserve for a young girl". He helped her with money for a bus ticket. This is how she left her home community and she has never been back. NH has travelled: "all over the American south west, Las Vegas, etc.," she told me. She was married at one time. I asked her about children. "I was privileged to have a beautiful baby for only two months. After she died I never had any more children," she said, with incredible finesse and forbearance.

NH's voice can also be very loud and commanding. One day she wanted me to help her carry in some goods she had bought at an apartment sale on her floor. "Come

on!" she yelled, "Help me get this stuff in here!" I was startled by her loud, gruff voice. If I hadn't known her I might have been actually scared.

SA (age 70)

SA has lived in the building for eight years. He invited me into his suite. There were handsome drapes at the windows. A budgie bird was singing. The room was cool and pleasant with a slight breeze coming the south window. SA poured me a glass of juice and told me about himself.

SA is in good health, retired and independent. The grown-up son and daughter of SA's second wife live in Kenora but they don't "keep in touch" with each other. His wife died fifteen years ago.

SA keeps busy. He gets up very early in the morning to watch the day come and then gets out on his bike and rides around while the city wakes up. He walks down to Eaton's where he runs into friends. At home he watches TV some. He likes to read good novels following his favourite authors. But his eyes hurt when he reads too much. He does his washing and other chores on weekends. SA doesn't want to get involved in organized activities. He thinks that BB and KK on the Tenants Association board work too much for their own good. He has friends in and out of building. He does favours for people in his own way and time. When I told him about our plans to train people as Friendly Neighbour Volunteers SA said that he would enjoy a bike riding friend, maybe but that he or she "would have to be a friend first."

I went bike riding with SA and he showed me houses in the neighbourhood where he had lived as a child. I had always noticed the interesting old but nicely kept two-story house with the tall spruce at the corner of Frances Street and McDermot Avenue. SA lived there in the 1930's with his mother who owned the building. He told me tales of growing up in her depression days rooming house. Her roomers were on relief but they used to have some good times. The men would sneak loaves of stale bread out of the soup kitchen to bring home for evening tea and toast around the big boarding house table. In the summer they would set up the table in the yard and enjoy their meals out in the air. One man made doughnuts in his room to peddle around the

neighbourhood. This went fine until his grease caught on fire one day. The fire department arrived in time to save the house but his mom had to put an end to the doughnut business.

RN (age 58)

RN has lived in the building for one year. He moved in in connection with diabetes and a serious heart condition which has been treated and he's now well enough to go back to work. RN was born in 1934 in Ireland. He came to Canada in 1956. He has five grown children and one stepchild. He has worked in construction especially on drilling crews and as a truck driver. He wants to get a truck to do deliveries or to do other work. RN would like to find a woman to live with. He doesn't drink or smoke. In the building RN has always tried to be alert to people's needs and helpful in any way possible. He worked closely with the Friendly Neighbour Worker passing on the information when he knew of someone who needed something.

TD (age, about 56)

TD has several health complaints. Heart and circulation problems in his legs give him the most trouble and cause him the most worry. He has limited walking capacity. He gets very severe pain in his legs after walking a block or so. TD is a very well-meaning and thoughtful man whose aim is towards the "greater good." He is a professional chef.

People's suite doors are often open on this floor. TD is neighbours with BA and RT across the hall as well as others. When NT and DT got married, TD cooked a fancy multi-course meal for them and six guests. BA got her nephew to help with the semi-formal dinner at the table by the windows in the ninth floor hall.

A drinking man and an opportunist, always a hard worker, TD's life has been sprinkled with dear friends and good times.

RT (age 93)

RT has lived in the building for twelve years. She is the oldest woman in

building. RT traded a middle class Winnipeg existence for life as a hotel maid and heavy drinker. She does not look back with regret nor demean her choice of life-style. "Three men died in my arms," she says. RT is treated in the building as a kind of resident queen. She is catered to and humoured and enjoyed. She gives hospitality in her suite. RT probably could not remain independent in her apartment if it weren't for BA who stays with her in her apartment and helps keep her life organized. Frail and nearly blind, RT falls periodically and has several serious health problems. She still goes down to the canteen on first floor nearly every day where people stop for a chat or give her a kiss. "Will that last you until Christmas?" "Yes," she says to appreciative titter, "but I'll need another on Christmas Day!"

RT was tied up, gagged and robbed just before I came to work here. I am told that the night watch man was fired for incompetence and two people were convicted and jailed for several years. The motive was apparently money for drugs.

BA (age 49)

BA moved into the building to be a companion to IS. She is an old friend of TD and other tenants. Their suite is a centre of social activity. It is a part of a network of friends who share food, work and responsibility. They check on each other and give mutual care, advice, information, material goods etc.

ED (age, about 50)

ED has lived in the building for one year. She is trying to recover from a debilitating heart attack. She gets sick from exertion. She can't carry on her life in any way that feels to her like normal living. She has quit drinking but this causes isolation because being around drinkers "bothers her" and her family drink. She has three or four sons and two grandchildren. ED has apparently always been a power in her family and the fact of her illness seems an extremely difficult transition for her and her family. Models for constructive change seem to be similarly lacking in ED's family, her home community and in the larger society of Winnipeg.

ED is a very obese woman with an extremely large waistline. She says she eats

fat and salty foods from habit and to stave off worry and depression. She has problems in her relations with her doctor: At her last appointment he examined her but he "wrote nothing down and did not make another appointment" for her. She thinks that he is completely uninterested in her situation. ED was angry but did not know what to do. This is a very good lady, strong and intelligent. She is used to being active and effective in her community and to enjoying a good time. She is now at a cross roads of uncertainty and doesn't know how to inform herself adequately or adopt the right attitudes for making decisions and proceeding. She thinks maybe she's "all washed up."

DB (age 60)

DB is legally blind. In a bright room she can see shadowy figures against a light background. She is diabetic and has congestive heart failure and arthritis. Politically active, DB is an official elder in aboriginal circles. Taking this position seriously she tries to understand the meaning of Canadian government policies for aboriginal people. She listens attentively to news broadcasts and follows the parliamentary proceedings in Ottawa. DB has a ready laugh and a sharp mind. She can carry on a conversation and never miss a phrase of the radio news-cast playing on the other side of the room. When I introduced myself and offered any help I could give, DB asked me to come back in three days and read something for her. When I returned she handed me a copy of the current "Speech From the Throne" to read. It was a first for me, but DB took it in stride trying to deduce its implications.

DB broke her leg on a city bus recently. The driver couldn't see her standing in the stair well because of the press of people and he proceeded to open the doors which caught her foot and broke it. The city finally gave her some compensation.

When her foot was nearly better DB tripped over a cord in her room and broke a toe on her other foot. She told the building management that since she was blind she needed one of the one-bedroom suites of which there are two on each floor. They were built for couples but in fact are nearly always occupied by individuals. DB said they told her that if her suite is too crowded to get around in she should get rid of her piano. This may seem an unlikely response but in the office one day I heard building staff chuckling

together merrily about "DB and her piano." DB has friends in the building but has problems on her floor. She says that someone takes her clothes out of the washer and dryer and throws them on the floor. The tenant in question complains at the office that DB yells at her and calls her names.

DB doesn't get along with the caretaker. She asked him to put a new bulb into her overhead kitchen light fixture. He replied that it wasn't his job. She swore at him and he went immediately to the office, which sent back word that the staff were not to be sworn at.

DB said that a person dared not complain at the office because they would tell you if you're not satisfied you should "start looking for a place." DB asked the Friendly Neighbour Worker to intervene for her because she did not want to be kicked out.

The office told me that DB was not to be trusted, that "she is manipulative." Someone else called her "a trouble maker."

DB had to go into the hospital for congestive heart failure. Her son made arrangements for her to live in the basement of his house and notified the building management that she wouldn't be back. The basement suite didn't work out for very long and DB couldn't, then, get into any Manitoba Housing because of a negative report from the building management. She went in and out of a series of rental places and finally found a small one-story seniors building not run by Manitoba Housing where she was admitted and has had fairly good satisfaction there.

BR (age, about 78)

BR speaks some French. She says that her husband "spoke beautiful French" and also some Cree. Both her mother and father spoke Cree but she hasn't spoken it for a long while and without her teeth, speaking it properly is difficult. She understands both French and Cree but generally speaks English. She does not read or write. BR gets along fine here. Her kids are attentive to her needs. They get her groceries, go to the bank for her, take her out in their cars, etc. BR says she doesn't lack for anything. She watches TV, cooks and often walks to the freight house for bingo and other activities.

BR grieves over the loss of family members who have died: her father, her

mother, her brother and her husband. She is a small woman with a solid and grounded look. She has a business-like manner but a genuine and ready laugh. People say BR used to dance at Tenant Association functions which was nice because "no one gets up and dances now."

KR (age, about 72)

KR is tall and straight. He is a force in the building and generally looked up to. He keeps his suite in sparkling condition. A quiet and private person, KR takes no nonsense from anyone. He got along fine with the Friendly Neighbour Worker but kept substantially aloof from the proceedings.

MR & K (age, 50s)

MR who has been living in the building for one year spends much time with K who is living with him. He is very attentive to her. They attend the church service at St. John's Place and are generally seen together. MR would say hello but didn't want to get too familiar with the Friendly Neighbour Worker. He refused to have a questionnaire done. "I don't want to answer any questions!" he said firmly. I believe that MR is very desirous to have this family relationship thrive and is in the process of trying to understand how to organize and arrange for that to happen. K did do a questionnaire and expressed her present satisfaction with things. She said that nothing so very nice as living with MR has happened to her for a long while and she wanted to tell me about it. She said, "I've never been happier."

MR & K moved into a different seniors block and said when I saw them on the street that they are "doing fine."

IO (age 63)

IO is a tall, pleasant woman who has lived in the building for ten years. She has hip problems and walks rather carefully. She has other health problems as well. She enjoys company and has a passion for bingo. IO cooks for herself and for her steady friend, VI, and does some baking. VI, also a tenant, enjoys talking when the Friendly

Neighbour Worker comes to visit.

Fieldnotes to stand in for an introduction and a farewell to IO:

IO, tall, kind of raw-boned and solid looking, like a country woman -- pretty yet earthy -- still there's a frailty and a city paleness and wispieness. She sure seems nice. 5'11" -- hip replacement, walks with great limp as if one leg were shorter than the other. Goes to bingo every day except Monday. Has metal banded chips and a magnet to pick them up. Has a penny cup and a string of good-luck trinkets to take along. She plays eighteen cards.

Has a son who lives just across the tracks in the north end and six grandchildren, ages eighteen and down. Likes to see them come but is glad to see them go. They used to fight over who would push her wheelchair. Has two birds that sing and chatter. She lets them out every day for exercise. She was the tallest one in her family, but relatives in the previous generation were tall.

IO commented and paid attention as VI showed me pictures of his family. As I left she was meticulously slicing carrots into a pan to cook.

Another day when I came in IO was playing solitaire. Her door wasn't locked.

I hadn't talked to IO since the fire in her suite so I went to pay her a visit. IO said that she hasn't smoked much for twenty years, but has once in awhile enjoyed a cigarette. The night of the fire she was smoking and drinking and fell asleep.

VI said the alarms were ringing like crazy. He went out into the hall and then he started dumping pails of water on the sofa. He thought he had the fire out but after a little while it started burning afresh and this time the flames were leaping up and a thick black smoke filled the room that had the smell of Styrofoam which he knows to be poison.

He took a deep breath and squinted his eyes and went in after the budgies which survived. The firemen arrived and doused everything plenty. VI cut the carpet in strips and took it out and he also replaced the sofa. There is still a big water stain on the part of the old carpet that is left. VI also washed the wall behind the sofa. The pictures hanging above the sofa weren't damaged nor was the colour TV nearby. IO says she's off cigarettes for good now.

VI has a good memory and he helps out here and there in the building. Seems never to be paying attention and it always comes as a surprise to find that he hasn't missed a thing.

IO died suddenly on a Sunday a.m., tumbling from her bed as she reached for the phone, apparently from a heart attack. The news came as a shock.

KD (age 63)

KD used to care-take the building and has now come back to retire here. He is a small man and quiet, though not shy or backward. He likes his floor which is "quiet but neighbourly."

WL (age 68)

WL is a quiet but strong presence in the building. He was born and raised up North. He worked "all around" as a young man. He said that work crews would sometimes walk seventy-five miles to a work site. When he was twenty years old he was caught in a house fire. He woke up and got out but then learned that an elderly woman was still caught inside. He went back in and brought her out but was critically burned on the face, head and hands in the process. The lady that WL rescued did not survive her injuries. WL woke up several days later in hospital, in a very different world. In 1944 treatments were crude. The doctor had stayed beside his bed three days and three nights constantly tending his wounds and had saved his life bringing him through the initial crisis. After that seven more years of treatment were needed to stabilize his condition and get him to the place where he could function on his own. The only antibiotic they had then was sulpha drugs which they used too much of. This resulted in actual skin breakdown and poor healing, especially of his hands.

WL had a visitor, M, whom I had met at someone else's place once. She was watching TV. AM turned the sound down a bit. I gave him an update of the FNW program and what we were trying to do. I also told him that I don't like my present assignment of knocking on doors and asking people what languages they speak. He thought about it and said that I shouldn't be frustrated if people are crotchety or non-communicative or don't want to say what their language is. He said that as people get older they don't want to bother with questions, even when someone is wanting to help. In the end I told him that it is probably me who is non-communicative (shy and afraid).

People here talk in stories. When I told WL about our rationale for doing the language survey in the building, of the possible need for translators in the day hospital or clinic he told me this story:

I was in the hospital for seven years, you know, and I saw a lot of people coming and going. They brought in an Eskimo from up north and he didn't talk English. Nobody could talk to him. Sometimes they would bring in an Eskimo man who worked somewhere in a town that they knew. This man would sit and talk to this Eskimo in his native tongue and then he would translate for the doctors and nurses. He was in the hospital more than a month recuperating. He would just lie quietly by himself and listen to the radio. One day he said to a nurse out of the blue, "Go tell the doctor to come and see me: I want to talk to him." The nurse was dumbfounded but fetched the doctor pretty quick. The Eskimo told the

doctor that he had heard on the radio about an epidemic in his home town and that the people were dying and that he needed to go on back home now, to help in the emergency.

The moral must be that sometimes a lack of communication between people is caused by more than simple linguistic difficulty. I noticed later that WL never did tell me what languages he spoke other than English.

I dropped in on WL to say hi and see how he is feeling after his trip to the hospital. He had gone in with swelling in his legs. He's getting better but he had quite a time in hospital. He was in a coma for most of a week. He had pain and inflammation in ankles and knees before going in. His condition was diagnosed as a bone infection and was treated with intravenous and intra-muscular antibiotic (it sounded to WL like something in the penicillin family). Soreness persists. He's using a walker to get around. Ice packs were recommended but they make him shiver so he has stopped using them.

