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THE PSYCHOLOGICAL LINK BETWEEN THE PERCEPTION OF  
NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE AND ACTION

by

Doris E. Rajagopal

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in  
Psychology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of  
New York

1999

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## Approval Page

This manuscript has been read and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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## Abstract

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL LINK BETWEEN THE PERCEPTION OF  
NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE AND ACTION

By

Doris E. Rajagopal

Advisor: Professor Leanne Rivlin

The goal of this study was to explain how the perception of neighborhood change effects a resident's reaction to change. The setting for the study was a working-class inner-city neighborhood. This neighborhood experienced changes in 1980's, which could be described as gentrification. Some of the newer people who moved into the neighborhood were more educated and had higher wages than most of the current residents and housing prices increased dramatically. Thirty long-term residents, five former residents, and two new residents were interviewed. The respondents were not asked specifically about gentrification, but about how they thought the neighborhood has changed over the years. The respondent's reaction to neighborhood change was influenced by the nature of the change, as well as individual characteristics. Most respondents only reacted to those changes that had an

immediate impact on their lives, but they did attend to those they thought might affect them in the future. The perception and interpretation of the changes were influenced by the resident's attachment to his or her neighborhood, the resident's self-identity and world-view. Many of the residents identified with middle-class values, although they did not have a middle-class income. This affected their perception and reaction to change. Some residents had a long-standing and deep connection to their neighborhood. Because of this they accepted change rather than break the bond with their neighborhood. The idea of a threshold of neighborhood change was introduced in order to interpret these findings. One group of respondents was identified as activists because of their long-term involvement around many community issues. They were involved because of an intrinsic belief that it was their responsibility to give back to their community. They said the belief system developed through interactions with their parents and/or religious ideology. They were active despite not always feeling attached to the neighborhood and not always being directly affected by neighborhood change.

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I am grateful to my brother Henry, sister-in-law Tina, and husband Gopal for all of their support, and for believing in me. This would not have been the experience it was if I had not been born and raised in Fishtown. Thanks Mom.

I dedicate this work to my son Nikhil.

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The fate and form of our urban neighborhoods have always been relevant issues in our constantly changing environment. Each of us reacts to those changes in a way that we feel is appropriate. However, researchers have studied neighborhoods where drastic changes have occurred with no apparent reaction from residents (Gans, 1962). Many of us have pondered how and why this has happened. This process, the perception, processing of, and reacting to neighborhood change was the focus of this research.

It is especially of interest now in the United States, with a decade or two of the so-called 'back to the city movement' or gentrification behind us. Many urban areas have undergone drastic changes in their appearances and social compositions as a result (Cybriwsky, 1978, Hartman, 1979, Levy, 1978 & Smith, 1979). This process has been described as the movement of middle-class or upper middle class residents into a working-class or poor urban area. Smith (1996) stated that another dimension was added to these changes when the real estate market collapsed in the late 1980's and an "economic depression" followed.

Changes in the social composition of the neighborhood may lead to tensions between the long-term residents and the newer residents because of differences in lifestyles and

uses of space. More specifically, there has been a presumption that the newer residents see their home as an investment, which they would protect at all costs, while the long-term residents value their neighborhood mostly as a place to live. O'Hanlon (1981) documented this in Brooklyn, where the newer residents stated that the displacement of the long-term residents would be an improvement in the neighborhood. Also, Barry and Derevlany (1987) documented arguments between long-term residents of Hoboken and the newer residents (called yuppies by the older residents), in particular, concerning the street activities of the long-term residents. The newcomers considered these activities, such as parades and religious festivals to be a nuisance.

There is no universally accepted definition of the term gentrification, and it has been used to describe different forms and processes of urban change. As a result, the lack of understanding of this particular type of urban change has led to an inability to respond to it. Why, how, and when residents respond to change in their neighborhood was the focus of this study.

There have been many studies of who participates in community organizations and/or actions and why they participate from the perspectives of volunteerism (Dempsey, 1988), political participation (Verba & Nie, 1972), social participation (Chapin, 1941) and larger social movements

(Castells, 1983). However, there has been little study of community participation or action at the individual level. The process that may lead an individual to action was broken into three steps for the purposes of this research: 1) perception of neighborhood change, 2) interpretation of these changes as requiring some response from the individual, and 3) action. This raised more specific questions such as: When does a person notice changes in his or her neighborhood? How are these changes interpreted in terms of what they mean for the individual and his or her neighborhood? What spurs a him or her on to action? In order to answer these questions, the neighborhood and the changes going on there must be understood in the larger context of a national and global setting, as well as at the community and individual level. Many have studied each of these components separately, but at this point, no one has woven them together into the complex pattern in which they exist simultaneously for each individual.

In the larger context, we live in a capitalist society and within it certain changes are expected, or at least acceptable. At the next level, we must understand the person-place link, i.e. that both person and neighborhood are in a state of flux and are influenced by each other. The perception of neighborhood change can then be examined. This would entail understanding the link between environment, an individual's development and his or her world-view. Finally,

the link between knowledge and action can then be fleshed out. This involves understanding an individual's conceptualization of the problem, his or her connection to the neighborhood and the meaning and importance of the neighborhood in the life of this person, and his or her understanding of how the world works, how changes are made and by whom (Lees & Smith, 1975, Marris, 1982).

The site of this study was the neighborhood in which I was born and raised, Fishtown. I lived there until I was twenty years old, when I decided I wanted to live in a more "cosmopolitan" neighborhood. As a teenager living in this neighborhood, I heard rumors that our neighborhood was going to be the next Society Hill. Society Hill was a very fancy and expensive neighborhood in an historical part of Center City Philadelphia. At that time, I could not imagine why any wealthy person would want to live in my neighborhood because I was very anxious to get out of it. However, by the time I was in my early twenties, I began to notice a trickle of professional people and artists moving into Fishtown and renovating their properties and becoming active in the Fishtown Civic Association. I thought some of these houses looked as though they belonged in Society Hill, washed brick fronts, wooden shutters, brass lanterns, etc. They were trying to make their homes look more "historical," like those in Society Hill.

At this time, I had read about a process which many researchers and academics were calling gentrification. I realized, according to what I read in college and graduate school, that if this process continued on its current track in Fishtown, many Fishtown residents would be displaced by rising taxes, rents, and their children would be unable to buy homes in the neighborhood in which they grew up. As a result of my concern for the continuity of the neighborhood for those who wanted to live in it, I decided to study my neighbors' awareness and understanding of the changes going on around them.

The first study I conducted in Fishtown was for my Master's thesis. I found that many of the people I interviewed saw changes in the neighborhood, recognized them as being related to an increase in sale prices in the neighborhood, stated that a new "type" of people, professional people, were moving into the neighborhood, yet did not feel threatened by this process. I was surprised that they did not feel threatened by this process because I thought they should be concerned about being displaced. At this point, I believed that if I could tell my neighbors about how these types of changes have affected other neighborhoods in Philadelphia (Queens Village and Fairmount- both similar in socio-demographic composition to Fishtown at one time), and that they might be displaced by these changes, they would understand the process and fight to

protect themselves. The Fishtown Civic Association hailed these changes as the physical improvements Fishtown has deserved for so long. Many residents believed that the neighborhood would be a better place to live now, not realizing that they might not be around to enjoy these changes. Justa (1984) found a similar way of thinking in Park Slope, Brooklyn; the long-term residents she interviewed thought the physical improvements were just what the neighborhood needed, while many of the newer residents felt that the next improvement would be to get rid of the current residents.

After completing each interview I discussed these possibilities with the respondents as a way of helping me understand their way of thinking better. They said they would not allow themselves to be displaced from the neighborhood because they would fight. Again when I mentioned the cases of Queens Village and Fairmount, most of the people said that would not happen to them because, "I am different." Also, many of the long-term residents saw the physical changes in the neighborhood, acknowledged the appearance of many new neighbors who were professionals (professors, physicians, member of the Philadelphia Orchestra, etc.) yet felt that there was nothing unusual going on, except that perhaps these people had finally discovered what a great place Fishtown was to live.

These findings made me realize that I must dig deeper to understand what these changes mean to each individual in the neighborhood. How does each individual see himself or herself? How does this person believe the world works (taxes, government, politics, etc.)? Where does he or she fit into this puzzle? What impact do changes in one place have on him or her? What power does he or she have? Yet, before attempting to understand the psychological link between the perception of neighborhood change and action, the concept of neighborhood must be clarified because there is not much agreement about what defines a neighborhood.

#### Definition of a Neighborhood

Is there such an entity as a neighborhood? Do neighborhoods really exist? Is the concept of neighborhood a convenient category of analysis created by researchers? Does it only exist in romanticized memories of people in danger of losing their homes? Is a neighborhood the same thing as a community, or is a community a special type of neighborhood, or is community a non-place bound entity? These are a few of the unanswered questions about the concept of neighborhood and the link between neighborhood and community.

Some researchers have defined a neighborhood as a physical entity with distinct markers and boundaries which

are naturally occurring or imposed (Lynch, 1960). In contrast, others have said that the physical entity is not important, but that a network of important people is the real issue (Webber, 1963). Ahlbrandt (1984) stated that both "types" of neighborhoods exist. Suttles (1972) stated that it is differentiation that gives a community its identity, that community identities develop from outside of the community, rather than within it. He said the "image" and identity of a community derive from aspects that contrast with other communities, i.e., an ethnic community need not have a majority of residents of one ethnicity, but must have more of this ethnic group than other neighborhoods. Cohesion comes from having an adversary and a critical mass of people. Suttles (1972) used community and neighborhood interchangeably. Rivlin (1986) stated that both the physical boundaries and social ties were important aspects of a neighborhood and that both must be present, "The criterion for neighborhood is the acknowledgment by residents, merchants and regular users of an area, that a locality exists. It presumes some agreement on boundaries and a name; and the recognition of distinguishing characteristics of the setting" (Rivlin, 1986, p 4).

Whether a neighborhood is "physical" or a "social" entity has been debated for years, probably at the expense of getting to the heart of the matter, i.e., that a

neighborhood may be many different things, and fulfill many different needs for various people. Lofland (1983) said:

We need to break out of this dichotomous straightjacket and to develop a rich vocabulary of relationships which would allow us to speak with precision and clarity not only about the diverse relations humans can have to other humans, but about the diverse relations they can have to places or forms of social organization as well (Lofland, 1983, pg. 3).

Ahlbrandt (1984) stated that a neighborhood serves different functions for different groups of people, "Older people, those with less income, households with more children, and blacks are more dependent upon their neighborhoods for meeting their needs for sustenance, entertainment, and sometimes even employment, than are other groups of people. Because of the varied uses, interactions, attachments, and meanings of places for people, many different levels and types of connections develop between people and places.

#### Link Between Person and Place

Many researchers have made the connection between person and place by studying the concept of attachment to place. They examined the characteristics of the neighborhood and the socio-demographic characteristics of groups of

people within the neighborhood, and then related them to attachment to the neighborhood (Ahlbrandt, 1984). However, others (Altman & Low, 1992; Feldman, 1990; Proshansky, 1978; Rivlin, 1986; and Stone, 1982) have taken this a step further by actually looking at the psychological and behavioral link between a person and his or her environment. Altman and Low (1992), in discussing place attachment, defined it in terms of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral attachment to a place, "emotional qualities are often accompanied by cognition (thought, knowledge, and belief) and practice (action and behavior)" (pg. 4. Through our actions in a space, it becomes a place. They also pointed out that there are individual attachments to place, as well as group attachments to place.

In examining place attachments of individuals, Chawla (1992) asked adults about childhood places. She defined four different forms of place attachment: affection, transcendence, ambivalence, and idealization. In feeling affection toward a place there is a fondness toward the place and the people in it. In transcendence there is "a feeling of a dynamic relationship with the outer world, of a profound sense of connection with nature. It transcends social convention by expressing one-to-one communion with the environment" (Chawla, 1992, p.75). When there is an ambivalent attachment to place, there is:

Identification with a place of origin, complicated by the tension that it embodies family weaknesses or social injustice and stigma. It cannot be rejected because it is where one's personality and perspective developed and there are not deep ties of affection to it, but neither can it be completely embraced. (Chawla, 1992, p.75)

And finally, idealization is the process by which an individual identifies with an abstract place, such as feelings of patriotism.

Rivlin (1986), on the other hand, studied a group of people, the Lubavitch in Crown Heights, New York who were anchored to a physical setting through their attachment to a person, their leader, and to the religious sect to which they belonged. Most remained in the area even though it has changed a great deal, with an increase in the number of black West Indian residents. This has not only meant a racial change, but also many social changes with new types of businesses and services appearing to serve the new residents. However, the reason most of the Lubavitchers moved to and stayed in the area was to be near their leader and to be part of a religious community where their needs could be met. Their leader asked them not to abandon the area because many of the elderly and lower income Jewish

residents could not afford to leave the neighborhood. They should not be left behind.

The leader of the Lubavitch is no longer alive, yet the people remained because it was a strong, religious community and their daily needs were met by the businesses and services that developed as a result of the large concentration of people who had the same dietary, dress, and other needs. One of the outcomes of a group of people who have non-mainstream dietary, dress, and other requirements concentrating in an area is that businesses and services develop to meet their needs. This would not happen if only a handful of residents required the services. They would be required to seek out these services elsewhere. Because of the large Lubavitch population in the Crown Heights area, many businesses did develop to meet their needs, sustaining the Lubavitch settlement.

Settlement identity was defined as, "patterns of conscious and unconscious ideas, feelings, beliefs, preferences, values, goals, and behavioral tendencies and skills that relate the identity of a person to a type of settlement, and provides dispositions for future engagement with that type of settlement" (Feldman, 1990, pp. 191-192). Feldman (1990) theorized that it may be an individual's settlement identity which may make some moves easy in a society with such a high level of geographical mobility.

Being comfortable in a type of place, such as an "urban environment," rather than only a particular city, may make the transition from place to place easier. For example, a person who feels comfortable living in an urban environment may adjust better to a change from one city to another in comparison to a person who is more at home in a suburban setting but who then moves to a city. Feldman (1996) found in a follow-up study that a person can have more than one settlement identity. She also found that settlement identity can change as a person passes through various life stages," ... life-stage passages and the resulting changes in needs, desires, and self-conceptions, as well as the cultural norms that guide expectations about appropriate relationships between these life stages and types of places to live" (p. 493). For example, many of the respondents in Feldman's study professed a connection with the suburbs after the birth of a child, while many of those who were retired expressed a desire to move to a warmer, more relaxed climate, such as Florida or Arizona.

Proshansky (1978) linked an individual to his or her environment through the concept of "place identity." He stated that place identity is one of the sub-identities that make up our personalities, such as racial identity, sex identity, etc. Place identity is:

Those dimensions of self that define the individual's personal identity in relation to the physical environment by means of a complex pattern of conscious and unconscious ideas, beliefs, preferences, feelings, values, goals, and behavioral tendencies and skills relevant to this environment. (Proshansky, 1978, p. 155)

Stone (1982) said that certain environments are intimately tied to our personal growth and identity. He found that a group of residents of a New York neighborhood actually came to feel that they belonged in a particular type of environment. They had a history in the neighborhood. Fried (1969) and Erikson (1976) both found that in some cases when people were forced to leave these environments, they experienced very severe reactions, often with physical illnesses, resembling the grief reaction experienced with the loss of a loved one.

There is also a temporal aspect to place attachment. A person can be attached to a place of the present, past, and future. In studying place attachment in the elderly, Rubinstein and Parmelee (1992) stated that, attachment is a way of keeping the past alive by fostering a sense of continuity, "fostering identity," and protecting the self against negative changes. They also described attachment to

a current place as representing independence and a high level of functioning in an aging person.

In summary, we each may have a "place identity" and "settlement identity" that have developed through our interactions and experiences with places. We also may have past and current place attachments of many different kinds (affection, transcendence, ambivalence, and idealization). These aspects of ourselves, in congruence with our goals, life course, and interactions within a space will affect the type of bond that we forge with a place. One question that was answered by this research was: What type of connection exists between the participants of the study and Fishtown? The relevance of this question to the perception of neighborhood change was in the link between how attachment to place affected understanding, interpretation, and reaction to neighborhood change.

#### Perception of Neighborhood Change

The perception of neighborhood change is a complex process that occurs over time and is influenced by characteristics of the environment and the perceiver. The first phase of this process is environmental perception, which can be conceptualized as a specific type of information processing (Ittelson, Proshansky, Rivlin and Winkel, 1974). In this process the individual has a set of

expectations for a particular environment. These expectations are tested, and then, depending on the outcome, they are either reinforced or revised. Winkel (1981) applied the concept of information processing to the perception of neighborhood change, and theorized that we perceive neighborhood change through monitoring environmental manageability.

A manageable environment is one that can be organized by a person in order to evaluate whether or not the environment is allowing a person to meet his or her goals. "The physical configuration and social organization of a neighborhood present to the resident potential information in ways and quantities that will differentially facilitate the person's perception and organization of such information" (Winkel, 1981, p. 18). He stated that the factors that influenced the judgment of manageability were : 1) socio-physical homogeneity, 2) environmental permeability, 3) attentional overload, and 4) unit formation (imageability). According to Winkel (1981), the judged level of manageability should decrease as the socio-physical characteristics of the neighborhood become more heterogeneous. This would affect judgments of manageability differently from person to person, depending on what levels of heterogeneity the person is used to.

Environmental permeability refers to a quality of unstableness or changeability. It would be difficult to form expectations of a highly permeable environment since it changes often. Attentional overload encompasses anything that interferes with a person's ability to obtain a "fairly accurate sense of the information field...leading to withdrawal or alienation, and less concern for change" (Winkel, 1981, p. 29). And finally, unit formation, or imageability refers to "the ways in which parts of the environment are defined as perceptually distinct or as related to one another" (Winkel, 1981, p. 29). This quality is useful in organizing information about the neighborhood. Each of these characteristics interacts with the others in the perception of neighborhood manageability and change.

Monitoring of manageability is always at a high level for a person who has limited resources and must constantly guard what he or she does have, but increases for all residents when new and apparently different people or facilities appear in a neighborhood. More specifically, these changes would include: 1) a sudden increase in physical deterioration; 2) an appearance of a new group of residents in the neighborhood who are considered to be different from the current group, whether the new-comers are young professionals into a working-class neighborhood or unemployed welfare recipients in a middle- or working-class neighborhood; 3) new facilities not directed for use by the

current residents, whether trendy boutiques, public health facilities, or shops dealing with products for a different cultural group than that of the old residents. This model clearly lays out the characteristics of the environment that would influence the perception of neighborhood change, but does not deal in great detail with the characteristics of the individual that would influence this process. The individual differences are important, and obvious when many residents of the same neighborhood react differently to the same events.

O'Hanlon (1981) also characterized this monitoring of our environment as a form of information processing, but conceptualized it as a constant process:

It is in the process of negotiating and managing goal-oriented activity that individuals learn cues for identifying environmental contingencies, develop categories for organizing information and inferential structures for the interpretation of environmental contingencies. In particular, it is during this process that aspects of environmental change are identified and their significance determined. (O'Hanlon, 1981, p. 276).

Individual characteristics, such as: lifestyle, stage of the lifecycle, feelings of attachment to the

neighborhood, length of residence, the individual's level of involvement in the neighborhood (local politics or social activity, or indirect involvement through more global action, such as becoming involved with a worldwide organization such as Greenpeace in order to preserve the environment of the planet, and in that way fighting problems in the local community) may also influence the perception of neighborhood change.

The media may also be involved in the process of neighborhood change at many levels, from influencing the people who live in the neighborhood through their decision making processes, influencing people who are considering moving into a neighborhood, influencing current and potential neighborhood businesses, and by reinforcing or discouraging neighborhood improvement projects - individual or otherwise. The media can damage the reputation of a neighborhood and encourage its abandonment by reporting every incident of crime in a neighborhood, or giving a great deal of coverage to problems or potential problems in an area. For example, the media may give extensive coverage to plans for a future dump-site or half-way house in a neighborhood, focusing on all of the potential problems instead of possible benefits. On the other hand, this information may be beneficial to the residents by allowing them to react to or prevent a potential problem. The media not only control much of what we are told, but they also

control how much information we are given, and the point-of-view from which we are given it. "As an integral part of the community, the newspaper reflects the concerns of the dominant power groupings...newspapers reflect selectively in ways determined not by editorial idiosyncrasies, but by the structure and distribution of social power in the community" (Tichenor, Donohue & Olien, 1984, p. 94). Witty (1988) said:

The electronic media are awesome tools of power...Whoever can dominate them can determine not only how people spend their money, but also what ideas people are exposed to, the decisions they make based on those ideas, and ultimately the political process.  
(Witty, 1988, p.93)

At the perceptual level, Kahnemann and Tversky (1974) have shown in laboratory studies how the media can influence the perceived frequency of traumatic events. When asked to estimate the likelihood of some traumatic event occurring, such as an airplane crash or being struck by lightening, people greatly overestimated the likelihood of these events. Kahnemann and Tversky (1974) attributed this to the sensationalized coverage these events are given in the media.

At the neighborhood level, Goetze (1979) stated that the media played a role in neighborhood change by

influencing residents' level of neighborhood confidence. In the case of neighborhood improvement, residents saw positive stories in the media about their neighborhood: new businesses, improved services, physical improvements, etc. As a result, residents who were able to made physical improvements in their homes. This can also happened in the negative direction, where negative stories cause residents to move from their neighborhood.

#### The Relationship Between the Perception of Neighborhood Change and Action

The first step toward action is perception, in this case, the perception of neighborhood change. The environmental factors that influenced the perception of neighborhood change were discussed earlier. The next step toward action depends on how a person interprets (understands) changes occurring in his or her neighborhood. Why is it that when certain events occur in a neighborhood the residents do not respond, or not every resident responds, or sometimes different people in the same neighborhood respond differently to the same event? Part of the answer lies in the perception process itself. Aitken (1992) found that residents of a California neighborhood that was experiencing a great deal of social and physical change rated the changes as impacting on their lives if the changes were perceived as drastic and/or close to the

resident's home. Many of these respondents said that changes that occurred more than two blocks from their house were not important.

According to Winkel (1981) change is not responded or attended to if the new residents or facilities seem to fit the residents expectations of the neighborhood, if the current residents expect to use the new facilities, or see the new residents as similar to themselves. Every person sees himself/herself as belonging to certain "groups," ethnic, racial, sex, class, etc. (Merton & Rossi, 1957). If the new residents are perceived as not belonging to the existing residents' group or groups, they will feel that there is a change process occurring in the neighborhood.

Development of Self-Identity and Formation of World-View:  
Understanding How the World Works

Each of us learns about the world through the process of socialization (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Socialization was defined by Berger and Luckmann (1967) as, "the comprehensive and consistent induction of an individual into the objective world of a society or a sector of it" (p. 130). This stock of knowledge is transmitted from generation to generation. During the process of socialization, this knowledge is "mediated" by "significant others" who "filter the social world that the child is taught about in

accordance with their own location in the social structure, and also by virtue of their individual, biographically rooted idiosyncrasies" (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, p. 130). This process is not a one-time event in childhood, but continues throughout the individual's life. Each person is also actively involved in the formation of his or her worldview through the process of identifying with various reference groups or reference individuals. A reference group or individual is a group or person against which an individual evaluates and assesses himself or herself (Merton & Rossi, 1957).

Merton and Rossi (1957) re-examined data from a previous study of military men and their attitudes towards the military. They found that different men, in what appeared to be similar situations, often had very different attitudes toward the military. They applied the concept of reference group to these data as a more parsimonious way to explain the differences in attitude. They found that the men did not necessarily evaluate their situations in comparison to their peers or men with whom they were in contact every day. For example, a married man in the military who has just received a promotion may not always have felt happy about the promotion because he was comparing himself with other married men who were not drafted into service, rather than comparing himself with other men who were in the military, at his similar rank, and who had not received a promotion.

The reference groups or reference individual with whom we identify affects our world-view by leading us to expect certain behaviors of others, certain outcomes in the world thereby influencing our appraisals of the world around us, and therefore our own behavior:

If the structure of a rigid system of stratification, for example, is generally defined as legitimate, if the rights, perquisites and obligations of each stratum are generally held to be morally right, then the individuals within each stratum will be the less likely to take the situation of the other strata as a context for appraisal of their own lot. They will, presumably, tend to confine their comparisons to other members of their own or neighboring social stratum. If, however, the system of stratification is under wide dispute, then members of some strata are more likely to contrast their own situation with that of others, and shape their self-appraisals accordingly. (Merton & Rossi, 1957, p. 267)

This scenario may hold up in environments where the system of stratification is concrete, defined, and acknowledged. However, in a country such as the United States, where the system of stratification is defined and often rigid but not acknowledged, many are taught to believe

that it does not exist or that it is permeable to anyone. Many operate under the assumption that our society is unstratified or stratified but permeable. As a result, it seems that many people are not conscious of themselves as members of a particular group, especially a particular class. Merton and Rossi (1957) found that many individuals identified with a class or group which did not objectively fit their real life situation. This occurs when a person wishes, or is working toward becoming a member of that group. An example of this would be the college student from a working class neighborhood who no longer has ties with neighborhood friends, and concentrates more on making friends at school.

Goffman (1974) explored a concept that would also influence our understanding of the world, "frame analysis." He defined a frame as a "schemata of interpretation used to recognize a particular event" (Goffman, 1974, p. 21). Frames are culturally evolved and accepted phenomena. As members of a larger culture or members of a group, we have certain frames which we use to understand the world around us; "a primary framework is one that is seen as rendering what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful" (Goffman, 1974, p. 21). These frames are not always concrete and may not have specific rules, but sometimes are more vague and simply work to "provide a perspective" (Goffman, 1974). Frameworks also

change, varying with the context in which specific actions occur. Not only do frameworks vary from culture to culture, but also within the culture in the context of different groups (friends, family, co-workers often have their patterned ways of interacting with each other). Also, the same observable behaviors may signify different meanings depending on the context. Goffman (1974) calls this "transformed" behavior a "key." An example would be play fighting, where similar behaviors found during real fights are seen, with slight differences in the real and the play fighting, such as laughing during the play fighting. There are cues in each situation for each of us to understand the framework in which we are operating. As members of the same society, or group of friends, or co-workers we are expected to understand these cues and regulate our behavior accordingly. The groups with whom we identify (racial, ethnic, class, etc.), in our capitalist political system, in conjunction with influence from the media, interest groups, etc., influence our images of ourselves and the world in which we live. Chapin (1941) found that when families were moved from slum-type, crowded housing to newer and roomier public housing, the condition of the family's living room improved, and these were related increases in social participation. These studies demonstrated the influence of world-view and self-image on how, when, and what actions people may take in the face of change, or when and why they do not act.

### Taking Action

Peter Marris summed up the relationship between knowledge and action by stating: "Meaning, then, is I think best conceived of as a comprehensive, integrative structure of interpretations which each of us elaborates through experience and depends upon for confidence to act" (Marris, 1982, p.6). A person's understanding of a situation determines if, how, and when he or she will act. Robert L. Warren (1971) made a similar point in the context of the field of social work by saying that before we can change something we have to decide: what it is we want to change, who we are and where we fit in, on whose behalf the changes will be made, and with whose help.

Lees and Smith (1975) offered a concrete example of how changes in a group's understanding of a situation altered what they saw as necessary action. They described a group of researchers in England who were sent by their government to study, and subsequently help improve twelve economically depressed areas in England. After working in these areas for some time, the research teams realized that the problems in these areas were not due to weak or dysfunctional people who live in these areas, or with problems in the delivery of services to these areas, but rather with the setup of the government and class system. They developed three models of

social change based on ideas about the root of problems in these economically depressed areas. The first was the consensus model. Within this model, problems were seen as stemming from the problems with the people who lived in these areas, and, "malfunctions of the existing system, failures of communication and coordination...the focus of change is thus on management and administration and the nonparticipant" (Lees & Smith, 1975 , p.12 ). The next model was the pluralist model, which explained problems within the system as problems of imbalance. People were not getting their fair share of what was available due to imbalances in the system of government. Representation and participation of all groups was seen as the answer to this problem. The third model was one of structural conflict. The problem as presented within this model was one of conflict of interests between various groups and classes and unequal distribution of power. In terms of this model change was brought about by educating people about what was going on. The need was not for more "managerial and technical solutions," because the government works very well for people in "better areas" (Lees & Smith, 1975). Solutions to problems are devised depending on the how the problem is conceptualized. These researchers felt that the problems they were sent to correct were really problems of structural conflict, and any solution offered without dealing with this fact would be a temporary solution, treating the symptom, not the problem.

It is this lack of understanding of the entire picture which Castells (1983) blamed for the lack of long-term success of American social "mobilizations." He differentiated between social mobilizations and social movements. He defined social movements as actions for structural changes, not surface level changes. Social mobilizations were defined as organized actions taken by people which brought about surface level changes, rather than fixing the problems that were at the heart of the matter.

According to Castells (1983), we need to know who all of the actors are at all levels of involvement, and how these actors and levels of interaction fit together to make up the entire picture (i.e., citizens, federal, state, city interests, business interests, etc.) before meaningful changes can be made. He said there are three major issues underlying American popular movements: neighborhood preservation and improvement, poverty, and ethnic and minority oppression (Castells, 1983). Each of these issues was interrelated, but many failed to see their interrelationship. As a result, not only did people fail to work together, they often worked against each other, feeling that they must get the most for their group, neighborhood, or organization. In the mean time, powerful alliances that could have been formed to work together never came about because people feel they were fighting to get a piece of the

limited pie. Each group got what they wanted, and went home satisfied. Castells (1983) described one organization, which was plagued by infighting between Hispanics and poor whites. They failed to see the entire picture, and as a result, received a few concessions (some new programs) and disbanded because of what they saw as their different interests. They did not make any major changes in the system, which set them up for the same or similar troubles as soon as the time limit on their newly gained programs expired. These people failed to see the commonalties of their places and fates in our society, that they were poor and will stay that way unless drastic changes are made.

Rowbotham and Wainwright (1981) pointed out the same problem in the separation of the white socialist women's movement from the struggles of other oppressed groups. Separate struggles (feminist, worker, racial) would make sense if the institutions that discriminated were separate, but they are linked and overseen by a state power and through "the organization of production and culture, which makes such a piecemeal solution impossible" (Rowbotham & Wainwright, 1981, p.4). Also, in Robert Fisher's (1984) evaluation of neighborhood organizations, he stated that neighborhood organizations must be placed and evaluated in the context of how they work within the current national political and economic environment.

Kornblum (1974) came to the same conclusion as Castells (1983) and Rowbotham & Wainwright (1981) in his study of blue-collar workers in Chicago steel mills. He was trying to find out why there was no working-class socialist party in the United States. He concluded that there were two reasons. One was racial and ethnic divisions within the classes. Steel workers who were in the same work situation, often did not identify with other workers of different racial and ethnic groups. The second reason was the promised possibility of economic success in the United States. If you worked hard enough, you could achieve anything, therefore implying that the system is fair and open to all. These workers did not identify themselves as permanent members of the working class. In the United States we are taught that any person can be successful if he or she works hard enough. As a result, no person wants to be labeled as being associated with a group which he or she feels is inferior to him- or herself. Each person feels that he or she will be the one to work his or her way from rags to riches. The point was made by Merton and Rossi (1957), that an individual may identify with a group that he or she aspires or wishes to belong, rather than a group to which they actually belong. This influences our actions and reactions to the world around us, sometimes to our own detriment. Gans (1962) found in his study of Boston's West End that when plans were announced to clear the neighborhood in the name of urban renewal there

was no mass effort to stop this destruction because each person thought his or her block would be spared.

The gender of the individuals doing the community organizing may have an effect on the approach to and formalization of the organization. In an analysis of tenant movements in New York from 1904 to 1984, Lawson and Naison (1986) found a pattern in the way community organizations evolved. In many of the movements, neighborhood women did the initial grassroots organizing. These groups were later formalized and taken over by men. Saegert (1989) also found that men and women often had different approaches to community organizing. In a policy assessment of low-income limited equity co-ops in New York, Saegert (1989) assessed the style of the various co-op resident leaders. She found that the women managed buildings with the knowledge that "all tasks also involved the maintenance of communication and social bonds" (Saegert, 1989, p. 304). The women saw the building management as an extension of running a household. On the other hand, the men who ran these co-ops saw their leadership position as being similar to jobs they had held in the past, relating the management of the building to work. There were also demographic differences between the male and female building leaders. More often the female leaders were uneducated and poor, and had held unskilled labor jobs. The four males in the study were more educated than the females in the study, and three of the men related

their work in the co-op to their involvement or work with other community organizations.

All of this work raises the same point, the need to understand an individual's self-image, his or her world-view, before we can answer the question of why an individual responds to change in his or her neighborhood.

#### The Connection Between Self-Identity, World-View, and Action at The Individual Level

Lees and Smith (1975), as described in the previous section, documented how experience had changed the world-view of a group of researchers in England. As a result of these changes, the researchers felt that their methods of intervention could not work as previously planned because they now conceptualized the problem differently. Another way that world-view can be influenced to spur people to act is through education. Paolo Friere (1970) stated that with education people can become aware of their place in the world, the contradictions in the world, and as a result, work to change the world. He said that the "oppressed" live in the world created by the "oppressors," and rather than desiring liberation for the "oppressed" group (because they do not see themselves as part of oppressed class), they identify with the oppressors and aspire to become oppressors (Friere, 1970). This point was illustrated by Kornblum

(1974) in his study of the steel mills, as described in the previous section. Friere (1970) stated that education can further people's understanding of the world and their place in it, and by doing this, change their view of the world. Then they can make meaningful changes in the world around them, not just temporary solutions.

The way an individual deals with neighborhood change can be conceptualized as a form of coping behavior. Any type of change that a person becomes aware of requires appraisal of those changes: whether and how the changes may influence this person's life. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) developed a model of stress, appraisal, and coping that included the individual's self-image, world-view, and situational as factors in these processes. They stated that a person's commitments and beliefs influenced appraisal of a situation by " (1) determining what is salient for well-being in a given encounter; (2) shaping the person's understanding of the event, and in consequence his or her emotions and coping efforts; and (3) providing the basis for evaluating outcomes (cf. Wrubel, Benner, & Lazarus, 1981)" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 55). Through these commitments and beliefs, "A person may generate several interpretations of an event depending on which facets of the encounter are attended to and the clarity - ambiguity of the available information concerning demands and coping resources" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 79). The process of appraising an event or

situation is also influenced by characteristics of the event: novelty, predictability, imminence, duration, and temporal uncertainty. The terms novelty and predictability are self-explanatory. Imminence refers to "how much time there is before an event occurs" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 92). Sometimes more time is beneficial, allowing a person time to get used to the stressor, or the idea of one. In other circumstances, when there is a long time before an event occurs an individual becomes more nervous or upset, or "tunes out" the event and not does use the time to develop coping strategies. Duration refers to how long a stressful event lasts. And finally, temporal uncertainty is "not knowing when an event is going to happen" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, pg. 101) Both duration and temporal uncertainty can work in the same way as imminence, allowing a person to either adapt or become more anxious and stressed.

The step following appraisal in this model is coping. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), the way a person copes is determined by his or her: (1) resources, which includes health, energy, existential beliefs and beliefs about his or her level of control over the situation; (2) commitments, which can motivate or hamper coping; (3) problem-solving skills; (4) social skills; (5) social support; and (6) material resources, and constraints on resources.

Rochford, Burke, & Blocker (1991) applied Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) model to understand people's reactions to a natural disaster after a flood in Tulsa, Oklahoma. They conducted a total of 180 interviews in three different Tulsa communities nine months after a flood hit the area when flood lakes built by the Corps of Engineers overflowed. They interviewed only people who were flooded with one foot or more of water in their house. They stated that people with "differing interpretive frames" (i.e., that the flood was a natural versus unnatural event) adapt and respond in different ways (Rochford, et. al., 1991). They found that those people who thought the flood was the result of human error were more likely to work to help in the aftermath, while those who felt that it was a "natural" disaster did not become involved.

Neighborhood change can happen in many ways, from the sudden natural disaster to the slower more deliberate changes which may take years to become noticeable. Gentrification is one form of neighborhood change, which may be stressful for some of the people involved. There have been many interpretations offered as to the reason for this process. Some said it is a "natural" occurrence which can be expected in a capitalist society. Others explained the process called gentrification as definite and deliberate activities of a few to profit at the expense of others. The

relationship between how an individual appraises, copes with and reacts to gentrification as a form of neighborhood change was the focus of this study. The issue of gentrification is discussed in great detail here because it was expected to be an important issue for the respondents in this study. However, as the study progressed, it became apparent that gentrification was not an issue for most of the respondents. They were more concerned with crime, drug use, and the physical deterioration of the neighborhood.

#### Gentrification - A Form of Neighborhood Change:

##### Theoretical Approaches to Understanding Gentrification

The term "gentrification" came into use in the 1970's. Greir and Greir (1978) defined gentrification as an influx of middle class residents into a working- or lower-class neighborhood, and the consequent displacement of the previous residents. Is this process so simple and clear cut? After many researchers have studied and documented this process of change, the term and the process are now viewed as much more complex. There has been disagreement about the term "gentrification" and whether it appropriately describes the process or processes occurring. There have been debates about who the newcomers are, where they come from and why; who the previous residents were; whether the previous residents are actually displaced and, if they are displaced, what are the effects (Barry & Derevlany, 1987;

Greir & Greir, 1978; Henig, 1984; Le Gates & Hartman, 1986; London, 1980; Newman & Owen, 1982; Rose, 1984; Spain, 1980).

There seems to be some agreement that there are at least two distinct processes which will change the physical and social form of a neighborhood: incumbent upgrading and non-incumbent upgrading (gentrification, reinvestment, or urban reinvasion) (Clay, 1979; Schill & Nathan, 1988). Both of these processes may occur separately or together in the same neighborhood. In order to explain gentrification as the complex process which it really is, certain assumptions must be made about the nature of urban change in general. These assumptions must be stated in terms of a theory of urban change, then gentrification can be explained as a form of urban change which can be described in the language and terms of these urban theories.

#### Economic Determinist Theories

One theory of urban change is the economic determinist theory (Park, Burgess, & McKenzie, 1925; Wirth, 1961). These theorists explained urban change in terms likened to the biological model of the survival of the fittest. According to economic determinist theories, people compete for space, doing the best to meet their needs, and in the end everybody is in the place that best suits his or her needs. They explained urban form and change in terms of technological

development and ecological succession. As technology develops, the city expands, allowing the development and residential settlement of newer, "healthier" suburban areas. Those who can afford to move, leave the city for the newer suburban dwellings. Their vacant city properties are rented or sold to other city dwellers who cannot afford to move to the suburbs, but who consider this intracity move as an improvement in their lot. Consequently, there is a successive filtering of the urban housing stock.

