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VI

CONSTRUCTION OF SENTIMENTS AND VALUES IN A MIDDLE-CLASS BLACK URBAN COMMUNITY[1]

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INTRODUCTION

Research on the black American class structure and the class relationships between middle-class and lower-class blacks has generated a great deal of controversy over the years, especially among black scholars (Frazier, 1957; Sowell, 1975; Wilson, 1980). The present study delineates the construction of local sentiments and values that led to the opposition of a half-way house for black rehabilitated mental patients in a middle-class black urban community. My analysis emanates from the current theoretical debate on the occurrence of class bifurcation in black communities (Wilson, 1981; Kilson, 1981).

In the 1960's, most of the research on black communities focused solely on race, very little attention was devoted to internal class differences and the construction of local sentiments and values in black urban communities (Hannerz, 1969; Wilson, 1981). These differences were overlooked as researchers investigated local black/white urban community differences (Duncan, 1957; Taeuber and Taeuber, 1965) The movement of black workers from lower paying to higher paying positions, however, resulted in the formation of a diverse set of class interest among middle-class and lower-class blacks in urban communities. These diverse class interest are inextricably tied to the changing structure of the American economy and have manifested the construction of local sentiments and values in black urban communities.

This analysis will focus on the social process involved in the construction of local sentiments and values in a middle-class black urban community. The author intends to show how the interpenetration of social policies of the larger urban complex constructed these local sentiments and values. This construction of local sentiments and values led to a series of strategies to

keep a halfway house for rehabilitated black mental health patients from locating in the community.

My analysis is based on one and a half years of participant observation in Chicago's South Shore, one of the original 75 Chicago "communities" identified by Burgess and his students in the 1920's. An attempt is made to demonstrate how residents within South Shore came together because social policy changes in mental health institutionalization clashed with their shared sense of their neighborhood; and also encouraged them to articulate those feelings in a way that had not been necessary before. This case study describes the process through which local sentiments and values in South Shore were constructed by the external interpenetration of social policies from the larger urban complex and by local transformations in community control and class interest.

DATA COLLECTION

I used data gathered during one and a half years (January 1984 through August 1985) of participant observation in the community, particularly in the neighborhood area most involved in mobilizing to prevent a halfway house from locating there. Data are presented from recorded open-ended interviews with local residents, community organization leaders, and the local political leader, and from systematic observation and participation in community and block club meetings that involved residents concerned about and opposed to the halfway house. Also presented are newspaper accounts and conversation data from meetings held at the local community organization office and aldermanic ward service office, where I was employed during the research project as a part-time "housing conservationist."

WHY DO BLACK COMMUNITIES ACT?

From slavery to freedom, black communities have been forced to act and react to external societal forces of economic inequality, political disenfranchisement, and social isolation--all of which have been commonly considered race subordination (Genovese, 1972; Franklin, 1980; McAdam, 1982; Morris, 1984). These structural conditions in several local urban communities from the 1930's until the present have

been viewed as the central social forces that motivated black communities to act in the past. The mobilization of local southern black urban communities during the Civil Rights Movement has been greatly discussed--especially by resource mobilization and political process theorists (cf. McAdam, 1982; Morris, 1984). This analysis, however, is based on a rather peculiar transformation in a local Midwest middle-class black urban community: the transformation of middle-class blacks in a local urban community into powerful actors controlling the fate of a group of black rehabilitated mental health patients.