Quite involuntarily I commented on how good the bacon smelled. This set off a chain reaction of events. Gears were shifted, a table was set and I found myself sitting down to breakfast with WL and NU who was helping him in his convalescence. It all happened very quickly and with very few words. NU had been quietly cooking while WL and I were talking.

And what a breakfast it was! The bacon was homemade and fresh from the country. The raw-fried potatoes were most expertly done and very delicious. The toast was well buttered, very crusty and richly browned. The coffee was perfect and the fried eggs (done to a turn) were just great. NU said, "Now you can tell all your friends that you have had an Indian breakfast." It was a beautiful gesture and a lovely meal. I will always remember it.

Chapter 4

SPENDING TIME AT ST JOHN'S PLACE: THE FRIENDLY NEIGHBOUR PROGRAM AND FURTHER CONVERSATIONS

I was impressed by the cheerfulness and by a general sturdiness of character of the people I was meeting. I saw a much authenticity and integrity of spirit that I wouldn't have known without the opportunity to spend this unfettered time as a friendly neighbour. I had to learn how to be quiet and not so agitated when talking to people, not to jump in with too many words or to over-anticipate the meaning of the other person. I had to learn to allow a conversation and a situation to evolve at its own speed and to feel comfortable with silences. I had to learn to be observant and enthusiastic yet soft. I watched my friend and fellow staff member, G, who had relatives or old friends in each of the three senior's blocks of our project. I could see that I was imposing a distance and was holding back unnecessarily. I did not copy her actions but tried to relax and to understand the possibilities and requirements of situations.

Some cultural rules soon became very clear. Looking back these were not really different from social rules elsewhere but here they were very pronounced and insistent and made clear in no uncertain terms: "If you are my friend, we'll talk. If you want to know my business, we won't," and "I'm open to friendship but I don't need your program."

I tried to be simply open and direct. As student of culture/society I was here to learn about community in and from community. As Friendly Neighbour Worker I was to be helpful and to try to understand issues of isolation, loneliness and victimization. I did not have to adopt a stance. I am a student trying to learn; this is my real identity. I am a friendly neighbour, really. I live two-and-one-half short blocks away. This is my neighbourhood. I like people. I felt lucky to be working in this project. It reflected many of my own aims and beliefs and it also increased my opportunities to learn. As to the ways that I would be helpful, some suggestions were made by the project. We

canvassed the building for signatures to close the street for the open house celebration for the Health Action Centre renovations. I organized an series of gentle exercises for interested tenants. I administered the FNP questionnaire to fifty-five tenants. Still I was able to use considerable discretion in what I did with my time. I decided for one thing that I would use the model of "friendship" as my guide. I would try to be honest and dependable in relationship and when it came to "helping" I would only offer to share things that were valuable to me. I gave people potted plants because I grow them at home myself. It turned out that people here like them too. I loaned books and magazines that I was enthusiastic about to people who shared similar interests. The man who was doing night school upgrading was quite inspired to borrow a good typewriter for doing up his class assignments. People in the building and in the surrounding neighbourhood taught me and challenged me to keep honest.

In this section edited fieldnotes are presented as an example of my experiences in the building and in the surrounding neighbourhood. The intent is to show the tenor of the expressions and activities of the people in the community, mostly tenants, but including others on occasion. Quotation marks are used to indicate close paraphrase as well as direct quote.

And so! Welcome to the action at St. John's Place, 450 Jemima Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba. The time is between February 18, 1991 and May 31, 1993.

It is nearly 9 a.m. as I come up to the building, a bright and still warm summer morning. It is going to be hot today! I am supposed to meet FS on sixth floor. Here is WT sitting on a bench on the boulevard beside Eden Street. He has a walker in front of him and he's wearing a light blue jacket and a baseball cap.

FNW: "HI, WT."

WT: "Someone died. That young man who sat by the door. Young, dark hair. I always see him. He died." (I couldn't figure out who he meant.)

"I'm going (across the street) to get a drink. Will you get me a drink?"

FNW: "WT, I'm supposed to be upstairs at 9:00. What time is it?"

WT: "It's after 9:00. You'd better go."

FNW: "Are you OK? Can I help you across the street?"

WT: "No, I'm OK."

FNW: "OK. Bye, WT."

So my day is set up. It's hot; someone has died.

There were two or three deaths during that extremely hot summer. TS was found after the weekend, in his room, sitting in his wheelchair.

I sat down at the front doors for a few minutes. Relatives were taking TS's stuff out in boxes. Everybody watched and commented. KR said that the funeral would be tomorrow morning at nine at the Bardall Funeral Home. HD turned to me and commented, "Tom died last night, and that's life!" He watched me scowl and added, "Eh?" As he had no success out of me, he called out to a man sitting further down the line of chairs, just beside the door, "Tom died, and that's life. Right?" "Sure," the other returned, "That's right!" The two friends chuckled heartily and I had to smile. They were right, "Tom died last night. And that's life."

LL, was sitting outside the day hospital. She wanted to talk to me about her foot. She says it's blue, "I don't want to lose my foot. Some women lose their leg when they're only fifty years old." Then she told me to go and talk to WT, "He's the one I'm telling you about. Go and talk to him before he leaves...." Her concern was victimization. Is someone cashing his check for him and not giving him back all of his change? LL is still trying to figure out what my business is. She runs through various possibilities quizzing me when she sees me, trying to find out what I am here for: does she want a man? Does she want favours? Is she a stool pigeon?

LL's eyes bother her. She is soon going for a cataract operation.

The Return of Mr. S

Mr. S is back. I saw him sitting in his wheel chair out by the sidewalk at the Jemima Avenue entrance. TR is a handsome elderly man. He has never married. His family in the city are two nieces who come over to help him when he needed things. Mr. S has always been an independent and responsible person. He worked up north as a fisherman for forty-eight years before he retired. After injuring his hand and not feeling

well for a while he felt that he was not really able to care for himself and made arrangements to live in the nursing home at Hudson, Manitoba. There, close to Peguis reserve, relatives and old friends, and with the facilities he required, he thought he would be better off. But now, several months later he was back. I welcomed him and then asked him why he had decided to return to the city. He said that the nursing home hadn't prove especially satisfactory. Six hundred dollars a month was a high price and the food was not great either. "I would rather look after myself here," he said, "Home Care comes in to clean. The doctor is handy downstairs." "How about your food?" I asked. "Ridge Diggers brings it. All I have to do is phone them. Everything is fine!" he announced enthusiastically. I was telling my son, Steve, about the conversation. He thought it was rich. Riedigers Supermarket in our neighbourhood is well appreciated. It is sort of a local institution. It is run by a traditional family who have been doing it for several decades. Mr. S thought the name wanted a bit of Canadianizing.

TR did not live for many months back at 450 Jemima Avenue. It is kind of curious and kind of touching that a country man would decide to come home to the city to finish his days.

Even Sweet Little Children

Coming in this morning to speak to K, the native out-reach worker, and FS who were sitting by one of R's tables near the wall. FS often eats breakfast here in the canteen. FS wanted to tell me about the Friendship Centre's Seniors Dinner which she had attended the day before. This quiet straight-laced lady was describing the event in glowing terms:

They had so many different things to eat that were very delicious. And there was so much that even after extra people came in there was still plenty of food for people to have seconds. And Santa Claus handed out gifts. Besides that there was a pow wow. Even sweet little children danced. It was very lovely.

"Where's The Chairs?"

As I rounded the corner towards the elevators to go up and prepare for my exercise class I could see NT, the deaf lady, standing beside the doors. She seemed in

disarray and was yelling, "Come here! Come here!" Coming closer I could see the problem. There were no chairs out for people to sit on. EB was sitting on an odd one that he had found somewhere. Otherwise the hall was empty. I went back to the office and told the lady at the desk. She said that she would see what she could do. Once more I hurried on to set up for my class. Two hours later chairs and people were lined up against the walls as usual. I asked BB, the Tenant Association President, if she knew anything about it. She said that it wasn't good having all those chairs and all those people sitting out there. "People didn't formerly sit out there like that," she complained. Q, the caretaker was taking his day off today. Later, in the elevator KR told me what had happened. He had come down and seen that there were no chairs, "The #%*+&~ caretaker locked them up," he said. He went straight to K, the head of the building management, and complained. K immediately had the doors opened and the chairs brought out. Later up on tenth floor KR was still talking about the problem...and the solution.

On my way out I could hear laughter. Someone had had an accident coming in. First there were small drops on the floor and then bigger and bigger ones, ending with a sizable puddle. S from the clinic downstairs was sitting laughing and gesturing with Q who was passing through in the opposite direction. He returned as I went out and they continued with the bitter seeming merriment.

It seemed to me that what Q and S were not seeing what was I was seeing. I know that sometimes humour is used for relief in cases of frustration or oppression. This didn't have that feel about it. It seemed like these jokers didn't care about the extreme embarrassment and discomfort that the accident in question undoubtedly caused to a tenant of the building.

A tenant refused to do the questionnaire because she had family visiting. But I believe she was glad for an excuse. She didn't reschedule. This tenant, as well as many in the building, is very cautious about divulging personal opinion, especially in a formal situation. This tenant is very sensitive to the needs of her family members and helps them

when she can, health permitting. FNW was able to form good rapport with her and facilitated her increasing involvement in tenants' association activities by acting as an unobtrusive go-between. She has been quite a steady and dependable and appreciated volunteer during the past few months.

KW was sitting at a table in the canteen area. "Hey, Caroline, when are you going to take me for a walk?"

"I can't," I said, "because you don't live here any more. I can't take you out when you are only here with the day program. Anyway it's too slippery outside. I keep falling on the ice when I go out.

"Okay, Okay, he conceded, "We'll wait till it's warmer."

"So you can't go for a walk, KW, but you can kiss her," teases R. KW smiles and snarls. Q appears and the conversation continues as I go out.

KW chides, "There's that good-for-nothing caretaker!" Q chuckles and snaps back with a smart remark. Before KW was finally evicted (he really couldn't cope on his own), Q and others used to take up some of the slack by giving him food on weekends.

"This building has changed over the years to more of a hospice. The day hospital has encouraged people to move in and try to be healthy and independent making use of all available services. People are able to stay independent longer but also it changes the resources and interests of the community as a whole." (This is a direct quote from the former tenants association president.)

FS was troubled because another tenant, whom we both knew, had come to her door and when she let him in he had trailed her all around her room grabbing at her. She was so upset and angry that she said she felt actual hatred for this person. She is worried now that maybe her old depression may come back. We talked for a long time.

Barring PR

RN and PR were coming into the building the other night about 11:50 pm. The

security guard blocked their way. He said that PR is barred from the building and demanded her keys. She refused. They argued and they finally got in. RN was incensed at such a stupid mistake, "How could they mistake an eighty-pound flat-chested white-haired, white-skinned woman for a dark-haired, dark-skinned woman twice her size and half her age? And where does the caretaker gain authority about who to ban and who to admit anyway? They should have a letter from the office for that kind of business. But that's not the way it works!"

The conversation was rapid-fire as it always is with RN. When he's reaming out a person or a situation he does a thorough job of it and does not mince words. Q's works with the evening and weekend security guards. He allegedly described to them two or three women who are barred from the building and he told security not to let them in. It was never clear how this rather outlandish mistake was made. But security did acknowledge it. The next night the guards gave PR a silk rose in apology. RN says the apology should have come from the office as the policy and rulings should do. RN believes this sort of disregard for reason and ordinary protocol to be foolish and atrocious because it is disrespectful.

NOTES AND THOUGHTS AT THE END OF THE FNP

K, our meeting chairman, read over our list of conclusions for the project manual. Someone wanted to teach seniors to avoid contact with "strangers without credentials." Hmm, it sounds like a good idea in a way but I'm not sure that reinforcing and elaborating people's paranoia is the way to go. Perhaps the surest protection from attack lies in the direction of widening, strengthening and enriching social networks and increasing community formation.

The Friendly Neighbour Program was drawing to a close. The project was considered very successful even though we had not instituted on-going volunteer programs in the three buildings. Our focus had changed from establishing volunteer friendly visiting programs to encouraging the helping and mutual assistance networks already existing in the buildings. Still, how this could be done after we left was a puzzle. But now we turned our efforts to closure and evaluation activities.

Experiences with the FNP Questionnaire

One large closure activity was the sixteen item evaluation questionnaire (see Appendix). Discussing these questions with tenants was the main focus, outside our on-going tenant contacts, for several weeks. They provided a different, and in numerous instances, a very useful context for conversations. The objective and standardized form meant that some topics which hadn't come up in casual conversation were addressed. For instance, when the open-ended and indirect style of communication that was generally the best in this community was replaced by a point-blank question such as, "Do you feel safe in this building?" new understandings became possible. People frankly discussed threatening situations they had experienced and how they handled them. They showed me self-protection devices they used and how they used them. Men especially seemed to take the need for self-protection for granted and had conscious plans of how to proceed.

The question about the best and worst things occurring in the previous year also brought forth very personal responses. Some people remembered a special occasion such as a visit from an out-of-town relative or even a very beautiful birthday card as significant. Others indicated that they just didn't think of their lives as consisting of "best" and "worse" things. Asked the question, they gave a helpless shrug, "Last year was just a year like any other. What else?"

The Feedback Session

As a part of the evaluation and closure activities a session was planned to report back to tenants how they, as a group, had answered the questions. This seemed reasonable and considerate and we found that our budget would allow for a small lunch and also door prizes for a general evaluation meeting in each building.

I posted notices on each floor and also spent several hours talking to individual tenants regarding the upcoming meeting, encouraging them to come and hear the report of the questionnaires and to express themselves in the discussions. Two members of the network were coming to present an information and planning session. I would introduce

the guests. Before the meeting two tenants and the caretaker's helper and I set up chairs and tables in what we hoped would be the most congenial fashion. Then I welcomed tenants as they came in making sure they were comfortable. I served coffee, introduced new tenants to each other, etc.

There was a good turnout for the meeting: twenty-five to thirty tenants came as well as the building caretaker, a geriatric out-reach worker and the tenant relations worker of the building management company. People were in a sociable and happy mood.

A synopsis of concerns as expressed on the questionnaires by tenants of the three buildings combined was presented verbally and written on a flip chart. Issues such as gossip, alcohol abuse, insect pests, safety, old age and illness were introduced in hope that the tenants would "own" these problems and discuss ways of dealing with them as well as bring up other concerns. The format proved unfortunate. It seemed that tenants felt they had been trapped into spilling the beans about themselves and were now being confronted with their shortcomings. Even the content of the "problems" seemed somewhat remote because the combined responses that were being presented did not represent priorities of concern expressed in this building. A few participated but most remained quiet. The brief exchange concerning cockroaches in the suites resulted in one woman wheeling her chair out of the meeting when people started pointing fingers about bad housekeepers who had bugs. But even the good news didn't work in this format. People would not "put up their hands" if they received informal assistance from their neighbours or if they gave it.