In these terms, gentrification was seen as a result of socio-demographic changes in combination with shifts in industry (shift from manufacture to service). Gentrification was explained as the influx of upper- and middle-income people into areas which are inhabited by lower-income residents because of, "historic character, closeness to downtown, attractive, but salvageable buildings, and a general increase in demand for inner-city housing" (Weiler, 1978, p. 1). The greater demand for inner-city housing is generated by the change in center city from manufacturing to service centers, bringing in more white-collar workers (Weiler, 1978). This means there will also be changing tastes and lifestyles. Greir and Greir (1978) characterize this group of people who are buying and renting relatively low-priced housing in these urban neighborhoods as the mature "baby boom" generation. Family structure is different for this group in comparison to previous generations.

They have few or no children due to economic factors and the changing role of women.

Clay (1979) stated that "neighborhood renewal" was a result of private rehabilitation which came about because of the previously mentioned shifts in industry, socio-demographic shifts, and the resulting changes in lifestyles. These newcomers wanted to live in the city because it was an easy commute to work at their white-collar jobs in center city; convenient to cultural events and entertainment; and the housing was so inexpensive, or relatively so, that it could be "customized" to each owner's taste. The steps in the process of gentrification, according to Clay (1979) and Schill and Nathan (1988) were: 1) "pioneers" move into rundown but affordable neighborhood; 2) more "pioneers" move into the "newly discovered" neighborhood; 3) young city dwellers move in, and at this stage there is a great deal of renovation and the slow displacement of the "original" residents"; also at this stage there is a great deal of media attention directed at these neighborhoods; 4) there is a massive influx of young people into the vastly changed area; 5) the stragglers move into the neighborhood which is now seen as a safe investment. Clay (1979) offered the "renewal" of Society Hill in Philadelphia as an example. We will see later that Smith (1979) documented the "renewal" of Society Hill and the close dealings of the federal, state, and city governments in the development and financing of

this venture. The economic determinist theories are based on the assumption that all people have equal access to what they want with no outside interference, but that some people have more resources than others. This does not appear to be true in all, or even in many cases.

### Marxist Theories

The Marxist theories of urban change criticized the economic determinist theorists for assuming that all people have equal access to goods and space. The Marxists stated that different groups of people have different levels of access to goods and space depending on their wealth, power and influence (Bartelt, Elesh, Goldstein, Leon & Yancey, 1987; Feagin, 1986; Logan & Molotch, 1986; Tabb & Sawyers, 1984). As a result, the Marxists conceptualized the urban landscape as a reflection of the circulation of capital, not as a fair struggle among individuals competing for space. "A given built environment expresses specific patterns of production and reproduction, consumption and circulation, and as these patterns change, so does the geographical patterning of the built environment" (Smith & Williams, 1986, p. 21). In actuality, the wealthy and powerful members of our society have first choice in goods and space, and operate to increase their wealth and power, often by influencing government in their favor (LeGates & Murphy, 1981; Smith, 1979; Smith, 1986; Smith, 1996). The economic

determinists' theories ignored the role of government and politically powerful people who make a living from speculation and the development of gentrifying neighborhoods. Many governments were convinced that gentrification would save the declining city by renewing the sagging tax base.

Feagin (1986) proposed an urban ecology, "that accents the role of class structure, the role of the powerful land-oriented, capitalist actors in shaping the location, development, and decline of American cities" (Feagin, 1986, p. 100). Logan and Molotch (1986) argued that the pursuit of highest exchange values was a leading force in the shape of the urban landscape, and that ecological and biological metaphors cannot simply be applied to the urban landscape. This perspective stressed that these earlier theorists assumed free market competition for space, while ignoring the fact that people did not have equal resources and opportunities at their disposal, and were seeking various benefits for these places.

Many persons in the United States must frequently deal with discrimination because of the color of their skin, their ethnic background, their sexual orientation and/or their chosen lifestyle (Ahlbrandt, 1984; O'Hanlon, 1981; Saegert, 1989). Bearing this in mind, gentrification cannot simply be seen as a result of the

maturation of the baby boom generation and an increase in disposable income, or a change from manufacturing to service industries, but must be seen as a strategy for increased profits. Real estate speculators have used all means possible to secure profits from the purchase and resale of properties, thereby influencing the pattern of development within cities (Feagin, 1986). "The pursuit of exchange values so permeates the life of localities that cities become organized as enterprises devoted to the increase of rent levels through the intensification of land use. The city becomes, in effect, a 'growth machine'" (Logan & Molotch, 1986, p. 13). The Marxists saw gentrification as a way to make money from land that is potentially valuable. The trick was to make it desirable.

Neil Smith and Peter Williams (1986) categorized the economic determinist theories as the "consumption side" and the "production side explanations." The "consumption side" explanations attributed gentrification to "lifestyle changes, preference patterns, and simple descriptions of demographic change" (Smith & Williams, 1986, p. 4). In contrast, the "production side" theories stressed the role of "institutional agents and capital" (Smith & Williams, 1986). "Gentrification, according to this perspective, results from the private and public investment of capital in

certain land uses, devaluation through non-use and disinvestment, and the resulting opportunity for profitable reinvestment that is thereby created" (Smith & Williams, 1986, p. 4).

Smith and Williams believed that the process of gentrification was a complex combination of all of these factors, a "visible" expression of social, political, and economic changes. This represented a broader way of thinking about the urban landscape and gentrification in particular. Gentrification was an expression of the desire for increased profits. Of course, it would not be feasible if it were not for the sociological and demographic factors mentioned by other researchers (shift from manufacturing to service industries, maturation of baby boom generation, delay of marriage, etc.). "In brief, price is sociological and sociology is needed to analyze its determination as well as its consequence" (Logan & Molotch, 1986, p. 9).

#### Neo-Marxist Theories

Finally, there were the critiques of Marxist theories of gentrification. The common thread in these critiques was that the Marxist theorists separate the economic and social aspects of gentrification, concentrating on the economic aspects while ignoring the social. One critic, Beauregard

(1986), applied a Marxist economic analysis, but took the analysis of social aspects from the socio-demographic theorists. Beauregard (1986) described gentrification in terms of the factors that lead to the emergence of a class of "gentry": (1) an increase in the number of professional-/managerial jobs; (2) no desire to move to the suburbs (due to the delay of marriage and children--no need for suburban amenities) and the prevalence of two income households with more disposable income-conspicuous consumption; (3) many of the "gentry" are young and new in their careers, and cannot afford the down payment for a house; (4) postponement of marriage "makes it (consumption) necessary if people are to meet others and develop friendships" (Beauregard, 1986, p. 4). In addition, the postponement of marriage also meant more one- and two-person households--therefore an increase in the demand for housing.

The final ingredient is that all of the factors must come together in specific locations. These locations include some or all of the following characteristics:

Architecturally interesting housing or commercial and industrial structures 'with potential': a unique spatial amenity such as access to a waterfront, a hilltop location, or a spectacular view, substandard but not structurally unsound buildings clustered relatively close together to allow for a contagion effect

to occur and for gentrifiers to protect themselves; proximity to the central business district, or at least good mass transportation to the types of shops, restaurants and facilities most compatible with the reproductive decisions and consumption activities of the 'gentry' (Beauregard, 1986, p. 53).

In a study of various gentrifying neighborhoods, Clay (1979) found that only 13 percent of the gentrified/gentrifying neighborhoods he studied did not have one of the previously mentioned physical amenities. All of these factors exist within a capitalist society, where government and business work together for profit.

Rose (1984) offered a Marxist approach to the economic analysis, but did not accept the socio-demographic theorists' analysis as the complete picture of the social changes. She stated that family structure had changed, and we now have many single mothers and divorced single parents. Many of these people were on the lower level of the new white-collar hierarchy, and therefore had to live in the city because of economic and time constraints. They were not "gentry," but rather, in many cases were only slightly better off than the original residents of the gentrifying neighborhood. She said that they may actually be a valuable resource to be tapped into to help support the struggles of long-term residents who may have to fight to stay in their

neighborhood. This approach seemed to be the best because it was grounded in reality. Rose (1984) did not have a model that she was trying to fit the world into, but was trying to describe the world as she saw it.

We live in a democratic, capitalist country, which plays a role in shaping our environment and daily life. This specific type of political and economic environment, "Transforms and fixes the meanings of space and time in social life and defines limits and imposes necessities upon the shape and form of urbanization" (Harvey, 1985, p.1). We cannot ignore the complexities of our environment by studying the processes of urban change as if they occur in a vacuum or in a laboratory. Capital influences our use of time, space, and our interactions with each other by dictating when we work, where we can afford to and are allowed to live, and with whom and why we interact. "The urbanization of capital is an objectification in the landscape of that intersection between the productive force of capital investment and the social relations required to reproduce an increasingly urbanized capitalism" (Harvey, 1985, p. xviii). It is within these constraints that we live, not as "organisms" looking for our "niche."

### The Varied Process of Gentrification

There is a process of neighborhood change called gentrification, which many are stretching to fit into their world view. I am not convinced that there are one or two processes occurring which can be neatly described or labeled as gentrification. There are many definitions and theories of the process of gentrification, and there are as many different physical and social expressions of the process. What these definitions have in common is that they are describing why a group of newcomers who usually have higher incomes and are usually better educated than the long-term residents move into a previously poor or working-class urban area. Smith and Williams state, "A given built environment expresses specific patterns of production and reproduction, consumption and circulation, and as these patterns change, so does the geographical patterning of the built environment" (Smith & Williams, 1986, p. 21).

In some cases--Society Hill in Philadelphia and False Creek, Vancouver--these processes were manipulated in order to bring about gentrification. These are two examples of what Logan and Molotch (1986) call the "growth machine . . . an apparatus of interlocking progrowth associations and governmental" (Logan & Molotch, 1986, p. 32). The development of Society Hill, an affluent Philadelphia neighbor-

hood, was undertaken in order to save Philadelphia from the "debilitating effects of decentralization, aging, and disinvestment so typical of older industrial cities in the United States" (Cybriwsky, et al., 1986, p. 93). "In False Creek, by contrast, the context is western Canada's rapid urban growth of the late 1960s and 1970s, and confidence in Vancouver's future prosperity . . . (Cybriwsky, et al., 1986, p. 94). Society Hill was "consciously selected for transformation into a district of prestigious homes in order that it be occupied by Philadelphia's elite class" (Cybriwsky, et al., 1986, p. 99). In the first phase of the development a section of the area was condemned, all of the residents and businesses were displaced. High income residents were purposely targeted. In 1956, Albert M. Greenfield, a real estate magnate was appointed chairman of the City Planning Commission. He urged and aided in the founding of the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation, a group of business and banking leaders (Cybriwsky et. al, 1986). Some of these businessmen and bankers became politicians or became involved in the governing of the agencies which would regulate the development of Society Hill (i.e., Gustave Amsterdam, Executive Director of the Redevelopment Authority, and Executive Vice President of CPCD and chairman of the Bank Securities Corporation) (Smith, 1978). The city government provided "30 percent of the state's project costs" (Smith, 1978, p. 28). The federal government provided 67 percent of the project costs, and "FHA insured mortgages to a number of

developers in Society Hill" (Smith, 1978, p. 28). Also, in 1956, Mayor Dilworth moved to Society Hill. He was followed by C. Jared Ingersoll, "a multi-millionaire lawyer and railroad financier with numerous civic credentials" (Cybriwsky, et al., 1986, p. 102).

Vancouver is a smaller and younger city than Philadelphia, but it too experienced its own version of "gentrification." Vancouver was founded as a "railway town" in 1886 with the completion of the Transcontinental Canadian Pacific Railway (Cybriwsky, et al., 1986). It evolved into an industrial port city. False Creek was an "industrial garbage dump," marked by severe air, water and noise pollution (Cybriwsky, et al., 1986). In spite of this, there was always a high demand for housing in False Creek, "and elite residential districts near the core have not only survived but have expanded . . ." (Ley, 1981 in Cybriwsky et al., 1986, p. 108). In 1968 The Electors Action Movement (TEAM) was formed, "a liberal reform party concerned to a significant degree with such planning and development issues in Vancouver as the False Creek question (Ley, 1981 in Cybriwsky, et al., 1986, p. 109). In the 1968 election TEAM won two Council seats. In the 1972 election, TEAM won 9 of the 11 available Council seats. They then implemented a plan to improve False Creek:

There was a quite deliberate and unusually direct transfer of prevalent social science theses concerning the built environment, a process encouraged by the four academics on the TEAM Council. So, too, other designers and social scientists advocating humane planning sensitive to user needs were cited and drawn upon (Cybriwsky, et al., 1986, p. 112).

Architectural and cultural diversity were promoted. The redevelopment was financed by "conventional market investment," developers, subsidies to nonprofit groups, and grants from the "housing programs of senior governments" (Cybriwsky, et al., 1986).

Another example of the complexity of the process is the case of the gentrification of Fairmount, another Philadelphia neighborhood. This was a predominantly white, ethnic neighborhood. In 1978, over one-quarter of the residents were over sixty years old and seventy-five percent of the residents were homeowners (Cybriwsky, 1978). This area is located on the outskirts of center city Philadelphia, and in the 1970s the housing prices were very inexpensive compared to housing prices in Center City Philadelphia (Cybriwsky, 1978). At this time, people who wanted to live in Center City (the center of business, culture, and entertainment in Philadelphia) but who could not afford the price of a house there or higher rents,

bought properties in Fairmount. As housing prices and taxes increased, many long-term residents became worried that friends and neighbors would be unable to buy or rent a property in Fairmount (Cybriwsky, 1978). "Changes in the neighborhood's commercial structure include a small art gallery, an antique shop, and two stores which specialize in house plants. Their sites were formerly 'Ma-and-Pa' type businesses" (Cybriwsky, 1978, p. 29). While many long-term residents were pleased with the changes they were seeing in Fairmount, they also felt that they had lost something of the old neighborhood (Cybriwsky, 1978). The gentrification of Fairmount was basically a slow, private process, not the blanket condemnation and complete displacement which occurred in Society Hill.

Three concrete examples offer very different processes and outcomes of urban change which have been described as "gentrification." The question is whether these fit the neat five step models proposed by Clay (1979) and Schill and Nathan (1988). The neighborhoods described above did not seem to simply follow this model. It seems that gentrification is not one simple process. De Giovanni (1983) documented that the changes in the housing market in so-called gentrified neighborhoods have not followed this neat pattern. Alternatively, perhaps a process of change begins, but evolves into a particular form depending on factors such as the will of the people who stand to profit, the people

who stand to lose, whether and how the people who stand to lose choose to fight these changes, and by the character and location of the area experiencing the changes. This process must be examined across time, in particular places and involving many different people. It is a process that has been occurring full force in the United States and other countries for at least the past twenty years. Since many things have changed in twenty years, why would this process, which is directly tied to the economy via the employment trends, the health of the real estate industry, and related to socio-demographic shifts, have remained stable and in one form, when none of these other conditions have?

#### Gentrification in the 1990's

Because of the slowing real estate market, researchers turned away from generating theories about the gentrification process, to descriptions of the changes which took place as a result of it, almost like post-occupancy evaluations. Smith (1996) described how this process slowed, and in some cases came to a complete stop, in the late 1980's and early 1990's when the national economy stopped growing, or as he said, experienced "economic depression." He said "white middle-class optimism of gentrification" has been replaced by the "revanchist" city. The revanchist city is one where there is a "reaction against the supposed 'theft' of the city... cloaked in the populist language of

civic morality, family values, and neighborhood security" (Smith, 1996, p.211). He said this backlash against minorities, immigrants, women, those who are unemployed and/or homeless, and gays and lesbians is an expression of the "terror felt by middle-class and ruling-class whites who are suddenly stuck in a place by a ravaged property market, the threat and reality of unemployment, the decimation of social services" (Smith, 1996, p.211). These white, middle-class people are trying to control their environment by controlling, or in some cases getting rid of, people who they perceive as being different from themselves, therefore dangerous.

Mele (1996) described how planners and financial institutions had been working for decades to clear the Lower East Side of its low-income, mainly minority residents to make way for those who could pay higher rents. The goal was to build luxury housing for higher income employees of the financial institutions on nearby Wall Street. According to Mele (1996), the existing residents were able to mount an effective campaign against these plans, even going so far as to post signs suggesting that you "Mug a Yuppie." Rather than abandoning their plans to gentrify this area because they could not get rid of the existing residents, these planners and developers decided to sell the neighborhood as an eclectic, urban neighborhood. As Mele (1996) described it:

Responding to opportunities afforded by the increasing global economy of cultural production and consumption, place entrepreneurs have abandoned their efforts to displace existing notions of place and local character. Efforts to reinvent neighborhood now involve appropriating, packaging, and marketing of the identity of marginalized communities as a means of accumulating profits in the local real estate market. (pp. 4-5)

Suchar (1992) interviewed long-term and new, higher income residents of Chicago's Lincoln Park about how they viewed themselves and their home as part of the neighborhood since it had undergone drastic changes as a result of gentrification. He found that the newcomers were more likely to see their homes as visual representations of themselves, while the long-term residents were more likely to see their homes as private places for their families. The long-term residents even seemed to distance themselves from what they described as the "materialistic" values of their new neighbors. Despite these differences, they lived peacefully in the same neighborhood.

#### Summary

The purpose of this study was to bring together all of the elements described above and make sense of how these

various pieces were woven together for each individual in a neighborhood which has experienced many changes recently. These elements were: the types and rate of change occurring in the neighborhood; the meaning and role of the neighborhood in the individual's life; the individual's understanding of and reaction to the changes. The individual's understanding of and reaction to neighborhood change will be influenced by a number of factors: the type of information the individual has; the source of the information; the individual's social, financial and emotional resources; the individual's lifecycle/lifestage, length of residence and attachment to the neighborhood; and the individual's self-image and world-view (how he or she believes the world works, what is important to him or her, and what the individual believes that he or she can do to solve problems or needs as they arise).

The literature discussed above was presented in an attempt to explain each of these processes separately. The goal of this project was to pull together all of the pieces into one coherent theory about the link between perception of neighborhood change and action at the individual level. In my view gentrification is not one process, but a multifaceted type of neighborhood change, which can and does take many forms. Winkel's (1981) theory of neighborhood change was applied and evaluated as a model of the perception of neighborhood change. At the time of this research, Fishtown

had experienced changes that could be described as gentrification. I evaluated characteristics of the individual that may influence the perception of neighborhood change. I expected most of the residents to discuss gentrification and changes related to that process. Finally, I examined how the characteristics of the changes occurring, and certain characteristics of the individual interacted to influence his or her reactions to neighborhood changes.

### Research Questions

- 1) Does the type and level of attachment a person feels for his or her neighborhood influence the process of acknowledging, understanding, and reacting to neighborhood change?
  
- 2) Do residents of a neighborhood experiencing change notice changes in their neighborhood when:
  - a) new facilities that are not expected by the current residents appear (i.e., trendy restaurants or boutiques, or housing projects or halfway houses)?
  - b) people who do not look like or live the same lifestyle as the current residents move into the neighborhood?
  - c) the resident is active socially or politically?
  - d) the resident has plans for long-term residence?
  - e) the resident sees many stories about changes in the neighborhood in the media?
  
- 3) Do self-identity and world-view influence the process of acknowledging and reacting to neighborhood change by affecting the individual's interpretation and understanding of the changes?

- 4) Does a resident act on changes in his or her neighborhood if he or she perceives these changes as affecting his or her life?
  
- 5) Does a resident act on changes in his or her neighborhood if he or she perceives that something can be done to encourage or discourage further change?
  
- 6) Does the type of action an individual takes to encourage or discourage neighborhood change depends on his or her understanding of the nature of the changes?

## Methods

### The Setting: Fishtown

The neighborhood that is the focus of this research is called Fishtown. It is a small, white, working-class neighborhood located a few miles north of Center City Philadelphia and is situated along the Delaware River. Before I discuss Fishtown, I would like to place it in context by giving a brief history of Philadelphia.

### The History of Philadelphia

Philadelphia was founded in 1682 by William Penn as a "Holy experiment," where people could find "social and religious tolerance" (Cybriwsky, 1995). His intention was also to develop Philadelphia as a business center, with an abundance of fertile farm land and two rivers for transport. Most development took place in a two-square mile area along the Delaware River, except for Germantown and Newtown, farmlands located north of Philadelphia. The area of Manayunk was developed as a factory district along the Schuylkill River. The majority of settlers were from Britain, Wales, Ireland, and Germany (Cybriwsky, 1995).

In the mid-nineteenth century, when industry shifted from water to coal as its primary source of power, other neighborhoods developed: Fishtown, Kensington, Brewerytown, North Philadelphia area, and South and West Philadelphia. This expansion was also facilitated by improvements in the transportation systems, especially the rail lines, which not only allowed the transport of goods, but also people, who were no longer restricted to living in the center of the city. By 1854 Philadelphia had grown from 2 square miles to over 130 square miles and by 1890 the population of Philadelphia was over 1,000,000 (Cybriwsky, 1995).

These factories employed many immigrants. The new neighborhoods were packed tightly with new row houses that were built for the middle-income workers. As the transportation system continued to improve, more neighborhoods were developed from the center of the city (Cybriwsky, 1995).

The early twentieth century was the beginning of a shift in the economic base from manufacturing to service, with more white-collar and professional workers. As more highways were built the city lost population while the suburban areas gained, leaving many "empty and abandoned" buildings behind (Cybriwsky, 1995). Those who moved to the suburbs were usually white, upper income, and had children (Cybriwsky, 1995). This shift coincided with an influx and

of African-Americans from the southern United States and Hispanics, mainly from Puerto Rico (Cybriwsky, 1995). Many business also moved to the suburbs. Despite these changes, there were areas that remained strong and stable (Cybriwsky, 1995).

According to Cybriwsky (1995), Philadelphia continued to change as more people moved to the suburbs, new immigrants settled there, and some areas were being revitalized. The city government put into effect a plan to revitalize Center City in the 1950's. This plan:

Called for the removal of the most noxious blighting influences, and for construction by public-private sector cooperation of spectacular new projects designed to modernize such categories of land use as offices, retailing, transportation, and spaces for tourism and recreation. The plan also provided for elaborate historic preservation efforts in older neighborhoods. (Cybriwsky, 1995, p. 370)

One component of this plan was the "revitalization" of Society Hill, which was discussed in detail above.

### The History of Fishtown

William Penn founded Philadelphia in 1682, and in 1708 he sold part of this land to a man named Anthony Palmer, who named it Kensington (Emery, 1982). The area originally consisted of farms and a few homes for those who could afford to escape the chaos of the industrial center of town. During the revolutionary war Fishtown was developed as a site for the shipbuilding industry and the weaving and dying industries because of its proximity to the Delaware river (Robertson, 1982). Cramp's Shipyard opened in 1830 and became one of the major employers, with 20,000 by 1915 (Robertson, 1982). Many of the area residents also made their living as fishermen. They caught shad and roe and sold them in the open-air market along Girard Avenue (Robertson, 1982). The residents of the area were mainly English, Scottish, and Irish. They were craftsmen, artisans, laborers, fishermen, textile workers, and a few wealthy manufacturers and shipbuilders (Mordell, n.d.).

Lower Kensington came to be considered as a separate entity from Kensington. It even had a separate name, Fishtown. There are two versions of the story about the name Fishtown. One is that Charles Dickens visited the area and was so amazed at the number of fish being brought up from the wharves in the area that he called it "Fishtown" (White,

1982). The other version of the story is that there was a boat race between two groups of Kensington men, one group from upper Kensington (ship carpenters) and the other group from lower Kensington (fishermen). The fishermen won the race, and in anger, the ship carpenters began calling the area of the victors Fishtown (Mordell, n.d.). The name has remained the same. However, there is still some ambiguity for residents about the "official" borders of Fishtown, more specifically, where Fishtown ends and Kensington begins. Also, there are still feelings of animosity between residents of Fishtown and Kensington. As a former resident of Fishtown, I know "Fishtowners" are very proud of their neighborhood, and become indignant if you mistake them or their area for Kensington.

Fishtown was incorporated into Philadelphia in 1854 (Robertson, 1982). Early in the twentieth century, the American Can Company and Philadelphia Electric Company opened facilities in Fishtown. At the same time, there was a drastic decline in the shipbuilding, fishing, and weaving industries in the neighborhood (Robertson, 1982). In 1992 the Market-Frankford Elevated train line was opened in Fishtown. It allowed Fishtowners access to shops and employment in other areas of Philadelphia, mainly Center City (Robertson, 1982). Fishtowners also gained further access to Philadelphia by the expansion of I-95 through the neighborhood in the 1960's. Two-hundred people lost their

homes because of this development, but most resettled in Fishtown (Robertson, 1982).

There were major changes in the neighborhood in the late 1970s. One of the elementary schools (George Chandler) closed. The students from this school were required to attend another public school about five blocks away. This school was in the same neighborhood, but required the children to cross a four-lane street that serves as an on-ramp for I-95. Also, a parochial school closed (Immaculate Conception). The small factories in the neighborhood were closing, and a major blow came when the National Sugar Refining Company (Jack Frost Sugar) closed. Eight-hundred employees lost their jobs (Knox, 1979). The abandoned building was imploded in 1997.

However, with all of these ominous events in the neighborhood, the Fishtown Civic Association hired "The Alley Friends" to do a study of Fishtown (Ingram, 1979). The Alley Friends were a group of Center City architects. They did a three-month study of the area and concluded that, "the area is ripe for development" (Ingram, 1979, p. 1). Finally, in 1982, the city announced plans to upgrade Penn Treaty Park, a small park in Fishtown, near the Delaware River. Supposedly, this is where William Penn signed a treaty with the Indians, in what was then called Shackamaxon, an Indian village (Emery, 1982). To develop this project, the city

purchased six acres to add to the existing nine. The planners were planning a river front square, a fishing pier (costing \$205,000), a "river walk," with a total budget of \$505,000 for the park (Hine, n.d.). This river walk would connect Penn Treaty Park to Penn's Landing, a concrete park and marina located in Society Hill, which is the most historic, well preserved and one of the wealthiest areas in Philadelphia (Hine, n.d.). As of 1998, this river walk has not been built.

However, a large number of the industrial buildings along the Delaware waterfront in Northern Liberties, a neighborhood bordering Fishtown and Center City, were converted into "theme nightclubs." This frenzy of development has spread into Fishtown along the waterfront there. As a result, where there were once factories and auto repair shops, you now find neon lit nightclubs with fake palm trees or covered in fake rock to look like caves.

Also in the 1980's a mission which served homeless men, and provided holiday parties for underprivileged neighborhood children was closed. The building was bought and turned into a semi-residential drug treatment facility. It is not uncommon to find many of the clients standing in front of the building. This has been a source of contention between some of the neighbors and the owner of the facility.

### The Gentrification of Fishtown

The city planning commission planned and completed various industrial, commercial and residential uses for each of the Philadelphia waterfront areas, the South Delaware Waterfront (Society Hill and Northern Liberties), North Delaware Waterfront (Fishtown, Bridesburg, and Port Richmond), Lower Schuylkill Waterfront, and Upper Schuylkill Waterfront (Philadelphia Planning Commission, 1980). The major objective was to take advantage of the rivers as resources and sources of entertainment. The planning commission proposed condominiums and townhouses with "marinas" for development along the South Central, and part of the North Delaware Waterfronts (Fishtown) (Philadelphia Planning Commission, 1980). However, in the plans they did not consider any of these communities as such. The city government regarded these areas as strips of empty land along the riverfront, ignoring the other acres, houses and people attached to it. In the plans the commission never once mentioned the people in these neighborhoods and how the changes would affect their lives (North and South Delaware District Plans, 1980). Logan and Molotch (1986) point out that typically, "aggregate growth is portrayed as a public good" by bringing in jobs and increasing the city's tax base. However, "the reality is that local growth does not make jobs: it only redistributes them" (Logan & Molotch, 1986, p. 89). Also, those who move into gentrifying

neighborhoods and pay higher taxes, typically demand many more city services, therefore using more tax dollars (Logan & Molotch, 1986).

It is this development, planned by the City Planning Commission, and much private investment and speculation, that may have led to the gentrification of Fishtown and many other Philadelphia waterfront neighborhoods:

Often justified by planning officials' misleading cost-benefit analyses that show that the disruption of poor people's neighborhoods will create the least loss in taxes and values, the life chances of the poor are sacrificed on behalf of profits and rents enjoyed by people living elsewhere (Logan & Molotch, 1986, p.113).

These plans were made and many of them realized in the 1980's, a time of economic prosperity for many Americans. Suddenly, in the early 1990's, our economy in some ways ground to a halt. One of the outcomes of the economic downswing was the sudden drop in the frenzied real estate activity of the 1980's. Because of this, some neighborhoods that were experiencing an increase in housing sales and sale prices began to experience little or no real estate activity.

The sudden halt in this type of neighborhood change has led to quite a mixed make-up of residents where some of the new home buyers were young, middle-class people buying houses in poorer or working-class areas (Williams, 1988). Previously, neighborhood change of this sort, labeled as gentrification, would result in the eventual displacement of all or most of the residents who could no longer afford the increased property taxes which resulted from the large number of house sales at constantly increasing prices or the increased rents due to the neighborhoods increased desirability. Another aspect of gentrification is the change in the nature of local shops and businesses. When the real estate market slowed or virtually stopped, many of the new residents co-existed with the previous residents, at least until the market picked up again.

This leads to some interesting dynamics within the neighborhood because of different ideas about the neighborhood and lifestyles, as documented by Williams (1988) in Washington, D.C.. There have often been strained relationships between longer-term residents and newer residents in areas which were experiencing an increase in housing sales and higher prices due to the influx of newer, often more prosperous residents (Barry & Derevlany ,1987; Levy, 1978). The newer residents are not necessarily more prosperous but sometimes have more formal education, are younger, and have different lifestyles than the longer-term

residents (Beauregard, 1986; Rose, 1984). These differences, or perceived differences, often lead to clashes within the neighborhood (Barry & Derevlany, 1987).

Gentrification, more specifically, how gentrification or neighborhood changes were perceived by various residents throughout Fishtown; and why, if and how they react to these changes, was the focus of this research.

### The Participants

My initial contact was with a former neighbor. I interviewed this participant and another former neighbor. The first participant recommended two other people, who became interviews #3 and #4. Interview #5 was obtained when she volunteered after I met her at a local church. Two other interviews were also gathered in this process. At the same time I visited the Fishtown Civic Association where one employee and a couple of Board members volunteered by signing a sign-up sheet which the employee posted for me after I interviewed her. I interviewed the employee because she also worked there as a volunteer when there were no funds to pay her salary, so I could safely assume that her involvement was more than financial. I only agreed to interview two Board members because I did not want too many participants from any one group. However, one of the Board members never completed the interview. We started it, but

she never kept appointments to complete it. I replaced her (#12) with a new participant and did not include her interview in the final analyses because only the first 5 questions were completed.

I relied on each participant to recommend other contacts. At one point when I was unable to arrange interviews with any participants recommended by previous interviewees, I called a childhood acquaintance. She agreed to be interviewed, and recommended a friend of hers, who was also a childhood acquaintance of mine. This person agreed to be interviewed and also recommended a friend. This was how most participants were recruited.

I also included 2 of my relatives. One was my aunt who had moved from Fishtown. I felt comfortable interviewing her because she was unaware of any of the details of my work, so I felt she could be unbiased. Another was a cousin, who was not related to my aunt. Again, he did not know the details of my work, so I felt that he could be unbiased. Also, since I had limited contact with him over the past 25 years, I did not feel that he had any stake in replying in predetermined ways. See Appendix A for a discussion of the issues that were relevant to conducting research in the neighborhood in which I grew up.

The sample was not not, nor was intended to be representative of the population of Fishtown. The focus of this study was long-term residents. The sample was comprised of 37 participants. Twenty-seven of the participants were females and the remaining ten were males. The average age for this sample was 49 years, with a range of 25 to 83 years. This is slightly higher than the median ages of 34.4 and 33.7 listed for the two census groups that comprise Fishtown (see Appendix B for a map of Census tracts & Appendices C, D, E, and F for data). On average, the respondents had lived in Fishtown for 39 years, with the range spanning from less than one year for a newcomer to 76 years for one lifelong resident. Most of the participants were married (54%) at the time of the interview. This was also slightly higher than the census percentages listed by the census (36% and 41%) (see Appendix F). Almost two-thirds of the total group (65%) had children. Of those with children, 54% had at least one of their children living with them at the time of the interview. See Table 1 for more details.

More than three-quarters (78%) of the participants owned their home. The census data show that 70% and 72% were homeowners in the two census tracts that comprise Fishtown (see Appendix F). Almost one-third of the total group were high school graduates (30%), followed closely by 24% with some college. The most commonly held occupation was

clerical/office work (32% counting active and retired). The modal household income was "over \$50,000" annually, with 29% of the sample falling into this category. The next most frequently reported category was "\$30,000 to \$35,000," with 21% of the sample reporting this category for total annual household income. Finally, a majority of the sample (69%) reported having taken a vacation in the two years prior to the interview, with 21% of reporting having taken more than one trip. See Table 2 for more detailed socioeconomic information on this sample.

The respondents who participated in this research were fairly representative of the residents of Fishtown according to data taken from the 1990 Census (see Appendices E and F). However, the average age was ten years higher for my sample compared to the 1990 Census data. It is possible that this may have influenced the issues discussed by the respondents in this study because as I mentioned earlier, lifestage and lifecycle did influence the changes discussed by respondents. For example, those with children were concerned with changes that would affect whether the children were able to safely outside. Elderly respondents were often concerned with neighborhood changes that would make them less self-reliant, such as the closing of local convenience stores. Now rather than being able to walk to the corner to buy what they need, they have to depend on someone to drive

them to the grocery store or take public transportation. Further study is necessary to address this issue.

Most of the participants were long-term residents of Fishtown. I defined a long-term resident as a person who has lived in Fishtown for at least ten years. I chose this length of time, because, in my experience as a Fishtown resident and based on my previous research (Hunt, 1986), changes in the physical appearance and socio-demographic make-up of the residents became very apparent to me by the middle of the 1980's. These changes were documented in an earlier study which I conducted in Fishtown (Hunt, 1986). Because of this, I thought a ten-year cut-off point would eliminate any residents who moved to Fishtown because they found it more affordable than Center City, which is a very fashionable and expensive place to live. However, I realized that this might have excluded people who had moved to Fishtown from other working-class neighborhoods, for whom this move to Fishtown was simply a change from one affordable neighborhood to another. I now believe I should have used a 15-20 year residency cutoff point. This will be addressed in more detail in the discussion of how I chose the case studies.

At the beginning of each interview I gathered information on each individual's neighborhood activities by asking members of these groups to answer the items on a

social participation inventory (see Appendix G). This inventory was a list of types of organizations and groups, with blank spaces for others about which I might not have known. I wrote in the names of the organizations of which he or she was a member, and coded the type(s) of involvement he or she had with the organization (contributes money to any of these organizations, attends meetings or functions of these organizations, serves on committees, etc.). I also coded how often he or she participated, writing in whether the organization is located in Fishtown, and writing in the date of the last time he or she participated. This inventory served two purposes. It gave me the information I needed in order to group my respondents (see below). At the same time, it gave me leads as to other neighborhood organizations or clubs to contact for more respondents. I also went from door-to-door on one day, asking people at random if they were willing to participate in the research. I did not recruit any participants using this method.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants by Group

<b>GROUP</b>	<b>Active Only in Fishtown (n=10)</b>	<b>Active In/Out Fishtown (n=10)</b>	<b>Not Active (n=9)</b>	<b>Ex-Resident (n=6)</b>	<b>New-Comer (n=2)</b>	<b>Total (n=37)</b>
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	0	50%	22%	33%	50%	27%
Female	100%	50%	88%	67%	50%	73%
<b>Age (years)</b>						
x	60	45	47	41	37	49
<b>Lifelong Resident</b>						
Yes	50%	50%	88%	0	0	49%
No	50%	50%	11%	100%	100%	51%
<b>Avg Length of Res. (Years)</b>	52	36	40	30	3	37
<b>Marital Status</b>						
Married	40%	60%	56%	66%	50%	54%
Divorced	10%	10%	11%	0	0	8%
Widowed	30%	10%	11%	17%	0	16%
Never Married	20%	20%	22%	17%	50%	22%
<b>Has Children</b>						
Yes	80%	60%	89%	17%	0	62%
No	20%	40%	11%	83%	100%	38%

Table 2. Socioeconomic Characteristics of Participants by Group3

<b>GROUP</b>	<b>Active Only in Fishtown (n=10)</b>	<b>Active In/Out Fishtown (n=10)</b>	<b>Not Active (n=9)</b>	<b>Ex-Resident (n=6)</b>	<b>New-Comers (n=2)</b>	<b>Total (n=37)</b>
<b>Education</b>						
< High School	30%	10%	11%	33%	0	19%
High School	30%	10%	55%	17%	0	30%
Some College	0	40%	22%	17%	0	19%
Coll Grad +	30%	10%	12%	0	0	16%
Post Grad.	10%	30%	0	33%	0	16%
<b>Occupation</b>						
Homemaker	20%	0	22%	0	0	11%
Mgr. & Prof.	20%	60%	0	17%	50%	27%
Tech, Sales, Adm Support	40%	20%	45%	49%	50%	38%
Service	0	0	11%	17%	0	5%
Prod, Craft & Repair	10%	20%	22%	17%	0	16%
Unemployed	10%	0	0	0	0	3%
<b>Home Ownership</b>						
Yes	90%	80%	55%	83%	50%	76%
No	10%	20%	45%	17%	50%	24%
<b>Income</b>						
0 - \$5,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
\$5,001 - \$10,000	20%	0	0	0	0	6%
\$10,001 - \$15,000	10%	10%	0	0	0	6%
\$15,001 - \$20,000	10%	10%	23%	0	0	9%
\$20,001 - \$25,000	10%	0	11%	17%	0	9%
\$25,001 - \$30,000	30%	0	0	0	0	9%
\$30,001 - \$35,000	20%	20%	33%	0	0	21%
\$35,001 - \$40,000	0	0	11%	0	0	3%
\$40,001 - \$50,000	0	20%	11%	0	0	9%
Over \$50,000	0	0	11%	66%	50%	29%
Not Available	0	10%	0	17%	50%	0

In making the connection between neighborhood change and a resident's response to change, I grouped my participants according to their level and type of social participation. Social participation was defined by using Chapin's (1941) definition, "the degree to which an individual actually engages in the original activities of his community in terms of membership, attendance, contributions, committees, and offices..." (Chapin, 1941, p.869). Each potential participant's level and type of participation over the past two years was assessed using the social participation inventory (Appendix G). Participants were grouped according to their whether they participated in any organizations: only in Fishtown, both inside and out of Fishtown, or had no participation at all, in order to be sure that I included a variety of people. I did not expect type and level of participation, or level of attachment to the neighborhood, to explain why people in the different groups were different in terms of their acknowledgment, understanding, and reaction to neighborhood change.