RACIAL CHANGE IN SOUTH SHORE, 1950-1980

South Shore, in a twenty year period, underwent rapid racial change (see Table 1). The migration of blacks into the community in 1960 resulted in the simultaneous out-migration of whites. Whereas in 1960, whites were 89.6 percent of the population by 1970 this percent had plummeted to 29.9 percent and was a meager 3.6 percent in 1980. During the early period of racial change in South Shore several blacks, whose socioeconomic status was comparable to their white counterparts, had been forced to rent under-maintained housing (mostly multi-family) because of the local bank practice of denying blacks conventional mortgages (Molotch, 1972; Manley, 1986). However, in 1970, when blacks became a majority in South Shore (69.0 percent), the local bank attempted to move from the community. The move by the bank was stopped short by the mobilization efforts of the black in-migrant group. Upon hearing of the local bank decision to move from the community the in-migrant group of middle-class blacks petitioned the Federal Comptroller, who is in charge of granting banks permission to move, to deny the bank the right to move. The middle-class blacks of South Shore presented to the Federal Comptroller the past racist actions of the local bank and argued that the result of a move by the bank would be catastrophic to the overall stability of the community. Indeed, the Federal Comptroller went along with the community and for the first time in banking history denied the bank the right to move and mandated that the bank become a local neighborhood bank (Manley, 1986).

Racial change in South Shore was also accompanied by internal class differences. As Table 1 shows, the

population of South Shore decreased during the 1970's, but more importantly, as median school years and median family income increased, so too did families headed by females, income below poverty, and the unemployed civilian labor force. This data begins to show a bimodal stream of in-migrants into South Shore. That is, the blacks who moved to South Shore in the beginning of the in-migration stream (1960 migrants) were, on several social indices, equivalent to their white counterparts, but the blacks at the tail-end of the migration stream tended to be less so (1970 migrants). Thus, the mobilization efforts of the early black in-migrants to keep the bank in the community was based on their class interest to control and stabilize a community that whites were fleeing from because of racial invasion.

The percentage of residents in white collar jobs decreased from 62.6 percent in 1960 to 29.1 percent in 1970 because of rapid white flight, and although the white collar percentage went back up to 59.0 percent in 1980, families with percent incomes over the median family income in South Shore declined throughout the racial change period (see Table 1). But if all the blacks who migrated to South Shore were equivalent socioeconomically to their white-flight counterparts, there should have been little reduction in percent of income over the median family income for South Shore. However, although middle-class blacks in South Shore tended to have educational backgrounds similar to those of the displaced whites and although in 1980, after the community had become predominantly black, the median education increased, the relative increase in younger age groups was concomitant with the national trend of black adolescent unemployment and out-of-wedlock births. This trend in the migration stream of the black in-migrants had a role in reducing the percent of income above the median family income in South Shore.

Although racial change in South Shore produced a bimodal stream of migrants, the early in-migrant blacks had begun to construct local sentiments and values in the community by the formation of their class interests. The formation of their class interests was similar to the historical internal class distinctions among blacks in urban communities (Frazier, 1957; Zunz, 1982). This process of constructing local sentiments and values by the formation of middle-class black class interest in an urban community was clearly manifested when a group-home

for rehabilitated mental patients was purchased in the O'Keefe neighborhood area of South Shore.

The O'Keefe neighborhood area has a strong component of middle-class and working-class residents (see Table 2). Indeed, on the block where the group home was purchased single family homes and two and three flat family units surrounded it. O'Keefe, like South Shore in general, resembled the bimodal distribution of the population that migrated to the community.

The O'Keefe neighborhood in 1980, had the highest percent of male workers in white-collar occupations, 67.8 percent, coupled with the highest percent of families headed by females 53.6 percent, in the community. Aware of these internal class differences in the O'Keefe neighborhood of South Shore the middle-class blacks in the community came together to ward off the interpenetration of social policy changes in mental health institutionalization.

SOCIAL POLICY CHANGES IN MENTAL HEALTH INSTITUTIONALIZATION

The advent of "deinstitutionalization" in the middle of the 1970's with its core ideal of phasing out mental hospitals had been a subject of continuous policy debates since the early 1950's (Mechanic, 1969). The social policy of deinstitutionalization was thus part of a cycle of social reform movements aimed at alleviating the problems of overcrowding, understaffing, and the permanent institutionalization of "mental" patients in state mental health hospitals (Morrissey, 1982). It was specifically implemented to remove from overcrowded and understaffed state hospitals patients who seemed capable of coping outside. Deinstitutionalization involved an effort to dismantle and close state mental hospitals and to relocate their clientele in a new network of community-based mental health services (Bachrach, 1976, 1978).