The second speaker had better luck. He had met some people in the building and he also mentioned friends of friends and relatives of relatives that he knew living here. He had a facility for light performance and a knack for identifying the positive aspects of what seemed to be complete negatives. For instance, he said that what is known as gossip may also be an indication of concern and a willingness to get involved that can be all too scarce sometimes. He illustrated his point recounting a recent experience in which his own elderly mother had benefited from the concern of some "nosy" neighbours.

A spirited discussion centred around tenants perceived lack of pleasant and functional socializing space in the building. There is a sizable common space on each

floor but not on the first floor where tenants would enjoy congregating and visiting near the mail boxes and near the front doors. They thought it would be nice to have a place where they could see out onto the street and bring a guest for a visit. Access to the pool table and shuffle board is limited to a few hours a week and requires coordination with building management and cleaning staff. The suggestions seemed fanciful to the staff who were present: "Move the Day Hospital to the basement;" "Move the pool table to the first floor;" "Knock out the wall on the south side of the hall by the main entry so that tenants can sit by the windows looking out on Jemima Avenue."

After some brief encouragement to talk to neighbours about concerns and the advantages of getting organized the formal part of the meeting was closed.

The Party Afterward

The tenant relations person and the caretaker had left because they were afraid they were inhibiting discussion. Mr. M, the eldest tenant, left because he was tired. Everyone else stayed and enjoyed the delicious and beautifully displayed sandwiches and dainties that K, the HAC director had arranged. Names were drawn, amid much good humour and enthusiasm, for the two door prizes. One of the chief worriers and most vocal complainers got one of the prizes, a large grocery hamper. She said she thought this was the best party ever given in the building. Later she told me that she had given the hamper to a young mother who needed it more than she. Mr. M's name was drawn for the second one. A tenant (who had just told me he was completely out of food, oh dear) volunteered to deliver it to him.

The next morning I saw Mr. M sitting outside on a bench. I said (clearly and loudly so that he could hear), "Mr. M, did you get a surprise?" His face was bathed in late August sunshine and perfect glee.

"Yes, I did," he beamed, "I got LUCKY!"

Questions At The End Of The FNP

How can this meeting and this program be evaluated? Obviously, some unfinished business lies in the area of enabling the tenants of this building to understand

their own situations including the physical and institutional realities of the building in which they live. They need information and attention concerning their queries about possible flexibilities in present building space usage. But there are probably other questions and concerns in the backs of people's minds as well.

As a Friendly Neighbour Worker, I had come to feel at home with the tenants as friends and neighbours. But before the feedback session I had not seen how to communicate this understanding to the FNP evaluator who could have used the information. When doing tenant interviews the following spring, I noticed that two of them, who had been at this evaluation session, had become rather objective about the building and its facilities. One commented, "They don't have to provide anything (in the way of extra facilities). The only thing you can do is to shop around and see who gives the best deal." The other said simply, "Lack of social space is the weakness of this building." Perhaps our attempt at inviting tenants to consider and discuss problems in a more formal setting was partially successful.

Now at the end of the project we sat together: staff, management committee and the wider Seniors at Risk Network reflecting on the experience. Some questions remained. It was never posed as a question but it was a curious fact that even though the FNP did not really do what it set out to do everyone connected with the effort was so pleased with it. We wanted to go on working together.

A second question was: why do "natural helpers" in the three buildings dislike being singled out and recognized? In our network evaluation sessions we worked again and again with this reality. It was formally summarized in the project manual (Seniors, 1993, p H-2) as a conclusion of the study.

9-A One group of informal or natural helpers did not wish to identify or recognize their helping skills. In addition, this group did not wish to express any commitment regarding their helping activities. As well, this group did not identify themselves as natural or informal helpers on the evaluation questionnaire, rather, they felt they were "friends."

A third question was mentioned in discussion but not formalized. How can agencies be of assistance to the natural helpers in the buildings if they don't

want to be recognized? As time went on I came to see a relation between the existence of community life in the building and these three questions.

LATER FIELD EXPERIENCES: LOCAL SOCIETY, LOCAL CULTURE

In the fall of 1992 I began spending less time in the building as I wrote up my research proposal and constructed questionnaires. I would continue to visit people and to volunteer at Tenant Association functions until I could do the set of interviews that would complete my fieldwork in the building. In addition I would also interview building and agency personnel and others involved with subsidized senior's housing to balance my account.

I offered to write down autobiographies of tenants to secure a more in-depth understanding of the life trajectories that people are working out of. They were also meant to be a token of appreciation to the tenants in the building, something useful that I could offer to people who had been very generous to me. People did not respond well to this offer. Most that I spoke to didn't want to have things written down about them. Some who were interested got sick or other matters intervened. One man said, "The memories are just too bitter and too painful." I wrote down three stories. This activity did deepen my understanding of each person and the circumstances of people migrating into the city from Manitoba reserves in the 1970's. It increased rapport between us and it enhanced my ability to understand the meaning of what each person said. DB enjoyed telling her story and having it written down. Afterwards, she asked me to be secretary for a local aboriginal political action group in which she served as elder.

I will include only enough of these later fieldwork experiences to conclude this account of the population at St. Andrews Place.

IO's Funeral

IO's funeral is today at 2 pm.

I wasn't dressed to go. But as I sat in the canteen I got people's reports as

they came back. About thirty people attended the funeral at Kerr's Funeral Chapel a few blocks away, near Main Street. VI was so drunk that he could hardly stand. C who works up north, went "just like that." It was "minus twenty" outside and he had walked there and back in his white shirt and suit jacket only. In order to look politely dressed he had left his coat at home. IM said he had gone to represent the Tenants Association executive. He had dressed handsomely in suit and overcoat. PS and AW were pleased with the way he looked. People were to gather afterwards in their room. A combination of excitement and sadness prevailed. I did not stay for the festivities.

Some days later as I was going out I paused to listen as NH was giving HD a report on his day. It had ended with dinner at the St. Regis Hotel. It was a long story with funny spots and a good climax. And it was well appreciated and commented on by HD. VI, who had been sitting in the chairs for long hours since IO's funeral looking straight ahead with eyes even more hollow than usual, actually gave me a "V."

The Christmas Party

Yesterday afternoon I went to 450 Jemima to the Christmas dinner. It had been arranged by K, the part-time tenant recreation director along with the Tenants Association executive employing a tried and true caterer. There were generous portions of veal cutlet, mashed potatoes, vegetables, cabbage rolls, coleslaw and cake with strawberries and whipped cream, and rolls, tea and coffee. As I approached the door to the first floor multi-purpose room, Reverend W was saying grace. George Hicks, our member of the Manitoba legislature. and his wife, Pauline were there as well as John Prystanski, our very young city councillor, and other visitors. BB had her daughter as guest, FE had her daughter and her granddaughter. An elderly gentleman from the Old St. John's congregation came over and spoke to me. The church in the building closed since last summer. He said that he and his wife were having a difficult time

establishing a new church home.

I offered to help and I took up three meals to the floors for people who were not able to come down. At first I sat down beside IW, across from HS. I was feeling sociable but they weren't. They were too busy as they very intently concentrating on their big dinners. After that, I got up and found myself a cup of tea and sat down again between LL and HB. The cabbage roll that I tasted from the plate of extras in the middle was very good, just delicious. The tea was good, too. HB told me that he plays the piano and later when we sang carols, I shared a song sheet with him. He sang very sweetly with a pleasant tenor voice. This man of unkempt appearance has a notably wholesome presence.

After the singing GKB made her way across the room and shook hands warmly with the small, old Chinese lady and then with the younger one. I noticed Mr. IM (age 94) looking very handsome in his suit & tie. He was going out but he stopped at the chair of a new tenant, a small white haired man, and spoke to him. He then pulled the man's chair sideways for him so that he could get out better and then he started looking around. Spying a walker, IM went over and picked it up kind of awkwardly with one hand. Steadying himself as he went he brought it back and set it up for the other man.

It was interesting for me to note, in my reaction of mild surprise, that I harbour a prejudice. It seems that I was expecting old people to be somewhat unable and self-centred.

This seemed a very important occasion for people. They pay to go and be with the group and they enjoy a valuable Christmas dinner. And they eat it in rather serious appreciation of its value. It seems that they want to have a formal Christmas dinner with each other. It should be respected, appreciated and participated in. It should be good food, nicely served. It is a ceremony, a structural place holder authenticating the past and respecting the present. It is a group acknowledgement of social realities and of formal pretences authenticated. It occurs to me also that the Christmas dinner is an event in which the ordinary

hierarchical relations between tenants and the powers that be poses no problem. As an event that is traditionally "put on" and also that people have bought tickets for there is no symbolic barrier to enjoyment. It was a fine party.

Revelations of the New President

I was still trying to go when IM, the new president, came back in and motioned me to follow him to his suite where he asked some pointed questions: "Who controls this place? Who is actually the boss? Is it building management, or is it the government?" He answered his own question, "No one is the boss. The management company manages the building, accepts applications for occupancy, collects rent, provides heat-lights-cable-water and janitor service, and kicks people out if they bother their neighbours. The government subsidizes people's rent. People have to apply, sign a contract, live up to the contract, live up to government obligations to keep getting their rent money etc. But who has control?"

Here in his own room IM speaks more comfortably, "Look I have a key for the day hospital and the tenants' lounge and the fridge and the cupboard. But at 4:30 (or whenever), the caretaker throws the elevator switch and no one can go to the second floor. He lets people in by prior arrangement and by his own decision. This ring of keys is worthless because I can't get into second floor except by the OK of the caretaker. I make a fool of myself in public and no one cares. On Saturday evening, November 7th, at Bingo I announced, 'Come to bingo next Wednesday.' It was written on the schedule and so I asked people to come. Outsiders come in and we have a good bingo on a holiday; people don't have anything to do, so they come. The night before Remembrance Day, Tuesday, November 10th, R said to me, 'There's no bingo tomorrow because it is a holiday and I won't be here.' It was his whim, not our decision, no organization, no planning, no poster, no announcement counted. The Tenant's Association means nothing. I've visited in prisons where people had more freedom, choice and dignity. Imagine, everyone huddles around the doors on

first floor when there is a perfectly good room just behind them, large and comfortable and never used. People move in here and after a year they have lost the spark. They don't care any more. This is why people don't participate, because activities are actually meaningless. There is no real power with the tenants. The caretaker makes the decisions and we are treated like inmates. This place is not a community but only a rented room. Building management wants to appear to be providing amenities but actually they are not. They provide them very minimally and provisionally and they are condescending about it. This is why people keep to themselves. What hope do they have of taking any control of their own lives except extremely privately?"

A few weeks later when I saw IM, I apologized to him for not having gotten the information on Manitoba senior's housing that he had wanted. He said that it was all right, he had done some inquiring himself. He told me later that an EPH is not actually required to provide lounge and recreation space. "Anyway," he said, "That (insensitive management) is not even the biggest problem now."

"No?" I asked, "Then what's the biggest problem now?"

"Lack of participation!" he said, giving me a wan smile.

A Friend's Lament

"I told her not to live with him. I remember when he beat her up the last time. Her glasses were smashed, her eyes were black, her face was all bruised. I had to clean up the glasses and hide the beer bottles before the police came. She had to go to the hospital. I called her son and he told me to stop bothering him. I said, 'I'm only calling to tell you that your mom is in the hospital...' and I hung up. Then she wouldn't press charges. I said 'Are you going to press charges?' I told her that they couldn't do it, that she would have to. These old people, they complain and then they won't help themselves."

The Geranium Travels

Walking in through the big doors at the Eden Street entrance I was

clutching my potted plant. This geranium had grown too tall for my winter window sill and I was bringing it to FS who said she loves geraniums. But now I had to stop and shift the gears of my mind because NT was sitting there in the chair beside the door. NT is a bit disabled: deaf and with an old head injury. People of the building look out for her giving help and expressing affection in small ways.

NT talks to anyone who will stop and otherwise to herself, calling off the names of family members: "Mary, Mary Henry. Four girls (and she holds up four fingers) Bella...." She gestures and smiles referring to other times and places. Sometimes she gets mad and shouts, shaking her finger in the air. People bring her a pop and sometimes she gives people money to bring her a newspaper from across the street. Sometimes she says she'll pay them and doesn't. One day I heard ED threaten to cut her off from all further services for this reason. She looks after herself in her suite depending on her walker and one or more relatives who come in to see her every day. Mostly she sits by the front door looking out and occasionally going through her repertory of names, places and events. FN stops on her way out the door and gives her a gentle kiss.

Seeing NT there I couldn't pass by without stopping. I snapped off the big red ball of blooms from the top of my plant and gave it to her. NT smiled and spoke inaudible words without ceasing to smile and gesture. She stuck the long stem into the bag that hung on her walker. I smiled too, and continued to the elevator. An hour later I walked back past the front hall and NT held up her geranium to show me that she had wrapped the stem with wet paper towel and a small piece of plastic. Again later, I was sitting and talking to someone in the line-up of chairs. As is customary in this line-up when one of the doors opened or someone got off the elevators everyone would turn to have a look at the newcomer. A young woman came sauntering in, casting her eyes about. Her eyes were soft and large. She was not intoxicated, though I had seen her eyes or someone with eyes like that, and thick lips and dragging step on the street. She had kind of loose flesh and bountiful black hair, not unpretty. I smiled and got a

warm smile back again. Two or three minutes later I looked up from my conversation and there was the dark haired girl getting onto the elevator with a carefully wrapped geranium with its big red bloom held casually in her hand. Secrets! NT who can't hear and maybe can't think much; the dark-haired girl bent on large sins: what can this flower mean between them? The bonds of social interaction here are extensive and run deep. And they are subtle, easily escaping the notice of outsiders.

I had to go in to work with an ugly blister on my face. I had been to the skin doctor and he had frozen off a small area of skin that had been damaged by too much sunshine. It was a large blister. My face hurt and I was embarrassed and uncomfortable. HD and RN were sitting in the hall and asked me what was the matter with my face. I sat down and explained. They immediately saw my discomfort and turned the whole thing into one big joke. I, of course, had to laugh; these guys are good at what they do. And I went on my way feeling much better.

NA Arranges An Interview

NA was sitting by the doors, "How's yer book?"

"I can't start writing yet but I'm doing interviews this week and that's progress," I said.

"Well, I don't have anything to tell about," he replied. I couldn't grasp from his tone what he was trying to say. But he listened attentively while I told him what I was doing. Then he said, "And then you will have to compile it all together and make your story. That will be the hard part." As I left NA is speaking French to someone going out the door.