The first group of respondents included ten long-term residents who were involved with any neighborhood-based organizations in the past two years, using Chapin's (1941) definition of social participation.

The next group consisted of ten long-term residents of Fishtown who were involved with organizations outside of the neighborhood within the past two years. Respondents of this group may also belong to neighborhood-based organizations. The same definition of participation was applied to this group.

The third group consisted of nine long-term residents of Fishtown who had not been actively involved with any organization for the past two years. I chose a two-year time frame because a one-year period of no involvement could be due to some temporary reason, unrelated to feelings ideas about social participation, such as unemployment, illness, family illness or problems, the birth of a child, etc.

The next group consisted of six respondents who had moved from Fishtown within five years prior to the interview. I chose to go back as far as five years, because this would include people who had moved from Fishtown when real estate and rental prices were escalating (Hunt, 1986). Each of them had lived in Fishtown for at least 20 years before moving. I found these participants by asking my friends and family who still resided in Fishtown for names of anybody who had moved in the past five years. I also asked my respondents for names of friends or relatives of theirs who had moved from Fishtown in the past five years. I interviewed these people to see if their perception of the

changes that occurred in Fishtown were different from the people still living there.

I also had informal discussions with 2 "newcomers." I defined the newcomers as anybody who has moved to Fishtown in the last five years. These were not formal interviews, but really informal discussions about why he or she moved to Fishtown, what his or her expectations were before moving there, how these expectations have worked out, feelings about Fishtown and the people there, and plans to stay in or leave the neighborhood. The purpose of these discussions was to discuss Fishtown and the other residents with the newer resident, basically to see if there were any issues that arose in these discussions, which I might have overlooked.

I divided the participants into three formal groups by their level of participation based on the assumption that each individual's participation in social/community organizations is related to his or her assessment of what personal and community needs would be met by participating in an organization. In some cases, participation or lack of participation may be a matter of personal convenience. These assumptions will be examined in this research project. I also intended for the first three groups to have an equal number of participants by monitoring the number in the group and as it approached 10, I would carefully assign participants after completing the Social Participation

Inventory. I would then end interviews with participants who would go into a group that already had 10 completed interviews. However, as I was working with the data writing summaries and re-checking the Social Participation Inventories, I realized that I had misclassified one participant. This will have no effect on the quality of the data, however, because each participant was asked the same questions, regardless of the classification group in which he or she belonged.

### Pilot Interviews

Prior to developing the final instruments to be used in this research a pilot study was conducted. The purpose of the pilot study was to decide which of the methods of events analysis (see p. 69) would glean the most interesting and useful information. I also examined the responses to all sections of the interview to be sure that I was addressing the issues in a way that was meaningful to the participants, while gathering the information I needed to address my research questions. The interview was revised after studying the completed interviews.

Three Fishtown residents were interviewed. Each of these people was given the same interview, except for the method used to choose events to be discussed in the events analysis (see Appendix H through Appendix K). In the events

analysis, each person was asked to discuss two events in Fishtown. The method of choosing the two events varied in the three pilot interviews (see below). Each of the events was discussed separately. The participant was asked what he or she knew about the particular event, how he or she found out about the event, whether he or she was involved in the event, how he or she felt about the event, whether and how it affected his or her life, whether and how it affected Fishtown, and why he or she chose that particular event to discuss. Each person was also asked to give his or her environmental autobiography (Appendix L) and answer a set of open-ended questions about their attachment to Fishtown, their experiences there, and changes in the neighborhood.

The first person was then asked to tell me about two important events that had occurred in Fishtown over the past twenty years. I did not define important any more specifically. Next I asked the participant to answer the questions listed on the events analysis sheet for each of these two events (see Appendix I). Using this instrument, this respondent was asked to think of two changes that have occurred in Fishtown over the past 20 years. He was asked what he knew about these changes, how he knew about them, why he chose to discuss them, and how they have affected his life and Fishtown.

The second person completed the events analysis by discussing the changes that he mentioned in question 1 of the open-ended section of the interview. I asked him about these changes, using the questions on the events analysis sheet (see Appendix J). This instrument was the same as Appendix I except rather than asking the respondent to think of two changes, she was asked to choose and discuss two of the changes that she mentioned when asked in the full interview how Fishtown has changed.

In the final pilot interview a third version of the events analysis was used (see Appendix K). This participant was given the list of events which I had collected by asking four Fishtown residents to list two to four important events that have happened in Fishtown over the past twenty years. I also contributed four items to the list before the four people from Fishtown were asked to list two to four events.

#### The Participants of the Pilot Study

The first respondent was a 39 year old white female. She was a widow and had four children. She had graduated from high school, and completed one year of college. She was employed as an Avon Lady, with an annual family income of \$5,001 to \$10,000. She attended church a couple of times a

year, but did not belong to any other groups or organizations.

The second respondent was a 43 year old white male. He has never been married and has no children. He lived at home with his retired parents. He had graduated from high school and has also completed one year of college. He was employed as a deli-worker in West Philadelphia and had an annual family income of \$15,001-\$20,000. This included his parents' pension and Social Security. He attended church weekly and was a member of the Fishtown Civic Association. He went to the Fishtown Civic Association meetings once a month.

The third respondent was a 29 year old white male. He was single and lived with his grandmother. He was a high school graduate, and was employed as an Accounting clerk in Center City. He did not know his total family income because he did not know his grandmother's income. His total personal income approximately \$20,000. He attended church a couple of times a month, and belonged to a health spa in Center City.

### The Results of Pilot Study

The interview questions addressed the issues that needed to be examined in order for me to answer my research questions. However, it was apparent during the interviews that some adjustments were needed. The first respondent

recommended questions to be added to the interview. They were:

- 1) Are there places in Fishtown that are still here that you do not go to or use anymore?
- 2) Are you glad you grew up here?
- 3) Are you glad you raised your children here?

The second pilot interview made it apparent that I was not asking the respondents whether they have ever lived outside of Fishtown. This made me realize the need to add a question and set of prompts about whether the respondent has ever lived outside of Fishtown:

Have you ever lived outside of Fishtown?

When?

Where?

For how long?

Why did you move out?

Why did you come back to Fishtown?

In all three of the pilot interviews, I felt that I was unable to get the respondent to make the connection between his or her philosophy of life and his or her actions (if there was a connection), when I asked:

"Do you have something that you would call a philosophy of life or a point-of-view that influences what you do? Does it influence your daily life? How? How would you say it has affected your actions or what you do?"

As a result, I thought it was best if I asked directly:

1) Do you have a philosophy of life, or motto that you live by?

- a) What is it?
- b) Will you explain it to me? What does it mean?
- c) How did it develop?

2) Does your philosophy of life affect how you would handle a problem, or something you don't like in Fishtown?

I also found the Environmental autobiographies, the idea of telling their life story, made the respondents nervous. I substituted more direct, open-ended questions and dropped the autobiography as it was in a separate form. The following questions were substituted:

What was it like for you to (grow up in/move to) Fishtown?

- a) How did you spend your time? What did you do?
- b) Did you have friends in the neighborhood?
- c) Are you still friends now?
- d) Do you have relatives in the neighborhood?

What was it like to (move/grow up) here?

a) Were there good things about (growing up/moving here)?

What?

b) Were there bad things about growing up/moving) here?

What?

IF APPLICABLE:

How do you feel about (raising/having raised) your children here?

How would you describe people in Fishtown?

Would you say there is such a thing as a "Fishtowner"?

a) Describe a "Fishtowner" for me.

b) Are you a "Fishtowner"?

I believe these questions allowed me to gather some of the information about the resident's history in Fishtown, which I had hoped to gather using the environmental autobiography. I tried to understand whether there was a feeling of attachment to Fishtown, a feeling of being one of the "group," and if so, how these feelings developed.

As a result of the pilot study, the questions in the events analysis section were combined with the open-ended questions about neighborhood change. I wanted to learn how the resident gathered and understood information about changes in his or her neighborhood using the events analysis. The most direct way to do this was to ask each person about the changes that he or she felt were important enough to mention in the interview, rather than define the

events for him or her. However, some of the questions from the events analysis were used at the end of the open-ended interview (see Appendix M). I used these questions to examine how a person decided which events were important enough to discuss, and how he or she learned about those events.

I felt the three neighborhood changes that I listed were major changes because they marked a turning point in Fishtown. The grade school that I attended closed in the 1970's because there were not enough children to keep it open. This signaled the changes in Fishtown from the family neighborhood it once was, to just another inner-city neighborhood. The other two changes that I asked about (the park renovation and the appearance of new people in Fishtown) were also major changes, similar to none that I have seen in Fishtown so far. I wanted to know how other residents of Fishtown felt about these changes and how they interpreted them.

### The Interview

After I introduced myself to the prospective participants and got their permission to ask them a few questions, I asked each person how long he or she had lived in Fishtown (Appendix N). This information was used to group them into one of the long-term resident groups or as a

newcomer. Appendix N contains the format I used to introduce myself to anybody I met by knocking door-to-door. I only did this on one day, and that was because my scheduled interviewee had to cancel. All of the remaining interviews were arranged by referral from participants who had already been interviewed, or by my own telephone calls to friends, neighbors, family members, and acquaintances. Appendix O contains the introduction I used for participants whom I met through a referral.

The first thing each participant was asked to do was to complete the Social Participation Inventory (Appendix G). I read the list of types of organizations to each person, noting the activities in which he or she participated. The remaining questions in the inventory were asked for each activity in which he or she participated. This was done first, in order to be sure that respondents were recruited as they were needed for each of the three groups of participants. A tally was kept of the number of participants in each group as the interviews progressed. By doing this I attempted to ensure that I had ten participants in each of the three groups of respondents. As categories were filled, I asked participants to refer friends, relatives, neighbors, or acquaintances who would fit the particular criteria I needed.

The Social Participation Inventory for the participants who no longer live in Fishtown is in Appendix P. The respondents were asked about their social participation during the last two years they lived in Fishtown because I was interested in what their lives were like immediately before they moved. This information was not used to classify this group in any way.

Information was gathered about each participant: his or her attachment to Fishtown, self-image, world-view and philosophy of life by asking open-ended questions (see Appendix M). This provided the information needed to understand the meaning of the neighborhood and the role it played in each participant's life, and how the participant and the neighborhood influenced each other, i.e., how changes in the neighborhood influenced changes and understanding of the participants. These questions are found in Appendix Q for the group of participants who no longer live in Fishtown. There are additional questions in Appendix R for the participants who have moved from Fishtown, about their current relations with Fishtown, the people there, and how they feel about the neighborhood now.

The final part of the interview entailed asking the participant to answer certain demographic and socioeconomic questions (see Appendix S; Appendix T for non-residents). I originally intended to complete these questions after the

Social Participation Index so that I would know whether particular questions contained in the main section of the interview were relevant for that respondent (for example, what it has been like to raise his or her children in Fishtown). However, before the first interview, I reconsidered and decided against asking these questions early in the interview because of concern that starting the interview with such personal questions would cause some of the participants to be more guarded throughout the rest of the interview, or that it might even cause others to end the interview at that point.

Each of the interviews was transcribed verbatim into a typed document by a professional transcriptionist. These transcripts and the interview protocol containing the Social Participation Inventory and the demographic and socioeconomic information for each client were the source of data for this dissertation.

### Profile Preparation

Eleven respondents were selected for presentation as profiles in this dissertation. These respondents were chosen either because they presented some unusual or unexpected information during their interview, or because they spoke very eloquently about issues that they and others have raised. The rationale for choosing each respondent will be discussed on a case by case basis.

### Objective Measures of Neighborhood Change

Real estate information from the 1980 to 1990 census' was used to document changes in the number of house sales and an increase in prices during the mid 1980's. The figures for the two census tracts that make up Fishtown will be compared to figures for a nearby working class neighborhood called Kensington (see Appendix B for a map of Census tracts). However, Kensington was comprised of 11 census tracts, many of them not comparable to Fishtown in their racial composition. Because the majority of residents in Fishtown in 1980 were white, and many neighborhood changes may be affected by the race of existing residents (prejudice in the housing market), only the five tracts that were similar to Fishtown in their racial composition were included for comparison. This decision was based on data

from the 1980 Census because I wanted the neighborhoods to be comparable before the onset of gentrification in Fishtown. Census data from 1990 were also used to compare my sample characteristics to those of other residents of the neighborhood.

I expected Fishtown to have more real estate sales at higher average prices when compared to Kensington, which did not experience "gentrification." The socio-demographic changes in Fishtown were also compared to those of Kensington from 1980 to 1990. These neighborhoods were compared in terms of income, types of employment held by people in both neighborhoods, and household compositions (marital status, number of children, and total number of people living in the household). I expected to find higher incomes in Fishtown, with more people there in managerial/professional types of employment in comparison to Kensington, and smaller households with fewer children in Fishtown. All of this information was used to answer questions about the types of environmental changes that occurred in Fishtown from 1980 to 1990 and how my sample compares to other residents in Fishtown (See Appendices C, D, E, AND F for these data).

Changes in the physical appearance of Fishtown have been documented by updating slides I took of certain blocks of Fishtown in 1986 as part of my Master's thesis (Hunt,

1986). Two of the blocks at that time were experiencing much in the way of real estate activity (many sales at greatly inflated prices), with many of new residents from outside of Fishtown and middle class. The next two blocks were experiencing a moderate amount of activity, but overall were very stable, with most of the long-term residents continuing to live there, and intending to stay for a very long time (Hunt, 1986). The final two blocks were experiencing little or no change in real estate activity or the appearance of new residents. I visited these blocks and updated 8 of my slides. In the updated slides, I was looking for changes in the appearances of the blocks and properties photographed earlier.

#### Analyses of Data

The real estate sales information was only available from the census data. The source who provided me with the real estate sales information which I presented in my Master's thesis has since left the position where he was able to obtain these data, so I was not able to get these data from him. I attempted to get the information from the Philadelphia Board of Realtors, Temple University Social Science Data Library, University of Pennsylvania library, Haverford College library, and the Philadelphia Planning Commission. None of these sources was able to provide me with these data.

Census information was collected and presented in tabular format in order to document the changes that Fishtown has experienced in these time periods (see Appendices C-F). I expected the census information to a sharp increase in average income in the past decade, an increase in housing prices, and an increase in the number of people in professional occupations.

The slides were intended as a description of physical changes in Fishtown. They were compared with the earlier slides of the same location, and a written summary of the changes is included in the Results and Discussion section. In examining the updated slides of Fishtown, I was looking for changes such as: washed bricks, new doors, the removal of screen doors and aluminum siding, new window boxes and trees, and more "colonial" type decorations. Many of the houses in the upscale Society Hill section of Philadelphia are decorated in a colonial motif because many historically important buildings from the colonial period of the United States are located in Society Hill. As a result, many residents in Fishtown also strive to reproduce this effect.

#### Analyses of the Interviews

Each of the interviews was taped on audio-tape. The first step in analyzing the open-ended interviews was to

have each taped interview transcribed by a professional transcriptionist into a computer file. I have used an open-ended coding process whereby open ended coding is, "The process of breaking down, examining, conceptualizing, and categorizing data" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.61). This is done by comparing similarities and differences between events, incidents, objects, opinions, etc.

I read each of the transcripts looking for possible errors. After correcting these, I read the transcripts again and wrote a 2 to 4 page summary of each of these transcripts. In the next step, I wrote summaries for each question. This was done in order to look for patterns of similarities and differences in participants' responses. These data will be examined by interview group for analytical purposes. In order to answer each of the research questions put forth in this study, I have reviewed each of the summaries and transcripts, going through them in sets by group. However, group participation was not the focus of the study. I approached it this way so that I would not miss any group similarities or differences that might be noteworthy. The findings will be presented by group if that is meaningful according to the findings, or by other groupings which emerged as meaningful from the data.

The purpose of using these techniques was to discover and understand themes that emerged from the interviews in

ways that were true to the experiences of the people in the study. The aim was to place all of this information in the rich, complex tapestry in which it exists, rather than just break people into groups and count their responses. The goal was to present the results so that the people who participated in the study could relate to, and feel that I accurately made sense of what they told me, rather than simply categorizing their feelings and experiences without an attempt at understanding the complex interrelationship of these feelings and experiences. I examined how the characteristics of neighborhood change, certain characteristics of the individual (self-image, world-view, feelings of attachment to the neighborhood, lifecycle/lifestage), and the information available to the individual (media and other sources) mesh, influence reactions on the part of the resident living in the changing neighborhood.

In the final step, background variables from each of the participants were summarized in tabular form for clarity of presentation (see Table 1 and Table 2 above). The participants' occupation was coded into categories as presented in the 1990 Census Report: Detailed Occupation and Other Characteristics from the EEO File for the United States. Also see Appendix U for a map locating the respondents and Appendix V for a map of the sites most frequently mentioned by the respondents.

## Results

### Census Data

These data are presented in Appendices C, D, E, and F. The purpose in presenting them was to document some of the changes described by the participants of this research, not as an attempt to prove or disprove the occurrence of any of the changes they mentioned or as an attempt to "prove" that the neighborhood had experienced gentrification.

According to the 1980 Census data, Fishtown and Kensington were very similar to each other in 1980. Both had around three people in each household. Almost of half of the adults were married. The median age was approximately 31 years for most of the census tracts.

Almost three-quarters of the residents owned their homes in Fishtown and Kensington (except tracts 188 and 194 in Kensington: 42% and 40% respectively). Most of the tracts had a median household income of approximately \$15,000 and most tracts had a median house value of approximately \$14,000. Almost one-third of the residents in each tract worked in a "technical, sales, or administrative"

occupations, while almost one-third were laborers. There were very few in managerial/professional occupations.

One census tract in Kensington, tract 193, stood out as being different from the rest in Kensington and Fishtown. The median age was 38.5. The median house value was \$20,500 and the median household income was \$18,977. The majority of residents were either in a managerial/professional or technical/sales/administrative occupations (69%), while only 21% were laborers.

By 1990, Fishtown still resembled Kensington some ways: in the number of 1 and 2 person households, median age, and homeownership rates. However, the two census tracts that comprise Fishtown had higher median and per capita incomes than all census tracts in Kensington except tract 193. The median house values were higher in Fishtown than all tracts in Kensington.

There were many more residents in Fishtown who were at least college graduates. Fishtown also had substantially more residents who were in managerial/professional occupations. There were slightly fewer married people in Fishtown and slightly more divorced people.

These shifts point to the newer residents and gentrification. There was also a sharp increase in income (median household and per capita). However, there was no dramatic decrease in the median age and no increase in the number of single people. This may mean that many of these newcomers were not "young," single, urban professionals as portrayed by many who have written about gentrification, but perhaps middle-aged or older, divorced or with families.

It is difficult to tease out the exact nature of the changes that occurred in Fishtown using Census data because these data may be masking, or averaging out different sociodemographic changes. As I explain in the following chapters, a few of the respondents described how Fishtown started to experience a rebirth, brought about by internal changes and the arrival of new, more educated, professionals. However, they also said that many of these people had moved away from the neighborhood a few years later. It is difficult to see this cycle in the Census data because they combine multiple changes that might have happened between 1980 and 1990. It offers some information about changes in these neighborhoods, but cannot accurately describe the details of the processes.

## Slides

The slides also confirmed much of what the respondents said, that Fishtown was in a downward spiral. The slides I took of businesses along the main street, Girard Avenue, showed that the buildings were neglected, and many of the businesses were gone. However, the residences were still well maintained on the blocks I photographed. See illustrations 1 through 6 for visual presentation of the slides. The slides from 1986 are on the top of each page and the updated slide of the same location taken in 1994 at the bottom of each page.

I updated slides of three of the six blocks I studied previously (Hunt, 1986). All of these blocks were still clean and the houses were well maintained. The outside of houses on a few of the blocks had been renovated even more. The bricks were cleaned and pointed. Many of the houses now had brass lanterns by the front door. A few even had new doors. All were freshly painted. As you can see in illustration 1, the houses were well maintained. However, by 1994 (illustration 2) the aluminum door of the first house was replaced with a wooden door with stained glass windows.

The metal gate to the yard was replaced with a wooden gate with fancy iron detailing. Also, the tops of the front steps were replaced with marble. Even the next door neighbor had replaced their metal gate with a decorative wooden gate. Similar upgrades are visible in illustrations 3 and 4. In 1986, (illustration 3), this house had a new door and windows and a new coat of exterior paint. However, by 1994, (illustration 4) the front door and windows had been replaced again. Shutters and a brass lantern had also been added to enhance the "colonial" look of the house. As I mentioned earlier, many of the residents were trying to renovate their homes to have a colonial" look, as was done in the upscale Society Hill.

Only one of the blocks showed any signs of wear. It was one of the first blocks to become popular with the newer residents because many of the houses had already been renovated (Hunt, 1986). However, the corner property on this block, while it had freshly washed and pointed bricks, had peeling paint on some of the wood-work. Overall, however, the blocks I visited had been well maintained.

The businesses on Girard Avenue, the main street in Fishtown, were not as well-maintained. All have changed use

since I took the original slides. One had been an antique shop but has since become a bookstore, which I was told was rarely open. The building had been painted royal blue by the people who owned the antique shop and appeared to have the same coat of paint. It no longer looked like an eclectic, new addition to the neighborhood, but was dull, dirty, and peeling.

Down the street was one of the new realtors' offices. It now had a dilapidated sign advertising an antique shop. It was neither a realtor's office nor an antique shop, but was abandoned. The wood had been painted to look like natural wood. Now it and the windows were the same dirty color brown, both covered in dust.

Another building which housed an auto repair shop, and still does, had been freshly painted and had gotten new windows and stucco when I took the earlier slides. This building, like the others, was dirty and rundown looking. Along with the others, it looked as though they had not been cleaned or cared for since I took my earlier slides in 1986.

Another business, a crafts gallery, opened in the early 1980's. The building was freshly painted and the windows

were decorated with their wares (see illustration 5). However, by 1994, the business was no longer in operation. And like many of the other buildings along the main thoroughfare, Girard Avenue, it too was in poor physical condition. As you can see in illustration 6, the building is not being utilized and the door has peeling paint. The sign for the gallery still remains in the window, as if someone just locked the door and never came back.

The contrast between many of the residential blocks and the so-called commercial street, Girard Avenue, was striking. I wondered how people who took such care in maintaining and upgrading their homes could accept the shoddy buildings that lined the main thoroughfare in their neighborhood. This appears to be a physical manifestation of some of the changes mentioned by the respondents. First, some of them mentioned that many people in Fishtown no longer care about their neighborhood. This may partially explain the neglect. Also, they mentioned how the neighborhood was experiencing a "rebirth" in the 1980's, but that it has gone into decline again. Many of the newcomers who started these new businesses were gone or did not arrive in sufficient numbers to sustain the businesses. And finally, many of the respondents mentioned the new

shopping mall located about one mile away, on the border of Fishtown. It appeared as though many people in Fishtown have lost interest in and the need for shopping along Girard Avenue. Most of their needs were met at the new mall, or some other mall. Because of this, they were not motivated to maintain the businesses along Girard Avenue.



Illustration 1: 1100 Montgomery Avenue before renovations

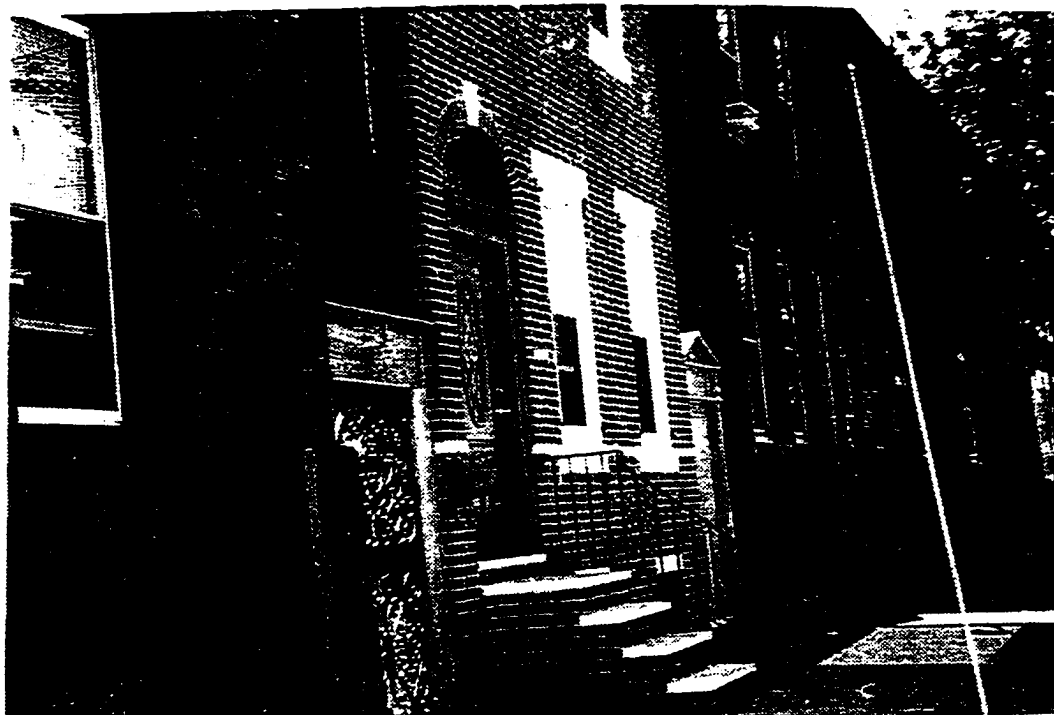


Illustration 2: 1100 Montgomery Avenue - New doors, windows,  
and gates



Illustration 3: 1100 Palmer Street before renovations



Illustration 4: 1100 Palmer Street - New doors, lantern, and shutters



Illustration 5: 500 East Girard Avenue - New Crafts gallery



Illustration 6: 500 East Girard Avenue - Out of business

## Profiles

### Profile # 1:

Dana is a 43 year-old woman who lived in Fishtown for her entire life. She was active in community affairs because she was trying to make it the best possible place for herself and her family, not because she loved Fishtown. She lived with her husband and two children, ages 5 and 16. She was a member of a church in Fishtown and an employee of a community organization. At the outset of this study, I planned not to interview employees of community organizations or civic groups because I was concerned that their involvement might be purely financial. However, this person started with this organization as a volunteer and stays on as a volunteer in the intermittent periods where there are no funds to pay her salary.

She described her life growing up in Fishtown as: "I had nothing dreadful happen to me during my childhood. I just had a good, healthy, happy life. I don't regret anything. I survived this long. I think if you're going to be bad, you'll be bad." (p 26 of transcript). As she was describing her childhood, she focused on her friends and all of the fun they had. She said that Fishtown- and the world- were much safer then. She and her friends used to go to dances in the neighborhood, "hang out" on corners playing

cards, and take day trips to local lakes and amusement parks. She attended a neighborhood parochial school and the neighborhood public junior high school.

Regardless of her childhood experiences, she said that growing up in Fishtown had no particular effect on her development:

I think you adopt (sic of transcript) to your environment. I don't think living in a different area would change that. I just think you grow up. Your life goes on no matter where you're at... I had a good childhood. I had a happy childhood. Put it this way, I think any place you grow up, I mean you're there, unless it's really very bad. It's the only place you ever know of. Your friends are all there. You don't know of growing up in any other place. (p 25 of transcript)

She married a man who also grew up in Fishtown. Some of her childhood friends still live there. She was not in close contact with these friends. She saw them occasionally in a neighborhood store, and "exchanges Christmas cards" with a few of them. Her parents moved to New Jersey after they retired.

When I asked how Fishtown has changes over the years, all of the changes she mentioned were negative. She said more people have started using drugs in the past 10 years. As a result of the increase in drug use, there is a higher crime rate in Fishtown and the teenagers using the drugs are more violent- they kill each other rather than fight with their fists. A teenaged boy from Fishtown had been beaten to death by boys from a nearby neighborhood the year before.

A second change she mentioned was that very young girls are having children, "kids are having babies and they can't cope with this." (p 16 of transcript) Because they cannot cope with the stress of being a parent, they are less friendly, less involved with community affairs, and have less civic pride their parents had.

She believed that these changes reflected similar changes occurring in society at large. Another indirect effect of these changes was that young adults who grow up in Fishtown and could afford to move did so, leaving their elderly parents alone in the neighborhood. Besides draining the "cream of the crop" from the neighborhood youth, their parents were alone and afraid of the changes going on around them.

Despite the effect these negative changes had on the social climate of the neighborhood, she said that they have

had no affect on her life and expects them to have no effect on life in the future because she will make a point to continue to be involved in community affairs and live her life as she does now. However, she did discuss at length how as a result of these changes her children had less freedom than she had at their age. They were not allowed outside alone after a certain hour (an earlier curfew for her daughter than she had). Her daughter was not allowed to "hang out" on corners, as her mother did at the same age, for fear of drive-by shootings.

This participant said that she was not really attached to Fishtown in any way, "Not really. I mean, I was born and raised here. I like it here. But, if I had the opportunity, I think I would move." (p 28 of transcript) She would like a larger house with open space around it. She and her husband wanted to live in a place that was quieter and safer. She talked about trips to her in-laws house at the New Jersey shore, and how it was quiet and safe and how there was space for her young son to play away from traffic and crime. They stayed in Fishtown because they could not afford to move.

Despite the fact that she does not feel attached to Fishtown, she considered herself to be a Fishtowner because she was involved and "tries to help people." (p 32 of transcript) She described a Fishtowner as someone who is

involved with, and cares for the neighborhood- not as a certain "type" of person. She mentioned that there were all kinds of people in Fishtown: "friendly/unfriendly, poor/middle-class/wealthy." (p 32 of transcript) It was none of these characteristics, but their involvement and caring for the neighborhood which would make any of these people a Fishtowner.

She explained her community involvement by saying that her family and her home are important to her and she felt that through her involvement she could make Fishtown a safer place to live. She said that her parents "instilled" in her the value of working to make something of yourself and doing what you believe needs to be done. This has influenced how she handles problems as they arise in Fishtown because she sees each problem as a solution, " I always look, if there's a problem, there's a solution." (p 31 of transcript)

When I asked her about the changes which I thought were important: young, urban professionals living in Fishtown, the closing of Chandler school, and the renovation of Penn Treaty Park, she said she did know much about the new people in the neighborhood or the closing of Chandler school. She did not mention the park because she felt that it was no longer a "part of Fishtown" because many "outsiders" (racial minorities) go to the park to use drugs. As a result, the

residents of Fishtown are afraid to go there so they no longer use the park.

In summary, this person was involved with neighborhood affairs, through her church, her employment, and volunteer work at a community organization in order to make Fishtown a better place for her and her family, not as a result or reaction to changes in the neighborhood. She became more involved in the community after she had children. She talked about her plans to become involved in school activities again as her son reaches school age. She seemed to focus her energy on the organizations that would increase the quality of life for herself and her family. She was chosen to be presented as a Profile because she illustrated the point that community attachment was not a necessity for involvement.

Profile #2

Mona is a 32-year old woman who was born and raised in Fishtown. She had no attachment to Fishtown because she felt that was different from most of the people who lived there. She felt that she belonged with people who were educated and professional, like herself. She had moved to a suburb of Philadelphia for two years during her marriage but moved back to Fishtown after the break up of her marriage. She returned to Fishtown because her mother was there and she lived with her for a while in order to save money. She stayed in the neighborhood and eventually moved into her own house. She said the only reason she was living in Fishtown is because the housing is inexpensive. Her goal was to move out of Fishtown, along with her daughter, within the next five years. Her ex-husband was a local community activist. I met this woman at the home of another community activist, the father of her close friend. It was here that she volunteered to tell me what she thought of Fishtown. She was not attached to Fishtown in any way and saw herself as being very different from most of the people there. She said a Fishtowner is,

Probably someone who is white, who probably nowadays has a high school education but nothing further; doesn't really have a whole lot of aspirations; tends

to get married young, raise a family, might be divorced within a couple of years; doesn't really set a whole lot of goals for themselves and doesn't really set that many goals for their children; probably hangs out in the bar on weekends; has very little involvement with their child's life (p. 25 of transcript).

She said that she was not a Fishtowner:

No. I don't believe I am and most of the people that have met me are surprised when I say that I am from Fishtown. What I say is that I'm from Fishtown but I have all my teeth, no tattoos, and a college education (p. 25 of transcript).

She said she has never had any emotional ties with this neighborhood, and was waiting to make the physical break. The experiences of growing up in Fishtown were "fine." She had no problems but felt that growing up in this neighborhood has had nothing to do with who she is today. When she thought of growing up, she thought of CYO, sports, school, and her friends, many of whom lived outside of Fishtown.

She said the neighborhood was in a downward spiral: more people on welfare; young girls having babies; children

having no respect for people and property; and many irresponsible renters who rent from young urban professionals who will not live in Fishtown, but who will rent their properties without screening the tenants.

Shortly after moving back to Fishtown, she had to sell her house and move to another block because of a gang near her house. She and other neighbors banded together, but were unable to get any help from the police. The police officer told them there were other people who needed more help than they did, so they were low priority. As a result of this experience and the other negative changes around her and the fact that she felt that she did not belong in Fishtown, she has made a conscious effort not to get to know people or to get involved in trying to change the neighborhood and does not get involved. She has chosen to spend the little free time that she has with her daughter rather than in any community activities.

This respondent was chosen to be presented as a Profile because she was very clear about how she was different from most other people in Fishtown - she saw herself as more educated and possibly more sophisticated. As a result of not feeling attached to Fishtown and feeling no kinship with the people there, she interpreted changes in the neighborhood very harshly. She saw no hope for the neighborhood and was not willing to spend any time to make it a better place to

live. Rather than spend any time or effort trying to make Fishtown a better place to live, her goal was to move into a neighborhood where she would have more in common with her neighbors, a more middle-class neighborhood.

Profile # 3

Amanda is a 41-year-old woman who was born and raised in Fishtown. She bought a house in Fishtown approximately 5 years prior to this interview and now lives there with her mother. She had been working in Center City in a clerical position at an annual salary in the range of \$25,000-\$30,000, but was unemployed at the time of the interview. She is a member of a church in Fishtown and was on the board of the Fishtown Civic Association. She was also involved with other groups when she deemed it necessary. She saw herself as being on a moral crusade. She believed there was a right way and a wrong way to live, and that it was her duty as a Fishtowner to protect the neighborhood from those who did live the right way.

She had pleasant memories, but mixed feelings about growing up in Fishtown. She grew up having friends and family in the neighborhood. She said that there were and are "good" and "bad types" of people in Fishtown, "you had your go-getters, and then you had your people that would just lay back and take life as it came." (p 23 of transcript) People in the second group often received public assistance. She believed that any child growing up in Fishtown could fall into either of these groups. It was good and it was bad,

fortunately, I didn't fall off to the bad side." (p 23 of transcript)

She also said that growing up in Fishtown caused her to grow up quickly, become very "streetwise," "It was a learning experience. I know people that grew up in the suburbs, I don't know, sometimes they walk around with rose-colored glasses on... like you become a little streetwise growing up." (p 23 of transcript)

One benefit of growing up in Fishtown is that the friends you make are friends for life, " It's a community that if you have friends, you are a friend for life. They stick together. It's something I would never want to change. I wouldn't want to lose those friends." (p 24 of transcript)

In describing the Fishtown of her childhood she said there was a,

small town attitude. We had rules that didn't apply in other parts of the city... It was like a small town in a big city... Basically it's almost like everybody was one family versus now, it all individuals. People worked together rather than apart." (p 25 of transcript) One drawback of this environment was the

feeling of being "cutoff from the rest of the world. (p 25 of transcript)

She talked about changes in all of these aspects of the neighborhood when she described the Fishtown of today. She said that people did not care about their community or their property the way they used. Another change she discussed was the loss of industry and jobs in the neighborhood. She believed this change happened because of cheap labor in other countries, and the general shift from industry to service in the U.S. economy.

She said there were two new establishments in Fishtown which have had a very negative impact on the quality of life there: nightclubs along the Delaware river waterfront, and the new Brotherhood Mission. The mission once served as a nighttime shelter for homeless men. The men were only allowed to sleep there at night and were required to leave the neighborhood during the day. Now the mission is a drug rehabilitation facility, which she believed was poorly operated. She thought people at both of these facilities were responsible for an increase in crime, noise, vandalism, and harassment of local residents. She called these people "outsiders, imports, cockroaches." She has gone so far as to help found The Concerned Citizens of Fishtown, a group whose sole purpose is to get tougher regulation of, or preferably close the drug rehabilitation facility.

Overall, she believed the neighborhood was in decline, "I don't see it coming, I see it going." (p 26 of transcript) She felt these changes were not good for the neighborhood because they created an environment in which people would not want to buy a house, " I don't think it encourages people that have a lot of family morals, like a strong family unit to say, hey, come on, why don't you buy a house here." (p 15 of transcript)

She believed that she was on a moral crusade to keep Fishtown for the "right kind of people." In describing her work to change the daily operation of the Brotherhood mission, she described fighting against harassment as, "It's just a moral thing." (p 9 of transcript) She said she enjoyed picketing outside if a neighborhood strip club and humiliating the strippers and customers as they entered and left the club.

She became involved with the Fishtown Civic Association at approximately the same time she bought her house in Fishtown. However, she did not state a connection between the two events. She said that her personality has changes as a result of her involvement with the Fishtown Civic Association. She has become more outgoing and less shy.

She saw herself as being involved in helping her neighbors and her community. She stated that she saw all of Fishtown as her home. She did not define her home as her house, her block, or even her "side of Girard Avenue," "this is my home. I mean, I may live in one particular house, but this neighborhood is my home, and I want to take care of my home. It's mine." (p 27 of transcript) This may be one of the reasons that she felt very attached to Fishtown, or may be because she felt very attached to Fishtown.