For example, between 1955 and 1980 the resident population of state mental hospitals was reduced by more than 75 percent. During this period, over 700 community mental health centers (CMHCs) serving catchment areas representing 50 percent of the U.S. population were created in local community areas (Morrissey, 1982).

In Chicago, a psychiatric rehabilitation center, "Thresholds", founded in 1958, pioneered the process of deinstitutionalization. Thresholds was considered by the Illinois Department of Mental Health to be "one of the best of its kind in the country" (Koehler, 1984:2). In 1984 Thresholds received a six-month interim loan ($225,000) from the Illinois Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (DMHDD) to complete the purchase of two residences--one for the mentally ill and deaf, and the other, a halfway house for rehabilitated mental patients on the southeast side of Chicago in the community area of South Shore. If Thresholds was successful in South Shore, DMHDD officials argued, it could have a wide-ranging impact on other agencies' abilities to secure funding to build, rehabilitate, or expand facilities. The following discussion focuses on the local process involved in establishing the halfway house in the community under consideration.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The loan Thresholds received from the Illinois Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (DMHDD) allowed it to purchase a two-flat home in the O'Keefe neighborhood area of South Shore at 6941 South Paxton Avenue (Figure 1). The intent of the purchase was to move black mental patients who were able to function normally in the community into South Shore. But residents of the O'Keefe neighborhood and surrounding areas of the community were uninformed of this development. The president of the community organization of South Shore expressed the residents' concerns as follows:

> From what I can understand the community was not informed about this particular development. In other words, the community would not have found out. Not it is true that Thresholds has done the same thing in other communities, where it has gone in, not informed the community--just moved them in. In some places it has worked, in other places it has not (Interview with President of Community Organization, October 3, 1984).

Table 1

South Shore Population Characteristics, 1950-1980

	1950	1960	1970	1980
Total Population	79336	73086	80660	77743
% Male	45.7	45.3	46.0	45.3
% Female	54.3	54.7	54.0	54.2
% White	99.8	89.6	29.9	3.6
% Black	0.2	9.6	69.0	95.1
% Other Non-White	0.0	0.8	1.1	1.3
Age Structure				
% Under 5 Years Old	7.7	6.7	7.9	8.7
% 5-19 Years Old	15.0	16.4	20.3	24.0
% 20-44 Years Old	36.8	27.8	40.0	43.3
% 45-64 Years Old	30.5	33.4	20.3	17.5
% 65 Years and Older	10.0	15.7	11.5	6.5
% Families Female Headed	-	-	20.5	49.3
Median School Years	12.3	12.2	12.3	12.3
Median Family Income, 1959/1969/1979 ($)	-	-	7,888	15,969
% Income Below Poverty	-	-	7.8	20.8
% Income Above Median Family Income	-	34.1	24.4	19.1
% White-Collar Workers	-	62.6	29.1	59.0
% Civilian Labor Force Unemployed	-	3.5	4.2	13.1

Source: Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1980.