I walked past KR and sat down in the next chair. I couldn't avoid asking him straight out, if he would do an interview with me. After Mrs. L had gone I started, "K, you know I am trying to write a story of this building."

"Yeah, that's what I understand." he affirmed. And so I explained to him why I wanted to carefully take down people's opinion on a place to live for seniors, how it works for them personally, and how new ones should be organized to serve people's needs better. "Well no, I couldn't help you with any of that. I wouldn't have anything to say about any of those things," he assured me.

"Where are you from, K.?" I asked.

"Oh, I was born in Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan," he said. And we talked about Fort Qu'Appelle a bit. By this time, NA and HB had come up and sat down on the other side of the hall. NA said, "You should talk to HB; you could write a whole book on him." And he showed with his hands how thick a book I could write on HB.

"Where were you born, HB?" I asked.

"I came from St. Malo. I used to deliver milk there, up and down main street for five cents a litre. What we didn't sell fresh we took to the cheese plant but we didn't get such a good price for it there. We had nine cows and we milked them by hand. There were no machines in those days. My dad worked all over. He was a builder. We had three quarter sections of land..." he continued for a while with NA and I throwing in comments and questions. After a while HB got up and came over to where I was sitting. He pushed up one of my jacket sleeves and then the other. Finding both wrists bare he placed a watch on my right arm, checking it out for size and looks. It was a nice little watch: wood rim with a good readable face. It had a light brown leather band and gold buckle.

"HB, that's beautiful," I exclaimed. "It's exactly my kind of a watch, I have been looking for and not able to find." Wondering how to take his gesture I asked "How much do I owe you for this, HB?"

He touched the stem and said, "You don't wind it here. This is just to set the time. It will run by itself for about six months. Just whatever you think. If you want to give me a few dollars any time, it's okay."

"Okay HB." I said, "I'll bring you \$10 next week."

HB went on out and NA said, "He was telling you about the happy part of his life. Some other parts are not so good."

"Yeah we all have the happy parts and the sad parts," I offered.

NA continued, "He lost two kids in a house fire long ago. He experienced so much grief at the time that it affected his mind. The Main Street Project looks after his money for him."

I had the perception about HB of a man of truly benign nature and some kind of strength of feeling. I had been surprised at the Christmas dinner sharing a song sheet with him. He has a very wholesome presence. (I owe him \$10 now.)

The Inner-City Voice Speaks

TD showed me the Inner-City Voice article that featured a large clean and well shot picture of Mr. M, his lanky form sprawled out on a chair leaning on his cane, asleep. TD was very offended. He asked if that was my piece on the building or was I writing another as well. He had seen my name in the article and what I'd said at F, the editor's, panel discussion. He felt badly that Mr. M was being exposed to public scrutiny in this photo in such a bad light, at his worst really. We know that he was only napping as he often does and that he can look quite snappy when dressed up. He is a fine man, the oldest tenant here, very proud and also deserving. He is used to friendship, indulgence and respect, but the people seeing the paper wouldn't know any of this. I looked the article in TD's hand and my reaction was the same. When I phoned him, F was surprised that I was upset. He thought the article had turned out quite well. I said I'd call him back. The piece was well written, but I felt the picture was offensive. Q, the caretaker, was upset because the cigarette butts on the floor seemed to reflect on his care of the building. The photograph was intended to point out the lack of adequate lounge facilities. One tenant mentioned that he was pleased for this reason. Later I heard that Mr. M was showing the picture of himself around and laughing about it. I decided to let the matter go as well.

I had been my usual bear-like self at F's Healthy Communities panel. I

disclaimed any knowledge of the subject at hand and then came on heavy as someone who knows a lot. I wasn't alone taking a self-confirmed stance. A totally committed bureaucrat spouted the most polished bureaucratese. Intersectoral activities were important for her. "It will take a long, long time," she said in perfectly clear and understandable English. A seventeen-year community development man thought that if only he could arrange it so that people could get together..."the ontological project of humanity, to reach its full potential" would be aided. "The paradigm shift from exploitation to partnership is now in the air," he announced. I broke in that people do get together and all the time, but maybe for their own reasons and not for community developers' reasons. People didn't understand what I meant. I offered a long winded example that didn't work too well and then I became quiet. I was sorry that I had not been able to express what was on my mind. The FNP had been a key for us. The three FNW had found those doors already open which seemed a mystery to my community development colleague and a not-even-hinted reality to the vivacious young bureaucrat.

Dodging Traffic With CW

I went by Riedigers on my way home and coming out, I met Mr.CW and spoke. He had been hurrying across Isabel Street in front of the north bound traffic, with a great limp and two heavy bags of groceries. I dodged the cars as well and caught up with him, "I'll walk part way home with you."

"Well, walk on this other side," he asked, "That's my blind side." Then I saw him crank up his hearing aid for conversation. "I don't know," he said, "we keep losing more and more of ourselves." Then we talked about terrible things in the newspaper as we walked along. I said goodbye as we approached my street. He gave me his hand and a great big smile. These dudes are fine, I'll tell you, gallant and good-hearted. They're proud and intelligent: strong Canadian stock. They deserve our respect and attention.

Encounter On William

A more balmy air had replaced the deep-freeze temperatures of mid-March, but the resulting euphoria was balanced for me by the remnants of flu and head congestion. I

was walking home early from the NMR conference on disenfranchisement that was being held in the first floor multi-purpose room of St. John's place.

Approaching the busy corner I noticed a tall man, slept-in-my-clothes-for-days/didn't comb-my-hair-for-a-week-type of individual coming up William Avenue to my left. The split second before shifting my gaze to peer up the street for a break in the on-coming traffic, I noted that he had caught something apparently positive in my aspect. After looking both ways I could see that I was being approached. "Pardon me, could you spare me a quarter. I want to buy a cup of coffee. I don't know how much it costs." He held out a hand showing me a nickel, a dime and a few pennies. I started rummaging in my shoulder bag with one hand as I spoke to him.

"There is a conference going on over at 450 Jemima Avenue. It's called Native Mediation Representative. There's no charge. You could walk right in. You can get a whole lunch there, coffee, stew, bannock," and I started pointing to where the building was as I put a looney in his still outstretched hand. He halfway looked to where I was pointing and then he put his hand on my shoulder in a kind of protective gesture.

"It's okay, Missus," he said looking very benevolent, "Thank you very much," and he continued on west, down William Avenue. Crossing the street I was trying to figure out the curious gesture and the "It's okay missus." On the other side of the street I noticed another scruffy man. He was tall and lean with a slightly off-centre amble. "Ah," I thought, "it's his buddy. They're working the street for cash." A glance back showed the man approaching a young woman with his request and my idea was confirmed. Then I thought of the first man's benevolent gesture and "That's alright lady." I guess he thought that I was over-reacting to his request and was trying to gently calm me down. His implicit commentary on my response invited reflection.

Looking back, I could see that I had made assumptions that were soon disproved. I assumed that I could give this man a suggestion that would improve his project. Actually he was not looking for information or advice but he was proceeding according to a plan that he and his friend had made. It seems now that I was being somewhat arrogant in assuming that I was capable of and justified in giving him advice. In contrast he was more charitable, gently inviting me to calm down with his "It's OK, lady."

I did not know this man at all. He had only asked me for money for a cup of coffee. Why did I think that by merely seeing his outside appearance I could understand what his needs were? Maybe another time I'll just say, "It's nice to see the warmer weather, isn't it?"

Used Cues for Pool Players

IM was looking for some good pool cues to replace the old warped ones the men used when playing pool on the second floor. He asked if I could help find something at an affordable price. Good new ones cost close to \$100 and that, of course, was out of the question. It was spring and I was trying very hard to finish my work, but I would try.

Fortunately I was able to score a coup. For the price of a dozen phone-calls, three trips to the "Club" at the University of Manitoba Students Union (UMSU) and ten dollars for materials, I was presented with an arm-load of reconditioned cues which I brought home on the bus from Fort Garry.

I brought them over to 450 Jemima Avenue that evening quite elated with my success. The spring dampness was glistening in the not quite setting sun. The building was quiet although I knew that a pool game would be in progress on second floor. The large glass door to the elevators had already been locked. I had no key. Q had made sure that I turned mine in at the end of the FNP. Oh well, I could call someone on the floors and get buzzed in. IM was coming out and beckoned to me to come in as he held the door open, but I had stopped by then to speak to KR and when I merely said "Hi," HL went out. After we had talked briefly KR went over to unlock the door for me to go up and deliver the cues. But just then Q came through and said imperiously, "KR, you know you're not supposed to unlock that door for people. Caroline can call up to the floors to get buzzed in. I'm not going to stop you, but you both know the rules...." I made a joke of it and we all proceeded on our ways, but why treat a volunteer and a tenant of the building, a public spirited citizen with this officiousness and disregard?

On second floor I unloaded the cues. RN, NA, HD, and a fourth who I don't remember were playing. They quipped and joked as usual as they checked out the new

equipment: for length, trueness, firmness of tips etc. I explained who had donated them and said, "You should invite those young guys at the UMSU 'Club' to come over for a game."

"What?" they protested loudly, "We can't invite anyone in to play pool."

"Not even my brother!"

"Not even my twelve-year-old son!"

"Not even my two girlfriends! Ho, Ho."

"Some would like to watch a game, just for a laugh."

I left, shaking my head. Exactly who were these crazy rules made for?

Giga Gee Gee

BC phoned. He was thrilled with DB's autobiography. He said that he read it twice and that he found he had DB's old phone number in his book but while he was thinking about calling her, she called him. She told him she had lived at 450 four or five years and had been to his place more than once but that he had been pretty drunk. "Did I make love with you? Well, I won't miss the chance another time," he had said to her. DB suggested that BC show it to WL. BC's home care worker read part of it and then finished it after his shift. He had liked it a lot. BC had phoned just to let me know how pleased he was.

"I was worried when you didn't answer the phone," I said, "I thought you might be sick."

"Y'got t'be tough," DB said. Women from the reserve have gotten the chief to call a band meeting for tomorrow and they are phoning her and telling her to come. "You are the only one who will speak up to F," they had urged again and again. F was the chief who I had seen on CBS News recently. There were serious questions as to why band funds had been diverted to a rabbit farm somewhere in Saskatchewan and from there to a construction company in Regina. DB has a ride to the country, she says. She will go up Thursday a.m. and come back on the bus on Friday afternoon. DB's husband will come to her place on Friday so that "Clementine (her ill sister) won't be alone for too

long."

DB had organized a video filming session to provide informative material for people on and near Interlake reserves via the Bobo Television Channel. We sat around tables in the large and drafty gym/auditorium of Logan House as the crew and participants set up for the session. They wanted to be sure that as self-government discussions and negotiations proceeded that local people would have the information to participate effectively. In the lull DB asked me, "Did I ever tell you how I got my nickname?" I said no, and she told me the story of Giga-Gee-Gee. As she started to speak I began writing, visualizing the scene in my mind.

I had a large family of small children in a very small house and I worked hard to keep them fed and clothed, well and happy. Our nearest neighbour lived across a little stretch of thick bush but in fair sight of our house. One day in the winter time he told me "It's been snowing and storming lots this winter. I can't even see smoke from your chimney for the swirling snow. But any time it is clear enough for me to see into your yard, there I see you swinging your axe, splitting wood for your stove. I'm going to call you Giga-Gee-Gee for that little grey bird who looks small and fragile but is the very one who is tough enough to weather all the storms of winter." So I was soon called Giga-Gee-Gee by all my neighbours. In time baby girls on our reserve and other reserves nearby were also given that name. I'm thinking that when I die it would be nice to line up all my little namesakes in front of my coffin and give them each a flower for a keepsake to remember the soft grey bird who is small and insignificant but tough enough to last all winter.

Chapter 5

DEALING WITH THE DATA

In this chapter the major data of the study is presented . It constitutes the objectivized support for the daily observations, experiences and local expressions that constitute the body of the account.

Only brief summaries of responses to the Friendly Neighbour Program questionnaire and the tenant interviews are presented here. Fuller details may be found in the appendix.

In questionnaire and interview responses where respondents gave more than one answer to a question, decimal values were given to each answer.

A PRELIMINARY TEST: GROUNDED THEORY ANALYSIS

As a method of summarizing and analyzing my six hundred pages and part-pages of fieldnotes, a modified grounded theory analysis was used. The first 332 pages were scanned and information from them coded into categories on 291 slips of paper. These were first open coded. I simply sorted into piles, slips containing similar kinds of information. Then descriptive names were attached to each stack (see Table 4).

Table 4

Open Coding of Fieldnote Information Slips

1.	How I manage, how my life is going	106
2.	Problems (questionnaire & unsolicited, emic & etic)	97
3.	Description	55
4.	Community spirit, evidence of social cohesion	23
5.	Self concepts	5
6.	Interests with potential for development	3
7.	Solitary interest	1
8.	Methodology, boundary crossings	1
Total Slips		<hr/> 291

With the data summarized in the convenient form of information slips it could easily be looked at and compared in a variety of different ways. A second sort was done, for instance, of unsolicited expressions of concerns or problems seen or experienced by residential tenants in relation to the building and the surrounding neighbourhood. Then a sort was done of problems observed or otherwise identified by the investigator. This information has been separated out for use elsewhere. A fourth sort assembled notes of what tenants do, how they spend their time, how they manage and where they find the help they need. These unsolicited expressions of how people get along are used as descriptive and illustrative material throughout the ethnography. They are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5

Analytical Coding: How I Manage/How I Get Along Here

1. Talking with and visiting friends, neighbours and relatives in the building.	15
2. More active and complicated relations of mutual help, support & enjoyment.	26
3. Communities inside and outside, across building boundaries.	26
4. Help from the landlord and other agencies.	13
5. Cooperation between landlord and tenant on projects of mutual interest.	5
6. Getting along in opposition to the landlord and agencies.	5
7. Expressions of self concept and struggle.	7
8. The community looks after members who need special care.	6
Total Slips	<u>103</u>

These analytical exercises were very helpful. They provided an immediate and objective view of the types of information that had been recorded. They demonstrated the strength of the data, proved it to be the areas of experience and practice of community in this population.

THE FRIENDLY NEIGHBOUR PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE (FNPQ)

It wasn't until after the completion of the FNP that I was able to sit down to tally and interpret the responses to the questionnaire that had formed a large part of the FNP evaluation. The four questions that bear most strongly on community attitudes and activities in the building are briefly explored here. (Please see the appendix for additional data.)

Direct questions in this community are disliked and avoided. They are considered impolite and invasive; they are suspect. An agreement to answer questions was seen as either a favour to a friend, an accommodation under pressure or, more rarely, as an occasion to speak one's mind. For the FNP, it was a chance to write down verbatim what people said.