She saw herself as different from many of the people that she came in contact with at the Fishtown Civic Association because she said that many of them were only willing to get involved in community affairs if they believed it would have a direct impact on their lives. An example that she offered was that many residents on the west side of Girard Avenue will not help residents on the east side, the river side, in their struggle against the nightclubs along the river front, saying that the nightclubs do not bother them.

She was guided in her personal life by the philosophy that "What's right is right." (p 28 of transcript) When I asked her how she knew what was right she said, "Usually common sense will tell you what's right or what's wrong. Sometimes you make mistakes. (p 28 of transcript) However,

in her work in the community she was guided by the principle that "majority rules," what the people in the community want is what they should have. She strongly believed that in the matters of the nightclubs on the river front, and the general river front development in Fishtown, the city government has done what they thought would generate the most tax dollars, not what was best for the neighborhood. In the future, she expected to spend more of her time working on these issues and working to make the city government more accountable to the community in the matters.

Her work in the community was also driven by the desire to "be part of the solution, not part of the problem." (p 30 of transcript) This desire,

makes me more aware of what's going on. And it makes me more aware of if I'm slipping, and I'm not doing and I'm just watching from the sidelines. I don't want to be on the sidelines. And I don't want to sit back and have somebody else do my dirty work for me. I'll do it myself. (p 30 of transcript)

This drive to take care of her own problems fits in with her description of a Fishtowner as "someone who has had a lot of hard knocks" but is a survivor. "When things hit, start going rough and there's bad times, they all stick together. Even if they don't know you, you don't hurt a

Fishtowner. That's how a Fishtowner is." (p 32 of transcript) She said that she is a Fishtowner because, "I would fight for my community. I have pride in my community. I would defend its honor." (p 32 of transcript)

She also had definite opinions about who was not a Fishtowner. When I asked if she has seen any new people in Fishtown she said yes. She described them as, "Basically they are different from Fishtowners. A lot of them are professionals. white-collar professionals, a lot of yuppies, and different than Fishtown people are." (p 18 of transcript) She went on to describe them as being politically liberal, and as wanting to reform criminals. She, on the other hand, "is a strong advocate of the death penalty. Do it. I'll put the injection in." (p 18 of transcript) She also said that they were "into beautifying and planting plants and things like that, which is fine." (p 19 of transcript) They have had no affect on her life or the neighborhood.

This respondent was chosen to be presented as a Profile for two reasons. The first was her strong ideas about who was a Fishtowner and who was an "outsider," or as she called some of the nightclub patrons, "cockroaches." Entwined with this sense of who belongs and who does not, was a very strong belief in a right way and a wrong way to live. Both of these world-views had a direct impact on her

interpretation of and reaction to the changes she saw going on around her.

Profile #4

Ann is a 36-year old woman who was born and raised in Fishtown. She is living with her husband, child, and grandmother in the house she grew up in. She was raised by her grandmother after her parents divorced. She had a deep historical attachment to Fishtown.

She had fond memories of growing up in Fishtown, with many friends and relatives nearby and many things to do. She says she has tried to forget the bad memories. As she described these memories, it was very clear that it was the carefree aspect of her childhood that was so important to her, not necessarily that she was in Fishtown:

We had a lot of friends. We would meet. We had a pinball hall on Girard Avenue. We used to hang out there and play pool, play the pinball, no worries. When you are growing up you don't have any worries. You play pool; you don't have responsibilities. (p. 18 of transcript)

It was these memories that made her feel attached to Fishtown:

I guess, well, like when you have . . . when you grow up in your family, you love your mother and your father

and you get good feelings, you remember Christmas time. Some bad times, but you try to forget about the bad, just remember about all the good things. (p. 21 of transcript)

She seemed to keep this attitude of focusing on the good, not the bad, because she said that Fishtown has "gotten better" even though she talked about negative as well as positive changes in the neighborhood. She felt less safe, but felt that way everywhere because of crime reports on television news. She was more afraid of being robbed in Fishtown than she was of bodily injury because she knew people who have been robbed and she read the crime reports in the local newspaper. She was a victim of a crime when someone vandalized the side of her house and her car with graffiti. She did think the nightclubs along the waterfront were a good idea commercially, but they were too close to the residential area, causing an increase in noise, crime, and dirt.

For her, the saving grace was that new people were moving into Fishtown. Some of the newcomers were professionals who worked in Center City, young, and not so young. Other newcomers were people who lived in Fishtown at one point, moved away, and were now returning. She was happy to see new people move into Fishtown because the new residents and long-term residents have worked together on

various projects to benefit the neighborhood. Also, many of the new residents were families, bringing stability to the neighborhood. And finally, as a group, the new residents, along with the long-term residents, worked to maintain their houses to keep them clean and well decorated.

She has also seen new stores open in the area and remain open— not just coming and going, as other interviewees have mentioned. All of these positive changes made this respondent happy because she planned to stay in Fishtown for a very long time. The only reason she would move would be to move into a "mansion" after she "won the lottery." She was not paying a mortgage at this time, so this allowed her to save money for her daughter's education.

Because she was not in a financial situation to move to her dream house, which would be in a farm community with lots of space, she was working to make the best of where she lived:

I feel that when I was younger I wasn't involved because I wasn't married, I wasn't raising children, so it didn't seem important to me until I got married. I'm raising a child and I have to look out for her future. And I have to look out for the way I want to live in this neighborhood, hopefully for a long time. And I just feel that anything . . . I just don't like

sitting back. I may not be able to change the world, but I can put a little impact on it. (pp. 12-13 of transcript)

She saw it as being in her best interest to keep Fishtown safe and vital because she was raising her child there and she had made a commitment to stay in Fishtown for many years. One way she worked to make her neighborhood a safe and vital place was by being a good neighbor herself. She kept her house and surrounding area clean and in good condition. She also tried to be friendly and helpful to her neighbors, whether they were newcomers, people returning to Fishtown, or long-term residents. She also worked with the Fishtown Civic Association on projects that she thought would make Fishtown a better place in which to live. Finally, she is politically active as a local committee person (a local political representative). She had covered all realms, from her own home to the community at large.

She also said this work made her feel good because through it she was able to help others. She grew up watching her grandmother help various family members, herself included when her grandmother took her into her home and raised her after her parents divorced. She saw her grandmother as a worthy role model, and has taken it upon herself to follow in her grandmother's footsteps and help other people who may be less fortunate. Through her

community involvement she was able to make her life safer and more comfortable, protect the place she intended to raise her daughter and help other people at the same time.

She was chosen as a Profile because she had a positive attachment to Fishtown and was raised by a role model who taught her to help those who were less fortunate than herself. These two factors lead her to do what she could to make Fishtown a good place to live. Also, she saw newcomers as different from herself in some ways, such as being more educated, but she basically saw them as good neighbors who appreciated the positive aspects of Fishtown, so she welcomed them to the neighborhood.

Profile #5

Darlene was a 57-year old woman. She was born and raised in Fishtown and was an activist. She was a member of a church in Fishtown, the Friends of Fishtown, and was on the Board of the Fishtown Civic Association . She also used to work at a school in Fishtown, but was transferred to a school in a nearby neighborhood five years ago. She left the Fishtown Civic Association after more than ten years of involvement in protest over their involvement with a local politician. She and a few other members broke away and formed the Friends of Fishtown, an organization that focused on cleaning and "beautification" projects in Fishtown.

She had very fond memories of growing up in Fishtown because she had friends and family in the neighborhood. She remembered church block parties and her father renting a truck and taking all of the neighborhood children on a picnic. The places she missed were the local bakeries and their delicious smells, and the movie theater and ice cream parlors that she used to visit with her family.

Despite her pleasant years growing up in Fishtown, she was not sure that she was happy that she raised her children in Fishtown. Even though there were good things for them in the neighborhood: sports, scouts, etc., by this time drugs were more prevalent. She did have a problem with one of her

children using drugs and suffering severe physical and mental consequences as a result. She wondered whether she would have had this problem if they had lived in a different neighborhood.

She believed the neighborhood was in decline: more people using drugs and alcohol, there is more violence as a result, and people are not as close knit as when she was younger. She also said the neighborhood "was poorer" (p. 1 of transcript). A few young professionals moved in during the 1980s because of the expectation of neighborhood improvements with federal funding. However, when these funds dried up and the drugs and violence became more prevalent, these people moved away from Fishtown. Also, many long-term residents who could afford to move left because of these problems. She lost hope for the neighborhood when these young professionals left:

I think what I feel is almost a kind of despair. It's kind of frightening. It seemed to me that up until four or five years ago people were excited and thought there was hope that the neighborhood was going to go up and things were going to at least stay stable. And I think in the last couple of years I don't see that and I don't hear that. (p. 8 of transcript)

She thought these changes have sent the neighborhood into a downward spiral, and that it will become even poorer and more violent. This raised concerns for her about whether she and her family should stay in Fishtown because she had a disabled adult child whose safety she was concerned about after she and her husband pass away. She felt torn because she was so attached to the neighborhood. "I've done a lot of civic work, worked for a lot of things. My kids all grew up here. I grew up here" (p. 16 of transcript). She had invested a lot of herself in this neighborhood and had her roots there.

This led me to ask her why she had withdrawn from the community activism to which she has dedicated so much of her time. She had painted a picture of a neighborhood that truly needed some help. Her response was:

I feel I don't have the energy to fight as hard a fight. See what I mean? When I was younger, you know, I could fight, and fight really hard. This to me feels like a fight that is going to take almost your whole being. And I fought many, many battles, civic battles. But I think that especially the drug scene, to me, it seems like it has such a hold on the community. (p. 8 of transcript)

She has given all she can to this community. She believed that all people should be treated with respect, and this motivated her to be active in her community. She told me a story about her father, which influenced her throughout her lifetime. She was a young child driving in his car with him through a snowstorm. He saw a pregnant young woman waiting for a bus. He did not know this woman, but felt that she should not be out in this storm. He took the time and trouble to drive her home. This episode stood out in her mind, but she said it was just an example of how her parents treated others. They inspired her to be active and care about her neighbors. She fought many civic battles, but today has turned away from that type of work to focus on more pleasant tasks of neighborhood beautification through her work with the Friends of Fishtown. She continued to be active in Fishtown in a way with which she felt comfortable.

She was chosen to be presented as a Profile because she illustrated how a person's world-view, in her case, that it was important to give back to one's community, has meant that she would always be involved with community concerns in some way. However, the form and depth of her involvement were something which she made conscious decisions about. Years ago she fought political battles to gain federal funds for physical improvements in Fishtown. Now she cleaned lots and parks and plants flowers because these were less emotionally draining and this was where she felt effective.

Profile # 6

Tom is a 26-year-old male who was born and raised in Fishtown. He married a woman who was also raised in Fishtown. They moved to suburban community immediately after their marriage. He still had many relatives in Fishtown and visited often. He had no attachment to Fishtown, but felt that his experiences growing up there had a profound influence on his personality and lifestyle.

He had very unpleasant memories of growing up in Fishtown. His family life was tumultuous and he did not have many friends in the neighborhood. He said:

I got picked on a lot from other kids because I didn't really do the things they did. My mother, my father, they weren't really satisfied with anything. So it was... I don't want to be in a situation like that again, either physically, mentally, or emotionally where I have to basically need anybody for anything. That's my memory from Fishtown. (p 5 of transcript)

He said he grew up trying to distance himself from his peers because they were interested in drinking and drugs and he was not interested in those things. Because of this, he was harassed by the other boys, "Kids can be especially cruel when you are in a class of 30 kids and 25 of them

don't particularly like you. So for the record, I was never afraid of them, But I was always aware that I was outnumbered and they didn't like me" (p 9 of transcript).

As a result of these experiences, he was not happy that he grew up in Fishtown. He said he felt an air of "hostility and desperation" there (p 14 of transcript). He described people in Fishtown as hostile, desperate, uneducated, and lacking ambition. He felt the hostility was not so bad because:

Everybody's raised to fight and that's not a bad thing because I think that gets you ready for the world. But the desperation kills a lot of potential. There are so many kids that are great athletes, great minds, independent thinkers, what have you, that are squashed by Fishtown because I think they grow up believing they're not cut out to be. They're taught from day one it's those kind of people and us. (p 14 of transcript)

He believed that he was taught not to expect much from himself and his life- not even to expect a happy, stable home life.

His childhood experiences and feelings of not fitting in with the majority of people around him have led him to choose a philosophy of life which stressed individualism,

"the way of the warrior's death" (p 18 of transcript). For him, this meant death is the only thing that is certain and, "all you could hope for is proper death...live for the moment and you'll do things right because you'll do things right and with honor" (p 18 of transcript). He was attracted to this philosophy because it was "self-indulgent, very individual. You keep your little end of the world clean and you do what you got to do. And then if you have time, you help other people, but start with yourself" (p 19 of transcript). He adopted this philosophy as a teenager.

Another aspect of this philosophy that attracted this man was that it did not place an emphasis on community service. His negative experiences growing up in Fishtown have led him to shun any thoughts of being visibly active in community affairs, even though his grandmother was and he admired her for it. He made this decision because he felt he did not want to draw unwanted attention to himself:

I saw those people as the kind of people that are outside of the group, outside the norm and I felt I spent quite enough time swimming in those waters. I didn't want to make it any more graphic than it already was. They were distancing themselves from other people in a good way. They were actually getting off their butts and doing things, but they were clearly breaking away from the status quo and I did not equate

that with a good thing at the time, obviously. I was being picked on for it. I just kept to myself. I didn't want to voluntarily interact with anybody. (p 11-12 of transcript)

He was willing to sign petitions and participate in community affairs in other ways that he saw as anonymous, purposely choosing to keep himself out of the limelight.

He said he still feels the desperation and hostility when he visits Fishtown, but said that the young people somehow look "less criminal." He mentioned that he had heard that a few young, urban, professional people had moved into Fishtown, but said that he cannot distinguish them. He believed that they have had no affect on Fishtown and will not because they were there temporarily. They were living in Fishtown because housing is inexpensive and it is convenient to Center City, where they spend all of their free time.

When I asked about the closing of Chandler School, he said he did not know about it because he attended a different grade school. He said he did not mention the renovation of Penn Treaty Park because it was "cosmetic." In accordance with his belief system, objects and appearance are not important and you should not get attached to them. He generalized this goal of detachment to places also and said this may partially explain the fact that he was not

attached to Fishtown. He also explained this lack of attachment to Fishtown by saying that he did not identify with the people in Fishtown. He attributed his desire not to form attachments with places, and to some extent people, to the fact that he never felt that he was a part of the Fishtown community:

I don't keep a lot of things. I don't have a lot of clothes. I don't have a lot of material possessions. I'm most comfortable when I can pick up and go at any time. And even though I know now, take my wife with me, take my family with me, that's just a part of me that's never going to go away. I don't connect. I try as little as possible because I guess knowing this now, connection usually winds up being hurt eventually. And that's a lesson that good old Fishtown taught me. (p 20 of transcript)

This respondent was chosen to be presented as a Profile because he discussed very clearly how his childhood experiences in Fishtown helped shape his world-view and his approach to community action and involvement.

Profile #7

Jane is a woman in her early 40s. She moved to Fishtown 13 years prior to this interview. She bought a house in Fishtown because she was working in the neighborhood and wanted to be close to work. She found the housing to be very affordable and the proximity to Center City was another plus. She bought a completely dilapidated property and renovated the entire house. She was single, had no children, lived alone, and had no relatives in Fishtown but was an activist.

The major change she mentioned was " a fair amount of new people moving in, younger people. I think a little better educated, more open-minded perhaps" (p. 1 of transcript). These new people were renovating and improving their houses. She assumed it was the new residents who were renovating because she saw young people, but said many young adults who grew up in Fishtown could no longer afford to buy a house there. These changes have been very gradual and positive for the neighborhood. She believed the new people bring in new ideas, new perspectives, "diversity, and hopefully change" to the neighborhood. She saw Fishtown as being " very insular" (p. 1 of transcript)— meaning that if you are not related to your neighbor, at the very least your

families have known each other for a few generations. The newcomers have made physical improvements in their houses, the neighborhood in general through their community work, and fostered new businesses which "were not indigenous to the neighborhood to begin with" (p. 9 of transcript), such as frame shops, craft stores, etc.

She believed gentrification was inevitable in any deteriorated neighborhood. "You won't have gentrification unless you have real deterioration" (p. 6 of transcript). When I pointed out the many areas of Philadelphia that were severely run down and were not experiencing gentrification but rather an influx of Asian immigrants, she revised her statement to be all neighborhoods change, whether the change be good or bad, and nothing can be done to stop it.

This participant had not attempted to befriend many long-term Fishtown residents, but said she had a "cordial" relationship with her neighbors— they "nod" and say hello. She attributed this in large part to her personality, saying she was not a "stoop-sitter," and that she worked many hours at her job, then comes home and works on her house, and her "entertainment was not local." She also saw herself as being different from the long-term residents and more like the newcomers. She counted many of these new

residents as her friends, coming in contact with them through the Friends of Fishtown. Many of the newer residents became involved with this organization for its focus on the physical improvement of Fishtown.

When this participant first moved to Fishtown, she was heavily involved with the Fishtown Civic Center and their use of federal funds to renovate "key" properties in the neighborhood and resell them. They chose a house for these funds if they thought it would make a great difference to the surrounding blocks. For example, they would renovate corner houses when they could because these houses "anchored" the block. Some of the properties were bought by long-term residents of Fishtown, others were bought by newcomers. This program was put into effect at the same time Penn Treaty Park was being renovated. The overall goal was physical improvement of the neighborhood.

She saw the changes in Fishtown as positive because she says the new residents did not see the neighborhood through the same historical filter as the long-term residents; therefore, the new residents were more open to change and more willing to work towards changing the neighborhood.

She described the reactions of the long-term residents as being mixed:

Well, I think people have generally reacted in two ways. One is to be upset by it and kind of shut the door and say the neighborhood is going to hell and I don't want anything to do with these new people. And other people have said gee, this is something different and maybe they have something to offer the neighborhood and I'll accept them and embrace them. (pp. 7-8 of transcript)

She felt the presence of new people in Fishtown had been especially hard for some of the elderly residents of Fishtown:

I think it has been difficult for some of the older people to have people come in that didn't maybe particularly share their religious background or their work ethic, or maybe they are not union members, and that's important to them. Maybe they are of a different political persuasion. I think that's difficult for people who have been kind of contained and they are not used to new ideas and new people and new ways of thinking. (p. 7 of transcript)

However, she felt that the very stability of Fishtown, the fact that many of the residents were homeowners and that many of the houses were occupied has meant that these changes had occurred gradually. She noted this in comparison

to other Philadelphia neighborhoods where the changes have been quick and drastic. She was happy that the neighborhood was changing slowly because she felt that the cohesion amongst the residents is "their strength as well as their shortcoming" (p. 2 of transcript).

She also believed she was different from many of the "original" Fishtown residents because she was attached to her house, not to the people or the institutions. In discussing her neighbors, she said:

The frame of reference is all this family intermingling, and I don't have that frame of reference. People get involved in the church like at Holy Name and St. Laurentius and seem to be more clearly and closely identified with traditions and people and events in those neighborhood institutions.  
(p. 16 of transcript)

She said the long-term residents also thought that she was different from them. She said, "I will always be an outsider to the Fishtown natives" (p. 12 of transcript).

Her involvement in Fishtown through the Fishtown Civic Center and The Friends of Fishtown was a result of her upbringing stressing involvement in her community and giving back to that community rather than any attachment to

Fishtown " I guess I was brought up with a sense of community spirit. Wherever you live, you work to make it better" (p. 10 of transcript).

#### Profile #8

Lisa is a 32-year old woman who moved from Fishtown seven years prior to this interview. She left Fishtown for the first time when she was 17 years old, looking for a change, not to get away from Fishtown. "I didn't decide that I wanted to get out of Fishtown so much as I wanted a change. This was a better choice for me (p. 1 of transcript)." She moved back to Fishtown a couple of times since then, but left seven years ago and has not moved back. However, she visits friends there regularly. One was an elderly friend that she helps with chores. Another was a family with young children. She became involved with this family because she "thought they really could use some intervention" (p. 1 of transcript). They had very little money and she thought that she may be able to expose the children to some things that they might otherwise not come in contact with.

She believed that she was born to explore— that was a part of her "personality." However, she said this aspect of her self was allowed to blossom in Fishtown because she felt safe there so she wandered around the neighborhood and met

all types of interesting people. This was still one of her joys in life, she traveled as often as possible, had lived in a variety of places, and planned to retire at age 41 and travel across the United States. She had many pleasant memories of growing up in Fishtown. The feeling of being safe, the freedom, the good people she has met, and the sports she was involved with. She was the youngest child in a very large family, and as a result spent much of her time outside of her house, occupying herself in various explorations or sports activities throughout Fishtown. She said her "memories are all positive" (p. 14 of transcript). She also believed that her feelings of attachment to Fishtown also led her to want to give back to the community in the form of a video project on which she was working and by helping some neighborhood children live better lives. This helped form her philosophy of life, that "action is key, what kind of actions and how we take . . . I work in public service, so I am a public servant most of the time, and even in my off time" (p. 16 of transcript).

She also believed that she grew up to be a strong woman as a result of growing up in Fishtown:

It was challenging. It was my creation. I really had the sense that I had control of however I wanted to take this. And I think being a Fishtown girl and being aggressive and assertive, and being able to realize

that, was a blessing. I think that I was stronger. I think Fishtown women are very strong. (p. 11 of transcript)

She also attributed her "idealism for volunteerism" in part to growing up in Fishtown. She grew up with a strong sense of community and thought this may have fostered in her the desire to "give something back" to the community. In an effort to give something tangible back to the community, she was working on a video project about an organization in Fishtown called the Lutheran Settlement House. She spent much of her youth there and has very pleasant memories of that place. She was videotaping people talking about the role of the Lutheran Settlement House in their lives. She planned to have a special showing of the video at the Lutheran Settlement House.

She described people in Fishtown as being like people everywhere, but says that a Fishtowner is someone who has "a sense of the history of the areas . . . I think most of them do have a sense of acknowledgment of each other and a sense of community" (p. 17 of transcript). She said she was a Fishtowner because she was born there and that met her definition of a Fishtowner. But she also described herself as a Philadelphian and a member of her current neighborhood.

In her visits to her friends in Fishtown, she has noticed some changes in the neighborhood: a loss of industry; the nightclubs along the waterfront; it's more racially mixed, there are more young professionals living there; and people are more mobile— not staying in one house, or even the same neighborhood for generation after generation. She saw all of these changes as signs of progress in the neighborhood— not always smooth, and sometimes bittersweet— but progress, and reflecting changes in society-at-large. These changes were not enough to mar the positive image and feelings she had towards the neighborhood she grew up in; the neighborhood that played such a role in her becoming the person she was today. She described Fishtown as a place where her roots are and that she will always "respect." She called it "still a sweet slice of life" (p. 2 of transcript), a reference to the Fishtown "slogan," "Fishtown, a sweet slice of life."

This respondent was chosen as a Profile because she discussed very eloquently how growing up in Fishtown had affected the person she is today. She was also aware of a sense of community growing up there, and as a result, felt that she wanted to give back to the neighborhood, leading to her involvement there, even though she no longer lived in the neighborhood. Also, her positive feelings towards the neighborhood led her to see the positive aspects of many of the changes occurring there, rather than seeing the

neighborhood in a downward spiral which she was lucky to escape from.

## Profile #9

Helen was a 41-year old woman who was born and raised in Fishtown. She was a widow and was living with two of her four children in a house owned by a family member. Her other two children were adults who lived in their own houses on the same block. Three generations of her family lived on the same block.

Her feelings toward Fishtown were ambivalent. She had very happy memories of her childhood in Fishtown, being surrounded by family and friends with lots of games and activities and feeling very safe, but she no longer felt safe. She saw more people around her using drugs and alcohol. As a result, there was more crime, dirt, and abandoned houses and cars. She thought the combination of more people using drugs and alcohol and more single family households has led to the other changes in Fishtown. Because there were more single parents and they were either high on drugs or too busy working to support their family, more children were out on the streets unsupervised. She believed gangs were formed to give these children " a family" and a sense of belonging because she had seen television shows about these gangs. The very same parents who are not taking care of their children were also neglecting their properties— causing the neighborhood to

become dirtier. She understood the stress of raising children alone because she was a widow. However, she believed that a parent must supervise his or her children. She also believed the new nightclubs along the waterfront added to the dirt and increase in crime in Fishtown.

As a result of these changes, she no longer felt safe in her neighborhood, was very cautious about going out at night or early in the morning, and said that many elderly residents were virtually barricaded in their houses. Another result of these changes has been that residents who could afford to move away from Fishtown and its problems have done so. However, many have been unable to sell their homes and some have abandoned them. She said that other properties had been run down by "slum lords" who did not have to live in Fishtown, so they had no interest in or impetus to maintain their properties. She believed if a landlord did not maintain a rental property, or if it was abandoned, it should be renovated by "the city" and given to a homeless person free of charge.

Helen used to be a member of the Fishtown Civic Association but quit when she heard that one of the board members referred to people in Fishtown as "Neanderthals." She asked this person about this comment, but it was denied. She quit anyway. She had tried on her own to make changes in Fishtown, and on her block in particular, by repeatedly

calling the City License and Inspection Office to either seal or demolish the abandoned properties on her block. She did not send letters because she thought they would throw them in the trash. Also, the telephone calls were more immediate and irritating for the person answering her call. She wanted to "harass" them because she had gotten no response after months of calls.

She had suffered personally because of the abandoned properties on her block. Her house was destroyed in a fire when teenagers smoking in an abandoned property next to her house set fire to the abandoned house and it spread to her house. This experience led her to adopt the philosophy that all people are equal and should be treated as such. She "felt homeless" when she lost her house— even though many friends, relatives, and neighbors helped her through this period. She came to the realization that people can be homeless for many reasons and people can be poor due to factors beyond their control— that it is not a "sickness."

Fortunately for her, she was able to live with her parents on the same block until her house was rebuilt. But as a result of this experience, and the realization that without her parents help she would have been homeless, she survived the tragedy and came away with very strong and definite opinions that the city government should do more to help poor and homeless people— even by renovating abandoned

properties and giving them away to homeless people. She believed the city government should give funds to help make improvements in the poorest neighborhoods rather than focusing on developing Center City and riverboat gambling, which she saw as making "the rich get richer." She tried to work through city government (License & Inspections) to no avail.

When I asked her about new residents in Fishtown, specifically young, urban professionals, she said that she did not mention them because even though a few had moved to Fishtown none have moved to her block. Their presence, however, did give her hope for the neighborhood. First of all, because they were professional and educated she thought the city government may be more willing to listen to them when they complained about a problem in the neighborhood- or tried to obtain something the neighborhood needed. Also, she said they have made physical improvements in Fishtown because they have fixed up their houses and kept them in good shape. Finally, she felt they were a positive influence because they were responsible parents. However, she did not see a large presence of new residents, or any changes in Fishtown that she attributed to the presence of these new residents. So, she felt torn, wanting to leave the neighborhood that she once "loved," and hoping against all odds that it will once again become the safe, fun, clean, and family oriented place of her childhood.

This respondent was chosen to be presented as a Profile because she discussed how she viewed her involvement with the Fishtown Civic Association and offices of the City government as futile efforts to save the neighborhood from its pattern of decline.

Profile #10

Bob is a 36-year old male who moved to Fishtown when he was two years old. His parents were originally from Fishtown but moved away after they were married. They moved back when he was two years old because his grandmother, who lived in Fishtown, was ill. He was unmarried, had no children, and lived at home with his parents. He grew up with friends and relatives around him and said this was why he was attached to Fishtown, because he knew the people and that made him feel safe and comfortable. Even if he did not know a person, he said they will say hello to you as you pass because you have seen each other in the neighborhood and know each other are from Fishtown. He said also that friendships made there were friendships for life, and he was still friends with some people from grade school.

He described people in Fishtown as honest, hard-working, and friendly and said these characteristics, along with being born in Fishtown, made you a Fishtowner. Even though he was not born in the neighborhood, he considered himself to be a Fishtowner. "Anybody can tell I'm from around here. And God knows I work hard enough. I'm honest. I try to be" (p. 15 of transcript).

To be honest and work hard was his philosophy of life. He was one of many people to lose his job in Fishtown when a brewery closed, but rather than complain about this, he went out and found another job. However, this new job required a 45-minute commute in each direction. He did this because he believed in hard work and his comfort and attachment to Fishtown prevented him from moving closer to his work. He also could not afford to live near his job; it was in an expensive suburb.

However, one result of not working in Fishtown was that he spent a great deal of his time out of the neighborhood not only for work, but also for entertainment. When he worked in Fishtown, he lived and worked there with a group of neighbors. They lived, worked, and played together. This pattern has been broken. Many of his friends from work were from various parts of Philadelphia and its suburbs. He no longer spent all or most of his time in Fishtown, and as a result, he no longer knew much of what happened in the neighborhood. The only change he noticed was that many of his elderly neighbors were dying or moving away. An elderly neighbor may die, and his or her children will take the other parent to live with them. He noticed their absence because fewer people sat out at night and chat, and others have told his mother that they were moving.

I asked him about the three changes that I had noticed in the neighborhood: the renovation of Penn Treaty Park, the presence of young, urban professionals in Fishtown, and the closing of Chandler School. He knew of the renovations at the park, but said he forgot about it because he did not use the park. He said he had not noticed any new people in Fishtown, but later remembered hearing a neighbor say there were "Yuppies" in the next block, but they had moved away. He also forgot about this. He did not even know that Chandler School had closed. In sum, he said, "I'm oblivious to things" (p. 16 of transcript). Because of his life status- single, no children, and working outside of the neighborhood- he neither had the time or reason to know of many changes that had occurred in Fishtown.

This respondent was chosen to be presented as a Profile because his story illustrated the mechanisms of information gathering about a neighborhood. He had an historical attachment to the neighborhood, but had very few current attachments and spent very little time there. As a result, he did not perceive the neighborhood as changing very much.

Profile #11

Theresa is a 44-year old woman who was born and raised in Fishtown. She lived with her husband and two of her three children in a house she and her husband owned. She felt attached to Fishtown because she had many friends who lived there. She also had pleasant memories of growing up there, but said she was content because it was the only place she knew. Despite feeling attached to the neighborhood, she was not involved in any efforts to pull it from the "downward spiral" which she described.

She did mention, however, that if her family could have afforded to move when her children were younger they would have. The main reason was that she is dissatisfied with the public schools in the area. She said the high school her son attended was dilapidated and covered with graffiti and the teachers did not care about the students. This school was located in neighboring Kensington, but was one that many children from Fishtown attended. She also attended this school, but said it was a much better school when she was a student. She believed that an environment like that sent students the message that nobody cared about their education. She only had one child remaining in that school, and said she would feel much better about living in Fishtown once he graduated from that school.

Besides the decline in the quality of schools in the area, she also mentioned other negative changes in the neighborhood: fewer local stores, more dirt in the streets and sidewalks, more graffiti, and "it just seems poorer" (p. 1 of transcript). She said these changes have made people not want to move into the neighborhood. She was worried that as current residents moved out, their houses would not sell, so they would abandon them. She said, "I think that causes the neighborhood to die" (p. 3 of transcript). She believed the neighborhood had entered this cycle, but that it was not so far gone that it could not be reversed. "I think it could be stopped if more people got involved" (p. 5 of transcript). She also saw the closing of local stores as a loss of a gossip hub, which also meant the loss of a source of informal control:

Because the people go to the stores and they meet and they talk, and they talk about things that are going on around the neighborhood, it keeps them up with the news on who's doing what. I think gossip keeps people in line...You know, people are always afraid that someone is going to be talking about you, so you keep your neck, you keep your pavement clean. I think gossip is good

and I think a little store creates a little gossip line. (g. 9 of transcript)

She was not involved in any community-wide activities or with any community organizations. If she had a problem in the neighborhood, she went to her neighbor across the street, who happened to be the local committee person (a local political representative of transcript). The committee person organized a meeting for all of the residents of the block, and all of their problems were dealt with that way.

Even though this participant was able to deal with her immediate issues in this forum, she realized these problems needed to be dealt with on a community-wide basis. She knew that community organizations exist, but had never joined any because they never asked her to join. She said if she saw an advertisement where any of these groups asked the neighbors for help, she would join. However, she did not read the local papers:

I would do it, but I'm not the type of person that would go out and say I want to do this..Maybe if they had an advertisement I would call. Call us, we need help. But I just don't see it. (p 4 of transcript)

She also made the connection between her lack of involvement in the community to her philosophy of life, which was "that everybody has a right to live in this neighborhood and have a nice life. I don't believe that I should tell them how to live and they should not tell me how to live" (p. 20 of transcript). She said, "Maybe that's why I don't get involved that much because I do believe that people have a right . . ." (p. 21 of transcript). She attributed this approach to life to her father. As she was growing up she remembered her mother constantly calling the police about teenagers at a neighborhood playground, then waiting for the police to appear so that she could point out who did what. Her father would tell her mother to mind her business and leave the teens alone.

In summary, she was very happy living in Fishtown but said it was in a downward spiral. She was willing to help fight this trend only if someone specifically asked her to help. She felt attached to Fishtown, had pleasant childhood memories, and was glad her children grew up there, but it was not in her nature to go out on her own and get involved. She almost interpreted that as interfering with other people's rights.

Theresa was chosen to be presented as a Profile because her story illustrated how an individual's philosophy of life could have a strong impact on the way he or she reacted, or

in this case, did not react to changes in the environment,  
even when those changes were unwanted.

## Discussion

### The Relationship Between Neighborhood Attachment and the Perception, Understanding, and Reaction to Neighborhood Change

Many researchers have studied community involvement and the characteristics held in common by people who are active in some organization or movement. However, there is more behind the process of becoming active or involved in community affairs besides the individual's income, life stage, and other socio-demographic characteristics. These characteristics are important but there is a need for a more in-depth psychological understanding of this process. One of the questions addressed in this study was the relationship between neighborhood attachment and the perception, understanding, and reaction to neighborhood change. The results of this study show that there is no formula that fits every individual's process of interpreting and reacting to changes in his or her environment but there are common processes.

In an analysis of interviews conducted in order to address this issue, five overall groups emerged displaying

different types of attachment, resulting in similar reactions within the groups to the changes they see in Fishtown. Respondents were not placed in these groups because they were identical in every way. But they were more similar to each other in their feelings about Fishtown and their reactions to the changes around them than to respondents in other groups.

The first group expressed an historical attachment to Fishtown. This was an attachment that developed as a result of years of positive experiences there, which in turn led to positive memories. The second group expressed an attachment to Fishtown mainly because their family was there. Many of these respondents associated the history of their lives in Fishtown closely with their family history. However, they stated that they were attached to this neighborhood only because their family was there. They could live anywhere, as long as they had their family nearby. The third group expressed ambivalence towards Fishtown. Some of these respondents had pleasant memories, but they were dissatisfied with what they believed the neighborhood had become or was becoming. Others did not feel a deep historical attachment to the neighborhood but they had made a good life there. The fourth group felt no attachment to

Fishtown. They saw no connection between themselves and the neighborhood. An unexpected fifth group emerged. I called these people "activists." Some had deep historical ties to Fishtown, while others were ambivalent or attached to their house or family. However, for reasons related to their upbringing, these respondents were actively involved with many organizations, both in Fishtown and outside of Fishtown.

#### Historical Attachment

Six respondents expressed an historical attachment to Fishtown. All but one of these respondents was at least 45 years old. The younger respondent was in her mid-thirties, but had been born and raised in Fishtown. Two of the six respondents moved to Fishtown after marriage. However, they had lived in Fishtown for more than thirty years at the time they were interviewed. I believe the length of time of residence is one salient feature for this group because they have lived in Fishtown long enough to accumulate many pleasant memories. They associated living in Fishtown with pleasant childhood memories and/or pleasant lifestage events, such as their marriage, the birth of their children, and for one respondent, her divorce. They had formed a

strong bond with the neighborhood. Rubinstein and Parmelee (1992) found that places become suffused with memories of events and aspects of the individual's self-identity that span the life course. They said that these attachments to important places were one way of "keeping the past alive." One respondent said, "It's my life. My whole life has been here. I was born in St. Mary's Hospital. I was taken to the house on Eyre Street." (interview #22, p. 27 of transcript). Another respondent said:

For the years that I've spent here, and the involvement and everything. Home is where your heart is. Fishtown is home for me. It's nice to walk down the street and know your neighbors and not be a stranger in your own community. You get that down-home feeling. (interview # 5, p. 29 of transcript)

The existence of this solid and pleasant attachment almost seemed to be the equivalent of a child forming a good, healthy bond with his or her family. This attachment served as a buffer for some of the negative changes they were experiencing in Fishtown. As a group, these respondents mentioned that there were positive and negative changes occurring in Fishtown. A few of them mentioned only

negative changes. Some of the negative changes mentioned were: feeling less safe (but many said this is a trend throughout the country); an increase in drug and alcohol use; and a rash of nightclubs opening along the river front in Fishtown, causing noise, traffic, and drunken behavior. Some of the positive changes were: more people renovating their homes; newer, professional residents; an increase in racial diversity and tolerance for this change. What became apparent is that despite the negative changes, their image of Fishtown was so positive from a lifetime of overall pleasant experiences and associations and their attachment was so deep, that even these changes were not drastic enough to tarnish this image very much. One even went so far as to say that she did not feel as safe there as she did 10 or 20 years ago. She followed that however, by saying that she still felt very safe in Fishtown because she knew most of the other people in the neighborhood and she believed they would help her if she needed help. She admitted however that "my memories are better than my current reality" (interview #22, p. 29 of transcript).

What distinguished this group from the others, however, was that despite any negative changes, these respondents still felt that Fishtown was a desirable place to live. They

felt hope for the neighborhood. These respondents were not as harsh as other respondents in their judgment of the neighborhood, their neighbors, or the future of the neighborhood. All but one of these respondents planned to life in Fishtown for the rest of their lives. The one respondent who would even consider moving was the younger respondent. She would like to move to a more rural setting. However, by living in her family home in Fishtown, she was able to save money for the education of her child. She said that if she could not afford to buy the farm she dreamed of living on, she would live no place other than Fishtown. She was content there except for the desire to have more open-space around her.

#### Attachment to Family, Not Fishtown

Three of the respondents said that they were attached to Fishtown because their family was there, not so much to the neighborhood or other residents. Two of the respondents were single adults in their mid-thirties who were living in Fishtown with their parents. The third was a married woman in her late forties. She said that she was very involved in the lives of her siblings and their families, offering this as the major reason for her lack of involvement in

neighborhood affairs. All talked about how one benefit of growing up in Fishtown was that it allowed them to be close to their extended families. They all reported having many relatives in the neighborhood.