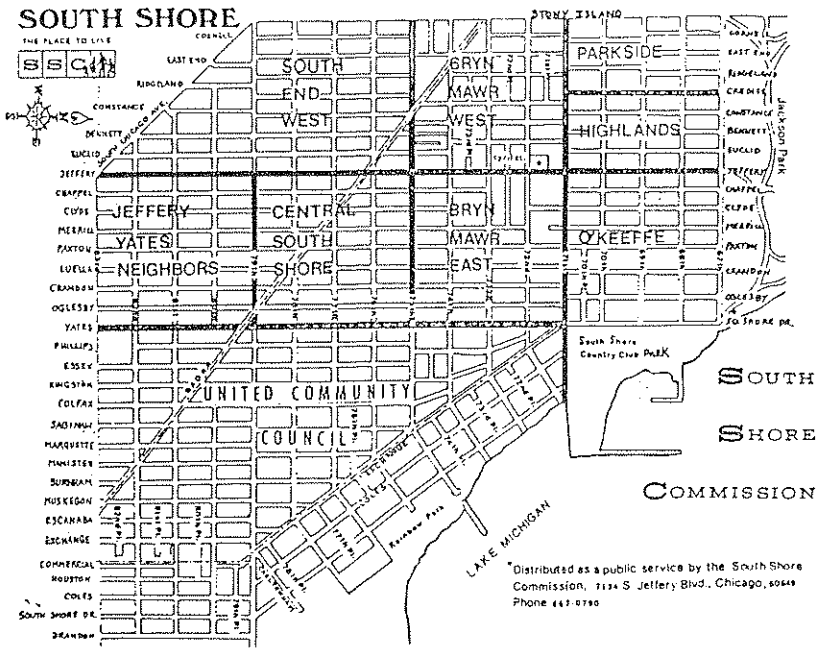
Table 2

O'KEEFE NEIGHBORHOOD AREA POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS, 1960-1980

	1960	1970	1980
Total Population	11,392	13,388	12,735
% Male	-	46.0	44.8
% Black	0.3	73.6	95.4
% Other Nonwhite	0.1	0.8	0.7
% Of Spanish Origin	-	0.6	0.4
% Foreign	49.6	4.6	1.4
Age Structure			
% Under 13 Years Old	-	18.6	21.7
% 14-20 Years Old	-	7.4	9.2
% 21-64 Years Old	-	62.9	61.0
% 65-74 Years Old	-	7.0	4.9
% 75 Years and Older	18.1	4.1	3.1
% Families with Female Head	-	22.3	53.6
Median School Years Completed	12.5	12.5	13.0
Median Family Income, (1959/1969/1979 $$)*	8,861	11,063	16,199
% Income Below Poverty	-	7.0	19.9
% Income Above Median Family Income	41.6	28.2	21.4
% White-Collar Workers	80.8	33.8	67.8
% Civilian Labor Force Unemployed	2.1	3.7	11.3

Source: Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1980.

FIGURE 1.--MAP OF SOUTH SHORE COMMUNITY



A resident of the O'Keefe neighborhood who lived next door to the building that had been sold to Thresholds called a meeting of the local community organization. Incidentally, this local resident of O'Keefe contacted the Alderman's office for advice on how to find out who had recently bought the building. After the neighbor became aware of the intentions of Thresholds, a community meeting was held with a representative of the Thresholds organization to address this concern. The following data are from field notes I recorded after attending this meeting.

Mr. A. (director of the South Shore Commission [community organization]) opened the meeting:

Mr. A.: Today we have with us a representative from Thresholds who will address the concerns we have for locating a halfway house for rehabilitated mental patients in our community. Let me first describe Threshold's plans. Threshold plans to place nine discharged residents of their facility into 6941 South Paxton. This was never brought to the attention of South Shore's block clubs or other community groups. The community learned of these plans accidentally. With this brief statement let me introduce Mr. M. (representative from Thresholds).

Mr. M.: I feel the gap Mr. A. speaks of concerning lack of communication can now be bridged. Thresholds works on psychosocial rehabilitation. The people being placed at 6941 South Paxton are able to function normally in the community.

Ms. L. (resident of O'Keefe): I am concerned about the increased danger and violence in the community as a result of the nine new residents entering South Shore.

Mr. M.: Most literature on this concern shows that mental patients are the least likely to commit crime.

Mr. C. (resident of O'Keefe): Mr. M., will you respect the wishes of the community and keep this residential facility out of the South Shore area?

Mr. M.: The land has already been bought, and plans have been made for the use of this property by Thresholds. I believe the people of this community need some

education on mental health. Let me refer you to a group home at 431 East 48th Street as proof that these people can function normally in a community setting. Although we placed them there without the community's knowledge, the residents, once they found out, stated they really didn't notice a difference. Most claimed that they were the best neighbors on the block.

Ms. F.: (resident of O'Keefe): Why doesn't Thresholds rent the housing space to someone besides Thresholds patients?

Mr. M.: Thresholds is not a real estate agency. [Mr. M. comments that he feels very antagonized by the people at the meeting.]

Ms. F. (standing up and shouting): I believe the reason South Shore was chosen for this project is because Thresholds sees it as a marginal community. This is a middle-class black community, and you cannot come in here violating our right as a resident of the community to speak out against this project!! We are not pushovers!