Table 6

FNPQ Question # 4

What do you think the biggest problem people in this building have?
(Multiple answers recorded as decimal fractions)

Answering the question: 45

Few or no or no big problems/no knowledge or opinion of problems: 16.5 (37%)

Drinking: 9.8

Loneliness/isolation: 3

Sickness/old age/can't get around: 2.7

Gaps in tenant mgt. communication/poor tenant, tenant communication: 2.5

Safety: 2

Gossip: 2

Other Concerns: 6.5

The pattern of answering is interesting. Thirty seven per cent (of those answering the question) disclaimed problems. Among the twenty-nine persons speaking of specific problems about half (52%) spoke of matters generally recognised as trouble areas among elderly people: drinking, old age and its attendant infirmities and loneliness/isolation. The other thirteen concerns range from gaps in communication, safety and gossip down to concerns for non-delivery of the newspaper and that the "caretaker doesn't smile."

FNPQ Question # 6

What type of activities would you be interested in getting involved with?

(Answers summarized in the Appendix)

Thirty-seven tenants answered the question, of these, twenty-eight (77%) replied simply, "none," "none at all" or words to that effect. Explanatory comments such as: "I like my life the way it is" and "I like it as it is, casual and neighbourly" show a preference for self-planning and spontaneity. This is a surprising amount of consensus and it was, for me a surprising form for consensus to take. These persons do not want to be organized.

Table 7

FN PQ Question # 7

Do you feel safe in this building? In the community?

In the building?		In the community?	
Answering:	48	Answering:	36
Yes:	41 (85%)	Yes:	16 (44%)
Conditionally:	1	Conditionally:	7
No:	6	No:	13

The answers to this question show a very high level of consensus (85%) to the effect that people feel safe in the building. The answers show a solidarity of opinion and either a confidence in the wholesomeness of their living environment or pride of place or both. The unsolicited comments and personal provisions for safety further indicates confidence and ability to manage ones affairs. The impression is not of weak individuals or of strangers speaking but of citizens describing their home.

Table 8

FN PQ Question # 8

What was the best thing that has happened to you this last year?

What was the worst thing?

The best?

Answering: 40

I had a "good year": 16

Happy/fortunate events/situations: 24

The worst?

Answering: 32

Nothing bad (yet/) a good year/things just rolled along/ a normal year: 20

Unhappy/unfortunate events/situations: 12

These are very positive people. Even when asked about the worst things that

happened to them last year nearly two thirds of them came back with a positive assessment of the year and their lives. Two main values and concerns are shown to be health and family. When mentioning the best things that happened family was mentioned more often; when referring to the worst things health was mentioned more.

NINE INTERVIEWS

In designing semi-structured interviews for tenants I put together a group of questions to consolidate a picture of the person: his/her general health and physical mobility, the extent and style of his/her physical and social activities. I wanted to bring out a person's view of himself/herself in relation to their view of the building (450 Jemima) as a place to live. I especially wanted to elicit information and opinion regarding the person's functioning community, its nature and where it centred, whether the person felt a member of an operating community and acted as such. Responses in these areas are presented in Table 9.

Table 9**Responses to Selected Interview Questions**

(Divided responses were recorded as decimal fractions.)

Question 22: Do you have a particular role in the building?

Answering: 8

Yes: 55

No: 2

Protesting: .5: "Everybody has a role in the building!"

Question 25: Do you maintain ties with your former communities?

Answering: 8

Yes: 3

No: 2

Not often: 1

Objecting: "This is my community!": 2

Question 26: Do you ever visit your old neighbourhood?

Answering: 3

Seldom: 1

Objecting: "I live in the same neighbourhood"/"This is my neighbourhood": 2

Question 32: What were the hardest decisions you faced last year?

Answering: 8

Personal questions and commitments: 3.5

None: 2

Family matters: 1.5

Own health: 1

Question 36: What do you want to accomplish in your life? Specific goals?

Answering: 8

Protesting: I Don't think in terms of goals/I take things as they come: 3.5

Mentioning goals: 4.5

Question 42: What kinds of things prevent your doing what you need and want to do?

Answering: 5

The management/the building set-up, it's run by the janitor: 1.5

I do pretty well what I want: 1

Men: 1

Finances/economics: .8

Responsibilities: .3

Health: .3

The nine people interviewed have a larger proportion of women to men, are younger and more mobile and have a higher proportion of Euro-Canadians than the general building population. The interviewees spoke for themselves.

T8's answer to question 22 (the role question): "companion to RT" is of special interest. T8's role represents a personal and public commitment on her part. It is generally recognized and respected as a formal role by tenants on her floor and many others in the building. RT occupies a role of honour and affection. It is recognized that without T8 she would without a doubt have to go into a nursing home. This role is not formalized in any way by the landlord or by any agency dealing with this EPH or the wider community as a whole. The fact that T8's role is considered formal in this "jurisdiction" and in no other lends strength to the notion that this population in this location constitutes a valid community.

Responses to question 22 showed one of the highest levels of consensus in the tenant interviews. Six of the eight respondents spoke about his /her role in the building. One person said pointedly, "Everybody has a role in the building!" This statement echoed my continuing observation that virtually everyone living in the building is accepted and considered important by the other tenants.

Responses to the question 36 re: goals, form another example of surprising answers. The highest consensus here was in rejecting the question and pointedly informing the questioner of the actual state of affairs, "Setting goals is not our way of doing things. We take things as they come." Such objections and volunteered information increases my confidence in the interviews. People were not merely trying to feed back to me what I wanted. It also confirms my frequent perceptions that people in the building were trying to teach me about who they were and what that meant.

Considering that the two objecting in question 26 were different individuals than those objecting in question 25 means that half the respondents made a special point (unsolicited) of informing me that they do, in fact, live in their community, their neighbourhood.

In question 32 the respondent (counted under "family matters") spoke about his small grandchild who had been in hospital with a critical heart condition. He said, "It wasn't really a decision but it was very hard, on all of us." It was surprising to me that three respondents (38%) did not choose to talk about any difficult decisions in the past year. Either they considered decisions a personal matter and didn't want to talk about it

or they don't think in terms of "hard decisions."

It is interesting to note in question 42 that no one mentioned safety.

The responses and the explanatory and objecting statements in these interviews demonstrated a self-concept of citizens in community. They took the trouble to point out that it is their community, that "Everyone has a role in this building." These objecting and firmly expressed opinions also increase my confidence in the interview responses in general. The tenants were not merely feeding back what they thought I wanted to hear. It also increases my confidence that the symbolic meaning of the personal expressions and the actions that I have been observing do have objective validity.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSIONS

This study was done from the point of view of the tenants at St. John's Place. Views of building management and agency staff were mainly from this point of view as well. No personal bias is intended but as Irving Goffman (1959, p x) said, "To describe a situation faithfully is necessarily to present a partisan view."

Without detracting from this partisan point of view, I want to disclaim any intention to imply that the institutional interests representing Manitoba departments of Housing and Health and Social Services or others are not well intentioned or not being effective. Neither did tenants make such a statement. To say that the institution is not *entirely* effective is a very different statement. These definitions of what the building as a place to live means to people were assembled from fieldnotes and tenant interviews:

- a refuge for needy people
- a safe haven for the recluse
- a reasonable housing alternative for the prudent
- a tolerable alternative for some
- a frustration for some
- subsidized housing for the elderly
- a needed stopover to recuperate and to reorganize ones life
- "a place to end their days, and not alone." (from tenant interview)

The lack in the building of a comfortable and compatible socializing space which tenants can call their own was protested. Again, to be fair and objective, here is a brief informal list of facilities the building does provide:

- a clean, orderly and safe environment
- a security guard after ten in the evenings and on weekends and holidays
- twenty-four hour free access to the building
- twenty-four access to residential floors by tenants with key
- part-time recreation director
- outdoor space for sitting in good weather
- familiar neighbourhood for many
- convenient central location, near bus stops, cheaper taxi than outlying EPH and walking distance to many destinations
- institutional neighbours that provide health services
- grocery store
- canteen (discontinued after R became ill)

St. John's United Church (closed in 1992)
part-time use of rooms on second floor for meetings and recreation
yearly conference with tenant leasing officer.

The position of the caretaker was a focus for some tenants. Q's words and actions were often referred to. It is felt that the position of caretaker puts the incumbent at often contentious points between members of the building community and the greater institutional forces that impinge upon it. When the caretaker is the only staff person in the building he may have to institute a policy when there is none or to choose whether and in what way to enforce a policy. He is routinely in the position to make judgment calls. Without a normal arena for discussion or appeal tenants feel frustrated as their complaints attest. IM, RN and others thought that, reasonably and fairly-speaking, more self-government should be a possibility.

The data gathered in this project could have been analyzed along various lines. For instance, individuals with similar kinds of needs could have been grouped together in a rather administrative analysis. Historical/social profiles could have been constructed of tenants and groups of tenants. Types of life-styles and adaptations to the building situation could have been described and interpreted. However as I gained rapport in the building and knowledge of the social networks as well as the needs of the tenants I became more interested in what seemed to be a fragile and small but very real community. Fieldnotes tended to reflect what people did together and who they did it with: how they managed and what their concerns were. The questions that I chose to address in this study were: what elements of community are in operation here? Are the tenants living in this building merely a conglomeration of people, consumers of government services? Are they inhabitants of an institution? Are they citizens of a community? If they are a mixture, part independent citizen and part institutional resident then what sort of a mixture? Interview questions were designed to shed light on these areas.

As time went on I was accepted more and included more in relations of mutual trust, discovery and definition and friendly exchange. And I came to appreciate the value and the subtle strengths of individuals but also the extent of their social bonds and commitments to each other. As I understood that these relationships and activities of mutual sharing and definition did in fact form a vital core of social life in the building,

then people's reticence of expression and resistance to organization made more sense to me. Responses to the FNP Questionnaire and tenant interviews strengthened my impressions that they were protecting the fragile structures of community, "life-world" in Habermas' term, against the large and not very self-aware power of institutional ambition and its proclivity to organize and control. What we in the FNP were calling "social networks" finally presented a picture of a small and fragile but functioning community. People living in the heart of the government and "non-government" health and social service systems that are large, pervasive and extremely powerful, protect and preserve for themselves a life-world of intersubjective spaces, subtle social structures, minor but important ecological systems and provisions for self-expression and enjoyment. They are wary that the institutional forces that surround them will invade these fragile arrangements, activities and relations and destroy their life-world of creativity, meaning and mutuality.

COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTION: USING GOFFMAN TO SET THE DISCUSSION

Some, but not most of the aspects of life in the building conform to Goffman's (1959) description of life in the total institution and even those that apply do so partially or provisionally. There are physical barriers to departure: for some it is because of a combination of economic and mobility limitations. For others social and economic constraints mean that other affordable housing would be considerably less satisfactory than this subsidized housing. The other characteristic that stands out is the imposition of surveillance which again is not as pervasive as in the asylum of Goffman, (1959, p. 7): people have privacy in their suites unless some exceptional situation should arise. But there is still ongoing and effective surveillance. And there is considerable demand for compliance to advice, rules and regulations. The institutional characteristic of enforcing an overall plan for people's existence (1959 p 4) is paralleled in this environment only in the apparent overall plan to deal with people minimally and from a stance of power and authority. Order and control are prime considerations. For example, the fact that there is a table but only three chairs in the space at the windows on each floor was pointed out to

me as the sign of out-of-sight but effective and persistent, unchallengeable authority. I was told that if a fourth chair is added, it disappears. Apparently, the thought is that four chairs would invite a card game. In this formally independent living situation the feeling of lack autonomy is noticed. This was demonstrated when the new Tenant Association president slammed his keys on the table and complained, "Look! I have the keys to all these rooms on second floor, but not the keys to second floor itself." This perception of arbitrary authority lent an institutional cast to the environment.

Some types of tenants "got on well" in the building: those who were very dependent on the services whose lives were quite organized around the day hospital and Health Action Centre. Those who were fit, very well-organized in themselves and quite self-contained got on well. They would be able to do so about anywhere. "They have their ways of doing things, but they don't interfere with mine," a tenant commented during an interview. A third type who apparently made successful adjustments between their own needs and preferences and the building environment were some recluses and solitary drinkers.

Goffman (1959 p 50ff) mentions systems of restrictions and privileges as control mechanisms. This was not generally noticed in the building although written eviction warnings led two tenants to make fervent requests for the FNW to "put in a good word for me in the office." And the two one bedroom suites on each floor were considered a prize that was not handed out indiscriminately.

The assaults on the self that Goffman observed among institutionalized persons are paralleled at 450 Jemima Avenue either by long-standing status or other social problems or by debilitating health conditions that have precipitated a personal crisis. Sometimes these conditions improved over time.

At the end of his book Goffman describes the power of the institution to generate assumptions about identity (1959 p 186) and to initiate primary action to which others then responded by making "secondary adaptations" (1959 p 188). It appears that the institution at 450 Jemima Street (meant inclusively as government and non-government agencies) behaves as an institution in these terms. Its self-concept is institutional: the ability and the will to define the identity of people and other elements of

local social reality and to initiate primary actions. Foucault's question would seem to be pertinent here: is it necessary that there be as much nonconsensuality in the system as there presently is?

THE POPULATION AT 450 JEMIMA AVENUE AS A COMMUNITY

There is a shared concept of place here: "I call this place home;" "This is my neighbourhood;" "This is my Community;" "I have always lived around here." These statements among others were made in the tenant interviews, even when other questions were posed. People wanted me to know that this is and has been their home. People pointed out houses in which they used to live. They told me of going to Old St. John's Church that stood on this ground. They baby-sat with, bought groceries from and played with other tenants, people who are here now, in the building. There is historical depth to the building itself. People told me stories about "what we used to do" about the recreation director who used to dance at the functions; about that "wild trip to Victoria Beach;" about "my nutty brother who carried a colour TV over the bridge wading knee deep in snow, crazy guy." There is local mythology which has historical depth.

The tenants of the building do not act obviously and officially in concert as a group. Communities are generally expected to at least conceivably be able to do so. Instead, many people are involved in specific sub-groups: kin and friend and activity centred groups which do overtly accomplish things. These networks have no names. They are not referred to at length and were revealed to the FNW only over time, bit by bit. These smaller, more active and apparently more cohesive groups are embedded in the larger looser one that is the building community. What the whole population is and does together is to live in the building, have their livelihood from the same or similar sources, spend time together, interact in relation to goods, mutual assistance, hospitality, sociability, in trading favours and in intersubjective space.

The following is a mini-essay that I wrote when considering whether the population at 450 Jemima Avenue is itself a community. Each role or position or activity refers to a real one that I observed. Written in the midst of the action it has an immediacy

that may be useful in evoking the impression that I gained.