Two of the respondents mentioned mostly negative changes in the area: problems with neighborhood children such as crime, vandalism, fighting, teen pregnancy. These two respondents also said that they would like to move away from Fishtown. One of them stayed because she was living with her elderly mother and was worried about leaving her. However, she also mentioned that she had never lived any place else, and was not sure that she was psychologically ready to move. This respondent was a young professional woman who identified more with many of the more educated newcomers to the neighborhood than she did with the people she grew up with in Fishtown. The other respondent stayed in Fishtown to be close to her family. However, she also said that living there allowed her to save money for a vacation home. She said she felt ashamed to bring visitors home because of the dirt and vandalism on her block. She also felt that Fishtown offered no other recreation for adults than bars. Her ideal was to move herself and her entire extended family to a semi-suburban area in northeast

Philadelphia or New Jersey. She said she would not feel ashamed to have guests there and that she would have many more recreational options in these areas. None of her siblings would consider moving. As an option, she mentioned the desire to remain in Fishtown but move to a different block.

One respondent in this group was the only respondent who said he saw no changes in Fishtown. As we spoke, he changed his mind and said that some of his elderly neighbors had passed away, so there were fewer people sitting out chatting. This respondent was a young man who was living at home with his parents. He lost his job in Fishtown when the factory where he was working closed. He now travels almost one hour in each direction to a job in suburban Philadelphia. He stayed in Fishtown for three reasons. The first reason was that his family was there. The second reason was that he felt comfortable there because he knew his neighbors. The third reason he stayed was that he could not afford to rent an apartment in the location of his new job and he would only consider moving in order to be closer to his job.

Despite not feeling attached to Fishtown, these respondents considered themselves to be Fishtowners because they were tied to the neighborhood through family connections. One respondent defined a Fishtowner as,

Somebody with family here, over generations. Someone who has family here. Someone who remembers Fishtown.... well, the way it was. I would say I'm a Fishtowner. I remember how nice it used to be. And I guess somebody actually, well it wouldn't be me, as far as somebody who does things for the neighborhood. (Interview #12, transcript p. 23)

However, these ties were not enough to make these respondents active in neighborhood affairs. Two of them had not been involved in any neighborhood organizations. The young professional woman had attended a couple of meetings with a friend from the neighborhood in order to try to close or regulate the operations of a drug rehabilitation facility in Fishtown. The priority of this group of respondents was their family. However, they did not see that their involvement in neighborhood organizations or activities might make Fishtown a better place for themselves and their families.

### Ambivalence

The third group of respondents was characterized by their feelings of ambivalence towards Fishtown. Six of the long-term residents fell into this category. Two of these respondents had moved to Fishtown after marriage. But each of them had lived in Fishtown for approximately 50 years at the time they were interviewed. I am using the term ambivalence in the sense that Chawla (1992) described it as a feelings of connection with a place because of your history with that place, and the feeling that a part of your personality was formed in that place. However, these feelings are complicated by negative feelings also associated with this area. All of these respondents described feelings of attachments to the Fishtown of their youths. However, these positive memories had been marred by the negative changes they saw around them. One respondent said some of these changes "make her heart ache" (respondent #4). Another respondent described her ambivalence in terms of her attachment to Fishtown when discussing the description of a Fishtowner:

I guess you would consider yourself a Fishtowner if you really loved this neighborhood, which I used to. I really loved my neighborhood, but I don't really love it anymore. I would like it better if things started changing, getting back to the way it used to be.

(Interview #24, pg. 21 of transcript)

However, when asked if she is a Fishtowner, this respondent's ambivalence came through:

I used to be. I consider myself a Fishtowner because I live here and I get mad when people out of Fishtown say anything bad about the neighborhood. I mean if you live here, you can say anything you want. I think that's how people are anywhere about their neighborhood. You stick up for your neighborhood even though you don't really like it. You stick up for it just because you live here. It's like brothers and sisters. You can say anything you want. It's the same way. I guess there's is still a loyalty to it. (interview #24, pp. 21-22 of transcript)

She still lived on the same block she grew up on. Her parents also still lived there and her adult children and their children also lived there.

The respondents who expressed feelings of ambivalence towards Fishtown described many of the same changes as residents who did not have these feelings of ambivalence, such as: an increase in crime, an increase in drug use, the closure of small neighborhood businesses, a dirtier neighborhood. However, one of the features that set these respondents apart from those in other groups was their strong feeling that people in Fishtown have changed for the worse. Besides the increase in drug and alcohol use, they mentioned that people were not as friendly as they were years ago. They also mentioned that they were aware of many more problems with the children, especially teenagers. These problems ranged from disrespectful behavior to vandalism, drug use, gang fights, and teen pregnancy.

The two respondents who moved to Fishtown after marriage reported that they used to be active in the neighborhood when they were younger. Both were involved in organizations or activities that were related to their children. One of these respondents led a successful battle

against the city government when they threatened to close the only library in the neighborhood. The other was involved in scouts, PTA, and church activities. Neither was active in any of these or other activities at the time they were interviewed, mainly because they were both in poor health.

Two of the other respondents had been involved with various organizations in Fishtown, but both had ended their participation in disgust. The first was a member of the Fishtown Civic Association, but she resigned her membership after she heard of insulting comments made by one of its officers. The other respondent joined Town Watch after seeing people selling drugs near her house. She quit after seeing the drug sales and use become even more obvious, despite the efforts of Town Watch.

Another respondent said that she was not attached to Fishtown, even though she has had a fine life there. She was motivated in her community involvement to make Fishtown a better place for herself and her family, until she could afford to move to an area that has more open space.

The fifth respondent in this group had never been involved in any organization or group in Fishtown or outside

of Fishtown. She also saw negative changes in the neighborhood, and was worried about the fate of the neighborhood. However, rather than become involved in a fight to counteract these changes, she believed that the Fishtown Civic Association would take care of it and if they did not, she would move.

The desire to move if the neighborhood continued on its current path was mentioned by all respondents in this group. All of the respondents mentioned that they were prepared to move if necessary. However, three of them mentioned that they could not afford to move. One of the more elderly respondents said she would move immediately, but she did not think she would live much longer. She did pass away one year after I met her. These respondents have given up on their neighborhood. Ironically, many of them felt that these same changes were occurring in all neighborhoods, but at different rates and having different effects. One said that they were just better hidden in the suburbs. As a result, they were not sure where they would move, or where they could afford to live.

### Activists

The fourth group of respondents was defined as activists. This group was labeled as activists because they were involved with one or more community organizations purely for the sake of improving the neighborhood. Their involvement has spanned many years and was not related to a specific issue in Fishtown. This was the thread that drew them together. There were five respondents in this group and all but one of them said their involvement reflected some aspect of their upbringing. These four respondents related their community activism back to memories of their parents helping those around them. Sometimes their involvement was explained as a belief that treating people with respect and helping others to have the best life possible is an extension of the practice of Christianity, "being a good Catholic." Other times it was explained as a belief that you should work to make wherever you live the best it can be by being involved and giving back to the community. One respondent said that even though her parents were not active in the community, they were caring people. She has combined this with a very strong and definite idea of what is wrong and right and the belief that it was her responsibility to "fight her own battles" to motivate herself to spend

countless hours fighting, picketing and protesting businesses that she felt would damage what was left of the "family atmosphere" of Fishtown.

The one respondent who did not attribute his activism to his upbringing was an elderly man who moved to Fishtown 15 years prior to the interview. He moved there after his divorce. He lived on the border of Fishtown and Kensington and was involved with community affairs in both neighborhoods. He chose to devote most of his time to a civic group in Kensington rather than Fishtown because he felt the group in Kensington was doing more meaningful work. They were helping poor working families purchase and rehabilitate abandoned properties. He described how at one point he was approached by a board member of the Fishtown Civic Association and told that the Kensington group is "a bunch of liberals" because they assist people of various racial and ethnic backgrounds. When I asked him about why he was involved in community affairs, he at first said it was purely a way to fill his time since retirement. As we spoke more about his work in these neighborhoods I pointed out that he spoke with pride and passion about this work, he then said he did care about this work and did it because he thought it might help the neighborhoods. However, he

described it as a matter of respect and treating all people with dignity. This set of beliefs developed through his work in the arts and through reading. He was trying to emulate people whom he has met or has read about.

All of the respondents in this group mentioned a majority of negative changes in Fishtown: more crime, more dirt, more drug and alcohol use, teen pregnancies resulting in a new generation of young children raised by parents who have poor parenting skills, and more teen violence. They all felt Fishtown was in a downward spiral. However, they also believed that in some way they could work to make Fishtown a better place in which to live. Two of the respondents had been members of the Board of Directors of the Fishtown Civic Association in the 1970's and 1980's when the organization was given federal money to undertake massive renovation and physical improvements in the neighborhood. Seeing these changes gave them great hope for the future of the neighborhood. However, both of these respondents resigned their posts and ended their involvement with this organization in the late 1980's when it became closely tied to a local politician who later was convicted and went to prison for illegal activities. Despite this, they both continued their work in community organizations that are

meaningful to them. However, one these respondents talked about how she no longer had the energy to fight the political battles she used to fight, and how she was not sure if that was because of exhaustion or because she felt the neighborhood was beyond reprieve. The three remaining respondents were younger and newer to the Fishtown Civic Association, and they were still very involved with the organization.

Attachment to Fishtown was not a prerequisite for these activists. Two of the older respondents, both of whom have lived in Fishtown for more than fifty years, expressed a deep historical and current attachment to Fishtown. They had outstanding memories of their childhood and youth and they still loved it despite the changes they saw around them. When asked about places in the neighborhood that were no longer there and that they missed, one of them talked about all of the places he visited with his friends and family: movie theaters, bakeries, ice cream parlors. He said:

They remind you of a much better time. Maybe we were poorer, but we had other things that are much more valuable than money- having those things around, comfort. They closed because people didn't want to pay

for them anymore. Also, many people were moving out to the 'paradise' of the far Northeast. (Interview #18, pg. 22 of transcript)

The fifth respondent in this group stated that she was not attached to Fishtown in any way; she was attached to her house. She worked in Fishtown for many years and decided to buy a house there because it was convenient to work and to Center City, where she spent most of her leisure time. She did not identify with the long-term residents of Fishtown, but did identify with some of the newer residents who, she believed, were more educated and more open to change than the long-term residents of Fishtown. She saw the addition of these newer residents as a welcome change because she said they would be more open to change in the neighborhood and because she thought Fishtown was too "insular." Despite the fact that she felt no attachment to Fishtown, she had been active in the Fishtown Civic Association and the Friends of Fishtown for many years. She attributed this to the fact that her parents taught her to give back to the community. As a teenager she did volunteer work and continued to do so.

No attachment to Fishtown

The fifth group of respondents was made up of two respondents. They said they felt no attachment to Fishtown and never have. Both were looking forward to moving from Fishtown as soon as possible, but both remained because of financial issues. Neither of these respondents felt any connection with other people in Fishtown, and never have.

Ironically, one of the respondents mentioned only positive changes in Fishtown. However, during the course of the interview he discussed how he, his siblings, and their mother were abused physically and emotionally by his father. As a result of these experiences, his driving goal in life was to establish a happy, healthy, and safe home environment for himself and his wife and children. He felt restricted to trying to do this in Fishtown because they could not afford to move. I believe that he was coping with this by making the best of a situation in which he was forced to live. He has been involved with block-level efforts at cleaning and physical improvements. He also mentioned feeling happy and hopeful because of the influx of more professional and better educated newcomers to Fishtown. He felt that they would help make physical improvements by renovating their

houses, and social improvements by working hard and not living like a "typical Fishtowner," which according to this respondent meant hanging out on corners, drinking, and chasing women.

The second respondent expressed feelings of superiority to almost all other people in Fishtown. She was an educated professional woman in her thirties who said that growing up in Fishtown has had no impact on her personality or development. She described her life there as being centered around her friends and activities at school. She expressed feelings of embarrassment about growing up in Fishtown and how she was automatically labeled as a racist because she grew up there. She stated proudly that most people who meet her are surprised that she comes from Fishtown because she has, "all my teeth, no tattoos, and a college education" (Interview #23, p. 25 of transcript). This respondent only mentioned negative changes in Fishtown. She felt that the neighborhood was in decline and she just wanted to get away. She had been involved with neighbors and the police when there was a problem with a gang of teenagers near a house in which she lived. Feeling that her efforts were useless, she sold that house and moved into her mother's house in order to save money to move away from Fishtown.

## Conclusions

Attachment to place is a mediating factor in an individual's perception, interpretation, and response to change in a neighborhood. A deep and long-standing attachment---an historical attachment, can serve to diminish the perception of negative changes occurring in the place to which a person feels attached. This level of attachment can also affect the interpretation of these changes. A person who is attached to and psychologically invested in a place may be less harsh in his or her interpretation of the impact of these changes. He or she may be less likely to see these changes as severe or irreversible. For some, focussing on the positive justifies their remaining in the area. However, even a strong bond with a place can be weakened or even broken as a result of changes that a respondent interprets as having a negative affect on the neighborhood. A few of these respondents were bitter, as if they had lost a dear old friend.

A lack of attachment can lead to very harsh judgement of a neighborhood which may be experiencing changes that are seen as negative. This lack of attachment may also magnify

the negative side of changes that may have positive and negative aspects. For example, many of the respondents interviewed in this study saw the influx of middle-class, educated, professional people as a positive change for Fishtown because they expected these new residents to keep their properties in good condition, and possibly even do major renovations. They also mentioned that they may attract new types of businesses to the neighborhood, which they saw as a benefit. And finally, they thought these new residents set a good example for the neighborhood children because they were educated, well-spoken, and went to work everyday, rather than standing on corners talking and drinking. However, the respondent who had the most bitter feelings towards Fishtown only saw these new residents as living in Fishtown to make money. She described them as buying a property in Fishtown, living there while they renovate the property, and then moving to Center City or a suburb after they rent out the property. She said that at this point they no longer maintain their properties, and have no accountability to the neighbors living near their them, so they do not care who their tenants are or how they live. There is probably some truth to both of these portrayals of newcomers to Fishtown, however, it appears as though

residents' level of attachment to the neighborhood plays a role in determining which aspects they focus on.

Finally, there are factors that can override the influence of place attachment on the perception, interpretation, and reaction to neighborhood change. One of these factors is a personal commitment to being active in the community. This commitment may evolve through upbringing or through some other experiences, but it can lead a person to be active in community affairs regardless of his or her level of attachment to that place.

In sum, there are many characteristics of an individual that can influence his or her level of involvement in community affairs. Place attachment is one factor that plays an important role in this process.

The Role of Self-Identity and World-View in the Perception,  
Understanding, and Reaction to Neighborhood Change

Many of these respondents went so far as to say that Fishtown was a part of who they were. Their experiences of living in Fishtown had been incorporated into part of their self-identity. And as each of us sees change in the world around us, it is also filtered through our experiences and beliefs... our self-identity and world-view. The intent of this research question was to examine this process systematically as residents discussed and interpreted changes in their neighborhood through these filters. In turn, their reaction to the changes in their neighborhood was also influenced by their self-identity and world-view. Each individual had a self-identity and world-view that was made up of many components. No person was defined as only having one aspect to his her self-identity. However, for the sake of clarity, the patterns that emerged from this study are discussed separately.

### Self-identity

#### The proud " Fishtowner"

When asked about changes in their neighborhood, many of the respondents discussed newer, better-educated, and higher income residents of Fishtown. Those respondents who identified themselves as " proud to be a Fishtowner" saw this change as perfectly natural because they believed these newer residents had heard what a great neighborhood Fishtown was so they decided to move in. These long term residents thought Fishtown was attractive to the newer residents because it was safe, affordable, family oriented, and close to the business district of Philadelphia, Center City.

Respondent #5 discussed how a new resident who had moved to Fishtown from New York City told her how safe he felt in Fishtown. Respondent #34 said, " It's close to Center City. It's relatively a nice, quiet area to live in" (p. 8 of transcript). Respondent #17 said the newcomers were interested in Fishtown because of its convenient public transportation system and its ties to Philadelphia's founder, William Penn, through Penn Treaty Park. Respondent #18 said:

Being a riverfront community helped because that seems to attract Yuppies. They come up here. Close to downtown. Five minutes and you're in town and whatever is going on downtown. You can come home to your own place without dealing with whatever problems they have to. That attracted a lot of young people who were a little higher up the scale, writers and jobs like that. They could get a good property at a reasonable price, less than what they were paying for rent downtown. (p. 6 of transcript)

These respondents saw Fishtown in a positive light. They were proud of their neighborhood and felt that other people were now discovering this hidden treasure. They were open to the new professional residents because they saw their arrival as good people being drawn to a good place. These respondents also tended to interpret most of the changes around them as improvements to the neighborhood, as a neighborhood on the upswing. They may have seen their neighborhood as an extension of themselves. Therefore, any time they evaluated the neighborhood they were looking critically at a part of themselves. A few of the residents said Fishtown was "a part of me." They did not say the neighborhood was perfect and that all changes were positive,

but they were content with who they were and where they lived. As a result of this point-of-view, they saw no need for action other than to welcome the new residents. One respondent (#17), an elderly long-term resident, went so far as to say that now that she has retired she may volunteer at the Fishtown Civic Center and work as a "mentor" to the newer residents who were active with the Association. She thought this would be a good idea since she knew more about the neighborhood than they did.

The "outsider" who identifies with the newcomers

By contrast, those respondents who did not identify themselves as a "proud Fishtowner" often saw the arrival of the newer, more professional people as a reprieve. These residents were not completely unhappy in Fishtown and were not planning to leave, however, they did not identify with what they saw as a typical Fishtowner. Each of these respondents was educated with at least a Master's degree (except respondent #3, who was an artist). Only one of them, respondent #30, was born in Fishtown. Respondent #1, who moved to Fishtown after he married a woman from the neighborhood, made a point of welcoming all newcomers to the neighborhood because he said he was never considered a

Fishtowner until his wife passed away a few years prior to the interview. Until then, he was always "so-and-so's husband," even though he had lived in the neighborhood for more than thirty years and had been involved with many efforts to improve the neighborhood, such as building a recreation center and maintaining the public library.

Each of these respondents identified with the neighborhood, but not always their neighbors. They were content and comfortable living in Fishtown. Some were happy with their house, others had gotten involved in trying to make it the kind of neighborhood they would be proud to live in, while others had spent many years trying to fit in because they had to stay there because of marriage or family ties. However, they all welcomed the arrival of the people who have been described as "yuppies" because they felt more comfortable with them than with other long-term residents. They expected their presence and activities in the neighborhood to continue to mold Fishtown into the kind of middle-class, or at least more diverse neighborhood in which they would feel comfortable living. They were also looking forward to having neighbors they could have a relationship with because they expected to have more in common with them.

### A stranger in a strange land

Respondent #23 was born and spent most of her life in Fishtown. She also had the most negative image of Fishtown and its residents of all respondents. She felt that she had nothing in common with any person there except a handful of friends with whom she shared some interests. She even said the fact that she grew up in Fishtown had not influenced who she was, " I see my life as growing up in terms of like, going to school and doing things like that, not necessarily having anything to do with living in Fishtown" (p.19 of transcript). When asked if she was a Fishtowner, she said:

No. I don't believe I am and most people that have met me are surprised when I say that I am from Fishtown. What I say is that I'm from Fishtown but I have all my teeth, no tattoos, and a college education" (p. 25 of transcript).

As a result of her negative image of Fishtown and Fishtowners she had a negative interpretation of the changes occurring in the neighborhood. She mentioned more unemployment, more drug use, more trouble with teenagers in

the neighborhood, and newer, more professional residents moving into the neighborhood. She thought all of these changes were negative. It is obvious why the first three changes would be seen as negative, but rather than feeling any kinship with the newcomers or hope for the neighborhood, she saw them as using the neighborhood as an investment or as a short-term bedroom community. She described the investors:

Most of them are coming from downtown. There are a lot of lawyers who own bars around here, own homes, who are converting a lot of homes into apartment buildings. And I don't think they are doing a real thorough search in terms of background on these people [renters] considering how small this neighborhood is and closely people have to live together...It's a tax write-off or whatever. And a lot of it is Section 8 housing. So they're getting paid and then the people who are living in these houses aren't real invested. I mean they don't care" (p. 2 of transcript).

She described the newcomers who live in the neighborhood:

I have seen some other people moving in. They are kind of like more professionals, but they don't really have... A lot of them, I think move in here because it's kind of close to the city, but like they don't have anything going on in their neighborhood except it's just kind of where they live. Their life is still kind of downtown, or whatever (p. 13 of transcript).

She felt that she belonged in the neighborhood she lived in while she was married. This was a suburban neighborhood located near a medical school on the outskirts of Philadelphia. She said:

I liked it out there. This is the interesting part, there was... it was mostly duplexes out there, but it was med. students. And even though they kind of moved in and out, it was quiet. It was...they were friendly. You knew them. You could kind of hang out and stuff with them, but you didn't have to worry about who was going to live next door to you. They came from a whole different background. Most of them were pretty wealthy and stuff. I liked it out there. I really liked living out there (p. 22 of transcript).

She felt more comfortable living with the "wealthier" medical students. She was more at home with, and identified more with them, than the people she had grown up with. She felt she did not belong in Fishtown. Because she felt no connection to the neighborhood or the changes occurring there. She did not feel the need or desire to react to them in any way. Her strong desire was to get away from Fishtown as soon as possible. She had only moved back to Fishtown after she was divorced because housing was cheaper there, which allowed her to save money to buy a house in a neighborhood in which she wanted to live.

#### Religious beliefs at the center of self-identity

Those respondents who described a direct connection between who they are and their religious beliefs often interpreted what they saw going on around them in terms of these beliefs. A few also said they relied on these beliefs to guide them in their everyday actions. They often traced many of the negative changes they saw in Fishtown back to their perception that fewer people attended church compared to when they were younger. These respondents felt that the parents were setting a bad example for their children by not attending church. Also because the children were not

attending church they were not being taught respect for self, others, and property. Respondent #4 said:

They don't go to church. If you ask them what they would like to say in their prayer and they say "what's that?" ...I think that church does help the family because when you go to church it's a different atmosphere in church than it is at home or on the street. When you go to church and it's so quiet...It's a different spiritual feeling when you go to church. This is God's home. You are supposed to live like human beings. It might hit the child. The child isn't taught anything about prayers. It's not taught to say please and thank you (p. 3 of transcript).

Respondent #13 said:

Well, mostly I noticed it in our church, you know what I mean? Before we saw the pews being filled up. Now you see empty pews, especially when we are up in the guitar group or up in the choir, you are looking down at empty places (p. 4 of transcript).

This was the only change she was aware of in the neighborhood, despite being a member of the Fishtown Civic Association and the Friends of Fishtown. She was concerned that this decline in the number of people attending church would affect the neighborhood in the future:

Because you get your sense of values through going to church. And if you don't have anybody to tell you what's right and wrong...and a lot of times the parents aren't there to tell the kids even. If you have a feeling that you belong to a church or something it makes you feel better...If you don't have good morals, then everybody gets in trouble. Right? (p. 5 of transcript)

Respondent #18 has always defined himself by his parish, as belonging to that part of Fishtown. He said that his parents and his Catholic education have instilled in him a sense of "self-worth," and respect for other people and his community. He believed that many of the changes in the people of Fishtown were due to a breakdown in values and morals, which were due in larger part to changes in the Catholic church. He said that when the Vatican instituted reforms in the 1960's, Vatican II, it alienated many people

from the church. As a result, many children were raised without the influence of a Catholic education and never attended church. In his opinion, this was one of the major factors leading to loss of control over children. Because these families had not returned to the church, teens were running rampant on the streets, using drugs and committing crimes. Their parents had no control over them and refused to listen to neighbors' complaints about their children.

This set of beliefs influenced the respondents' reaction to the neighborhood change by setting the parameters for their actions. These respondents had a strong moral code which they took into consideration in all of their actions. For example, respondent #18 said that through his strong family ties and religious upbringing he had developed a sense of self-worth, and as a result, respect for other people and his community. He went so far as to resign his office at the Fishtown Civic Association when they became affiliated with a local politician whom he did not respect. He said:

I didn't want to be involved. My involvement was to the community, not for some politician to say, 'Look what I did for you. Vote for me'. I didn't think I was working

for that guy. It became that, and I just couldn't stay.  
(p. 14 of transcript).

There were respondents who said their religious beliefs were an important aspect of who they were but they did not interpret neighborhood change in terms of these beliefs. However, their reactions were influenced by these beliefs. For example, respondent #16 said that she was influenced greatly by her church and her beliefs, so much so that she would not be affiliated with any organization that espoused ideas that were in conflict with her religious beliefs. She did not see changes in Fishtown as being related to religious beliefs or behavior in any way, but rather as a result of national trends. However, she was raised as a devout Catholic, and has applied this in her everyday life by helping people in whatever way she could. She was an activist. A few of the people who were defined as activists previously in this study attributed their activism to a strong religious upbringing, which has infused them with respect for self and others, their community. For these people, activism was an expression of respect for self and for their community.

### The moral crusader

Respondent #10 had very strong opinions about right and wrong. She said, "What's right is right and usually common sense will tell you what's right or wrong" (p. 28 of transcript). She interpreted changes in Fishtown through this rigid lens. In discussing her objections to a halfway house for drug addicts she said, "it's not a racial thing. It's just a moral thing" (p. 9 of transcript). She saw Fishtown as a place where people had very strong family values and she had a very strong reaction to anything she saw as threatening those values. As another example, she said she enjoyed taunting employees and patrons of a Fishtown nightclub that featured strippers:

I mean we did have fun while we were doing it. The first night we were down there we brought a table. We went and got donuts and coffee. We had ourselves a nice little time. One of the girls that was there, she says, "one of the dancers going in, I know her. She works in my office. Her name is blah, blah, blah. Well they handed me over the microphone, "Hi, you know so-and-so? Do your coworkers during the day know what you do at night? They will on Monday" ... I mean there was

people that you recognized going down there and you humiliated them for having to go to a place like that. So it was fun. It was learning experience. (p. 13 of transcript)

She believed many of these changes occurred because residents of Fishtown did not band together and fight for their territory:

They don't want to pick up a phone and they don't want to make calls for themselves. They want somebody else to do it for them. And rather than being a part of the solution, they are just part of the problem. (p. 3 of transcript)

She saw her involvement in community affairs as a way of taking care of her home. She said, " This is my home. I mean I may live in one particular house, but this neighborhood is my home. And I want to take care of my home. It's mine" (p. 27 of transcript). She also saw her involvement as being " part of the solution." This was important to her because she believed that if you were not part of the solution you were part of the problem. She

seemed compelled to be active in the community. She said this view of life:

Makes me more aware of what's going on and it makes me aware if I'm slipping and I'm not doing and I'm just watching from the sidelines. I don't want to be on the sidelines. And I don't want to sit back and have somebody else do my dirty work for me. I'll do it myself... I guess it makes me more aware. It makes me more... I would take more pride in doing it and doing it right. And to get other people's feelings and what they felt about it. Not just my side, but try to find out other people's sides... Cause I never want to go out and do something that basically, it's in my best interest. I want to make sure it's in the community's best interest. (p. 30 of transcript)

She saw herself as a person who fought her own battles and those of the community at the same time, almost as if it was her duty to protect the neighborhood and to give them what they want.

This respondent was so strongly motivated by this aspect of her self-identity that I thought it was important

to discuss it, even though she was the only respondent who saw herself as being on a "moral crusade." Even those who had a strong religious aspect of their self-identity spoke of their activism in terms of it being an extension of their faith. They believed Christianity taught them to give to others. She on the other hand, saw herself as doing what was "moral," and wanted others to do the same. Her major motivation was to make Fishtown a neighborhood that was safe for people with "morals," with family values. In contrast, the other respondents who were motivated by their religion wanted to make Fishtown a financially stable, safe, middle-class neighborhood.

#### World-view

As with each of the research questions addressed in this study, these data were analyzed by group (level of involvement and activity). The group of respondents who were not involved in any type activity emerged as being very similar to each other and different from those who were involved in some type of activity in terms of their world-views. The group that was not involved in any activity had more respondents than the other groups who saw the changes in Fishtown as being beyond their control.

### Forces Beyond Their Control

These respondents believed the changes occurring in Fishtown were reflections of national trends. As a result, they interpreted that as meaning they were beyond their control. Respondent #16, who had been an activist all of her life, felt ineffective in the face of societal changes: violence, poverty/unemployment, and drug use. She believed that many of the changes in Fishtown were mirroring those occurring across the country. Her views were echoed by many of the respondents. When asked about violence and drug abuse she said:

And I think that drugs actually just take your whole mind and your whole body, and that you just really are not the same person when you're under the influence of drugs. So, that I think that you're a lot of times, you're more violent, especially towards children. And I think that is really what I see most, that children are growing up being abused because of the drug abuse, feel that's a way of life so that when they want to play, naturally they treat others the way they are being

treated at home. And I think that's playing a very big role in American cities. (p. 3 of transcript)

In discussing poverty and unemployment she said:

I think industry has left. Jobs that normally our children would have, like my boys happen to be construction workers and my husband is a longshoreman, those jobs are not available. The trucking industry is going. The factories have moved to the Sunbelt. We have a lot more people on welfare than we use to have. And I think those things are very visible here. And to many of our people education is not important, so that a good percentage of our children don't finish high school or they don't go on to other types of employment. They just go on welfare. (p. 4 of transcript)

She believed these changes were occurring all over the country, but were more noticeable in Fishtown because there was a higher population density there:

I think that in other neighborhoods where there is maybe a little bit more money and people are... the

houses are a little bit wider apart, that it may not be as noticeable as it is in a neighborhood like this. (p. 3 of transcript)

Respondent #24 also interpreted the changes in Fishtown as being part of a trend affecting most places. She said:

I think it's everywhere. I don't think it's just in Fishtown. I think it's everywhere, even up in the suburbs, but they just can hide it more. It's probably worse down here, but I don't think you can get away from it unless you move out in the sticks somewhere... I just think people are changing. Out in the suburbs, I go for a ride out there. I still see, they still maintain their neighborhood and all. They still keep it up, but I don't know. The city life is, I guess just that way. Nobody cares. (p. 3 of transcript)

Respondent #19 attributed all negative changes in Fishtown to drugs and too much television. She said both of these behaviors were causing families to fall apart because parents were no longer involved with their children's lives. Because she saw the changes as being a result of societal forces that were beyond her scope of influence, it did not

make sense for her to try to change them. Instead, she applied the "Golden Rule" to those she could have an immediate impact on:

Golden Rule...Do unto others as you would want them to do unto you. If everybody lived by that, then I really feel that I wouldn't do anything to anybody that I wouldn't want to have done to me" (p. 24 of transcript).

She helped an elderly neighbor shop. She fed the cat of another neighbor who was hospitalized. Even though other respondents have mentioned this approach to life as the motivator that spurred them on to community action in order to make it a better place, her interpretation was to put yourself in the other person's shoes and try to help that person.

Respondent #21 mentioned more graffiti, more mentally ill people wandering the streets, and more disrespectful children in Fishtown. She was not really sure why any of these changes occurred, but she felt that she had no control over them:

Like you know, if you're from Fishtown, I think everyone loves their neighborhood, and it's just sad when you see bad things happen in your neighborhood that you have no control over. So that's why I think it's bad when you have no control over what's happening around you. (p. 11 of transcript)

She was also guided by the principle of treating people the way you wanted to be treated, which she interpreted as meaning to be nice and do not yell at people.

Some of the respondents felt that "people have changed." Many of these respondents made the comment that people care less about themselves, their children, and their community. Many felt less safe specifically because they believed that many teenagers in the neighborhood were out of control and terrorized their neighbors. Respondent #23 was forced to sell her house and move into her mother's house because of violent gangs on her block. Respondent #12 was afraid for her own safety and ashamed to invite guests to her home because of the gangs near her house.

Another reason cited for the changes in people in general was a prevalence of teenaged parents. Respondent #30

mentioned this as one the major changes in Fishtown. Respondent # 7 felt that these young parents were ill-equipped and stressed by the demands of parenting. As a result they ignored, and sometimes abused their children. Their children were growing up to be the next group of teen terrorists.

Finally a number of respondents mentioned the loss of industry in Fishtown. They related this to a shift in the national economy from industry to service. This has meant fewer jobs, and for some, this has meant they could not live the life they expected as they were growing up. For generations many people in Fishtown worked at factories in the neighborhood. They had convenient, steady, and relatively well paying jobs. Many young adults went to work in the same factory as their parent(s). As industry left the area, and even the country, some residents have had to take lower paying jobs or retire. Their children now have the choice of minimum wage jobs, welfare, or for some, a higher education. These are not the choices most expected to have to make as they were growing up.

Many of the respondents in this group did nothing in reaction to the changes in the neighborhood. They felt no

need because the changes were due to factors beyond their control. Others responded in a way that they were comfortable with, and only where they thought they could be effective. Respondent #16 who had been an activist for many years gave up many of the battles she once fought. She shifted her attention from fighting to improve the neighborhood to working with a small group of friends on small-scale projects like cleaning parks and lots and planting flowers. When she was asked about why she has changed her focus, she said:

When I was younger, you know, I could fight, and fight really hard. This to me feels like that is going to take almost your whole being. And I fought many battles. Civic battles. But I think that especially the drug scene, to me seems like it has such a hold on the community. (g. 8 of transcript)

#### Laissez-faire

As a whole, the respondents who were not involved in any type of activity, whether in or outside of Fishtown, still said they were Fishtowners and part of the community. However, they often mentioned world-views and philosophies

of life that focused on the individual. For example, respondent #22's philosophy was "don't judge me and I won't judge you" (p. 23 of transcript). This set the stage for her to be responsible for herself, while others were responsible for themselves. She said, "allow me my own choices and I'll allow you yours. But don't force yours on me. I won't force mine on you. I think open-mindedness is important to me" (p. 23-24 of transcript).

Respondent #14's approach was to live and let live:

I believe that everybody has a right to live in this neighborhood and have a nice life. I don't believe that I should tell them how to live and they should not tell me how to live. And I think that affects how I think about people in this community... That, you know, everybody does things differently and some people don't have a real nice house, and you know. As long as they keep it clean, I feel they have a right to live here and they should have a right to anything else that the neighborhood gives them. (p. 20 of transcript)

Even though she mentioned all negative changes: more dirt, graffiti, fewer stores, and people seeming poorer, she

had very benevolent explanations for these changes. She said a greater number of people were working outside of the home so they could not clean, and as a result the neighborhood is dirtier. She saw the graffiti as a trend, a form of self-expression by the teenagers. The small, local businesses have been replaced by larger, more competitive stores with lower prices. She was not sure why people seemed poorer. Even though she said all of these changes were detrimental to the neighborhood, she was unwilling to get involved because she thought that meant she was telling other people how they should live.

Both of these respondents had world-views which stressed the importance of individual rights. As a result, these respondents interpreted the changes around them as being acceptable because in the process of opposing them they may impinge upon the rights of others to live as they choose. In their view, the rights of the individual outweighed the needs of the community.

The children are the future

Two respondents, #9 and #17, explicitly stated that they believed the future of the neighborhood was in the hands of the children. Neither of these respondents mentioned problems with children or teens in the neighborhood. Respondent #17 attributed the problems in Fishtown to sources outside the neighborhood. For example, she thought people from outside of Fishtown were coming to the neighborhood to sell drugs because it was conveniently located near I-95, a well-known drug route between Florida and New York. Respondent #9 saw mostly positive changes in Fishtown, physical improvements. The only negatives were the loss of corner grocery stores and fewer people attending church.

They saw the neighborhood children as a great source of hope, so they focussed most of their attention on actions that would benefit children in the neighborhood. Both of these respondents taught Sunday school and respondent #9 proudly mentioned that both of her children were teachers. She had instilled this belief in her children as well. Their view of what is important has led them to act accordingly.

Where there is a problem, there is a solution

A few respondents said their philosophy of life was, "where there's a problem, there's a solution." Even though they had various interpretations of the cause of the problem, the response was the same, to take action. Respondent #7 said she learned this from her parents, who taught her to go after what she wanted in life. She saw this as taking her fate into her own hands, and as a result volunteered much of her time at the Fishtown Civic Association. However, she applied this philosophy to manageable problems of daily life, not to larger systemic ones. She mentioned sweeping changes in Fishtown: more crime, more drugs, more teen pregnancies, and more apathy. It is noteworthy that none of her activities were aimed at dealing with these issues. Rather she focussed on what she felt could change: a pothole, a noisy nightclub, etc. Even though she felt these larger changes were not influencing her daily life, she said her children had much less freedom than she did, for fear of their safety. As a result of these fears, and a desire for more open space, her dream was to move to a safer, quieter, more rural area.

## Conclusions

An individual's self-identity and world-view did influence how these respondents interpreted change in his or her neighborhood. They worked as a filter through which the information was processed before the individual came to an understanding of the nature and root of the change. When focussing on neighborhood changes, the part of the respondents self-identity that was tied to the neighborhood played a specific role in the interpretation of change. Respondents who strongly identified with their neighborhood were not surprised when people who were unlike them in many ways wanted to move to this neighborhood. They found it perfectly natural that anybody would be attracted to such a great place to live. It was affordable, safe, and convenient to public transportation, highways, and the downtown business and cultural district. Also, they saw the new residents' interest in their neighborhood as a common bond.

Those respondents who did not see themselves as Fishtowners, but who were committed to living in the neighborhood, often felt that they had more in common with the professional, and more educated newcomers. Most of these

respondents moved to Fishtown because it was affordable and convenient. One respondent moved there after he married a woman from Fishtown; another was born there. However, they did not identify themselves as proud Fishtowners, though they did have some attachment to something in the neighborhood, whether it was family, friends, or their house. They welcomed the newcomers because they were looking forward to the possibility of having neighbors who were more like them and who shared their interests. They tended to interpret changes around them as reflecting the positive influence of the new residents and expected even greater changes as a result.

In an extreme case, one respondent who was born and raised in Fishtown felt absolutely no connection to the neighborhood. She even had feelings of contempt for the neighborhood and most of the people who lived there. As a result, she saw everything associated with the neighborhood in a negative light. She also had no motivation to take an active role in the community because her energy was spent taking care of her child and working towards the day she could leave Fishtown. She felt more at home in a suburban neighborhood where she had lived surrounded by "wealthy" medical students.