Mr. M. (calm but nervous): South Shore is a good community. We feel that the nine people can benefit from the concerns you have about your community and the values you place on a good neighborhood.

The residents of the community continued to discuss how the safety of the neighborhood would be affected if the project was carried through. At this point, Ms. W. (aldermanic assistant) stated that "Some zoning regulations will have to be checked out regarding this project. There may be a problem with the type of facility that is planned for this building." The residents of the O'Keefe neighborhood began to gather around the aldermanic assistant for further information on the issue of zoning. This would become a key strategy for the middle-class blacks in South Shore to prevent the halfway house from locating in the O'Keefe neighborhood and to preserve their class interest and control over the local sentiments and values in the community. The meeting continued:

Mr. A.: Mr. M. will you explain the difference between a group home and an independent living facility?

Mr. M.: Group homes are made up of many people together with in-house staff 24 hours a day. An independent

living site would have only one person, to act as an apartment manager, who would not necessarily live in the building.

Mr. C.: What!? You mean an absentee landlord in South Shore if the staff person did not live on the property; this is another problem.

More discussion followed, but many residents had become hostile towards Mr. M. At this point, Mr. A. adjourned the meeting.

These data from the community meeting reflect several themes regarding the "defended neighborhood" concept (Suttles, 1972). Thresholds, as an external urban organization, became a threat to the ability of middle-class blacks to control the construction of local sentiment and values in the community. That is, Thresholds was perceived by middle-class residents as a threat and violation of their economic and social class interest in the O'Keefe neighborhood because of the "type" of community Thresholds chose for its halfway house for rehabilitated mental patients. But the situation not only threatened their ability to control the construction of local sentiments and values in the community, but also transformed the local mobilization efforts of middle-class blacks who had been confronted with similar prejudicial (racial) opposition from white ethnic groups when they migrated to South Shore in the early 1960's. One resident who attended the community meeting spoke of the unintended consequences of the construction of local community sentiment and values among middle-class black residents of South Shore.

> It really shamed me to hear black people talk so badly about other black people when our tradition has always been that we made room for everybody and that we went through so much that when people are using the same argument about not letting other blacks move into the neighborhood that we should have learned from our prior experiences not to inflict the same kind of selfish argument (Interview with Resident of O'Keefe neighborhood, October 15, 1984).

For many of the black middle-class residents of South Shore, however, a major social cleavage existed between Thresholds and the residents' construction of local sentiments and values. This cleavage resembled the utilitarian and purposeful approach some issue-oriented community groups, of diverse race, ethnic, and class backgrounds adopt when confronting governmental bodies about problems related to the allocation and distribution of public housing, police and city services (Clark, 1975:305-359).

The reactions of the residents of South Shore fit an ongoing pattern of the effect of urban institutions on community solidarities. As Suttles (1972: 49) makes clear, "the general trajectory of American society has been toward large-scale and specialized organizations which make extreme demands on consensus and collaboration of groups previously unrelated to one another." Black middle-class residents of South Shore fit this pattern because they continued to bear an unavoidable social responsibility of controlling and maintaining their class interests within their community boundaries. The demands of an external organization on a local community constructed local sentiments and values. These constructed local sentiments and values are connective and similar to larger value systems in other communities (e.g., white opposition to blacks in-migrating to their neighborhood), but they are also crucially disconnective (e.g., the denial of the entry of rehabilitated black mental health patients into the neighborhood).

The social policy of deinstitutionalization is in conflict with the values of middle-class black residents when their class interest and sense of community control are dependent on a collective image of each other's "cognitive map" of the local community. Furthermore, the construction of local sentiments and values in South Shore were similar to the past class interest of both the middle-class white residents of South Shore and the local bank--even though these particular class interests were acted out through racial prejudice.

This process of constructing local sentiments and values in South Shore led to the bifurcation of the community along mental health characterizations. Local community sentiments and values held by blacks in the 1960's, during racial change in the community, might have allowed such processes as locating rehabilitated black mental health patients to be integrated into the

neighborhood's social fabric. But the transformation in local economic and political power--from denial of mortgages to black home ownership--constructed (in this instance) the middle-class black residents local sentiments and values in the South Shore community.