If HL should decide to move back to New Brunswick would someone else take up his position sitting in the chair in the corner on first floor in plain view of the elevator, the mailboxes and the front door, thinking about things, joking and commenting on things? How could anybody ever replace EB or WT? The role of tenant's association executive is formally passed on but there are other roles in the building that are traditional here and passed on informally. I suppose there will always be bootleggers, errand runners and drinking company for anyone who'll buy the booze. Will there always be someone to shorten the new pair of pants? If FG quit would someone else take up the job of house-mother on Thea floor? How about the role of gossip or building news spreader? There would always be someone to take up that job if the position were to be vacated. How about the roles of cooking for, doing favour for, and paying attention to RT? Something would be very wrong here if no one would do those things. It would be a shame and people would grieve over it. RT would have to go to a nursing home and this building would be a different place. Someone always has an eye out for spare goods and will commandeer them and then pass them along to someone else who needs them. People frequently move in here without adequate furniture (sometimes with none at all). Others find out and see that they get some things they need. There is the role of native elder, someone who watches and says a word when needed or acts decisively in protest when he sees people's rights are being infringed. There is the role of someone who cooks, especially traditional food such as deer meat or moose meat and of someone who brings pickerel from the country. The building would be less and worse without these people doing these things and the celebrations and enjoyments occasioned by their efforts and also by the agreements, definitions, allowances and enforcements that sustain them. Other informal roles are noticed: feeding the birds; regularly loaning the newspaper; and roles of defending honour, person and property.

When Mr. M, the oldest man in the building, struggles up from his seat by the front door to open it for someone who is having trouble getting in, is he doing so only because he is Mr. M and a gentleman according to some larger ascription or is it also because he is upholding a valued definition of this building as hospitable place?

Other local structures are the need to provide pall bearers for funerals and witticisms and innuendoes in social repartee. Common informal, local adaptations are ways of keeping the suite door open while at the same time forming some blockage for intruders or people looking into suites. Men often have some provision for physical protection at the ready. There are people who don't participate and ones who participate in limited and closely defined ways. Some people are seen as being certain kinds of people: some are people commonly acknowledged as deserving of pity, respect and encouragement and some require reform. Acknowledged and seemingly agreed upon efforts in this direction in this direction are sometimes successful, although this is subtle and harder to document. Some people are commonly acknowledged as being strong, intelligent, credible and authoritative and are quite universally respected and listened to; some others might hold differing opinions but these would be taken as minority opinion. Others are by consensus considered as ignorant, maybe unintelligent, and quite generally discounted as far as credibility goes, their actions viewed with light humour but not ridicule. Kindness and tolerance seem very pervasive qualities of this population.

THE THEORY OF COMMUNICATIVE ACTION AND THE FRIENDLY NEIGHBOUR PROGRAM

Jurgen Habermas (1985) is a social philosopher. His concepts are dense and tight. Still the crux of what he is saying is straightforward and practical. His theory of communicative action can be used to help explain the questions that remained at the end of the Friendly Neighbour program:

1. Why was the FNP so successful?
2. Why do the natural helpers in the Three EPH wish to avoid formal recognition?
3. How can the institution or parts of it support and encourage natural helpers that are already active in the EPH?

The FNP was successful. Persons closely involved with it were not only pleased with the results, but were invigorated. We were happy in the doing of it. We were not successful in establishing on-going volunteer programs in the three buildings. The situation as it unfolded was not simple. We found that isolation and loneliness were more complicated than we originally thought. We found that getting acquainted required much unfettered time. To do it properly we had to be free to spend several hours with a person when that was needed. But later, having made friends and having established trust and understanding, then ever widening horizons of possibilities opened up before us. And we found on-going networks of mutual help and friendship in the buildings: personal and community strengths as well as human need. At this point, we also found that our efforts became effective and efficient.

In our weekly staff/management meetings the five of us gathered to tell of our experiences and to consider them in light of what we were trying to do. In these meetings, too, we spent time and got acquainted. We established trust and understanding. Each of us stuck our necks out in turn and gave our reasons for our opinion as to why we believed something was or was not so, would or would not work. We got excited. Once after a HAC Out-reach Worker joined us for a session she said to a friend, "I don't know how they get anything done; they all talk at the same time and they butt in on each other." We also listened and reflected on what was said. We had formed

a tight and energetic, yet non-coercive field of social interaction. We forged bonds of identity and community. And we were productive.

Habermas' theory of communicative action can be used to help describe and explain these two important bases of the FNP as examples of the same kind of social action and effect, communicative action: at once gentle, intense, important, mutual and creative. This non-strategic conversation for the purpose of reaching an understanding allows for individual expression and growth and at the same time socialization into a community of meaning and intent. His model goes like this:

Person A: speaks, throws out an idea. Person B: hears it. He evaluates it in his own mind, "Does it make sense? Is it true? Is it right? (according to the rules that we accept?) Is he sincere?" B takes a position on A's expression. If he wonders about one or more of A's points, he asks A to expand or clarify or justify. A responds giving his reasons for believing as he does. A has left himself wide open to evaluation. The thing that makes this event dynamic is that B has to commit himself, to evaluate, to take a position on what A says. B also has to honour A's vulnerability and refrain from attack. Then the relative positions are reversed as B offers an idea, leaves himself open to evaluation while A commits himself on B's expression yet respecting B's vulnerability. What they come up with is a common ground of understanding, the basis for plans of action or for further conversation. In the meantime they have established a space of commonality and solidarity between them (Bernstein: 1985, pp 18, 19, Habermas, 1985, pp 194, 195, 204, 205, Habermas, 1990, p 199ff).

Habermas says that communicative action is necessary for human life. He also says that this broadly based and uncoerced, gently powerful and creative life-world has been in our times crowded into the small corners of society by the instrumental rationality of the system which speaks and acts to achieve ends. He does not say that the systemic part of our society is not necessary but that it is invasive and colonizing and that it takes up too much room and time and energy and that a better balance must (quite literally) be achieved. It is interesting to note that the conversation for the purpose of reaching an understanding conforms to the accepted ideal set for scientific and legal discourses where similarly, the only force that prevails is the force of the better argument (Bernstein: 1985, p 19).

Habermas draws immediate inferences from this intersubjective process. He claims that in it agents are both individuated and socialized: Here is the simultaneous right and necessity to decide and to commit oneself (individuation) and the necessity to extend

trust, attention, sensitivity and possibly restraint to ones fellow (socialization) in the production and reproduction of community (Habermas 1990, pp. 200-1).

I believe that one of the reasons that the FNP was so successful is that it featured relations of communicative action with the groups that we were trying to understand and to serve and also in our working relations with each other. In both directions we found ourselves nourished and unified by that common and yet not so common resource, the non-strategic, uncoerced friendly conversation. The thing that is difficult to express to someone outside the experience (of the FNP) is the extremely positive feelings that accompanied our efforts. According to Habermas' explanation, this would be from the effect of simultaneous individuation and solidarity that characterize conversations for the purpose of reaching an understanding.

The second question that we faced at the end of the FNP was why people who regularly helped their neighbours did not want to be recognized. Why did these helping tenants want to keep themselves anonymous? This question remained in my mind during the later stages of fieldwork. And I became more aware of the extent and importance of these helpers and their "networks." Finally, I understood them as a part of a matrix of a functioning community. It was small and fragile. Its power was limited in particular ways. Its means of self-regulation were very limited. Its province was restricted. It was invisible to most outsiders, but it was real.

According to Habermas' theory this small community in the building at 450 Jemima Avenue comprised the life-world, the necessary core of human society, of many of the tenants at St. John's Place. Its rules, mentioned above, on which it is founded, are recognized the world over. He also says that inherent in the realm of communicative action is the tendency to recognize and eject any relations of force or systematic bias that may be inconspicuously set in the structures of communication that would prevent conscious and consensual settlement of differences (Bernstein, 1985, p 21).

Looked at this way people's concern that they not be formally known as volunteers but instead to remain just friends seems reasonable and prudent. They do not want their own structures and accommodations to be undermined by becoming beholden to or organized by another system. This also may explain why 77% of those at 450 who

responded to the FNPQ question on what activities they would like to become involved in replied "none" or words to that effect explaining that they preferred personal and spontaneous activities (see Appendix for tenant's actual answers).

And looked at in this way the definition of "independence" is broadened to include not just the management of one's material affairs, but involvement in practical and meaningful community life.

One more question had bothered me as we sat in those evaluation sessions at the end of the FNP: how to explain a seeming paradox. Help is needed in people's lives. The institution has resources and there is the desire to help. But the social field is ambiguous. The members of this population seem to resist helpful overtures. Additional fieldwork and working with the data prompted an hypothesis. As I have shown in the narrative and data sections, experiences of institutional influence by tenants in EPH is sometimes quite different from the intended self-concept (such as our concept of "we", of the agencies, of HAC, the University of Manitoba etc., as we sat mulling the "problems" in the evaluation session). Tenants of St. John's Place often saw the institution as the imposer of rules and regulations and sometimes of arbitrary decisions. It was variously described as "treats us as inmates or children" or "just a normal business." Either way, there were limits as to how close a person wanted it to be. How then could the institution or extensions of it be helpful? I believe now that to recognize the elements of community generation and community maintenance in a population would be a satisfying, productive place to start. Such recognition is based on an understanding of the validity and importance of community, people's own community, in their lives. Then in any plan for making contacts, care could be taken not to ignore or undermine the strengths and resources already active.

The FNP was brain-stormed, designed and run by the Seniors at Risk Network. This independent body is composed of individuals who have worked for years at positions in between the institution and the community. They have an empathetic understanding and good will that has reached in both directions. Foucault referred to individuals in this position as "specific intellectuals". He predicted that such people would be able to catalyse very positive movements for change (1980, p 128). The FNP

demonstrated their strength, understanding and good will. They chose and trained self-possessed staff with the knowledge needed and gave them the freedom and the time to become involved in the community as friends and then to build from there, still as friends. This approach did not necessitate that the FNW break ties with the larger community or its institutions. We also formed bonds of solidarity with each other, fellow employees and the Seniors At Risk network members.

I believe the success of this approach suggests the necessity of self-examination by institutional interests. What kind of balance between the practical communicative life-world and the purposive instrumental sectors of society will make for justice and the good life? The interesting thing about this question is that it cannot be decided by a bureaucracy as such. Only among friends in conversations, trying to reach an understanding, can consensus about meaning and value, justice and the good life be realized. The will to power and control characteristic of an institution may invade such space and activity but it can not replace it.

In Conclusion

If a theory is a plausible set of testable hypotheses then here is my theory of "the building":

1. The population of tenants at 450 Jemima Avenue constitute a small but real and functioning community.
2. Communicative action as described by Jurgen Habermas and as observed in this study is a necessary element of human social life. It is in this intersubjective space that community is generated.
3. The tenants in the community housed in this EPH resist organization by others and keep their mutual aid and other community activities "low profile" in order to avoid the invasive power of outside forces, such as institutional forces.
4. Government and non-government agencies, on reflection, might find it less that necessary to be as nonconsensual as they, all too often, prove to be.
5. The Friendly Neighbour Program was successful because it created the kind of space and time between people in which community could actually be generated, not by trying to make it happen but by setting up the possibilities and allowing it to happen and by being there, too, and participating in the process.

In anthropological fieldwork it is interesting how the personal, the practical and the theoretical weave into and out of one another. Elements of the thought of Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault and the experience of fieldwork at 450 Jemima Avenue can

be brought together to make a summary statement.

The extent of the extreme disequality inherent in the power of the institution and the recipient or "target" of institutional interventions makes for a very strange scatter of demands and possibilities for the different agents. One thing this research has clarified for me is that anyone, rich or poor, who aspires to transcend his or her own social conditioning and to understand society including that very conditioning has a real job on their hands and also will never be bored - not as long, at least, as their courage holds up.

As my friend HD said: "When I first started coming out (of my suite) I noticed that nobody wanted to talk. On the elevators they stood looking straight ahead. Down here they sat glum and quiet. Nobody wanted to talk. So I sat down and I just started talking to myself. I even told jokes to myself. One woman whispered to another, 'Is he crazy?' 'No,' she said, 'I think he just wants to talk.' So they started talking to me, and people have been talking ever since. People need to talk."

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Maintaining independence is key in Winnipeg

CANADA has an aging population, and the fastest growing segment of the seniors population is the over-85 group. Seniors are the biggest users of health services in the country, although 80 per cent of care is provided by the family.

The Health Promotion Directorate of Health and Welfare Canada has also found out that despite at least one chronic illness, most seniors consider themselves to be in good health. Fewer seniors smoke and drink. Many exercise.

Health and Welfare's Seniors Independence Program, which began in 1988, is a response to the fact that, increasingly, seniors want to maintain their independence. The program, which gives priority to senior women, seniors living in rural or remote areas and the disadvantaged, stresses community development.

With financing by the Health Promotion Directorate and programs such as SIP, projects are possible to help seniors live healthier lives. The focus of the Friendly Neighbour Program in Winnipeg project is seniors at risk.

"We're in the inner city of Winnipeg, which is a fairly disadvantaged population, and the seniors we've been targeting are ones who are isolated through fear of going out, victimization and numerous other problems including multiculturalism," said Jeanette Edwards, executive director of the Health Action Centre, which sponsored the project.

The Friendly Neighbour Program itself is short — only 18 months — but its long-term objective is to have

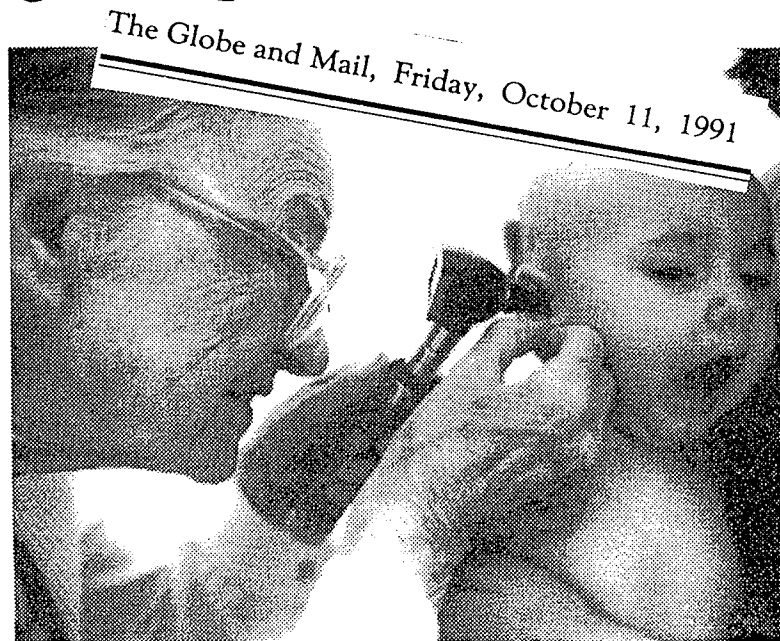


Photo by Jerry Valente, copyright 1990, from the book The Power to Heal. (Canadian debut of book's photography exhibition Oct. 21 to Nov. 2 at Toronto's Eaton Centre).

it carry on by enabling seniors to run it themselves.