These findings illustrate Merton & Rossi's (1957) concept of the "reference group." Even though the newcomers had different backgrounds and lifestyles than the majority of long-term residents, some of the long-term residents identified them as being similar to themselves in their appreciation for Fishtown. Also the vast majority of the new professional, educated residents were Caucasian, like the long-term residents, so that was another similarity. Finally, the long-term residents may have admired the newcomers, whom they saw as successful, upstanding, middle-class people. The respondent who identified with none of these groups felt a pull to be with people she identified more closely with and judged her life and the events in Fishtown according the standard she felt she had when she lived with her reference group, the "wealthier medical students."

Spirituality and religion were also important aspects of self for some of the respondents. These respondents often tended to interpret neighborhood change through their experiences with their church. Most stated that churches were losing influence over people's lives and as a result, many children and teenagers had no higher power to answer to

because they were not raised with respect for authority. As a result, they were wreaking havoc on the neighborhood because of their lack of respect for God, parents, neighbors, or property. These respondents lived with a set of principles and morals defined by their religious beliefs and tended to interpret the events around them through this set of beliefs.

For one respondent, seeing herself as a moral person permeated all of her thoughts and actions in Fishtown. She believed there was a definite right and wrong, and that everyone must follow these beliefs at all times. The problem was that she believed that everybody must have the same definition of right and wrong because this was dictated by common sense.

These were the respondents' frameworks for understanding the world and interpreting changes. Goffman (1974) defined a framework as "schemata of interpretation" used to help us make sense of the world around us. They used these to judge all that went on around them and decide on whether they were appropriate events and what their reactions should be.

The findings of this study make sense in light of Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) model of appraisal and coping with stress. In these terms, neighborhood change can be conceptualized as a stressor, whether positive or negative change. They described the first step in this process as appraisal, where the individual's commitments and beliefs influence their appraisal of a situation by determining what is salient; influencing his or her understanding of the situation and providing means for evaluating possible outcomes. They then described coping as bringing commitments/beliefs, skills, and resources to bear on the issue. This model describes the process these respondents went through in interpreting, understanding, and reacting to change in their neighborhood.

The respondents' world-views also operated as a framework for interpretation. They filtered events through their frameworks in order to make sense of them. The self-identity and world-view both came into play when the respondent was trying to make sense of the changes in the neighborhood. They also played role in determining what, if any action the respondent should take. However, this did not occur in a straight line. The respondent interpreted the events, bringing in various aspects of his or her self-

identity and world-views. The reaction decision went through the same process. However, because an individual's self-identity and world-view have many components, one aspect of the self may have a predominant influence in the interpretation and understanding of the changes, but another aspect may predominate in the decisions about if and how to react. The reaction was not always predictable. For example, respondent #7 learned from by her parents' beliefs and actions that every problem was really a solution in the making. But when she encountered what she saw as insurmountable problems she did not tackle those. Instead she focussed on what she thought she could change and made the decision to leave the neighborhood because of what she could not change. Through all of this she maintained the belief that none of these changes had affected her life, but described how her children had less freedom than she had at their age.

Conditions that Influence the Perception of Neighborhood  
Change

Another question addressed by this study dealt with the conditions under which an individual perceives change in his or her neighborhood. More specifically, this question examined the effect of: new residents and facilities, a resident's social/political activity, plans for long-term residence, and the role of the media on the perception of neighborhood change. Each of these factors did influence the perception of neighborhood change, but in various ways and degrees. These were tempered by the lifestage/lifecycle of the respondent and personal experience with the change.

Long-term residents and former residents of Fishtown were asked whether the neighborhood has changed, and if so, how it has changed, what they know about the change, and whether they were involved with the change in any way. Those who were born in Fishtown were asked about changes since they "were younger." Those who were not born in Fishtown were asked about changes "since they moved there." If new residents or businesses were not mentioned as a change in Fishtown, the respondent was asked directly about whether he

or she has seen any new people or businesses in the neighborhood.

### The Appearance of New Facilities

Many of the residents mentioned the new nightclubs along the riverfront, however, most who mentioned them lived within a few blocks of Delaware Avenue. Delaware Avenue is the eastern most road in Philadelphia. It runs parallel to the Delaware River, which is the border between Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The majority of these respondents were unhappy about these nightclubs because of traffic, noise, dirt, and inappropriate behavior (urinating and having sex in public places). They felt there were better ways to use these spaces and that nightclubs should not be so close to people's homes.

Respondent #34 said she thought the nightclubs were too close to a residential area. Her major concerns were noise and crime. She became especially upset after she heard news reports of a man who had just murdered a young mother and her 1-year old daughter going to one of these clubs after committing the murder, " I also read in the paper that guy that killed the little baby and the mother at that clothing store. He traveled to that club hours after he murdered them" (p. 7 of transcript).

Respondent #10 was also concerned about the closeness of the nightclubs to a " family neighborhood." She said:

Putting these clubs in without parking and having these people going through your streets all hours of the night has affected the community... People that come home at 6:00 from work can't even get a parking spot anywhere near their house. They have to go blocks away. Now they've resorted to putting barricades up at a certain time so to keep the imports or outsiders, whatever you want to call them, off the streets, so these people can have some privacy, some peace. (p. 6 of transcript)

Even though she has not been directly affected by the nightclubs, because she does not live near them, she has had the opportunity to speak to those who live near the clubs through her involvement with the Fishtown Civic Association. She thought that a more fitting use for the space would have been a movie theater, skating rink, or some other type of family-oriented recreational facility.

Respondent #11, who lived one block from Delaware Avenue, was concerned about the behavior of the patrons of

the nightclubs. He made an effort through his involvement with the Fishtown Civic Association to stay informed about the development of the nightclubs and was concerned about what he saw as unfair tax breaks given to some of the owners of the clubs.

Other facilities were mentioned because they were used by the newcomers, the "younger Yuppies that come in" (Respondent #5, p. 22 of transcript). Respondent #5 mentioned seeing new antique shops along Girard Avenue, the main thoroughfare in Fishtown. Even though she did not use these businesses she thought they were a welcome change because they added "variety" to the neighborhood. Respondent #15 also mentioned craft and frame shops, which were being patronized by the newer residents, the ones she described as younger and more educated:

As you walk along you notice somebody opened a craft shop on Girard Avenue. Now there is a picture-framing place, things like that, that were not the kinds of stores that were indigenous to the neighborhood to begin with. Some of those businesses have also failed (p. 9 of transcript).

### Loss of Existing Facilities

Historically, Fishtown has been a neighborhood where the residents go to school, marry, raise a family, work, and recreate within its borders. As a result, a loss or change in any of these arenas of life is felt deeply. This was exemplified by the numerous respondents who discussed the loss of factories that were major employers in the area. Respondent # 29 said:

Years ago your father had a job at Jack Frost Sugar or Schmidt's brewery, you pretty much had a job there. And maybe you could get your kid a job there someday. And they made really good money and the benefits were outstanding for this neighborhood, for the dollars that were needed to maintain a house and feed a family in this neighborhood. (p.1 of transcript).

In describing the loss of the factories she said:

You know, Jack Frost Sugar closed in 1983 and took with it hundreds of jobs, well paying jobs with benefits. Schmidt's brewery, I guess, now you're testing me... I guess 80-89ish. You know, that took with it hundreds of

jobs. American Can Company, you know Mr. Smith was there 40 years or whatever. Bobby Smith was there from the time he was 15, because his dad got him in. He thought he'd be there for life, making really good money and walking to work everyday. Now he's earning half of what he earned per hour. So it has changed that way. And it's left, you know, a lot of people have the attitude, "well I don't want to work for \$6 per hour after I've been making \$13." So it's left a lot of people, for a long time, jobless. They've recovered somewhat now, but for a long time people were jobless... People that I knew were out of jobs. Close friends, people that I've known for years. And I watched their lifestyles change drastically because of it.

#### Change in Existing Facilities

Residents also discussed changes in two existing facilities, Penn Treaty Park and the Brotherhood Mission. These changes were salient for those who mentioned them because they saw them as no longer being used by residents, but by "outsiders." Respondent #7 said:

I don't think Penn Treaty Park is no longer Fishtown's park... If you go down to Penn Treaty Park, you very, you very rarely see people from Fishtown down there. You see a lot of Spanish, you see a lot of Blacks. (p. 33 from transcript)

Respondent #26 did not mention the park and when I asked her about it she said she did not mention it " probably because I avoid the park. I never want to go down there and I never let my kids go down there. Never!" (p. 21 of transcript) She said she no longer used the park because there were prostitutes and people using drugs there. She also mentioned that a friend 's puppy was attacked by a vicious dog in the park. As a result of these occurrences, she did not feel it was safe place for herself or her children.

A handful of the older residents felt the renovation of Penn Treaty Park was a positive change for the neighborhood. They thought the physical improvements were a plus for the neighborhood. However, none of these residents used the park or had children who use the park. Also, none of them mentioned hearing tales of problems in the park.

The other facility mentioned because it no longer served a purpose deemed appropriate by some of the residents was a mission in Fishtown. Up until the early 1980's this mission served primarily as a home for a few men who would otherwise have been homeless. These men were permanent residents of the mission, therefore known to their neighbors. The mission also distributed food and clothing to needy Fishtown residents and treated some of the children to holiday parties. The mission was a fixture in the neighborhood until the couple who operated it retired and moved out of state in the 1980's. At that time, the building was bought and the new owner began operating a drug rehabilitation facility there.

One of the complaints about the new facility was that the patients were unsupervised and stood outside of the building all day long and harassed passersby, especially women and children. Respondent #10 said:

Now it's entirely different. They bring in drug addicts, etc. At any other rehab place they stay inside the rehab. These people have freedom of the street. They harass women and children and things like that. And unfortunately the people that go there, that stay

at the mission are a majority Black and Hispanic, and they holler racist since Fishtown is majority White and that is their defense...we're racist. And not that we're racist, we don't like the way it's run. Women that walk by should not have to be harassed and the person that runs it really doesn't care about the community (p. 1 of transcript).

The mission no longer served the needs of the long-term residents of the community, but served one they did not want in their community, especially since they felt it was not operated properly:

I was really concerned about the residents. They were saying things to people in the neighborhood. A few of them walked into people's houses. A lot of them aren't right mentally because they're on drugs. And what happens is they're on drugs, they're deranged at times, so they've done things in the neighborhood to people...There wasn't enough responsibility by the people who were running it and we, as I said, had meetings, got city officials involved and made them take more responsibility for what was going on there (Respondent #10, p. 13 of transcript).

### The Appearance of New Residents

The second part of this question addressed whether residents would notice new residents who have a different appearance and/or lifestyle from themselves. This was the case for many of the respondents in this study. Respondents primarily mentioned two groups of newcomers. The first group was characterized as more educated, higher-income, and usually holding professional positions. This group was often referred to as "yuppies" (young, urban, professionals) by the respondents, even though the newcomers were not always young. The second group of newcomers was described as poorer and less educated than the long-term residents. A small number of respondents also mentioned the presence of African-American and Hispanic residents in Fishtown.

Those respondents who mentioned the professional, more educated new residents usually did so because they were neighbors or had come in contact with them through some community organization, such as the Fishtown Civic Association. Respondent #5 described both of these situations. She mentioned new neighbors, one was a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra and the other was a chef. These

were not usual professions for a long-term resident of Fishtown. She first became aware of many new professionals and artists in the area when she was assisting the Fishtown Civic Association conduct a survey of people in Fishtown who were renovating their homes. She proudly described one young couple who moved to Fishtown from New York. They said to her, " you don't know what it's like to be able to walk down to the avenue to buy a newspaper. You just can't walk around in New York after dark." (p. 2 of transcript)

Four of the respondents in this study mentioned the professional, more educated newcomers specifically because they identified with the newcomers more than the long-term residents of Fishtown (respondents #1, 3, 15, and 30). Only respondent #30 was born in Fishtown. She was an educated, young, professional woman who only considered herself a " Fishtowner" because she was born there. Otherwise she felt she had little else in common with a typical " Fishtowner" who she described as those who work and those who do not work. She described those who have jobs as, " The ones who work, I would say, it's a 9 to 5 job, has lots of extended family, not a churchgoer." (p. 18 of transcript) She described those without jobs as, " they frequent the bars, hang out on corners, get into fights, burglarize, beat

their wives and kids." (p. 18 of transcript) She described the "young professionals" as "they like to be close to town, but then again not pay such high taxes. They like the convenience of being close to Center City, but then again, not paying the expense" (p. 7 of transcript). She said she liked the idea of having other professionals in the area and thought they were good for the neighborhood because "they keep their properties very nice...they hold down full-time jobs, and they also bring businesses into the neighborhood" (p. 8 of transcript). She felt that her assessment of these newcomers was not representative of other long-term residents' opinions, who she thought would say, "Well, who do they think they are, moving into this area, those snobs" (p. 7 of transcript).

Respondent #3 met a few newer residents at the Fishtown library. He said they were there representing the Friends of Fishtown. He described them as more having "greater intelligence than the Fishtown Civic Association" (p. 26 of transcript). He also described them as "they're doers too. I think they keep looking at the neighborhood and seeing how things are going, and if they don't like it, they'll get off their backside and do something about it" (p. 26 of transcript).

Respondent #15 echoed these ideas:

I think there's been a fair amount of new people moving in, younger people. I think, a little better educated, more open-minded perhaps. It's been a slow transition... I think of Fishtown still as being very insular as far as the aunt lives down the street, the grandmother lives 2 blocks away, and everybody's cousins have known each other for two generations. And I think some of that is changing...I think any neighborhood needs new blood, new ideas, more energy, people that aren't - haven't grown up in a neighborhood are more likely to think of things differently, bring about change (p. 1 of transcript).

She did not consider herself to be like other, long-term residents of Fishtown, but felt more akin to these newcomers, " they're like I am. They are looking for someplace else that's affordable, it's convenient to Center City, it's safe" (p. 4 of transcript). She also said that most of her friends in the neighborhood were relative newcomers. She did not consider herself to be a Fishtowner,

and said the other long-term residents saw her as an "outsider."

Even many long-term residents who did not identify with the newcomers mentioned them and the feeling that they brought hope to the neighborhood, as did respondents #16, #18, and #19. When asked about these newcomers, respondent #19 said:

That's what made it nice to stay in Fishtown. It gave me hope. Before the so-called yuppies moved in, the younger, upgraded people, before they moved in I couldn't see anything. I wanted to move. I went to work to save enough money to buy another house in another neighborhood because I got scared after the census. When I saw people with a better income moving in, and a better education and stuff, they made the neighborhood much nicer (p. 27 of transcript).

Respondent #16, who was involved with the Fishtown Civic Association in the early 1980,'s said:

I think that in a lot of city areas there was federal money that was building neighborhoods up. And that

dried out, so that I think our people who moved into the community and thought the community was going to be built up. That didn't materialize, so, then instead of staying, what they've done is rent their properties (p. 5 of transcript).

Respondent #18, who was also a board member of the Fishtown Civic Association in the early 1980's gave the same summary of events.

However, not all respondents saw the new, better educated residents as a welcome change to the neighborhood. Respondent #10 described them as:

Basically they're different than Fishtowners. A lot of them are professionals, white-collar professionals. A lot of yuppies, and different than Fishtown people are...I guess you can say more liberal. These are the type of people that would like to see more prisons built and a lot of reforming of hard core criminals, people that have murdered five times or raped ten times, which I think, and I know a lot of people around here think they're not reformable...And these are the

type of people that are moving into the neighborhood  
(p. 18 of transcript).

She said their effect on the neighborhood has been visual,  
" They're into beautifying and planting plants and things  
like that, which is fine" (p. 19 of transcript).

The second group of newcomers mentioned were described  
as poorer, lower-class than long-term residents. Respondent  
#24 describes this group of newcomers as:

Just like wild. But they keep to theirselves. I mean  
everybody lives different. You know what they say, live  
and let live. They bring their T.V. outside and with  
their beer and they put the Flyers on and they start  
yelling and all. I mean, they stay to their self, they  
don't get carried away (p. 9 of transcript).

Respondent #12 said:

People don't care as much. We have a lot of people that moved in here about a month ago. They don't take care of their houses. They may be renters...It's a different, seems to be a different kind of people here (p. 1 of transcript).

Respondent #24 described the newcomers as:

They're just kids, well young adults you might as well say. They come and rent homes in the neighborhood. Basically they're all renters. I know that. And it seems as though they don't work, you know, either unemployed or collecting welfare (p. 1 of transcript).

Both of these respondents stated that many of these newcomers were coming from Kensington, a working-class neighborhood that borders Fishtown on the north and west. Respondent #25 said, " I don't know where they're coming from. A lot of them are from Kensington. I've heard and seen a few" (p. 4 of transcript). As I mentioned in the previous section describing the history of Fishtown, there always has

been and still is a long-standing rivalry between the two neighborhoods.

Each respondent who did not mention new, professional, more educated residents in Fishtown was asked at the end of each interview whether he or she knew anything about these newcomers. Most respondents said they forgot about them because they had no effect on their lives or the neighborhood. When asked why she did not mention them, respondent #22 said, " I don't see too many of them. I don't see the people" (p. 32 of transcript). Respondent #36 said she did not mention this change because she felt any young, educated professional person who moved into Fishtown did so in the 1980's, but had already sold their house and moved away. This opinion was also expressed by respondents #16 and #19. They both welcomed these newcomers as people who would offer some hope to the neighborhood, however, they also felt these new residents had already moved from Fishtown.

Respondent #16 said:

I think maybe 5 or 6 years ago there were more affluent people that started to move in, and I don't think... now they are starting to move out and we have a poorer class of people (p. 1 of transcript).

Finally, one respondent said that she did not think of these newcomers as a change to the neighborhood, because even though they had a different lifestyle than hers, they were her friends. She said, " I don't consider them new people...Like I said, their lifestyle is different than mine, and they have different ideas, but yet all they wanted to do was help the neighborhood" (p. 31-32 of transcript). She was able to list a number of people she called " yuppies," yet she saw them as being similar to herself in their goal of the physical improvement of Fishtown because she met each of them through some involvement in a community project for physical improvement. As a matter of fact, she, along with a few other long-term residents and newcomers, split from the Fishtown Civic Association to form the Friends of Fishtown, whose major focus was the physical improvement of Fishtown.

The final group of newcomers mentioned were African-Americans and Hispanics. Most of the respondents who mentioned these newcomers lived near the renovated Chandler School building, where most of the minorities in Fishtown live. All of the respondents who mentioned these new residents saw the increase in diversity, and acceptance of these new residents as a welcome changes in Fishtown.

Respondents #1, #2, #29, #30 and #33 lived within two blocks of the Chandler school, and all mentioned the minority newcomers to Fishtown. Respondent #30 described the neighborhood as being "more racially integrated" (p. 1 of transcript). When she was asked how she knew about this change she said, "because of the Chandler school being so closely located, located so closely to me, and seeing the Black people" (p. 2 of transcript).

It is noteworthy that all respondents who mentioned the Hispanic and African American newcomers saw this as a positive change. It may be that only those who saw the diversity as positive mentioned it, while those who were unhappy with this change did not mention it, possibly for fear of being seen as a racist.

#### The Role of the Resident's Political/Social Activity in the Perception of Change

Involvement in political or social activities does play a role in the perception of neighborhood change in a variety of ways. To illustrate, there was the extreme case of respondent #31, who was not involved in any political or social activities within Fishtown. He literally only slept

there. He worked, socialized, and recreated outside of Fishtown. The only family ties were to his elderly parents. He had no spouse, children, or extended family in Fishtown. He was also the only respondent who saw no changes in Fishtown other than missing elderly neighbors, who have either died or moved away with their adult children. He is a good representative of the group of 9 respondents who were not involved in any activities (in or outside of Fishtown) because one pattern found within this group was that they only mentioned changes that they had seen in their immediate areas. They were not aware of, or at least did not mention, changes that had occurred in other parts of Fishtown.

Another pattern that emerged from this group was that all but one of them mentioned all negative changes. They mentioned more dirt, crime, loss of control over children, all of the same changes mentioned by many of the other respondents, however, only one of them mentioned any positive changes in Fishtown. This pattern was not found in any of the other groups of respondents. The one respondent who also mentioned positive changes was respondent #33. He was a young man with a family history of severe abuse. He claimed the only reason he stayed in Fishtown was to be near his mother, in case she needed him. This respondent

mentioned all positive changes. It appeared as though he had a deep need to believe that he, his spouse and child were living in a good, safe, and upwardly mobile neighborhood. He said that his main goal in life was to make sure that his family was in a " safe and warm" place. Because he was unemployed at the time of the interview and financially unable to move his family, and perhaps psychologically unable or unwilling to leave his mother there, he had to see Fishtown as fulfilling these needs.

Political activity can be a source of information about change in a neighborhood. At one level, the active respondents had first hand knowledge of a change because they were involved with changes as they occurred. For example, respondents #1 and #4 were both heavily involved in the fight to keep the Fishtown library from closing in the early 1980's. However, as a result of their work, not only did the library remain open, but they were able to bring in funds to provide major renovations and new facilities to the library. They were aware of these changes because they helped bring them about. The same was true for respondents #16 and #18. They were well aware of changes in the housing stock in Fishtown during the 1980's because they both were members of the Fishtown Civic Association at the time it

received federal funds to renovate and sell properties in Fishtown.

It also appears as though those respondents who were more politically and socially involved also sought out more information about the neighborhood and what was going on there. Besides the experiential knowledge which came from being active in an organization, respondent #18 said that he had access to many sources of data about the neighborhood through his involvement with the Fishtown Civic Association. He also mentioned that he still reads the crime reports in the local paper regularly. Respondent #10, who was an active member of the Fishtown Civic Association, said she also reads the local crime reports and local newspapers regularly, seeking information.

Respondents who were involved politically also mentioned that this involvement allowed them to have contact with other people, and therefore information. Respondent #7 was an employee of the Fishtown Civic Association. She discussed how people call the office everyday with information and complaints about issues that were affecting their lives. Respondent #10, who was also an active member of the Fishtown Civic Association discussed how other

residents approached her to tell her what was going on in the neighborhood, " I guess because I got more involved in community things...they complain to you about their problems, about what's going on, 'this has to change, this has to be fixed'" ...(p. 3 of transcript).

A handful of respondents mentioned that social contact with neighbors at small, local stores served as centers for gossip and information exchange. They expressed concern that the loss of these stores has led and will continue to lead to a decline in informal social control. Respondent #14 said:

Because people go to the stores and they meet and they talk and they talk about things that are going on around the neighborhood, it keeps them up with the news on who's doing what. I think gossip keeps people in line...You know, people talking, always being afraid that someone is going to be talking about you, so you keep your neck, keep your pavement clean. I think a little gossip is good, and I think a little store creates a little gossip line. (p. 9 of transcript)

Respondent #16 was employed in a job that allowed her access to people in their homes. During these visits, she also gathered information and observed people's lifestyles for her own conclusions about changes occurring in Fishtown:

So the job I have is I'm a community coordinator, so that I go into homes and I do home visits... So that when you go into homes a lot of times you go into homes that have many, many social problems. And it seems to me that a lot of those problems come from drug and alcohol use or mental illness. I see a lot more of that. But, I've just noticed that in the last five years that things have, the violence has gotten much worse (pp. 2-3 of transcript).

During her travels as a census taker, respondent #19 saw changes in Fishtown which concerned her so much that she decided to start saving money in order to move to another neighborhood. She later saw other changes, the arrival of higher-income, professionals, which convinced her to stay.

### Plans for Long-Term Residence

Plans for long-term residence did not affect whether or not a resident noticed change in his or her neighborhood. However, it did affect the kinds of changes he or she noticed and discussed in the interview. As a group, respondents who said they would like to move away from Fishtown more often mentioned many or all negative changes in the neighborhood. The key here is that these respondents wanted to move to get away from Fishtown, not to a dream house or more open space. They felt the desire or need to get away from what they saw as negative, not the pull to go toward something they have always wanted. In contrast, those respondents who were planning long-term residence in Fishtown mentioned both positive and negative changes.

This pattern was also found for those who already moved out of Fishtown. Those who moved to specifically get away from Fishtown mentioned negative changes, while those who moved for other reasons, such as marriage or to be close to a job, mentioned both positive and negative changes.

Respondent #23 was an example of a resident who was biding her time in Fishtown. She mentioned only negative changes:

Well, it was never like a wealthy area, but the percentage...the majority of the people I always thought as being working, going out and working. Now it's becoming, less and less people are working. There's more people just going on relief and not trying to improve their lives and the lives of their children. The kids around here have just gotten worse. I mean there was always gangs that hung on the corner, but they were usually off the corners by 11:00 or 12:00 at night. Now it's just 24 hours. They're around the clock. They're terrorizing the neighbors who live close to where they hang out (p. 1 of transcript).

She felt no connection to the neighborhood, even though she had been born and spent most of her life there. She was living with her mother in order to save money so that she could move away with her daughter. She had no desire to move to any particular place, just away from Fishtown.

Respondent #2 wanted to leave Fishtown, but stayed only because his wife was in poor health and they were

conveniently located near everything they needed,  
" Convenience, everything else. Doctors, hospitals,  
pharmacies, travel time, walking time. You can walk  
anywhere. You're not stuck in the boondocks" (p. 17 of  
transcript). The changes he mentioned were an increase in  
traffic through the neighborhood since the completion of I-  
95 twenty-five years ago and a loss of local businesses.

Respondent #34 however had very positive feelings about  
living in Fishtown, " If I had to move anywhere it would  
have to be out of the city or nowhere at all. This is where  
I would stay - in Fishtown" (p. 19 of transcript). She  
described how she made the conscious choice live in Fishtown  
and raise her daughter there. The major benefit, besides  
being satisfied and happy there, was that it was  
inexpensive, so it allowed her to save money for her  
daughter's education, which was a priority for her:

Well I stay, number one, in this are because I like the  
Fishtown area. And if I had to live anywhere it would  
be here. And another thing is I have a daughter growing  
up. She's going to need to go to school. I'm paying now  
a couple of thousands of dollars just for Pre-K, and  
she's only four years old (p. 20 of transcript).

Despite mentioning graffiti, problems with the new nightclubs, and feeling less safe, she said the neighborhood has gotten better since she was a child:

Well, basically it didn't change for the worst. It's gotten better. I grew up on this street. I was here for at least 35 years and all the people that lived in my neighborhood were older people. Still the younger ones are moving in. I feel that I'm fortunate I have very, very good neighbors...(p. 1 of transcript).

Respondent #15 had moved to Fishtown approximately fifteen years prior to our interview. She bought a dilapidated house and completely renovated it to her tastes. She felt extremely attached to this house and said " I don't have the desire to move. I put a lot of money in the house. They will take me out feet first" (g. 15 of transcript). She mentioned all positive changes, all of which revolved around the influx of " new people moving in, younger people, I think a little better educated. More open-minded perhaps" (p. 1 of transcript). This change gave her great hope for the future of Fishtown, " I think any neighborhood needs new blood, new ideas, more energy, people that aren't - haven't

grown up in a neighborhood and are more likely to think of things differently - bring about change" (p. 1 of transcript).

There was one incident where a respondent, #3, was considering selling his house in Fishtown. In order to prepare for this he started monitoring real estate activities more closely. As a result, he learned that houses in the area were becoming more valuable because of an greater interest amongst young, professionals who no longer wanted to rent properties in the downtown area. He changed his mind about selling and has enjoyed the new residents he has befriended.

A small number of respondents were disheartened by all of the negative changes they saw in Fishtown. They only mentioned negative changes. However, this group had no plans to leave Fishtown because of a combination of family and emotional ties to the area and financial inability to move. Respondent #24 said:

There are more kids running the streets, more dirt, more abandoned houses, abandoned cars, more drugs...I don't think the neighbors are as friendly as they were.

Like, they don't get along. A lot of businesses left. Just gotten run down, I think (p. 1 of transcript).

When asked if she would like to move from Fishtown and why she stays she said:

If I could (leave) I would. Maybe I'll hit the lottery. I don't know... And because my parents are still here, still on the street. I feel it's like family back there because my son might move down the street from me. So it's kind of family back there. But the neighborhood itself I don't like anymore (p. 16 of transcript).

Respondent #14 said:

I think it's changed. It seems a lot dirtier. The streets are dirtier. There is graffiti. The graffiti is starting to really bother me. It just seems poorer... There are less stores. You used to be able to walk to any type of store you wanted, like the butcher around the corner, the bakery and all. They're gone (p. 1 of transcript).

When asked about moving, she said she would like to move to a resort area, but could not afford to move there, so she stayed.

It is also noteworthy that none of these respondents was involved in any activity in or outside of Fishtown. However, not all of the respondents in the "inactive" group fell into this category. Many of them were satisfied with Fishtown and did not want to move away.

#### The Role of the Media in the Perception of Neighborhood Change

Only a small number of the respondents reported that they got information about changes in Fishtown through the media. Respondent #3 learned of a rash of burglaries through the local newspaper. He also learned of the real estate boom in Fishtown during the 1980's because he was thinking of selling his house and was monitoring real estate activity in the area. He also said he moved to Fishtown because of articles he had read in Philadelphia newspapers about changes in the neighborhood:

There were several pieces done in the paper on Fishtown. In fact, that's what led me back here. I read a piece in the Sunday paper which said that they felt real estate in Fishtown was a bargain and I looked around this area for a house to move into (p. 4 of transcript).

Respondent #18 also referred to the local newspapers for information about what was going on in Fishtown, in particular the crime statistics. He knew the media could be a great source of information because during his involvement with the Fishtown Civic Association, he and the organization were involved with giving a host from a Philadelphia radio station a tour of the neighborhood in order to drum up interest in the neighborhood. They were interested in attracting people who would buy the homes they renovated:

It got some good press at the time. Jay Lamont talked about it on his radio show. We brought him up and took him for a tour thorough the community to show him what it was like, and he talked it up on his program. A lot of positives. And Fishtown was quite a bad in the press (p. 6 of transcript).

Some of the respondents said that they learned of new stores and businesses in the neighborhood by seeing advertisements in the neighborhood newspapers. Most respondents, however, reported that they used the information from media to keep abreast of details, not as a first source of information. For example, respondent #34, who lived one block from the nightclubs used the local newspaper as a source of information about any issues surrounding them. She also read the crime reports in the neighborhood newspapers. Respondent #10, also knew of the nightclubs, and has even picketed outside some of them, said that she read details in the local newspapers about how the nightclubs were planned by politicians as a good source of income for the city. Respondent #1 said he read the local newspapers to get more details about what was going on with demonstrations and protests by neighbors outside of the nightclubs. He also relied on them for details while the Chandler school was being converted into apartments. He knew of each of these changes, but relied on the local newspaper to keep up-to-date on developments.

It was commonplace behavior for a subset of the respondents to seek out information about their neighborhood. These respondents were active, or past

officers of the Fishtown Civic Association. It may be that they knew where to look for information, and/or that they saw the value of being informed. You cannot be active without knowing what is going on in the neighborhood. Apparently the reverse is true, when you are active, you know what is going on in the neighborhood.

One reason the media may not have been a major source of information for most respondents was that many of the respondents felt the image of Fishtown in the media was negatively biased. Respondent #13 said the media portrayed people in Fishtown as noisy, toothless, and drunk. She did not agree with this image, " I'm not really noisy, although I talk a lot. You won't see me without my teeth, I don't think. I'm not real noisy...I used to drink but I don't drink anymore" (p. 28 of transcript). Respondent #12 said she has not seen anything in the media about changes in Fishtown because, " Fishtown gets a bad rap because of racial problems, but we never really see anything that says it's changed that much. I don't think they care so much" (p. 3 of transcript). Respondent #34 was very upset about a recent article about Fishtown:

One thing that I did see that I was really upset about, I think it was in the Philadelphia Weekly, the magazine distributed, I believe in Center City...it had a lot of negative things about Fishtown...It had a lot to do with drugs and it stated in there that Fishtown, the way of life, the welfare, where currency is food stamps...And it portrayed three women. It gave the ages. I would imagine made up names... about how they sit around all day. One of them got out of Fishtown, comes back, and married a truck driver. And when she comes back - and it, the paper actually says she ain't no toothless whore giving blow jobs underneath I-95 (p. 4 of transcript).

It is these negative portrayals of Fishtowners and their neighborhood that have led many in Fishtown to ignore or distrust what they saw and heard in the media.

Besides the issues addressed above, a few other factors emerged as being relevant to the perception of neighborhood change. These included: the lifestage or lifecycle of the respondent and having personal experience with the change.

The Role of Personal Experience in the Perception of  
Neighborhood Change

Most of the respondents did not mention all three of the changes I listed: the closing of Chandler school; new professional, educated residents; and, the renovation of Penn Treaty Park. Those who did mention any of these changes did so either because they have been involved with the change, such as with Penn Treaty Park, or because it has had some influence on their life. As can be expected, changes that had a direct impact on the respondent or a relative or friend were salient for the respondent. Only respondents who lived on the river-side of Girard Avenue, an unofficial dividing line in Fishtown, mentioned the nightclubs along the waterfront. It was most often respondents who identified with newcomers to Fishtown or who knew them personally who mentioned the younger, more educated newcomers (see above for discussion).

Respondents who lived within a two block radius of the Chandler school were the only respondents to mention the changes made to the school. Some of these respondents attended the school, others had children who attended the school, and others (respondent #1) identified with the

plight of a newcomer in Fishtown, the new residents of the renovated school building.

Respondents #24 and #25 did not mention the more educated, professional newcomers in their list of changes. Instead they mentioned a lower class of noisy, uneducated newcomers. This was because they saw these newcomers regularly, whereas they did not see the other professional people. When asked why she did not mention them, respondent #24 said, " Because I'm not affected by those people because I don't directly live with them" (p. 23 of transcript).

Most of the respondents did mention that there was an increase in drug abuse by young in Fishtown. They were concerned, and some had even known people who had children who abused drugs. However, only one respondent talked about this issue in-depth, because she had been directly effected by a family member's drug abuse.

#### The Role of the Lifestage/Lifecycle in the Perception of Neighborhood Change

Respondents who had children at home with them often mentioned that they were monitoring for any changes or

events in Fishtown which would affect the safety and/or future of their children. Respondent #7 said, " you become more involved in the community when you have kids, so you notice more" (p. 4 of transcript). Respondent #4 led the fight to stop the closure of the only public library in Fishtown. Many of her children had used the library when they were students, and she continued to use it, so she was well aware of the necessity of a library.

Respondent #34 said that she had become more aware of crime and safety issues in the neighborhood since becoming a mother. Respondent #22 said she became more safety conscious when her daughter started to attend high school because she left the house early in the morning:

I started to worry about my daughter leaving for school in the morning, in the early hour and just walking from my house three blocks away to get on a bus on Girard Avenue. Then it dawned on me that I never had to worry about that before...You think about and - I never remember when I had that thought before. No matter what time in the morning they would leave, there was always men leaving for work at 5, 5:30 in the morning when my daughter is leaving at 5:30 in the morning. I didn't

know that safety would be a factor. Now I have to worry about all these men (p. 3 of transcript).

Many of the elderly residents were also aware of changes that would affect their ability to function independently, such as the closing of local stores and the inaccessibility of some of the newer ones. Even though respondent #4 was glad to see the new mall in Fishtown, she missed the convenience of the corner stores, and felt her safety was in jeopardy trying to get to the new mall:

If you needed something, it's a hop and a skip. You go down one corner or the other corner. Now you can't go there... and it's a big pain in the neck for a lot of people because crossing big streets like Aramingo Avenue is not funny. And I feel sorry for the people that have to cross them. And there's a lot of older people that have to go with the darn shopping cart, and it's dangerous for them. Some of the drivers don't give a damn they ride up your backside. They don't give you the right of way. I won't go to the shopping things by myself. I'll do without before I have to walk there...

(p. 4 of transcript)

## Conclusions

This study supported O'Hanlon's (1981) statement that monitoring for neighborhood change is a constant process. However, there are various features of the change and characteristics of the person which make certain changes salient for the individual. The appearance, loss or change in existing facilities are important to the perception of neighborhood change.

As Winkel (1981) stated, the appearance of facilities which are not expected to be used by the resident is a salient change because it raises concerns for residents about the impact of this change on their life and their comfort and sometimes safety in their neighborhood. The same is true when a facility changes use. This becomes important if it no longer serves the needs or expectations of the existing residents or patrons. The loss of facilities is noticeable when it impacts the life of the respondent or his or her friends or family. This was seen in these interviews in discussions of the loss of factories in Fishtown. Even though none of the respondents was directly impacted, those who mentioned this change knew of someone who was profoundly affected. Other changes may signal a loss of control. As an

example, the closure of many local convenience stores meant a decrease of informal social control because they served as gossip hubs, which can also mean a loss of information. And finally, the closure of these businesses has meant a loss of personal freedom for some of the elderly residents who find it difficult to travel to newer stores, which are further away.

The appearance of new residents was also salient when the new resident was perceived as being different from self and other long-term residents. This change was also important for a few long-term residents who saw themselves as being different from the typical long-term resident of Fishtown. This small group of respondents felt more akin to the newcomers and welcomed their influx to the neighborhood. They saw this as a possibility to build network of friends where that was not possible before.

Social and/or political activity was important in the perception of neighborhood change because it influenced the types of changes a respondent mentioned. Those respondents who were not active only mentioned changes in their immediate area, usually a radius of a few blocks around their house. Also, they only mentioned negative changes. It

may be that a negative view of an area discourages local participation. It is also plausible that a lack of involvement may limit their access to information about knowledge of their neighborhood, including many positive changes. It was noteworthy that those who were involved either in political and/or social activities mentioned both positive and negative changes.

Those who were active in political activities, mainly the Fishtown Civic Association, also mentioned that they actively sought information about their neighborhood. They read newspapers for information about issues in the neighborhood and local crime reports. It appears that those respondents who are active in their community have more sources of information available. However, also appears that those who are active politically seek this information and expect to use it.

Plans for long-term residence did not affect whether the respondent saw changes in his or her neighborhood. However, it appears as though it affected how he or she interpreted what he or she saw. Those respondents who wanted to move to get away from Fishtown were more likely to mention only negative changes. This makes sense because they

were unhappy with the neighborhood and wanted to get away from it. They can see little or no redeeming value to living in Fishtown. On the other hand, those respondents who were planning to remain in Fishtown were more likely to mention a mix of positive and negative changes in the neighborhood. This was true whether the respondent was planning to stay for life or until he or she could save enough money for his or her "dream house." The key here was being content in Fishtown while you lived there, not feeling the drive to get out of the neighborhood. This finding held up even for the respondents who had already moved from Fishtown. Those who moved to get away from Fishtown mentioned many more or only negative changes than those who moved to for other reasons, such as marriage or convenience to a job.