The middle-class black residents' commitment to collectively opposing the external organization resembled a "conscious community" (Hunter, 1983: 186). This is a subcomponent of the emergent perspective approach to urban neighborhoods. The development of a "conscious community" is described by Hunter (1983: 186):

> The primary structural ingredient of the conscious community is the development of a more formal community organization that provides critical internal and external functions for maintaining local solidarity and sentiments. Internally, such groups provide a structure within which primary bonds of neighboring may be developed and within which the common community interests may become expressed and translated into specific organizational goals. Externally, the organization becomes the 'legitimate' representative of the community, an identifiable vehicle or corporate body that may more easily interact with outside agencies and institutions.

O'Keefe residents of South Shore requested that the Alderman provide them with more information on the legal approach to preventing the halfway house from locating in their community. At this meeting, the residents of South Shore became politically active and formally organized for local collective action. The alderman informed the community that the zoning of the building at 6941 South Paxton had been researched by office staff. "According to the Department of Inspectional Services, City of Chicago, if three or more unrelated adults were to occupy this building it could be considered a special-care facility. It is a special-care facility, Thresholds must acquire a special permit, which could be blocked by a restraining order. The community could determine this by having the Department of Inspectional Services inspect

the building once the Thresholds people move in." The alderman went on to say that the community had three options:

1. Have the city file a suit. This would be a free service, but the suit could take a long time to come to court.

2. The community could hire their own lawyer to file a suit. This could be expensive but the suit would go through the system more quickly, and the community would have more control over the suit.

3. The community could wait and see what it is like to have Thresholds in the community.

The residents of the community decided to hire a lawyer who would use the city's zoning department as a legal tool to prevent the halfway house from locating in the O'Keefe neighborhood area. The O'Keefe neighborhood council hired a lawyer to represent them and to inform the director of Thresholds of their actions. A letter from the lawyer to the Director of Thresholds was explicit in stating the community's present construction of local sentiments and values in their area:

> The size of the building and the interior alterations made will accommodate many more than the limit of two unrelated persons per unit, which city ordinances sets as the maximum to avoid imposition of the requirement of obtaining a special use zoning variance. The neighbors of the building are aware of the legal remedies available to them should your organization attempt to occupy the building in violation of the law. They hope that no such violation will occur but are prepared to oppose it if it does.[3]

This strategy of using the legal process to prevent the halfway house from locating in the neighborhood resembles actions taken by governments and communities throughout the country who have used zoning regulations to block the establishment of halfway houses (cf. Odenwald, 1985; Paterson and Craig, 1985). It also resembles attempts used by local urban whites in the 1960's to prevent public housing from being built in

their communities and blacks from moving into their neighborhoods (Rossi and Dentler, 1961; Goodwin, 1979).

The alderman provided the community with information that could be used to substantially increase their chances of controlling their emotional, social, and economic interest in the community. That is, the Alderman provided the community a political resource. The community's connection with municipal government, through the alderman, allowed residents of South Shore to determine the most effective course of action and the degree of economic and social investment needed to produce the desired outcome for constructing local sentiments and values in the community and preserving their class interest.

The director of Thresholds, after being notified of the community's position through their lawyer, responded:

> I have received your letter and, of course, will refer it to our attorney for a more formal reply. We have, of course, no desire to utilize the building in violation of the law and will not do so. The response of the neighborhood, however, in immediately hiring an attorney without first trying to sit down with us and talk about the situation puts us in an adversarial relationship which I do not desire.[4]

The director went on to state:

> In the early 1960's, I was Chairman of the Fair Housing Committee in Teaneck, New Jersey. The object of that committee was to insure that black people could buy houses in white neighborhoods and that real estate brokers should show such houses. It was my modest effort at that time (before I was involved with Thresholds), to demonstrate that fair housing is for everyone, regardless of race or disability. The arguments as, "our property value will go down," "we don't want 'them' in our neighborhood," "our neighborhood will go down in ruins," etc. It is all nonsense, of course, and indicates unnecessary fearfulness at its heart. In 1963, I fought like a tiger for the right of the black people to move into white neighborhoods. It's 1984 now and the clientele has changed, but my attitude has not.[5]

This appeal to the sympathies of middle-class blacks in South Shore did not reduce the conflict. Residents of South Shore largely ignored the appeal and awaited Thresholds' next move.