"What's unique is that we deliberately built it in as a short-term project and we hired individuals who were culturally and linguistically appropriate and who also resided in this area," Edwards said. "What we have tried to do is clearly get the community involved in the start-up project. Then the main driving objective is to start recruiting other volunteers from the community so that the community owns this issue and carries on with it."

The program is aimed at between

350 and 400 seniors living in three buildings, and after some initial reluctance, Edwards said the response "has been fabulous." The first step was spending three months building relationships of trust with the seniors so they would know what the program was about and that they could trust the staff.

"Generally, we're dealing with a population that has learned not to interact," Edwards said. "But the response has been just tremendous."

"What we have done is use community volunteers to provide buddy support, social contacts and inte-

gration. What we're considering here in terms of healthy lifestyles goes well beyond the normal, traditional scope of health — nutrition and all those things — and we're integrating that into the program."

In the planning stages, 17 community groups were involved and the final planning group was chosen to represent social service, housing, recreation and health, the four areas that most affect seniors' lives.

Integration into the community is the critical component, through social and leisure programs, in almost any community activity. That involvement, health experts find, is critical to a sense of well being.

"That's why we're using the community base," Edwards said. "As different tenant groups in the buildings have been identified and asked for information on nutrition, on foot care, on exercise, and a vast array of more medically orientated issues, we've tapped into existing resources in the community to start really reaching out their role."

Instead of only fulfilling their roles in clinics, hospitals and public health, the program encourages service providers and professionals to visit seniors where they live. The Seniors at Risk Planning Group sends resource people into the community to deal with issues as they arise.

Thanks to the Seniors Independence Program, which finances nearly 100 widely varying projects across the country, an exercise program has recently been started. That, too, will be run by individuals in the community as leaders are identified and training provided for future trainers.

Appendix B

The Friendly Neighbour Program Questionnaire

TENANT QUESTIONS

1. Has our contact been helpful to you? How?
2. During the last year, do you feel that you are doing better, have gotten worse, or are about the same? Why?
3. During the last year, have you had more contact with your neighbours here in the building and outside of the building? Less contact? Would you like to have more contact?
4. What do you think the biggest problem people in this building have? Why? What should be done about it? What could you do about it?
5. Compared to last year, do you think you know more about, the same about, or less about the types of services (i.e. health and recreation) available?
6. What type of activities would you be interested in getting involved with on your floor? In the building? In the community?
7. Do you feel safe in this building? In the community? Why? Why not?
8. What was the best thing that has happened to you this last year? What was the worse thing?
9. Do you feel comfortable in voicing your concerns?

Appendix C

The Friendly Neighbour Program Questionnaire

Responses to four questions on the FNP Questionnaire were summarized for interpretation. Where tenants gave more than one answer they were recorded as decimal fractions of answers.

4. What do you think the biggest problem people in this building have?

Answering the question: 45

Few or no or no big problems/no knowledge or opinion of problems: 16.5 (37%)

Drinking: 9.8

Loneliness/isolation: 3

Sickness/old age/can't get around: 2.7

Gaps in tenant, mgt. communication/poor tenant, tenant communication 2.5

Gossip: 2

Safety: 2

Other Concerns: 6.5

- Cockroaches

- People coming in from outside who have no relatives or business in the building

- Bumming (people bothering you, asking for things)

- People need help and I can help too

- Smoking in the elevators

- Carelessness which leads to problems

- Sometimes people don't want help

- Too many parties

- Caretaker never smiles, he is not friendly

- Non-delivery of newspaper; maybe it's held up on first floor

6. What type of activities would you be interested in getting involved with on your floor? In the building? In the community?

Answering the question: 37

None: 28.5 (77%)

Answering with specific suggestions: 8.7 (24%)

- Exercise/craft group

- I enjoy casual friendships

- I like making friends

- Organized bingo or cards on individual floors

- Neighbourhood watch

- A bingo-caller pool

- Church on Sundays

- Open up the pool room during the day

- Monthly tenant discussion and planning meetings

Comments accompanying negative answers are considered to be either objections to the question or as justification for the tenant's position:

- I like my life the way it is/things are ok the way they are
- I am involved with personal friends, relatives
- I like my privacy and my own arrangements.
- I prefer spontaneous and personal contacts
- I'm busy enough
- I prefer casual friendships
- I have outside interests
- I like it as it is, casual and neighbourly
- I like cards in the hall and when we visit each other in our suites
- I am retired and I prefer to do things when I feel like it
- I don't bother anybody and I don't want anybody to bother me
- I prefer informal visiting as neighbours
- It's okay the way it is on this floor, quiet, but people are neighbourly
- I visit with neighbours on the floor; that's enough
- I baby-sit for friends
- This building brings unhappy memories of better times
- I can't sit too long
- The outside community a nuisance
- People here are stuck in a rut.

Notes: There was a very high level of consensus (77%) for staying out of organized activities. These people are very similar in that they don't want to participate in "activities" which must mean formal or organized activities. In their unsolicited comments they stressed preference for spontaneous and personal interactions. The question that presents itself here is: are the respondents a very busy and satisfied group or are they trying to avoid intrusion by institutional representatives and interests? It certainly sounds as if they have other things that they would rather do.

7. Do you feel safe in this building? In the community? Why? Why not?

In the building(48 answering):

Yes: 41 (85%)
Conditionally: 1
No: 6

In the community (36 answering):

Yes: 16 (44%)
Conditionally: 7
No: 13 (36%)

The 24 comments and individual solutions were categorized as:

Minor and non-aggression based dangers:

- I need help with my wheelchair outside
- I'm only scared when the fire alarm goes off
- There are holes in the cement. You could trip.
- Someone stole my clothes hamper

Dangers are not strange but understandable/ not that great

- I've had trouble, but I face it; it doesn't bother me
- People have troubles (and that makes them dangerous)
- Yes people are afraid because strangers come in off the street. Maybe an appropriate sign would help, to explain that this is people's home and should be respected as such.
- The danger is not that great
- Nobody bothers me
- I feel safe enough. I watch myself
- I feel safe anywhere
- I feel safe and happy. My room is my home. I don't bother anybody and no one bothers me.

Expressions of aggression based dangers

- Too many drunks and thieves with little help
- Too many drunks walking by outside begging for money and for smokes
- Too many prowlers, even in the daytime
- "After dark gangs of several men will approach you demanding 'give me cigarettes; give me money.' I won't go out at night."

Strategies for self-protection

- I don't go out alone.
- I go out with a friend
- I don't go out except by car
- I use a cab at night
- I might have to get a gun.
- I don't go out at night
- I lock my door and use the peep hole
- I feel safe since I have a companion but I don't go out much at night, not alone

Note: This very high consensus (85%) shows a lack of fear and anxiety in the building and to a lesser extent (44%) in the surrounding neighbourhood. It seems to reflect pride in community and in personal ability. It is convincing evidence that fear of robbery and assault is not uppermost in people's lives. They seem to take it for granted that one must look out for oneself. When I was administering this questionnaire several people showed me their means of self-protection: a cane, exercise bars, a baffled doorway that allowed the door to be left open without leaving oneself exposed to view or without warning of intrusion. It was mentioned that a neighbour had sent off an intruder once and that the building is more livable since the hiring of a security guard for evenings

and weekends.

What does the above say about this community?

Tenants feel safe and at home here although this statement of attitude and affairs would be a very relative one. (For example my feeling safe may not be the same as your feeling safe.) People feel safer in the building than outside, especially at night. And people are proud that they can take care of themselves.

8. What was the best thing that has happened to you this last year? What was the worst thing?

40 answering the question.

The best?

I had a "good year": 24

- got engaged
- lots of good things
- my twin called from San Diego
- I like seeing my sons - they always come to visit me
- Got over cancer of the throat
- My daughter came from Vancouver and we went out a lot
- Everything
- When FNW comes to visit
- Had two new grandsons
- Moving in here
- Pretty good year
- A wonderful birthday party from family and friends
- Getting more care from the nurses aid and neighbour
- FNW gave me advice and confidence
- Lots of nice things
- FNW slowed down people's drinking and people taking advantage of me
- Having a companion, better health, nice birthday party
- Going on trips in summer with other tenants
- Nothing really, I got a piano but they wanted me to get rid of it instead of getting a more roomy, one-bedroom suite
- Christmas time
- My new living situation (a very satisfying relationship)
- Recovering from fall and broken hip
- I met a pretty girl
- My boyfriend is a damned good friend

The worst?

Nothing bad/nothing bad yet/a good year/things just rolled along/ a normal year/ok/everything seemed to go well for me: 20

Unhappy or unfortunate events or situations: 12

- Major surgery
- I lost my daughter; she died-

- Family needs
- Not being able to work
- Rent raised 40% in two years
- My house burned down
- Bad spell of flu and pneumonia in December
- Illness and accidents
- Somebody stole my Christmas hamper
- Nothing bad. Just my brother committed suicide in August.
- I was in hospital for 2 months
- I lost my keys and had to wake up the caretaker at 2 AM

Summary of 19 specific answers re: best:

Family and social relations: 7

Health: 4

FNW: 3

Moving into building: 2

Christmas: 2

Going on trips in summer with other tenants: 1

Summary of 13 answers regarding worst:

Health 5

Death in family 2

Family needs 1

Not able to work 1

Excessive rent hike 1

House burned down 1

Somebody stole my Christmas hamper 1

Lost keys, had to wake caretaker 1

Appendix D
QUESTIONS FOR NINE TENANT INTERVIEWS

Understanding a Senior's High-rise
Questions to Ask Local People
C. Ackerman

I Personal and Health

First I'd like to ask you a few questions to help me build a clear picture of your situation.

1. Sex _____ Age _____ Date of Birth _____ Place of birth _____
Where have you lived most of your life? _____ When mvd to Wpg.? _____
2. What languages do you speak? _____
3. What schools and other kinds of learning experiences have been useful to you? _____
4. Do you generally live alone or with someone? _____
5. What is your marital status? S _____ M _____ W _____ Sep _____ D _____ How many children? _____
6. What was your major occupation during your working years? (What did you work at;
how did you support your family?) _____
7. Are you now retired? _____
8. How would you rate your financial situation, now? _____ In the past? _____
9. Are you physically able to do most of the things you want to do? _____
10. For your age how is your mobility, your physical ability to get around? _____
11. How often do you go out of the building (times/week)? Winter? _____ Summer? _____
Do you walk? _____ Go by: Car? _____ City bus? _____ Taxi? _____ Handi-transit? _____
12. Do you walk around inside the building? _____ Unaided? _____ With a cane? _____
Use rails in halls? _____ Use a walker? _____ Use a Wheelchair? _____
13. Do you do your own personal and household chores? _____
14. For your age, how would you say your general health is, right now? _____
15. Do specific health problems trouble you (now or in the last 12 months)? _____
16. Would you make a statement about your life right now? Are things in general going
along pretty well? _____ Or do particular problems limit your enjoyment of life? _____

II What People Do Together: How People Spend Their Time

Now I'd like to ask some questions about what you do on your own and with friends and family to help me get a good idea of how people in the building spend their time.

17. How much of your life is centred around people and activities in the building? _____
18. How much of your time do you spend on your own? _____ Inside? _____ Outside? _____
19. What proportion of your time would you say you spend in your suite in the winter? _____
In summer? _____
20. Do most of your friends and relatives that you spend time with live inside the building? _____ Or outside? _____
21. What kinds of things do you usually do with them? _____
22. Do you have a particular role in the building? _____ (Do people expect you to be a certain way, to do certain things?) _____
23. If things went wrong or something happened that upset you or your neighbour what would you do? _____ Who would you tell about it? _____
24. Who are the three most important people in your life just now? _____
25. Do you maintain ties with your former communities? _____
26. Do you ever visit your old neighbourhood? _____ Your reserve? _____ Your
a. Home town? _____ How often? _____ On what occasions? _____
b. Do you still have friends and relatives that you see there? _____
c. What do you do there? _____
27. What differences do you see between life in your old community (neighbourhood, reserve etc) and life here at 450 Jemima? _____
28. Do you patronize Peter's canteen? _____ How often? (times/wk.) _____ Do you think the people benefit from having it in the building? Is he good to do business with? _____
29. Do you shop at St. John's Grocery? _____ How often? (times/wk.) _____
Is she good to do business with? _____
30. What is the recreation director's role in the building? _____
31. Do you participate in organized building activities? _____ How often? _____
On a weekly basis, what are the most important events and activities? _____
32. What were the hardest decisions you faced last year? _____

III Descriptions of Us: We who Live Here Aims & Goals, Satisfactions & Frustrations, Helps & Hindrances

This next section is to get your ideas about yourself and the other people living here, about yourselves and your situation here.

34. First, how would you describe your general situation here? _____
35. What are the most important things in your life right now? _____
36. In general what do you want to accomplish in your life? _____
Specific goals? _____
37. Are you able to do these things? _____
41. Do you sometimes find yourself isolated, not able to be where you want to be? _____
42. What kinds of things get in the way of your doing what you need to do and want to do? _____
43. What kinds of things help? _____
44. When do you feel most happy or most satisfied? _____
45. Why do you believe most people come here to live? _____
46. What kind of people do you believe fit in best here? _____

47. How would you describe your neighbours, here in this building, to someone who had never met them? _____ What are some words you would use? _____
48. Are people who live in this building friendly? _____
49. Are they the kind of people you can really make friends with? _____
50. Do you live here for particular reasons or is 450 Jemima Street. just the best solution to your present housing needs? _____
51. Do you feel like you have established a good home here? _____
What do you believe the purpose of this building is? _____
52. Optional: How do people who live here refer to themselves and their neighbours? _____
53. Where is the community space in this building? _____

IV Doing Business With Bldg Mgt. and Government Employees Interactions and Evaluations

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about what it's like doing business with Mgt. and government employees.