For most of these respondents the media often served the role of filling in details, not providing the initial information. For example, most of the respondents who mentioned the new nightclubs on Delaware Avenue lived near the nightclubs. They knew of them from firsthand experience. These residents turned to the local newspapers as a source of information once an event had occurred. For example, they read the local newspapers for information about crime at or related to the nightclubs and their patrons. There was a

specific distrust of the citywide newspapers and television media because, in the opinions of many of the respondents, they had a history of providing negative information about Fishtown and ignoring the positive aspects of the neighborhood. There were instances of changes which would affect the neighborhood, such as the construction of the new mall, about which the residents were informed through the local media.

As can be expected, having personal experience with a change made it salient for the respondent. This was seen in the fact that most respondents mentioned changes which affected their lives, or that of a friend or relative. Only those respondents who were very active within the community mentioned changes that have affected the neighborhood, but had no immediate impact on their lives.

Finally, the lifestage or point in lifecycle can play a role in the perception of neighborhood change because at certain times specific interests, needs, or limitations are highlighted. When a change in the neighborhood had an impact on the interests, needs, or limitations, this change was attended to and became important for the person experiencing the change.

In sum, all of these factors played a role in the perception of neighborhood change. They were influenced by the needs, experiences and expectations of the resident, but many aspects were common for groups of individuals. Mainly, when a change was perceived as possibly impacting the respondent, whether directly or through its effect on the way of life in Fishtown, it became salient.

The Relationship Between the Perceived Effect of Change, Understanding of One's Possible Effectiveness, and Action

The final issues addressed in this study were: whether a resident would act on changes in his or her neighborhood if he or she perceived these changes as affecting his or her life; whether he or she would act on the changes if he or she felt something could be done to encourage or discourage further change; and if the type of action was determined by his or her understanding of how and why the change occurred. These three questions were addressed together in this section because they were so closely related it would be difficult, if not impossible, to answer them separately in a meaningful way.

Most of the respondents were aware of changes occurring in their neighborhood, and believed the changes had affected the neighborhood, and in some cases, their lives. It is noteworthy that many of the respondents discussed sweeping changes in Fishtown, but said their lives had not been affected by these changes. Many respondents said the changes were negative, but, because they felt their lives had not been affected they took no action to discourage or minimize these changes. These respondents felt they could separate their lives from what was going on around them.

Some of the respondents were concerned that the neighborhood might become a place in which they would not want to live, while others stated without hesitation that they would move away from Fishtown if the negative changes started to impact them directly. Even people who were deeply attached to Fishtown said they would just pick-up and leave if they felt unsafe or uncomfortable there. I believe they thought things would never deteriorate to that point. Also, a few of them told me at other times during the interview that they could not afford to move, yet they said they would if the changes became unbearable. The majority of respondents did not react to changes in their neighborhood

even when they perceived them as affecting their lives unless they to their safety, happiness and/or way of life.

Many did not react to changes because they still had hope for the future of the neighborhood despite the detrimental changes they saw there. They did not interpret the situation as requiring an immediate response because they still had hope. The source of their hope varied from "the community group" to the newer, professional, more educated residents, the "yuppies," or even the return of long-term residents who had moved away coming back to the neighborhood.

A small number of respondents did not react to changes in their neighborhood because they felt they could neither encourage nor discourage change in their neighborhood because they had tried to do so in the past and failed. Others were disillusioned with the local civic association, so they went so far as to resign their seats as board members and end much of their involvement in large-scale, proactive changes in Fishtown. However, their resignations also coincided with a great loss of funds, and therefore power, for the Fishtown Civic Association. I am not sure what the exact relationship was between these two events. It

may have been coincidence. I did not have the opportunity to ask the respondents about any possible link because I only made the connection between their resignations and the loss of funds while analyzing all of the interviews.

A number of respondents did not react to changes because overall they thought the changes were good for the neighborhood. These respondents were content with their lives in this neighborhood and saw no reason that it would not remain that way. As a result, they did not feel the need to take action, even to ensure the status quo.

There were two groups of residents who did act on changes in Fishtown. The first group perceived the changes to be an immediate and direct threat to their safety, happiness and/or way of life. The second was the group of respondents who were defined as activists earlier. These respondents were motivated in the face of neighborhood change even though it might not have impacted them directly. They cared about their neighbors and they understood that changes occurring in the neighborhood could eventually affect their lives, directly or indirectly by changing the way of life in Fishtown. In many cases these respondents instigated or at least encouraged positive changes, such as

renovating houses and re-paving streets, in order to counteract negative changes already occurring in the neighborhood.

#### No Reaction to Negative Changes

Many of the respondents mentioned changes that they perceived as having negative consequences for the neighborhood. However, most of these respondents did not react to the changes because their way of life had not been directly affected other than causing some additional concerns for safety or emotional distress. Most of them have not changed their daily routines or way of life drastically because of the changes. Some of the respondents said they were concerned about the changes and they were actively monitoring them by reading the local newspapers and attending community meetings where the issues were discussed, but they took no direct action to discourage or curtail the changes.

Respondent #36 said she did not react to all of the negative changes she saw in Fishtown because it has been her experience that eventually the problem goes away. It was likely that other people worked to take care of the problem,

and this respondent benefited from their work. She said she did not get involved because she did not "feel like it. I am not a joiner" (p. 12 of transcript). The fact that the changes she mentioned had not affected her life directly combined with her past experiences where problems have "gone away," meant she had no motivation to react to changes in Fishtown.

Respondent #5 said she was concerned about what was going on along the riverfront. She thought the rumored introduction of riverboat gambling might be an improvement over the nightclubs that were there now. When asked about this she said:

Well inasmuch as what's going on down there, some of those nightclubs. There's people up in arms that were down there picketing and things like that. We have to be concerned about what's going on down there on the river. All these nightclubs and some of the stories you hear. Some were meeting at the Pilgrim church that night... I said well, you know, remember when they put those transformers in down on Delaware Avenue and blocked the front of the park? I had somebody say to me "Where was the community when they allowed that to

happen" ? See. So I'm saying now somebody is going to come along and say " Where was the community when they allowed this to happen on the waterfront." (p. 15 of transcript)

She was well aware of the need for action, but did not take any. This was partly due to the fact that this was the only negative change she saw in the neighborhood while she saw many positive changes. She also said it was her personal style to react through the civic association, and not to take direct action. When discussing the picketers at the nightclubs she said, " it's not part of my, you know, defense" (p. 16 of transcript). She had great faith in the Fishtown Civic Association and felt they would handle the problem. She had been a founding member of the Fishtown Civic Association and said that many of the residents who were fixing up their houses were doing so because the Fishtown Civic Association had inspired people when they made physical renovations in the 1980's. These renovations included some new sidewalks and street lighting, planting trees, and rehabilitating and selling a number of abandoned houses in the neighborhood. She also felt their presence gave people the security of knowing they had someplace to go with their problems, resulting in the residents feeling more

attached to the neighborhood. However, at the time of this interview the Fishtown Civic Association had lost much of its funding and had one part-time staff person who was paid only whenever the budget allowed it.

This respondent also had great confidence that more people were taking an interest in their neighborhood, " There seems to be more people wanting to get involved, you know. Like we have more block captains and they're heading to work and doing things" (p. 1 of transcript).

She also felt these changes have not had much of an impact on her life, " I don't know if they changed my life that much, just the life of the community in general. Because a lot of my life centers around my church, my close friends" (p. 20 of transcript). Her confidence that the neighborhood was thriving and that others would take care of the problems, coupled with the fact that they have not had a great impact on her life, led her to feel comfortable with not doing anything about her concern over the nightclubs in the neighborhood.

Respondent #14 only mentioned negative changes in the neighborhood, but she did not react even though she felt

that she should be doing something to counteract these changes, " I always think about it. I should get involved with the groups because I think they really do help the neighborhood, and I just don't" (p. 5 of transcript). She was well aware of the effect of these changes on Fishtown, " It makes people want to move out, and then when they move out, and then when no one wants to move in, then we got the abandoned house problem. I think that causes the neighborhood to die" (p. 3 of transcript). Even though she saw the neighborhood in a downward spiral she did nothing:

I think a lot more people are starting to sell... It's going down. It's really bad. I like living here. I think it's really convenient to everything that I want to do, like go to work and all that kind of stuff. And the crime is not real bad. I hate to see the neighborhood go down. (p. 4 of transcript)

Her lack of a concrete reaction was due, in part, to her philosophy of life, " to live and let live" and, in part, that she felt there was a " community group" already working to address these issues so her participation was not vital. When asked if she had done anything in response to these changes she said, " I don't do anything about it. I'm

hoping somebody else will do something" (p. 18 of transcript). Besides expecting the "community group" to fix the problem, she was used to having a local political representative who lived on her block take care of the needs of the block, "Well, usually when something happens that is really bothersome she starts it [the solution to the problem]. She gets a little committee going and we all vote and she does it" (p. 18 of transcript). Even though she has not been involved in addressing the issues that have affected the neighborhood, she did turn to the committee person when she needed something for her block and hoped that someone else would deal with the neighborhood's problems.

She felt the neighborhood was still salvageable despite the fact that she thought it was in the process of "dying." When asked if she thought whether anything could be done to counteract or discourage the negative changes she said, "I don't know. There are community groups that really do make it look nicer" (p. 4 of transcript).

She said she would like to be involved in cleaning up empty lots and planting flowers to make the neighborhood look better but that she was not involved because nobody has

asked her. She saw these activities as a possible solution to the negative changes in Fishtown because the majority of changes she mentioned affected the appearance of the neighborhood: graffiti, abandoned buildings, and more dirt. She believed this cycle would snowball, leading to more abandoned houses because nobody would want to move into such a shoddy neighborhood, causing the neighborhood to be abandoned and "die." Therefore, anything that would improve the appearance of the neighborhood might break the cycle of decline, but she did not try to lead these efforts or volunteer to help.

The only negative change respondent #26 mentioned was that she felt less safe. She had heard more about crime everywhere, but had not really been affected. Overall, though she thought Fishtown was on the upswing and that there was no need for her involvement because it will be "built up more and a little bit more safer" (p. 10 of transcript) in the future. As more young people who moved from the neighborhood returned it would be "stronger because everybody knows everybody in Fishtown" (p. 14 of transcript).

Respondent #21 was a young single mother who was very proud to be a Fishtowner. She did notice more homeless people on one of the main streets in Fishtown. She did not see these people as a reason for concern, but rather to be pitied. She also mentioned more graffiti. Overall, however, she saw the homeless and the graffiti as an "eyesore." She also felt that she had no control over these changes, "I think everyone loves their neighborhood and it's just sad when you see bad things happen to your neighborhood that you have no control over" (p 11 of transcript). This respondent knew very little about the Fishtown Civic Association, "I've heard of them, but I'm not really involved with them. I've heard about it but have never been involved or don't know anyone who has been involved" (p. 30 of transcript). She did not see a need to be involved, but also did not know how or where to be involved, which may be the reason she felt she had no control over what was happening in her neighborhood. She was not aware of any options, but also did not feel a need to look for them.

### Disillusioned

A handful of the respondents had been involved in community activities, but gave up after becoming

disillusioned. In a few cases, their efforts did not have the desired affect so they quit. Two of these respondents were activists who continued to be involved, though in less political work. The others have thrown up their hands in disgust, and most have given up all involvement.

Respondent #25 said there had been an influx of drug-using, unemployed young adults into her area and that they have had a negative effect because they did not care about themselves, their children, their property, or their neighbors. She felt heartbroken over the loss of the neighborhood she once loved, but determined that she would not stop caring about her neighborhood. However, she said these changes have not had any direct effect on her life other than to make her unhappy and less sociable with these neighbors. At the same time, she wished that she could move so that her children would not have to grow up in a neighborhood where there was nothing for them to do and where drug abuse was commonplace.

She had been a member of a Town Watch, a group of residents who patrolled their area and reported any criminal activity to the police. She gave this up " because there were drugs on that street, being sold" (p. 10 of

transcript). She felt it was a "waste" of her time. She also moved off that block and stayed away from that street. When asked how she would respond to changes in the neighborhood, she said she would, "Probably get involved with the organization that I should be involved with...like the Fishtown Civic. I should, just to try and help out the neighborhood. That's what I should do" (pp. 15-16 of transcript). When she was asked why she was not involved she said, "I guess because I'm too lazy. You work all day" (p. 16 of transcript). She also felt her involvement was not vital to the future of the neighborhood that she loved so much, even though she had to move her family to another street to get away from drug dealers.

Respondent #24 also mentioned all negative changes and felt the "neighborhood is going down the tubes" (p. 3 of transcript). These changes have affected her life by forcing her to limit the activities of her children because of concerns for their safety. Despite all of this she has not gotten involved in any way to counteract these neighborhood-wide negative changes. Instead, she said she would like to move away but did not do that because she could not afford to and because her parents still lived in Fishtown. She did, however, pin hopes for the survival of the neighborhood on

the newer, more educated professionals who had moved into the neighborhood. Even though they had no effect on her life she felt their presence made the neighborhood a better place because:

They keep everything nice. They keep their children... they live a different kind of lifestyle and I think it's good for us... It's good for the neighborhood. It doesn't make us so poverty stricken...I think they'll get more involved with things that are going on because a lot of them moved from Center City because of crime there. So they are coming here. They don't want it here. So maybe they'll have more pull than we will because they have more money than us and they are professional people and people will pay more attention to those kind of people than us. I feel like they don't want to hear you. (p. 23 of transcript)

She had been a member of the Fishtown Civic Association, but resigned after hearing that one of the members of the Board made disparaging remarks about other neighborhood residents: " She said Fishtown is mostly composed of Neanderthals" (p 1 of transcript). She already felt that she did not have time to attend the meetings so

this comment was the small push she needed to end her involvement with the organization. She resigned in disgust even though the board member denied the comments.

She said she has begun making her own calls to City Hall when something needed to be done on her block, like sealing an abandoned house. However, she said this had not been very successful either, " I don't know whether it's because they are over... they have too many problems and they are understaffed, or what, but they don't do their jobs... I would keep calling them, because letters they probably do not get. I would rather call and aggravate them" (. 10 of transcript). She was not sure whether she would ever get a response to her calls, but did not know what else to do. Besides, she was getting a small amount of personal pleasure at the possibility that she might be making the people who were ignoring her uncomfortable or angry.

She felt powerless to make Fishtown a better neighborhood, so she did not try. Instead she tried to do what she could to improve her block, which was not very effective either, and hoped that someone else whom she saw as having more power would help save the neighborhood. Because of her disillusionment with the community

organization, she focussed on the problems that affect her life directly and where she might have the possibility to make an impact. She felt the drug problems and the resultant social problems were beyond her scope, so she acted on what was important to her daily life and where she felt she could be effective:

I think it's everywhere. I don't think it's just Fishtown. I think it's everywhere, but they can just hide it more [in the suburbs]. It's probably worse down here. But I don't think you can get away from it unless you move out in the sticks somewhere. (p. 3 of transcript)

Respondents #16 and #18 were on the board of the Fishtown Civic Association in the 1980's and heavily involved in the planning and execution of the major physical renovation projects throughout the neighborhood. Both resigned when the association became entangled with a local politician because they wanted to dedicate their efforts to improving their neighborhood, not the politician's career. However, because these respondents valued giving back to their community, they did not quit and remain inactive. Instead, respondent #16 formed the Friends of Fishtown, a

group that focused mainly on small-scale neighborhood beautification projects, such as cleaning lots and planting flowers. Respondent #18 became more involved with a local ecumenical committee and the non-profit local soup kitchen. Both of these respondents were active in their community for the sake of improving it. When they became disillusioned by what they were doing, they went on to find more meaningful work.

#### Direct Impact on the Respondent's Life

Respondent #22 saw some negative changes in Fishtown, and as a result was very safety conscious. She also felt the changes have had a negative effect on the neighborhood. Despite this, she still felt it was a great place to live: " My feeling is that the majority are still decently, good people. And probably the reason for that is because the people who live in Fishtown lived here all their lives, most of them" (p. 15 of transcript). She also assumed her life would not be affected any further in the future by any of these changes, " I guess I just think that my life is what it is now and it will be that way. It will stay that way" (p. 17 of transcript).

She had been involved in actions to stop unwanted developments on her block and tried to help some children who were being neglected by their parents by calling protective services. Neither effort was successful. Despite this, she said she would not stop trying:

If I felt I could make a difference I would work for it. I would try to make a difference. I find that more and more frustrating as time goes on because differences are so hard to make now. Oh yeah, If I really thought I could do something to make a difference I certainly wouldn't back off. (p. 25 of transcript)

In both of these instances she went directly to the source of the problem. She took matters in her own hands rather than contacting the Fishtown Civic Association or a local politician. She confronted the person who was building illegally on her block and threatened to complain to the authorities and to physically beat him, " I went after him right in the middle of the street... I said 'you know what I'm going to do with you? I am going to clean our street and I'm going to do it with your ass" (p. 19 of transcript). She took this issue very personally because the developer lied

to her and her neighbors and then insulted her when she confronted him about it. I believe that besides the actual personal insults, she interpreted the developer's disregard for her opinion as a threat to her integrity, happiness, and her rights in her neighborhood as a Fishtowner.

She did call the authorities about the neglected children because she knew who to call because she worked with abused and neglected children. She felt, however, that this had no affect. As far as she knew, there was no official investigation.

Because she interpreted the overall changes in her neighborhood as being minor, she felt no need to intervene. She saw them as causing minor inconveniences. She had an alarm system installed in her house and had to be more cautious when she entered her car. But overall, she still felt at home in Fishtown and expected to always feel that way. She saw nothing on the horizon challenging her happiness there. She took action when the changes affected her daily life.

Respondent #11 became involved with the Fishtown Civic Association when a halfway house for drug addicts was

planned for a site near his home. He has remained active with the organization because he lived within a few blocks of the nightclubs and he wanted to have a means for affecting their future since they may affect his.

Respondent #1 also mentioned the nightclubs along the riverfront as a change that he saw as negative for the neighborhood. When asked about his involvement he said, " I didn't do the demonstrations. I am not a demonstrating person. I will put my name in. I'll speak my piece. But I don't go and stand and walk up and down streets with my picture on TV" (p. 11 of transcript).

He was also very involved in the struggle to keep the only library in Fishtown open. The library was an important part of his life because he valued the access to books and as a teacher he knew what a necessity a library was for the students in the area. He and a group of neighbors met with city officials and gave them a tour of the library and petitions signed by residents who wanted the library saved. Not only was the library spared, but the city government funded major renovations and improvements to the structure.

This respondent was also active in the issues surrounding the building of a stretch of I-95 through Fishtown in the 1960's. He remained in contact with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDot) as they were making plans for and building a section of I-95 through Fishtown, one block from his house. At that time he and other neighbors were concerned over the future of the neighborhood and the lack of confidence taking over the residents of that section of Fishtown. After feeling satisfied with the information he received from PennDot, he and his wife went ahead and make improvements to their house, a display of their commitment to and confidence in their neighborhood. He did this in order to try to inspire the confidence of his neighbors, and said he was able do so.

This respondent also saw many positive changes in Fishtown, but was on guard against changes he saw as even remotely affecting his life and happiness in the neighborhood to which he was so committed. He reacted in ways that he felt were appropriate for the situation and his personal style when he believed the changes in Fishtown might affect his life.

### Happy with the Status Quo

A few respondents were very content with their lives in Fishtown and saw no troublesome changes, so they saw no need to be involved. The only change respondent #31 noticed was that a few of his elderly neighbors had passed away and obviously there was not much he could do about that. He was not aware of any other changes in Fishtown because he spent very little time there. He had no partner or children in the neighborhood and worked and recreated outside of the neighborhood. As a result he was only aware of differences he could see in the immediate area surrounding his house. He felt the neighborhood was very stable, and as a result saw no need to spend any of the limited free time he had in neighborhood activism.

Respondent #9 also felt that Fishtown was basically stable. There had been some minor problems, but these were countered by some improvements. She saw Fishtown as an attractive place:

We have a very active civic association. There are playgrounds around, a recreation center, a library

right around here. I think the block captains help you too... I think it's a neighborhood-type thing. People take pride in their neighborhood. (p. 3 of transcript)

She and other residents made physical improvements to their homes. At the same time newcomers who were attracted to the strong neighborhood environment and the older homes moved in and renovated their homes. She felt this made the neighborhood even stronger because it made people want to live there:

I think it would make the neighborhood a little better and somebody else sees the house being fixed up and a stranger moving in, they'd say " Oh, this must be a fairly nice place to live. Let's think about it." (p. 19 of transcript)

Besides seeing her neighborhood as thriving, this respondent said she had never had a problem there. When she was asked how she might handle various hypothetical problems she said:

Oh, I never ran into a problem. I would be perfectly truthful with you, I don't know what I'd do. I guess I would either see your Congressman or your State

Representative, or go to the police station and see if they could direct me to the right person. I've never really had a problem. Even the Civic Association is willing to help you in a case like that. (p. 25 of transcript)

This respondent felt there were no immediate problems in Fishtown that needed her attention. Instead, she chose to devote herself to children's issues, where she saw her chance to affect the future by influencing the children, " I work with children quite a bit in Bible School... Our children are our open vessels, just to work with them and instill ideas in them" (p. 19 of transcript). She said she has made her contribution to her neighborhood by working with the children and " keeping my house in good order" (p. 19 of transcript) .

### Activists

A group of respondents was defined as activists in addressing the first research question. They were labeled as activists because they were involved with one or more community organizations for the sake of improving the neighborhood and their involvement had spanned many years

and many issues. By definition, then, these respondents reacted to many changes in their neighborhood, whether the changes affected their daily lives or not. They saw the connection between their lives and their neighborhood. They knew that any change that affected Fishtown would affect them eventually, either directly or indirectly by affecting the way of life in that neighborhood. These respondents also instigated or encouraged changes that they thought would be beneficial to the neighborhood.

Respondent #10 was involved in civic battles to stop or curtail many of the changes that she thought were detrimental to Fishtown. She picketed, protested and attended meetings about the nightclubs along the waterfront. She was also a leader in the fight to gain more structure and supervision in a neighborhood halfway house whose clients were charged with harassing and committing crimes against some of the neighborhood residents. Even though she was not directly affected by most of these changes, she saw it as her duty to be involved and care about her neighbors. She complained that because people did not care about their neighborhood and each other:

It just doesn't look nice. I don't think it encourages people, I don't want to say a higher class, better people. I don't think it encourages people that have a lot of family morals, like a strong family unit to say 'hey, come on, why don't you buy a house here'. (p. 15 of transcript)

She felt that each person should be interested and involved in their community for the sake of preserving the community, " I think people are less interested. Not until it bothers them do they want to participate. I see it more and more in the community" (p. 4 of transcript). She said the problems with the nightclubs were pitting one area of the neighborhood against the other because of their indifference for their neighbor's problems:

I mean people on that side of Girard Avenue are greatly affected by it. People on the other side of Girard Avenue aren't affected by it so much... It's pitting one side against the other. It's like that's a different neighborhood than this side and it just makes matters worse. (p. 7 of transcript)

Other activists have made efforts to create positive change in their neighborhood. Respondents #15, #16, and #18 were involved with the Fishtown Civic Association's efforts in the 1980's to renovate and sell abandoned houses in Fishtown. Their goal was to stimulate interest in the neighborhood, from within and without. The ultimate goal was to inspire other residents to make renovations, leading to the physical improvement of the neighborhood. Respondent #16 said:

I was president of Fishtown Civic ... So I was involved when there was federal money coming in and we redid the houses, like on George Street and some others. It might have cost maybe \$40,000 or \$50,000 to renovate a house and just sell it at the market value... So a lot of people bought those properties and there were people that followed in Linwood properties, which was good for the neighborhood. We felt it was good for the neighborhood, so that we had a nice mixture of people (p. 5 of transcript).

Respondent #18 said:

Fishtown was one of them [designated areas] to receive funds for housing and sidewalks and trees and lighting and all that. And working with the Civic Association, we identified places to build up, where we thought...They pumped a lot of money into the place. It got some good press at the time. Jay Lamont talked about it on his radio show. We brought him up and took him for a tour through the community to show him what it was like and then he talked it up on his program. A lot of positives... They said all the good things that were happening... So that brought a lot of the newer people in. And some of the ones who came in had ties to the neighborhood before. Maybe their mother had been born here or something like that. And in some ways they were coming back to their roots. Some of the private construction worked out quite well. (p. 6 of transcript)

These respondents did what they saw as necessary to make Fishtown a better place to live, whether that meant working to discourage or control unwanted change, such as the nightclubs, or working to encourage positive change, such as cleaning and making physical improvements.

### Type of Action Related to How and Why Changes Have Occurred

The way a respondent reacted to encourage or discourage change in Fishtown took many forms. This reaction was dictated by past experiences, personal style, knowledge of available options, and his or her understanding of why and how these changes had occurred. Some respondents took various actions because of past successes or failures. Others were dictated by what they saw as acceptable behavior. A small number of respondents became involved in certain activities because of the prodding of a friend.

As was discussed above, a number of respondents took no action because of past experiences that they felt were unsuccessful. They felt they wasted their time and now they were very hesitant to take on those actions again, or in some cases to get involved at all.

Respondent #26 resigned the local political post she held, committee woman, when she felt that she could no longer be effective and it required time and effort from her that she could be putting towards her son's and grandson's schools:

I used to enjoy it all the time. Like I said, now there really isn't too much to do... You can't do nothing. You can't get your tickets fixed because there's nothing there. And really the only thing it is really about with the committee people is to get people elected... It's just getting too much for me now, because like I said, I'm involved with the two schools and I can't be running back and forth now. (pp. 15-16 of transcript)

She did not campaign for this political post, " Well years ago my sister was involved in it and she took me over one night and I just... They elected me in and I've been involved with it for about 15 years" (p. 15 of transcript), but, she was willing to do the work as long as she felt she could help her friends, family, and neighbors. She gave up the position and focussed on her volunteer work at her son's school when she felt that she could no longer be useful. She felt she could make a difference in her son's life by showing him how important his education was to her, enough that she would go spend her time there. Her hope was that it would make him value his education.

She had no concerns that the neighborhood would suffer when she resigned because she felt that she was no longer

effective. She also felt the neighborhood was improving without her involvement, " I feel the neighborhood is going to be built up more, and a little bit more safer... because I feel a lot of the Fishtowners that were moving out, they're moving back" (p. 10 of transcript). She also thought many service-oriented businesses would move back to the riverfront area because of tax breaks and the neighborhood would continue to improve.

Respondent #1 preferred to gather information from what he saw as the source and attend meetings to discuss the issues. He often called the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for information and updates while they were making plans to build a stretch of I-95 through Fishtown. He needed this information to decide whether he was going to invest any further in the neighborhood. He took the same approach to the nightclubs on Delaware Avenue, one block from his house. He chose to sign petitions and attend community meetings about the nightclubs rather than picket, which he said was not his style, " I don't do demonstrations. I am not a demonstrating person. I will put my name in. I'll speak my piece. But I don't go and stand, and walk up and down streets with my picture on TV" (p. 11 of transcript).

In many instances respondents saw the cause of many of the changes which had occurred in Fishtown as being related to nationwide shifts. Only three of the respondents, #15, #16, and #18 ever attempted to deal with these issues at that level. They believed drastic changes were needed to save the neighborhood from a cycle of decay and abandonment. These respondents were activists who believed they had to reach much farther than the borders of Fishtown in order to improve Fishtown. They were involved in the planning and distribution of city and federal funds that were obtained to make major physical improvements in Fishtown. Their goal was to strengthen the neighborhood by improving the physical appearance of the neighborhood, thereby attracting the attention of outsiders who might want to buy a house in Fishtown, especially professionals from the downtown area. Respondent #18 said the plan worked:

Chances are if a person is investing \$60,000 in a home, I think you want to try to make the place they live nice... I think if you invest a lot of money in something, I think you want to try to take care of it, or you wouldn't bother in the first place. So upgrading

the housing stock has helped bring in a better class of people. (p. 17 of transcript)

They understood that if they used these funds in the right way they could have far reaching effects for the future of the neighborhood.

Respondent #15 described how they chose which houses to renovate:

When I first came here I was very involved in the Civic Association. At that time there had been coming in from the city a fair amount of funding for housing renovations and we did George Street, and curbs, and sidewalks, and trees, and kind of improved the housing stock. And I sat on the committee that tried to evaluate that, and steer the money in a good way... Well, some of it was what would make the greatest impact. Many people thought that with so many houses being abandoned, that you needed to target, like the corner house. Target the corner house and it's going to anchor the block. Or a block that was pretty much in good shape, but maybe there was one house that was in really

bad shape. So if we fixed that one up, it would contain any further deterioration. (p. 5 of transcript)

They believed that if they made physical improvements to the neighborhood, these changes would inspire existing residents to follow. And once the neighborhood looked better, it would be possible to attract professional, higher income people to Fishtown. They saw Fishtown's proximity to downtown, the easy access to transportation, and affordable housing stock as selling points. They wanted these people to buy houses in Fishtown because they thought their presence would inspire more renovations and further confidence in the neighborhood, thereby making it more stable.

It was noteworthy, however, that two of these respondents, #16 and #18 resigned their Fishtown Civic Association memberships in protest when the group became involved with a local politician. Respondent #18 summed it up by saying, " I've always thought that politicians were supposed to serve us. We are not supposed to serve them. Too many people think if you work for them they'll give you stuff. You shouldn't have to. So I've never played the political game" (p. 14 of transcript). Both were still active in the community after their resignation, but now

through their church or through the non-political splinter group called the Friends of Fishtown. They still saw the value of their involvement, but did it in arenas that were of personal interest to them. It appeared that both were somewhat disheartened when their planned changes for the neighborhood did not "save" the neighborhood.

Respondent #10 protested, signed petitions, attended meetings, and even formed a splinter group, the Concerned Citizens of Fishtown, when the Fishtown Civic Association did not meet her needs in dealing with the charges of mismanagement and racism that surrounded the drug rehabilitation facility, the Brotherhood Mission. She also believed that many of the changes that had occurred in Fishtown were simply reflections of national trends. However, when she saw something that she thought she could affect, she fought. When possible, she went to the source. For example, she did picket outside of the nightclubs on Delaware Avenue. But she also attended meetings with some of the owners and a few local politicians. She questioned the licenses of the operators of the clubs, and tried to attack them through that route. She took the same route in her work to regulate or preferably close the Brotherhood Mission. She

attended meetings with city and police officials and the operators of the facility.

Other respondents did not react to neighborhood changes that they felt were beyond their control. For example, respondent #17 said there was an increase of drug-users and dealers in Fishtown. However, she felt these people were not from Fishtown and that it was the responsibility of the police to get rid of them and she just assumed they would do their job and the problem would go away.

Sometimes respondents became involved because a friend who was already involved encouraged them to do so. They became involved in issues that they felt were important, but only when a friend invited them to a meeting. Respondents #13 and #19 were friends with respondent #16, an activist. They mentioned that she had taken them to meetings and gotten them involved. Respondent #13 even followed respondent #16 when she resigned from the Fishtown Civic Association and they, along with a few other residents, formed the Friends of Fishtown, whose major focus was small-scale beautification projects in Fishtown. Respondent #30 was a friend of respondent #29. They both became involved with the Concerned Citizens of Fishtown, the group that

formed in an effort to regulate or close the Brotherhood Mission.

This points to the need for a personal contact or invitation that some individuals may need in order to get involved in their community. Friends who trusted each other became involved together, although in some cases they might not have gotten involved. This may be what respondent #14 was waiting for. She said she would like to be more involved, but no one has asked her. An advertisement or announcement in the local newspaper may not be sufficient for some to join or attend a meeting.

Sometimes the issue at hand was so pressing for the resident, he or she might break their silence, or their "normal" code of behavior and attend a meeting or join a group. For example, when a person saw a direct threat to his or her happiness or way of life he or she might get involved with that specific issue. In other cases, even that was not enough to get a reaction, instead, the respondent thought of moving to get away from the problem.

## Conclusions

Residents responded to neighborhood changes when they perceived the changes as impacting their lives immediately and directly. The change had to be seen a direct threat to their way of life in Fishtown. At issue here was the fact that many respondents saw changes that had affected the neighborhood, but said they had not affected their lives. Some respondents worried that the changes might be detrimental to the future of their neighborhood, but still they did not react because they did not see a connection between their existence in the neighborhood and the general well being of the neighborhood.

A small number of respondents did not take action to encourage or discourage change in their neighborhood because they had made unsuccessful attempts in the past. They were either left feeling powerless, or just hoped that someone else would fix the problem, whether that someone else be "the community group," a local politician, or the newer, professional, higher income residents.

Finally, many of those who had thought about the possibility that their neighborhood might become a place in

which they would not want to live said they would move away if that happened. At the same time many of these respondents stated that they stayed in Fishtown because of attachment to the neighborhood and/or the people there and because they could not afford to move.

Most of these respondents had not made the commitment to try to save or improve their neighborhood. Instead they closed themselves off from the possibility that the problems would not go away. They pinned their hopes on some outside source and did not look at what they might do to help. Sometimes this was due to believing they would be able to manage in the future because the neighborhood would improve or at least stay the same. For others it was because they did not see the connection between their lives and the future of the neighborhood. They believed they could control their lives, even if everything around them was out of control. They also thought they could choose where to live, when in reality, many could not.

The activists were more likely to respond to a problem or encourage change, even when it did not affect their lives directly. They behaved in this way for two reasons. First, they had a commitment to making Fishtown a better place to

live, better for themselves and their neighbors. Second, they realized that anything that affected the neighborhood in general had a great potential to affect them if it changed the way of life in their neighborhood. They did not have the false impression being able to isolate themselves from changes in their environment.

In general, when respondents did respond to encourage or discourage neighborhood change they did so because they felt they could be effective. In doing so, they often tackled the problem at a level where they thought they could have an impact. For example, even though one respondent spoke of rampant dirt, graffiti, and abandoned buildings, she said she would like to be involved in planting flowers and cleaning lots. This was a manageable task and investment of her time, and one that she thought would help improve the appearance of the neighborhood. This was also demonstrated by the disillusioned respondents who gave up after feeling they had no effect and by the activists who resigned their board memberships when they felt their mission was compromised. The activists went on to work where they thought they could continue their work to give back to their community. For example, even though respondent #16, an activist, resigned her seat on the Board of the Fishtown

Civic Association because she did not want to be associated with the politician who was controlling the organization, she continued to be an active member of the Friends of Fishtown, where she could work to improve the appearance of the neighborhood.

Another consideration for each respondent was their level of comfort with certain actions. Respondent #10 enjoyed picketing, being in the limelight and antagonizing people she did not agree with, whereas respondents #1 and #5 said they would never picket. It was not how they wanted to behave and not what they saw as the most effective method in solving the problem at hand. Other respondents preferred to call whomever they believed to be the appropriate authority, whose job it was to handle such problems. Respondents #16 and #18 refused to devote their time to an organization that they believed was working to promote a politician, not a better neighborhood.

Some people needed a personal invitation in order to become involved. These respondents went to work on issues that were important to them, but only after being invited by a friend who was already active. It may be that many people are not comfortable walking into an existing group because

they are not sure how they will be received. The personal invitation was enough to make a few of these respondents comfortable enough to become involved, and it was what respondent #14 was waiting for. An advertisement in the local newspaper was not sufficient. Many people only found the courage to get involved when the threat to their happiness or lifestyle became so great that it outweighed the discomfort of entering the unknown, the community organization.

Finally, it also appears as though many of these respondents were not aware of how a community organization functions. This was also the complaint of respondents #7 and #10, who were active members of the Fishtown Civic Association at the time they were interviewed. Respondent #7 said, " They [local residents] just don't want to get involved. I don't know. You just don't know how people think. It's hard to tell" (p. 5 f transcript). She said one of the board members wrote a letter to the local newspaper,

About people not getting involved and things like that. Like she stressed, this is your community and you want to live in a safe environment and a clean environment, you've got to get off your duff and do something then.

You can't sit back and let everybody do the work. I mean this is a civic organization with eight board members. Eight board members cannot go out and clean Fishtown. You know? Eight board members, the development of the riverfront. We don't have the power to stop what's going on over there. (p. 5 of transcript)

This sums up the issue for many respondents. Some of them felt their neighbors were not doing their part. Others did not know where to turn or felt ineffective. While others were afraid to try, hoping that someone would ask them to help.

As with other findings in this study, there was a great deal of disagreement between how the residents perceived the impact of changes on their neighborhood, whether and how these changes would affect their lives, and the possibility of certain actions. This can be described as cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance exists when there is a discrepancy between knowledge, opinions or beliefs held by an individual. In this case, most of the respondents said they were not affected by changes in Fishtown and hoped and believed they would remain unaffected in the future. At the

same time, these respondents discussed feeling sad about what their neighborhood has or may become. They were more safety conscious and restricted the activity of their children. Some even went so far as to say they would move if they had to, while at other times they said they could not afford to move. This will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, Conclusions and Implications.

### Conclusions & Implications

At the time I designed this research I conceptualized neighborhood change as a series of discrete events which the residents would react to in a rational way, similar to the way one might expect a resident to react to a series of flash fires in his or her home. I expected the respondents to perceive a change, namely gentrification, evaluate that a major change in Fishtown would eventually impact their lives, and therefore take action. I thought that those respondents who did not react did so because they either because they did not realize the impact the change could have on the neighborhood and their lives; because they did not care about Fishtown; or because of practical reasons, such as not knowing how to react, a lack of time, or discomfort with attending public meetings, etc. While some of this was true, the process was much more complicated and gentrification was not the most important change for any of these respondents except #15, who identified more with the newer residents.

For most respondents there appeared to be a threshold for reaction. This threshold was affected by their

attachment to the neighborhood, the type of change, their assessment of the impact of the change on their life and neighborhood, expected impact in the future, past experience with neighborhood problems, prior involvement in neighborhood issues, self-identity and world view. The respondents' reactions also depended upon their they could be effective.

This threshold can be explained by various theoretical approaches: cognitive dissonance theory, reference group theory, learned helplessness, and neighborhood attachment. Each will be discussed later in this section. None of these theories explains all of the findings, but they do offer possible explanations for specific findings. I cannot conclude from this study which of these, if any, is an accurate or valid explanation for these findings but I offer them all as plausible explanations.