The black middle-class residents of South Shore constructed these local sentiments and values not only because of their attachment to the geographical area and their emotional, social, and economic interests in the community, but also because of the external constraints imposed on the local community by the interpenetration of social policy in mental health institutionalization. The social organization of South Shore did not rest on the assumption of community deterioration, but on the concerted effort, on the part of local residents, to maintain and control within South Shore's boundaries external organizations that would directly affect its cultural and social identification of residential stability, its status, and its self-respect.

DISCUSSION

The construction of local sentiments and values in South Shore can be understood in terms of the "emergent perspective" on urban neighborhoods (Hunter, 1983). This perspective considers local community sentiments and values as either the "product of new and emerging reconstructions or see neighborhoods as occasionally playing a critical role in the organization of modern urban life" (Hunter, 1983: 185). Earlier versions of this perspective were grounded in the concept of "community of limited liability" (Janowitz, 1967). Although this concept offered insight into why certain residents had limited attachments and orientations to their community--a question best viewed from an exchange perspective (Blau, 1967)--it did not take into account the internal class diversity of local urban relationships and the form in which those relationships would manifest themselves in material and social resources that could

increase the effectiveness of residents in warding off social policy interpenetrations of the larger urban structure.

The social policy change in mental health institutionalization that eventually produced the policy of deinstitutionalization are confounded by the local people who must confront such a policy at the level of the urban community. Indeed, policies that emanate from larger forces in urban society are not isolated from the local social forces that may determine their success or failure. The middle-class blacks in the urban community of South Shore were willing and able to construct local sentiments and values that challenged a state-level policy which directly affected their conception of community and their class interests at the local neighborhood level.

The emergent perspective on urban neighborhoods shows that the basis for constructing local sentiments and values directly affects the class interests of middle-class residents and does not lead to positive outcomes for external urban institutions. In fact, what appeared on the surface to be "limited involvement" was in reality a middle-class group of individuals maintaining and constructing their emotional, social, and economic interests in the community. These constructed local sentiments and values were constituted by the larger urban constraints of deinstitutionalization and the local conditions in which such a policy was introduced.

Local middle-class black residents of South Shore are not bound by ideological appeals, but by what they perceive to be of immediate concern to their local community and class interests. Indeed, the social processes that generate the construction of local sentiments and values in urban communities within larger urban areas will continue and are not restricted to non-blacks. Rather, they are based upon the principles of social organization rooted in the pragmatics of community life.

This analysis has shown that, in this case, social policy in mental health institutionalization served not only to construct local sentiments and values, but also to strengthen the class position of middle-class black residents of South Shore and to encourage them to

articulate their feelings in ways that had not been necessary before.

The lack of communication between Thresholds and the local middle-class black residents of South Shore reduced the chances that the social policy of deinstitutionalization would be successful. But, more importantly, local community sentiments and values were constructed by a network of urban channels--from a state bureaucracy, to a local municipal government, to a local urban community--which conveyed to local residents a collective responsibility to maintain their class interests and to control their corner of the world. The process of constructing local sentiments and values in a local middle-class black urban community preserves only the cyclical approach of social policy in mental health institutionalization.

NOTES

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[2]This paper was presented at the poster session for the Minority Fellowship Program Conference on Ethnic Minority Mental Health Research, Washington, D.C., April 24-26, 1986.

[3]Letter obtained from O'Keefe neighborhood area council meeting on August 24, 1984.

[4]Information obtained from an O'Keefe neighborhood area council meeting held August 24, 1984.

[5]Information from the August 24, 1984, O'Keefe Neighborhood council meeting.

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