54. How often do you see Mgt. staff? _____
55. What do you do with them on a regular basis? _____
Only occasionally? _____
56. Do you, personally, get along with Mgt.? _____ Office staff? _____
Building maintenance staff? _____ Security Guards? _____ Recreation director? _____ Tenant relations officer? _____ Director? _____
Caretaker? _____ Others? _____
57. Are they easy to get along with or do you have to know how to do it? _____
a. Do they try to be friendly? _____ Or do they try to hold their distance and stick to formal dealings? _____
b. Are they fair? _____
c. Do they understand the people who are living here? Their aims and goals? _____
Their problems? _____
d. Do they actually care about tenants or want to understand them? _____
e. In what ways do they influence people's lives here? _____
f. Are they reasonable? _____
h. How would you describe the relationship between the people here and building management? _____?
i. Is the relationship one-sided? _____ In what way? _____
58. Are other agencies about the same? _____
Are dealings with Sara and Peter about the same as? Or different from dealings with and Government employees? _____
59. What differences do you notice between these different groups? _____ Are the main differences between groups or between the individual people working for them?
60. This is quite a busy building with the canteen, the grocery, medical services, the offices, people coming and going all the time. Do you like having all the people around? _____ Do you like it more? _____ the same? _____ or less? _____ on the weekends when everything is quiet? _____
61. Are there other advantages? _____ Or disadvantages? _____ to living in a building such as this? _____ Do you feel more comfortable living in a building with built-in medical assistance? _____ Does living here mean that you have less privacy? _____ Less say about things? _____ Less space of your own? _____
62. What do you think the goals of Mgt. are? _____
63. What is their opinion of the purpose of the building? _____

- a. Are they satisfied with the building the way it is? _____
 - b. How do you think they would like to see it changed? _____
 - c. What do you owe them? _____
 - d. What do they owe you? _____
 - e. How much attention do people pay to them? _____
 - f. Can people avoid their influence if they want to? _____
 - g. What do they think of the tenants? _____
 - h. Should there be a tenant advocate in the building? _____ Should the tenants get organized? _____
64. Other than tenants, who would you say are the three most helpful people in this building? _____
65. In general what words would you use to describe the actions of:
MGT HAC VON PH Home-Care?
66. How would you describe this building as a place to live? _____
How is it working out for you? _____
How is it different from other places you have lived? _____
67. What would you recommend for elderly people's housing in the future? _____
Regarding the building itself? _____
The set-up? _____
The staff? _____
How should it be different from this one to make life better for the people? _____
What features of 450 Jemima Street. would you definitely want to keep? _____

Appendix E

SUMMARIES OF RESPONSES TO TENANT INTERVIEWS

Understanding a Senior's High-rise Questions to Ask Local People

I Personal and Health

1. Sex: M: 5
F: 4

Age: <60: 6
60 - 75: 2
>75: 1

Mobility: m-h: 8
l: 1

Ethnicity: FD: 6
NM: 2

Place of birth:
Winnipeg: 2
Other Manitoba communities: 4
Outside Manitoba: 3 (Halifax, Ontario, Ireland)

3. What schools and other kinds of learning experiences have been useful to you?:(4 responses)

Dufferin School
High-school
Chef's School
Much reading

5. Marital status?

S: 3
M: 0
W: 4
Sep: 1
D: 1

6. What was your major occupation during your working years? (What did you work at; how did you support your family?)

cook
chef
fisherman
farmer
forestry work (log cutting etc.)
store clerk

TV repair
book keeper
small business manager
construction
drilling crews
factory work
business
owner, janitor service
manager, small nursing home
nurse's aid
caretaker

7. Are you now retired?:

Y: 5

N: 3 (one person stated that he was not retired and not working. He was unemployed and not comfortable with that.)

8. How would you rate your financial situation, now?:

Good: 5

Poor: 3

In the past?:

Good: 8

Poor: 1

Great: 1

Better than now: 1

9. Are you physically able to do most of the things you want to do?:

Y: 6

N: 2

10. For your age how is your mobility, your physical ability to get around?²

Good: 5

Poor: 2

Use cane: 1

14. For your age, how would you say your general health is, right now?

Very good: 1

Good: 3

Fair: 3

Poor: 2

II What People Do Together: How People Spend Their Time

17. How much of your life is centred around people and activities in the building?

More than half/all: 4

About half: 2

Very little: 2

19. What proportion of your time would you say you spend in your suite?

Winter?

More than half/most: 4

- Half: 2
 Less than half/very little: 2
 Summer?
 Less than winter: 3
 Very little: 3
20. How often do you go out of the building (times/week)?
 Winter?
 Often/daily: 4
 Not much: 2
 As needed: 2
 Summer?
 More than winter: 2
 Most of the time/daily: 6
21. What kinds of things do you usually do with your friends and relatives?
 Play bingo: .3
 Go out: 2
 Visit: 4
 Help them: 1.6
22. Do you have a particular role in the building? (Do people expect you to be a certain way, to do certain things?)
 Yes: 6
 No: 2
 Roles mentioned:
 Neighbour (2)
 I keep people laughing
 Helping people: They depend on it
 Helper and companion to RT, the most senior woman in building
 President of Tenant's Association
23. If things went wrong or something happened that upset you or your neighbour what would you do? Who would you tell about it?
 Would do what is needed/what I can: 4
 I'm a loner/I don't complain: 2
 "I would find out about it, go to the source and I'd beat the shit out of them!" 1
24. Who are the three most important people in your life just now?
 Family: 5.5
 Who's rich: 1 (Whoever has the money to provide the fun and refreshments)
 Friend: .7
 Myself: .5
 My charge: .3
25. Do you maintain ties with your former communities?
 Six straight answers
 Yes: 3
 No: 2
 Not often: 1
 Two respondents objected to the question saying: "This is my community!"

26. Do you ever visit your old neighbourhood?
Only three responding:
Seldom: 1
Objecting: I live in the same neighbourhood/This is my neighbourhood: 2
28. Do you patronize R's canteen?
No: 5
Yes: 3
29. Do you shop at St. John's Grocery?
No: 5
Yes: 3 (
30. What is the recreation director's role in the building?
Two respondents named the position: recreation director.
Six gave evaluative answers:
Doesn't really have a say/don't see him much/so-so: 4
Good: 2
32. What were the hardest decisions you faced last year?
Personal questions and commitments: 3.5
None: 2
Family matters: 1.5
Own health: 1

III Descriptions of Us: We who Live Here Aims & Goals, Satisfactions & Frustrations, Helps & Hindrances

34. How would you describe your situation here?
Living ok, no complaints/just normal life/great, no problems/pretty good:4
Mentioned responsibilities: 1.5
"Rotten" a place to hang my hat: 1
Getting health together: .5
36. In general what do you want to accomplish in your life? (Specific goals?)
Don't think in terms of goals/take things as they come, a day at a time:3.5
Family and community goals
To visit my brother in Calgary: 1
To move into a small house with my charge: 1
To finish my year as Tenant's Association president: .5
- Personal goals
Take a computer accounting course 1
To be the comedian, the prime minister, the courser of my life: 1
41. Do you sometimes find yourself isolated, not able to be where you want to be?
No: 7
Yes: 1
42. What kinds of things get in the way of your doing what you need and want to do?
The building set-up, it's run by the janitor/the management: 1
I do pretty well what I want: 1
Men: 1
Financial/economics: 8
Responsibilities: 3

Health: .3

45. Why do you believe most people come here to live?
Economics: 4
Convenience: 1
Lots of friends and relatives here: 1
Health care facilities: 1
46. What kind of people do you believe fit in best here?
People who need what the building has to offer/cheap rent, good facilities: 2 (
Not too old and not too needy/fit, well and mobile: 2
Different kinds of people: 1
Most people can't afford anything else: 1
Non-gossipers: 1
48. Are people who live in this building friendly?
Some, yes
some no: 3
Yes: 2
- 51 a. Do you feel like you have established a good home here?
Yes: 3
No/it's temporary: 2
Partly: 1
- 51 b. What do you believe the purpose of this building is?
Housing for seniors/subsidised housing/low rent with health facilities: 5
I don't know, to make money, I guess: 1
52. How do people who live here refer to themselves and their neighbours?
Tenants: 4
Differs with different people/just ordinary people: 1
I don't know, I call this home: 1
53. Where is the community space in this building?
First floor lobby/halls: 2.5
Second floor: 1.5
None: (This is the weakness of this particular EPH): 1

IV Doing Business With BLDG Mgt. and Government Employees Interactions and Evaluations

54. How often do you see BLDG Mgt. staff?
Once per year/when necessary/seldom except C: 5
(of these 3 say they also see the caretaker often/daily/informally)
Every day: 1
Caretaker every day: 1
56. Do you, personally, get along with BLDG Mgt.?
Yes: 4
Pretty well: 1
We don't bother each other any more than necessary: 1

65. In general what words would you use to describe the actions of:

MGT HAC VON PH Home-Care?

Good: 2

Normal/large corporations are greedy by nature, the only thing a person can do is to shop around and see what is the best deal: 2

Set-up is bad:

Interview Notes

1. It is interesting to note that in the context of this question no one mentioned safety.
2. Response to this question shows understanding and acceptance of the wider community category of EPH and by inference their role in it as eligible users of this public service/resource. The minority opinion: "I don't know; to make money, I guess," illustrates an alternate understanding of wider community motivations but an apparently accepting and perhaps unalienated one (this is an enterprising person, herself).
3. The one time per year contact with Management is the required yearly contract renewal including suite inspection of every tenant in this EPH unit as well as their sixteen (check current figure) other rental buildings. These answers show something of the style and rhythm of the tenant/landlord interactions. The management as such is in the background and seen seldom; the caretaker is on the spot, a part of the every day scene in the building.
4. A looks after the front desk in the MGT front office. It is interesting to note that in contrast to the above familiar and positive reference by the president of the Tenant's association, when this very hard working and efficient staff person responded to a telephone inquiry recently, I saw that she fumbled over the president's position and title, mispronounced both his first and last names and had to scramble to find his phone number for the caller. I am, of course, not criticising this hard working, efficient and well meaning staff person. I believe that I am observing the reflection of a low value placed on the status and person of the Tenant's association president by the landlord. One might expect otherwise considering that he is the official representative of the community domiciled in the building and that the front desk person has dealt with him in matters concerning the tenants over a period of nearly two years.
5. This response probably indicates that A sees both management office staff and the

caretaker frequently. She and RT both frequent the canteen on first floor which is located between the two MGT offices. And they are both well known and liked by building staff as well as tenants.

6. Answers towards the end of this long questionnaire tended to be sketchier and more were skipped altogether. Fatigue probably accounts for part of this but also these questions are of a more political nature. This presented a welcome opportunity to one or two people. Others may have been inhibited.

Appendix F

T5's Response:

A Life and a Slice of Pie

T5 is 58 years of age. He came to Winnipeg in 1968. He had worked all over the Maritimes and at various places in the north as a chef. He earned a good living, lived high and fast and spent it as he went. T5 had to retire early due to heart and circulation problems (especially in his legs) with excessive pain. He has difficulty walking and is very afraid of (appalled at the idea of) having to use a walker.

T5 really didn't want to answer questions but wanted to be helpful and to be a good sport. When he finally seriously decided to talk to me it had to be strictly on his terms: "Come Monday; come for lunch; I'll make a pie." I came as scheduled. T5 made coffee. He took the pie out of the refrigerator, cut a large slice and set it before me and then we started to "talk." The talk was a two hour, rapid fire reportage of T5's life. I took no notes. I could hardly eat my pie and listen at the same time. The following is only an outline provided here as a sample.

NOT EASY BUT GOOD

T5 was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1934. His father's father was a Baptist preacher. His father ran a lumber mill and contracting business. His mother cooked and cleaned and looked after T5 and his sister until she started "going out to play bingo". T5's dad finally "threw her out of the house." T5 was seven and his sister eight at the time. The kids carried on, rattling around in the big house shopping for wieners and bread at the grocery where their dad had a credit account and generally looking after themselves. Their father's brother coming by once to check on things and found T5 with a terribly sore throat and a roaring fever. He got the doctor who immediately put him in the hospital for communicable diseases where he had to stay for 2 or 3 months. Strep throat was a frightful threat in those days. I will continue in close paraphrase of T5's words:

I was given a beautiful bicycle which I enjoyed riding around town. One day when playing hooky from school I called on a friend, a well off woman who was drinking her way through several pieces of good real estate. She poured me

a dark drink which I managed only after drowning it with several spoonfuls of sugar. After two more of the same I decided to go home. The next morning I couldn't go to school because of an awful headache. The same uncle happened around and asked "Why aren't you in school?" I answered truthfully that I was feeling ill with a terrible headache. Then he asked me about my bike. "Oh, it's fine," I said, "It's beautiful; it rides so well!" "But it's all smashed up!" my uncle protested, "The front wheel is smashed!" And he asked me some more questions about my headache. Finally he said, "Well, we had better get that bike fixed right away." And we did."

I had a heart attack when I was 13. I wasn't well. My gums were all infected. I had an extremely bad case of Pyorrhea. My uncle took me to stay with him for a year and I got alright. He's the only one who really paid careful enough attention to really look after me. But I got all right.

Later I took a commercial cooking course. I caught on fast. I had a lot of practical experience and even when I was small I had silently watched my mother in the kitchen. Cooking was no problem for me. I was lucky in getting good experience and good positions. I became a Chef-in-charge at a hotel very soon. I also learned French Dining Service and how to run banquets at a profit. I treated people straight and took no shit off anyone. The food business is hard work, long hours and generally low pay. To make any money you've got to hustle. I learned to hustle and I made money but I didn't save any. I lived well. I had friends and I had fun and drank lots. I've always done fine and I'm still doing fine. I don't owe anybody anything. I make my own decisions. I want to get this business with my leg over with. I'm not afraid of death. But hobbling along pushing one of those walkers is definitely not me.

T5 cooks for selected people in the block on selected occasions. He often cooks a meal for RT the very elderly woman across the hall. On a holiday he cooks a turkey. He will make pies on occasion. When DT and NT (who is blind) were married recently, he prepared a dinner for 8 and with the help of a young man (the nephew of A, who lives with RT) they served everything in high style. He continued to cook for them for the ten days following the wedding. T5 also cares for a needy friend.

T5 would prefer a good house to this one bedroom suite in an EPH. He would like a kitchen, big and bright and set up for serious cooking. He would prefer to be working than waiting for a hospital bed and a dubious future. His life has been work and socializing with people, especially partying and drinking with people he chooses to be with.

T5's income is provided sometimes by welfare, sometimes by Manitoba Public Health disability assistance. Subsidized housing helps. St. John's Place provides a

space that is orderly enough and comfortable enough to allow for some measure of "normal" life. "Normal life" for T5 includes self respect, choice, friends, generosity and a sense of quality.

It was a very delicious piece of coconut cream pie.

Appendix G
Informed Consent

Understanding a Senior's High Rise
April 24, 1993

Contributor's Sheet

Thanks for the interview. Please sign this sheet that will give me permission to use the information and comments you gave me in an essay about this building. To assure confidentiality I will not use your name or initials in my writing. If I am able to publish this piece and make any money, I will divide it with you and the other contributors.

Comments and other terms.

Thanks again,

Caroline Ackerman (Harkins)

Contributor

Address

Phone_____