#### Summary of Findings

Attachment to Fishtown had a strong effect on the respondents' interpretation of the changes he or she saw. All but two of the respondents who participated in this research expressed some form of attachment to Fishtown. Some

had a long-standing attachment that developed over many years, with many positive memories. This attachment did not prevent these respondents from seeing negative changes.. However, unlike those who did not have such a strong bond with Fishtown, these respondents believed the negative changes had not had much of an impact on their neighborhood. They still thought it was a great place to live.

Others said they felt this way at one time, but were now disheartened by the changes they saw around. These respondents mentioned all negative changes in Fishtown. Another group said they were attached to the neighborhood because their family was there. All of these respondents said they were Fishtowners. All of these respondents felt the negative changes had a detrimental effect on the neighborhood, but they also felt the neighborhood was salvageable.

The two respondents who felt no connection to the neighborhood felt they did not belong there and that they never belonged there. One mentioned all negative changes and thought the neighborhood was hopeless. The other mentioned all positive changes and felt the neighborhood was improving. However, this respondent had an abusive childhood

in Fishtown and was unable to move away. It is possible that he was rationalizing the fact that he thought only positive changes were occurring in Fishtown in order to maintain his survival because he had to live there.

There was no substantial difference in the types of changes mentioned by these respondents. What was different was their interpretation of the effects of the changes on the neighborhood and their lives. Those who had a strong historical attachment said there was a negligible effect on the neighborhood and their lives, and they expected this to continue in the future. Those with a weaker attachment were more likely to describe how the changes have affected the neighborhood, and sometimes their lives. However, even some of these respondents said the changes had not impacted them. The two respondents who said they had no attachment to Fishtown just wanted to get away and did not care about whether or how the changes would affect the neighborhood in the future.

The respondents' connection to Fishtown had a definite effect on their interpretation of many neighborhood changes, especially those involving newcomers. It colored their reasoning about why someone would want to move to Fishtown

and the effect their presence may have. For example, those with a deep, historical connection, the "proud Fishtowners," found it perfectly natural that a young, middle-class professional would want to live in Fishtown because they saw it as a safe, solid, family-oriented, affordable, and convenient place. They expected these newer residents to reinforce that image and to fit right in. In contrast, those who had no attachment to the neighborhood saw these same newcomers in a suspicious light. Respondent #23 said they had no attachment to the neighborhood and that they either hoped to make a profit from renting properties there, or they lived there temporarily because it was convenient to their work in downtown Philadelphia.

Almost all respondents were aware of new facilities or changes in existing facilities when those facilities were not meant to be used by the long-term residents. They were also painfully aware of the loss of facilities when it meant a drastic change in the way of life for themselves or close friends and relatives. The arrival of new residents was an issue when they were seen as different from the existing residents, especially when that difference was unwanted. For most of those who mentioned them, these changes were seen as a possible infringement on their comfort and perhaps even

their way of life in Fishtown. For example, respondent #10 described how the new, higher income residents were "different" from the existing residents because she felt their main concern was to "beautify" Fishtown. She, however, saw the neighborhood as having many more serious problems.

Personal experience was the most direct means of knowing about neighborhood change. Aitken (1992) found in a study of neighborhood change in California, that residents were most aware of changes which occurred within a two-block radius of their house. Those who were active politically and/or socially also had greater access to information because they had more contact with other people, therefore more information. Respondents who were politically active also sought information about their neighborhood. They read local papers for announcements and crime statistics and those who were involved with the Fishtown Civic Association made use of information available through that office. Most respondents said they did not trust the media, therefore did not use it as a firsthand source of information about changes in their neighborhood. Rather, they relied on the neighborhood newspapers, not the citywide papers, to get

information about developments surrounding particular issues.

Respondents were more attentive to information that was relevant to them personally. For example, those who had children at home were more likely to mention issues that would affect their children. Elderly respondents often mentioned changes that affected their independent functioning, such as the closing of local convenience stores. Plans for long-term residence had no effect on whether the respondent monitored for neighborhood change. However, it did affect the changes mentioned. The respondents who wanted to move to get away from Fishtown mentioned only negative changes. It was not clear whether they perceived Fishtown as a neighborhood in a downward spiral, so they wanted to move, or if they were justifying their desire to leave. The respondents who were content in Fishtown or who would only move away to a dream house mentioned a mix of positive and negative changes. Some residents' comments suggested honest contentment in Fishtown, while others expressed a desire to move but stayed for financial or emotional reasons.

The perceived source of the change had a great impact on whether and how the respondents reacted. Many of those who saw a change as being due to forces beyond their control saw no purpose in trying to do anything about it. For example, respondent #16, who was an activist, had serious concerns about drug abuse in Fishtown but did nothing about it because she felt it was beyond her control. In contrast, others were taught that every problem has a solution. These respondents did react to neighborhood change, but after assessing where they would be most effective. Respondent #7 would learn of a problem in the neighborhood and then make the assessment about who to make a telephone call or write a letter, and to whom. Others saw themselves and others as independent beings who had a right to live as they chose, within reason. This way of thinking precluded taking action. It justified taking care of your little corner of the world, while others took care of themselves. All of this changed when the respondents felt their lives were directly affected. Then they felt justified in taking action. However, it still is not clear how the judgement was made that their lives had been affected. In many instances respondents described changing their behavior as a result of changes in Fishtown, but still they said they have been unaffected by these changes.

A group of respondents emerged who were active in their community just for the sake of giving back to their community and making it a better place for all residents of Fishtown. I labeled them as activists because their involvement had spanned many years and many issues. They have reacted to changes in Fishtown, and have even brought about changes in Fishtown, because they were concerned with the quality of life there, not just specific issues. Not all of the activists had a deep historical attachment to Fishtown. One said she was not attached at all. Another said she was attached to her house but not the neighborhood or neighbors. They all shared the common belief that they were responsible to give something back to their community. A few of them had been taught this by their parents, while others said it was an extension of their religious beliefs: to treat themselves and others with respect. One respondent said both of these reasons led to her activism and influenced how she expressed it. She would never be involved with an organization that supported beliefs or behaviors that were in contrast to her religious upbringing.

Many of the respondents were also homeowners. They had a financial investment in the neighborhood so it was in

their interest to keep up the quality of the neighborhood. Respondent #14 expressed the concern that if the neighborhood stayed in its "downward spiral" that her house would lose value and that she might not be able to sell it if she decided to leave the neighborhood.

In sum, all of these forces influenced a resident's perception of and reaction to changes in his or her neighborhood. However, there are a few plausible explanations for the psychological processes at work here. They will be explored in detail. As I mentioned earlier, none of them explains all of these findings. They all offer some explanation, but raise more questions than they answer.

#### Reference group theory

A reference group is a group that an individual identifies with and by whose standards the individual judges his or her situation (Merton & Rossi, 1957). It involves "processes of evaluation and self-appraisal in which the individual takes the values or standards of other individuals and groups as a comparative frame of reference" (Merton & Rossi, 1957, p.237). In a study of reference group affiliation in six different western countries Kelley and

Evans (1995) found that the majority of people in each of these countries identified themselves as middle-class, even though most of them did not fit the objective income criteria for their respective countries. This was also the case for many of the respondents from this research. They described a Fishtowner, and therefore themselves, as hard-working, middle-class, honest, people who valued their family and neighborhood.

Many also acknowledged that there was another group of people who lived in Fishtown, who did not fit this description. They described these people as not caring about their neighborhood or children. They said these people drank, used drugs, and were usually unemployed. Many of the respondents feared these people would become the majority. This may explain why they welcomed the newer, more educated, middle-class professionals to Fishtown. They saw their presence as making it less likely that those hard-working residents with family values would be outnumbered.

Reference group theory offers a useful framework for understanding some of the findings of this research. Many of the respondents had middle-class values but not middle-class income. However, because of these middle-class values, they

felt a common bond with, and welcomed the new middle-class residents to Fishtown. Rather than feeling that their territory was being invaded, they welcomed those who shared their values. They expected the newcomers to fit in, and if anything, to enhance the neighborhood because some of the respondents expected these newcomers to work side-by-side with them, or in some cases instead of them, for the good of the neighborhood. They also expected the newer residents to be more successful at obtaining city services because they are more educated, and they might have a better understanding of to deal with these problems. However, they also thought city government officials would pay more attention to their demands because they had higher incomes. Respondent #24 summed it up by saying:

I think the new people that are coming in from Center City, I think they'll get more involved with things that are going on because a lot of them moved from Center City because of the crime there, so they are coming here. They don't want it here. So maybe they'll have more pull than we will because they have more money than us and they are professional people and people will pay more attention to those kind of people than us. (p. 23 of transcript)

Some of the respondents said they already knew many of the newer residents who were involved as block captains. Respondent #18 thought these newcomers would feel more invested in the neighborhood and take better care of it because they paid what he thought was a lot of money for their houses. He thought they would work to protect their investment. In summary, the common thread was that many of the respondents identified with the newcomers in their middle-class values and commitment to Fishtown, even though they usually had very different lifestyles.

I did interview two people who had recently moved to Fishtown. One was a secretary from another working/middle-class area of Philadelphia. However, she was very ambitious and saw herself more as a young, urban, professional and very different from most of the long-term residents of Fishtown. She was very open about the fact that she and her husband bought their house so that they could renovate it and sell it for a profit. They had very little invested in Fishtown besides their cash. The second newcomer was in the entertainment industry and had moved to Fishtown at the suggestion of his friend, respondent #23, who felt absolutely no connection to Fishtown and wanted to move

away. He was very content after living there for only nine months and was considering buying a house and settling there. He was not sure about how connected he felt with other people in Fishtown because he had only been there a short time and spent much of it travelling for work. However, he felt comfortable with the thought of making the neighborhood his home.

The relationship that will develop over time between the long-term residents and the newcomers remains to be seen. Justa (1984) found similar sentiments among long-term residents of Park Slope Brooklyn as their neighborhood was in the process of gentrification. However, she found that many of the newer residents felt the neighborhood would be improved if many of the long-term residents were gone. The dynamics in Fishtown may be very different because of the decline that the real estate market experienced in the early 1990's. Smith (1996) described how many of these "urban pioneers" were now stuck with properties that they paid exorbitant prices for because the economy collapsed. A follow-up study would be needed to know the status of the newcomers, their effect on Fishtown, and their relationship to the long-term residents.

### Learned helplessness theory

The respondents' hesitance to react to neighborhood change could also be explained as a form of learned helplessness. Burns and Seligman (1991) stated that the way an individual explains negative events influences his or her reaction to those events. More specifically, they defined three important axes in their theory: internal versus external cause; a stable versus unstable event; and, whether the event is global or specific. They found that individuals who explained negative events as internal, stable, and global tended not to react, to exhibit depressive symptoms. This was because the individual was more likely to blame him- or herself, to feel that these things always happen, and in this situation, how and why would a person react?

This may offer a plausible explanation for a very limited number of respondents, those who were disillusioned. I am not stating that they were depressed, but that they reacted, or failed to react, as a depressed person would when it came to changes in their neighborhood. They may behave differently in other arenas of their lives, but I cannot address that possibility since I do not have other

data available. According to this theory, however, these individuals have learned that their past attempts to make changes in their neighborhood have not been successful, so they expect to be ineffective in the future and so they do not take action. They also said the cause of the change was pervasive and external (reflections of national trends), so why bother?

For example, respondent #25 said she saw rampant drug abuse in Fishtown but that she thought it was a reflection of a larger change in society, " I think it's everywhere. Yea, I know it's everywhere" (p. 3 of transcript). And she also believed that drug abuse was at the root of many of the other problems she saw in Fishtown, " Well basically drugs are making them change. It does change people. So, you know, they're not going to care about no one, none of their kids, none of the people around them, just themselves" (p. 3 of transcript). She had gotten involved with the Town Watch on her block. However, despite attempts to eradicate it, she said drug use became even more prevalent. She saw people buying and using drugs out in the open on her block. She was so disgusted that she stopped participating in Town Watch and moved her family off that block. At the time of the interview she was not involved with any neighborhood groups

or organizations. One possible explanation is that she learned that she could not be affective, so she gave up trying. Another possibility was that she acted where she thought could have an impact; she moved her family off that block. Some may argue that she acted in a very practical manner, doing what was in her power, rather than in a "helpless" manner.

I cannot say that learned helplessness was the reason people did not react to changes in Fishtown, but I offer it as one possible explanation for some of the behavior documented. Further study would be necessary to define the role, if any, of learned helplessness in the process of reacting to neighborhood change.

### Cognitive dissonance theory

All of the respondents, except the two who claimed to have no attachment to Fishtown, said Fishtown was a part of who they were. They saw themselves as a " Fishtowner." As I stated above, for some there was a deep, historical bond. They loved their neighborhood and felt proud to be a part of it. Other respondents who felt ambivalent towards Fishtown had also loved their neighborhood at one time, but those feelings were diminishing. However, they still felt a connection to the neighborhood but they were disturbed by what they thought it was becoming. Even many of those who felt attached to the neighborhood only because they had family there said that they were Fishtowners because they were born and raised there. Each of these respondents had some part of their identity bound with that of the neighborhood.

The attachment an individual feels for his or her neighborhood is associated with knowledge, beliefs, and opinions about that neighborhood. It is through these beliefs, opinions and knowledge that cognitive dissonance can arise. Cognitive dissonance is present when an

individual has conflicting knowledge, opinions, and/or beliefs about " the environment, about oneself, or about one's behavior" (Festinger, 1957, p. 3). Dissonance arises as information becomes available, or events occur that are in conflict with existing knowledge, beliefs, or opinions. In the case of this research, that information would arise as a result of changes taking place in Fishtown.

Cognitive dissonance is one plausible explanation for the relationship between the respondent's attachment to Fishtown and his or her interpretation and assessment of changes that had occurred there. Those respondents who expressed a long-standing historical attachment to Fishtown did mention seeing negative changes in Fishtown. However, despite the nature of some of these changes, they felt the neighborhood was still a good place to live and that they have not been greatly affected.

For example, respondent #22 said she saw more drug abuse; people were less caring about the neighborhood and each other; and that the neighborhood is less safe and the children are more destructive and troublesome. As a result of these changes she has installed a security system in her house and locks her car immediately after entering it. She

has become extremely safety conscious. Despite this, she still feels that Fishtown is a good neighborhood and that she has not been affected by these changes, and she expects it to remain that way in the future. In terms of cognitive dissonance theory, it can be said that she has a very strong and positive set of cognitions (knowledge, opinions, and beliefs) about Fishtown and any information that is not in agreement with this causes cognitive dissonance.

According to Festinger (1957), when cognitive dissonance exists there is a strong need for the individual to reduce it and to avoid situations that would increase it. There are three ways to reduce cognitive dissonance. The first is to change your opinions/cognitions, which can be done by obtaining new information. However, there is always the chance that this may cause dissonance in other areas. Another option is to change the opposition's cognitions or change your environment. The third way to reduce cognitive dissonance is to create or accentuate differences between yourself and the person or group raising the issue that is causing dissonance. This offers justification for opinions, thereby reducing the dissonance.

In the case of respondent #22, even though she took precautions to protect herself and her home, she said that she still felt very safe in Fishtown because she knew many people and she believed they would help her if the needed help:

My house is alarmed. I would never, ever have thought about that years ago. I could go to bed and leave my windows open and I know I could wake up in the morning and my house would just be fresher or cooler. But the safety factor would have never entered my mind. I can't do that now. I don't feel that I can do that now. I personally feel a safety factor in my mind... But I've been here so long, and like I said, with my background, with my family, and with my husband's family, I've got that kind of safety. The fact that people know who they are and they are not going to take any shit. (p. 2 of transcript)

She addressed the safety issue, but then backed away from it saying she really was not worried. To explain it in terms of cognitive dissonance theory: the thought that she was not safe in the neighborhood that was so much a part of her was in such conflict with her image of that neighborhood

that she had to find a reason to say that it was not really applicable in her case.

The same explanation of avoidance of cognitive dissonance may explain the behavior of respondent, #23, who felt absolutely no connection to Fishtown. Her image of Fishtown was completely negative. She could see no redeeming value in the neighborhood. She even denied that growing up there had any impact on her identity, " I see my life as growing up in terms of, like, going to school and doing things like that. Not necessarily having anything to with Fishtown" (p. 19 of transcript). She felt she had nothing in common with most other residents of Fishtown and purposely avoided contact with them, even though she grew up there. She interpreted all changes she saw in the neighborhood in a consonant way, negative. Only this respondent and #10 had something negative to say about the newer, higher income residents of Fishtown. This respondent said they were only interested in Fishtown as a place to rent properties for a profit, or as a convenient bedroom community. Even though she identified herself as a middle-class professional, she could not even imagine that any of the newcomers might actually be invested and care about Fishtown. Instead she saw them as having limited interest in

the neighborhood: financial or convenience. If she believed they actually had a psychological investment in Fishtown, that would mean the neighborhood was not as hopeless as she thought it was, thereby causing cognitive dissonance.

Respondent #33 also felt nothing but contempt for the Fishtown of his youth and felt no attachment to the neighborhood. However, because he could not afford to move away, he interpreted all of the changes he saw as portending a great rebirth for the neighborhood. This respondent had been severely abused as a child and as a result felt a compelling need to have a home that was "safe and warm." Because he could not move away from Fishtown to his dream home, he made Fishtown the dream home he needed. He needed to feel safe and warm especially because he was still living one block away from his abuser, so he convinced himself that Fishtown was becoming a better place to live.

A similar pattern can be seen in those planning long-term residence in Fishtown compared with those who are planning or would like to move to get away from Fishtown. Those who want to get away mentioned only negative changes, fitting in with their belief that Fishtown is a place to get away from. On the other hand, those who did not want to get

away from Fishtown mentioned a mix of positive and negative changes, denoting an opinion or belief that Fishtown is not perfect, but it is also not a place that they need to get away from, at least not immediately.

Cognitive dissonance theory is also useful in explaining the finding that respondents noticed neighborhood change when it clashed with their image of Fishtown and the way of life there. They noticed facilities, such as antique shops, that were not expected to be used by long-term residents, whether the facility was new or a change in an existing one. They mentioned those that were lost when the loss meant a change in the way of life for residents there, such as Jack Frost Sugar refinery and the local grocery stores. It is noteworthy that this change did not have to affect them directly, but might have effected someone they knew. Respondents also mentioned new residents when they were seen as different from "Fishtowners." All of these changes would mean a shift in their cognitions of Fishtown, possibly leading to cognitive dissonance if not processed in a way to reduce it. If the newcomers were seen as similar to existing residents in ways that were important: middle-class values, commitment to the neighborhood, their arrival was welcomed. If they were seen as being different, as did

respondent #10 who thought the young, educated professionals were "different from Fishtowners," then their arrival caused some discomfort. In her case she said she did not like them, thinking they were too liberal and concerned with issues of little importance, such as planting flowers. In contrast, for respondents who saw those activities as worthwhile, these newcomers were a welcome addition to the neighborhood.

As was mentioned above, many of these respondents did not turn to the media as a source of information about changes in their neighborhood, because they did not trust the media. They had seen Fishtown portrayed in ways that they felt were unfair and inaccurate. As a result, they did not trust other information presented by the news media. Many of the respondents felt that it was biased and untrustworthy. In the language of cognitive dissonance, they may have been avoiding information that would increase dissonance, when the goal is to decrease it.

Even though most of the respondents mentioned at least some type of negative change, most of them did not actively respond to those changes. In general, unless the respondent was an activist, the only time a respondent did something

about neighborhood change was when the perceived change was viewed as an immediate and direct threat to his or her way of life, comfort, and/or happiness in Fishtown. The explanation in terms of cognitive dissonance theory is that it was only when the change becomes an imminent threat that the respondent could no longer reduce the inner tension caused by the dissonance. Up until this point the respondent has been successful at reducing the cognitive dissonance by either avoiding conflicting information, such as that presented in certain media or community meetings, or by creating a difference between their cognitions and the conflicting information, for example, discounting the media accounts of the neighborhood. When these tactics no longer work, they are forced to either change their environment or their opinion. This is usually the point where the resident will have an active response to neighborhood change.

Activists would be described in terms of cognitive dissonance theory as individuals whose cognitions about themselves encompass the importance and necessity to give back and contribute to the community. However, even the activists did not respond to every change they saw. They also went through a process of evaluation regarding the source of the change, the impact on the neighborhood, and

whether and how they could be affective. For example, respondent #16 who was personally familiar with the devastating effects drug abuse has had on the neighborhood was not involved in any work to counteract it. She said she was not sure that it could be changed and that if it continued on its current course she and her family may have to leave the neighborhood. This allowed her a reduction of the dissonance between her activist ideology and the problem that she perceived as hopeless.

Cognitive dissonance theory cannot be used to explain all of the findings of this research but it does offer one possible explanation for many of the findings. It may be fitting for some individuals and circumstances, but not all, because it does not allow for the possibility that the individual was aware of the contradictions in his or way of thinking, and that they made decisions based on those contradictions. They may have been fully aware of the concessions they were making. I am unable to address this issue directly because the interview was not designed to answer those questions. This issue emerged after the analysis of the interviews. However, I would like to discuss the findings of this study in terms of the residents having a threshold of tolerance for neighborhood change, where they

are seen as cognizant of their decisions rather than simply working to reduce dissonance.

Threshold of tolerance for neighborhood change

The bond with Fishtown served not only as a filter through which residents perceived changes around them, it was also the buffer through which their decisions to react were made. Their attachment to Fishtown influenced how much negative change they could tolerate. It appears as though each person had a threshold of tolerance for neighborhood change. This threshold could change over time and was influenced by the respondents' attachment to Fishtown. There was one exception, the activists. They will be discussed in more detail later.

Those respondents who were more attached to Fishtown were more flexible when it came to change in their neighborhood. They were more willing to shift what they saw as acceptable, rather than give up on their neighborhood. Respondents who said they had an historical attachment to Fishtown tended to be middle-aged and had lived in Fishtown for at least 30 years. They had accumulated many pleasant memories over that time period. Their lives were anchored in that neighborhood and they were loyal to it. This bond did not preclude them from seeing negative change in the

neighborhood. It appears as though it helped buffer the effects. These respondents were much more forgiving of problems that arose in their neighborhood. They were invested emotionally in their neighborhood and were working to keep the good feelings they had for the place they loved so much. It was similar to the way we are forgiving of mistakes made by family members or close friends when we would not forgive others who were not so close. There is an investment in that relationship that is not easily given up, so we forgive the transgression rather than end the relationship. They were also more likely than other respondents to say that the changes in Fishtown had no effect on the neighborhood or their lives. They were not very eager or willing to pack up and move away. However, they were not always very eager or willing to take action in response to the changes either.

As the bond with Fishtown weakened so did the tolerance for negative change. Those who were ambivalent about the neighborhood were much harsher in their judgment of the effects of change on the neighborhood and themselves. They apparently developed these feelings of ambivalence as a result of seeing their neighborhood change in ways that they were unhappy about. Respondent #24 said, " I really loved my

neighborhood, but I don't really love it anymore. I would like it better if things started changing, getting back the way they used to be" (p. 21 of transcript). However, they were no more likely to react than those with a very strong bond to Fishtown.

The respondent who said she felt absolutely no connection to Fishtown mentioned only negative changes in Fishtown. Other respondents, regardless of their attachment to Fishtown, said the fact that higher income, more educated people had moved into the neighborhood was an improvement, but this respondent saw it in a negative light. Her negative feelings towards Fishtown did not seem to be a result of feeling that the neighborhood was in a downward spiral. Rather, they were a result of feeling that she was different from other people in Fishtown. She felt she did not belong there, but was stuck there for financial reasons. She was not open to the possibility that there might be something positive going on in the neighborhood because of her bitterness about being forced to live in a neighborhood she did not like,. She wanted no part of it.

The idea of a threshold of tolerance for neighborhood change is also supported by earlier work by Stone (1982). In

a study of the connection between "Place and Identity," he found that long-term residents of the neighborhood he studied were less likely than the newer residents to mention neighborhood change when the changes were considered to be moderate. He hypothesized that the long-term residents were more "embedded," having a more stable relationship with their neighborhood, therefore they were less affected by even moderate levels of change in their neighborhood. He did caution, however, that because the identity of the long-term residents was interwoven with that of their neighborhood, large scale changes that affected this relationship could be "traumatic" for them. This may be the situation for some of the residents who hoped to move away from Fishtown.

The activists had various levels of attachment to Fishtown. A few of them had historical attachments while others were ambivalent. One went so far as to say she was only attached to her house, not the neighborhood. Attachment to their neighborhood was not the motivation for their actions, it was the overriding belief that being active and responsible to your community was the right thing to do. This belief was more important than any feelings towards Fishtown. However, they did devote their time and energy to

causes that were important to them, and where they felt they could be effective.

The idea of a threshold of change is also useful in explaining that as a group, even though the respondents noticed changes in facilities that were not expected to be used by long-term residents, they did not always react. These changes included: the appearance of new facilities that were not expected to be used by long-term residents, such as antique and framing shops; the loss of existing facilities, for example, The American Can Company; a change in the use of a current facility, so that it would no longer be used by current residents, such as Penn Treaty Park; and the appearance of new residents when they were perceived to be different from the long-term residents. Winkel (1981) described this process as monitoring the environment for manageability. When the change was judged as being manageable, the resident felt no need to react. However, in some cases, certain changes may require that the respondent adjust his or threshold in order to judge a change as manageable, therefore, not substantially impacting their relationship with their neighborhood.

To use the same example that was presented earlier, respondent #22 discussed her concern over an increase in crime in Fishtown and the measures she took to prevent becoming a victim. After discussing her concerns, she went on to discuss how the reputation of her family would deter people from victimizing her. She made the judgement that the preventative measures she took, along with the safety of her family's reputation, offered more positives than the negative of her concerns about crime. The positives outweighed the negatives and she decided that Fishtown was still a good place to live. However, she also mentioned that years ago she never imagined that she would ever have to be concerned about crime in Fishtown. She has had to raise her threshold for tolerance of these concerns, and in this instance was able to do so successfully and keep her positive relationship with Fishtown intact.

Contact with other residents, whether social and/or political, appears to foster this process by providing information about developments in the neighborhood. The information may be positive or negative, but it appears to be necessary to maintain any type of positive image of the neighborhood. Those respondents who were not involved with any type of neighborhood activity only mentioned negative

changes in Fishtown. This was also true of the one respondent who felt no connection to the neighborhood. However, no other group of respondents mentioned only negative changes. It may be that those who mentioned only negative changes were so discouraged by what they saw that they could see no use in getting involved. But it is equally likely that involvement with other people in the neighborhood provides a source for information about positive changes in Fishtown, which is necessary to maintain a positive relationship with the neighborhood.

Respondent's self-identity and world-view also influenced the respondent's threshold for neighborhood change by affecting their understanding of the change and their reaction to it. Respondents who identified themselves as "proud Fishtowners" were open to the newer, professional residents because they could relate to their desire to live in Fishtown. They saw their middle-class values, work ethic, and appreciation for Fishtown as common bonds between themselves and these newcomers, who on the surface, were different from them in many ways. These basic commonalties made these particular newcomers acceptable. This change was within their threshold for tolerance.

Other respondents felt the same way, but because they saw themselves as more like the newcomers than the existing residents. Not only was this change within their threshold, but they welcomed it because they hoped the new residents would have a positive influence on the neighborhood and their lives. Some were hoping the new residents would get involved in civic activities, with the expectation that they would command more respect than the existing residents from city officials, and as a result be more effective in acquiring services the neighborhood needed. Others were also looking forward to a relationship with these newer residents that they did not have with existing residents.

One respondent saw herself on a moral crusade. Her goal was to protect the way she thought Fishtown should be, the "right" way. She had a very low threshold for change. She interpreted many of the changes around her as being threatening to the way of life in Fishtown. She was always involved in a protest or meeting because of this. She was also one of the few people who felt that the newer, more educated and higher income residents were an unwelcome change. In describing the newcomers she said:

Basically they're different than Fishtowners. A lot of them are professionals, white-collar professionals; a lot of yuppies. And different than Fishtown people are... I guess you can say more liberal. These are the type of people that would like to see more prisons built and a lot of reforming of hard core criminals... which I think, and I know a lot of people around here think they're not reformable... These are the type of people moving into the neighborhood. (respondent #10, p. 18 of transcript)

A few of the respondents espoused world-views which would preclude reacting to many changes. One such view was that changes in the neighborhood were beyond their control because they were occurring everywhere. Another view was that each person should live as they see fit. This meant that if a resident did not like something in Fishtown, they had to put up with it because they could not expect somebody else to change their behavior. These world-views allowed for a very high threshold for neighborhood change.

The respondent's threshold for neighborhood change had the most profound effect on his or her judgement of whether or not to react to the change, which in turn, can have the

effect of changing their threshold. Unless the respondent was an activist, he or she only reacted to change when the change was perceived as having a direct and negative impact on his or her life. The main point of this explanation, however, is that under the conditions described above, this threshold was variable. It appears likely that respondents made a conscious and purposeful decision which would allow them to remain in their neighborhood as long as the changes had not surpassed their threshold for tolerance. However, there were respondents in the study who had surpassed their level of tolerance, but were unable to move. Respondent #23 was a good example. She had a very low threshold for neighborhood change because she felt that she did not belong in Fishtown, mainly because she thought she was a better person than most of the people who lived there. The only reason she stayed was because she could not afford to move into a neighborhood where she would feel more comfortable. She interpreted every change occurring in Fishtown in a negative light because of her low opinion of the neighborhood and the residents. Rather than seeing the newer, higher income residents as bringing new ideas and hope to the neighborhood, she saw them as using the neighborhood for financial gain. That may have been true in some instances, but not in all.

There were instances when the respondent described how they had changed their behavior because of changes in Fishtown, and then said later that the changes have had no effect on their lives. It appears that if a respondent is able to make adjustments to their lives, routines, and/or behavior and are able to maintain their quality of life, they feel overall that their lives have not been affected by neighborhood change. At these times they appear to adjust their tolerance for neighborhood change to encompass their experiences, but overall still feel they have the same quality of life. In effect, they judge that their lives have not been affected.

For example, respondent #7 described more drug abuse and crime in Fishtown. She said that as a result of these changes, her children do not have the same freedom that she had growing up in Fishtown. Her children had a strict curfew, were not allowed to "hang-out" on corners as she did, and spend more time in structured activities outside of the neighborhood. However, despite these changes she said that she had not been affected by neighborhood change:

I'm handling it as I go along. I mean it's not shutting me into my home or things like that. I find other activities for my children. It's not that I'm saying " Oh my God, all this stuff is going on and I can't go out" ... It's not stopping me. (p. 14 of transcript)

Respondents are separating changes in their behavior or routines from changes that prevent them from meeting their needs. Along the same lines, if they are able to have their needs comfortably met in their neighborhood, they make the judgement that their neighborhood has not been affected by the changes. Respondents who were disillusioned with their involvement in community activities expressed these same sentiments. They could tolerate the change as long as they could meet their needs.

Residents reacted when a change hindered meeting their needs, whether it was the threat of losing their library or being unable to sleep at night without listening to music from a nightclub too close to their house. Activists acted and reacted when they thought they could enhance the neighborhood or when they believed their own, or a neighbor's happiness was in jeopardy.

Overall, the cognitive dissonance theory and the idea of a threshold for tolerance of neighborhood change explain many of the findings of this research. I cannot claim that either is the correct answer because this study was not designed to address these issues. The idea of a threshold of tolerance views the residents to be conscious and purposeful in their actions. Even though people are not aware of their motivations at all times, they are also not mindless robots reacting passively to their environment.

## Implications

### Implications of findings for community activism

One of the most important findings of this research was that an individual can be encouraged and taught to be an activist. This can come through parental guidance and through religious teachings. I think the key is that the activists in this study learned the value of giving back to their community from someone they respected, whether it be a parent or a clergy person.

In some instances the respondent was told directly that it is important to give back to your community. In other instances the respondents remembered seeing their parents helping others. This role modeling is something every parent, teacher, and clergy person should consider. They have the ability to influence generations of activists by word or deed.

It could also be very useful for community organizers and activists to understand the processes an individual goes through before he or she decides to get involved. For many

years organizers have known that the residents of a community have to define an issue on their own before they will act on it. This research shows that it is a very personal and individual process and that people will arrive at the point of reacting to community change at different times because of this process. They go into the process with different attachments, experiences, and resources. As a result, they will come to different conclusions.

It is also important that community organizers understand that many residents do not understand how community organizations work. Some residents may not know that it is their duty to be involved. Some seemed to believe that it is the responsibility of the members of the organization to do the work for the neighborhood. This shows a lack of understanding of the fact that community organizations are stronger and more effective when many residents participate.

A small number of respondents were also hesitant to attend meetings until a friend who was already involved took them to a meeting. This points to the need for outreach at the individual level. Some people may need to be personally

invited to attend with a friend in order to overcome their reluctance.

Respondents also stressed some basic needs for Fishtown. First, almost all of them had some contact with the Fishtown Civic Association, whether as a member or as someone who has received help from the organization. The residents in Fishtown were proud of and gained comfort and confidence in knowing they had someone to turn to if they needed help. It is important that this, or some similar organization have reliable funding in Fishtown. Another basic need was for some family oriented recreation and entertainment options in the neighborhood. Many of the residents expressed displeasure with the lack of such opportunities. They would like to have a movie theatre, a bowling alley, or a roller skating rink in the neighborhood. Finally, there is a desperate need for funds to generate small business in order to revive the main business area, Girard Avenue. As some of the respondents mentioned, not only do these businesses provide needed goods at convenient locations, but they also served as centers for information exchange and socialization.

### Implications for future research

This research created at least as many questions as it answered. It appears that a process exists whereby residents evaluate the effects of neighborhood change on their ability to meet their needs in that neighborhood. It would be useful to examine this process directly. More information is needed to clarify how a resident makes the decision that his or life has or will be affected by neighborhood change.

It is important to directly assess the theory put forth in this research. The concept of threshold for tolerance of neighborhood change needs to be developed and examined. What affects this threshold? How and when does a person decide when the threshold has been surpassed? What is the effect on those people who cannot move even though their tolerance for neighborhood change has been surpassed?

Another research question which arose during the analyses was whether the sample was representative of the entire neighborhood. The average age for the sample was 10 years higher than the average age taken from the 1990 Census data for that neighborhood. It would be worthwhile to replicate this study with a sample that was representative

of the neighborhood in all important aspects, such as: age, gender, race, education and occupational status, homeownership, etc. so that any findings could be generalized to the neighborhood as a whole, not a select sample.

## Appendix A: Issues Related to Conducting Research in Our Neighborhood of Origin

There were advantages and disadvantages to conducting research in the neighborhood in which I grew up. The major advantage was that I had easier access to respondents. Those who knew me were willing to be interviewed, and willing to introduce me to their friend and family. Those who did not know me often knew a relative of mine. In both cases the respondents were eager to help a "Fishtown girl" in her education. The respondents were also eager to make me feel welcome in their homes because they did not see me as a stranger.

However, because so many respondent were willing to introduce me other potential respondents I had to be careful that I was not interviewing a network of friends and family. Although, some would argue that is exactly what Fishtown is. I had to decline to interview a few respondents in favor of others who were not connected to previous respondents.

At times I was faced with the opportunity to interview personal friends and relatives of mine. I did not interview anyone who had prior knowledge of the research. However, I had to deal with the issues of my objectivity, the respondents' prior knowledge and experiences with me, and whether they were saying what they thought I wanted them to say. I felt in some cases that it took some time for the respondent to realize that I was not judging them, that they did not have to impress me. I tried to make it

clear that I was interested in what people who were currently living in Fishtown thought about the neighborhood. I also let them know that I was not living there at the time, and had no right or wrong answer in mind, but that I was interested in their opinions.

I do believe that some of the people who were closer to my age were more concerned with my personal opinion of them, whether I thought they were uneducated or unsuccessful. I think for some of them, this was an opportunity to tell me what they knew about, Fishtown. I believe it may have had some affect on the way they spoke to me, not in "Fishtownese," but not so much in what they said.

There were instances where respondents assumed that I knew what they were talking about or that I agreed with them. I tried to be on guard for these instances throughout each of the interviews. I dealt with the assumptions by asking the respondents to explain what they mean in their own words. At times, I had to ask the respondent to allow me to finish the interview before I discussed my opinions or experiences so that I would not influence what they had to say. I tried to be direct with the respondents about not wanting them to make assumptions about me or allowing my opinions to influence them.

Overall, however, I enjoyed this experience. I had the opportunity to make many new acquaintances. I was proud to know most of them. There were a few whom I did not agree with, and I

tried to be very careful not to react. Sometimes I identified so closely, at other times I felt so alienated, by what the respondent was saying. In both cases, I was very careful not to make my reaction known. I also made a conscious effort throughout the interviews to ask myself whether I was clearly understanding what the respondent was saying, or was I embellishing or interpreting their responses with my own experiences in Fishtown. When I was not sure, I asked the respondent to explain what they were saying in more detail, "pretend I'm not from Fishtown."

Appendix B: Map of Philadelphia Census Tracts



Appendix C: Demographic Characteristics of Fishtown/Kensington Residents from 1980 Census

CENSUS TRACT:	<u>FISHTOWN</u>			<u>KENSINGTON</u>				
	<u>143</u>	<u>158</u>	<u>177</u>	<u>186</u>	<u>188</u>	<u>192</u>	<u>193</u>	<u>194</u>
Median age (years)	34.9	31.9	30.4	40.8	32.8	31.4	38.5	35.5
<b>Income</b>								
Median HH income (\$)	15,106	15,943	13,331	15,494	15,524	14,395	18,977	15,448
Per capita Income (\$)	5,513	6,139	4,847	6,170	5,673	5,012	6,963	6,414
<b>Marital Status</b>								
Married %	45	46	48	52	49	49	49	49
Divorced %	11	11	11	7	9	9	8	10
Widowed %	14	13	13	14	13	12	15	19
Never Married %	30	30	28	27	28	29	28	22
<b>Race (%)</b>								
White	98	98	99	99	99	99	99	99
Black	<1	<1	0	<1	0	0	0	0
Asian	1	1	<1	<1	<1	<1	0	1
Other	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	1	0
<b>Education</b>								
% Adults H.S. Grad.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
% College grad. or more	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>Occupation (% EACH)</b>								
Manage/Professional	13	11	6	12	7	6	26	18
Tech/Sales/Admin.	34	34	30	31	33	36	43	48
Service	12	13	15	14	13	11	0	8
Prod, Craft & Repair	13	32	17	18	14	17	11	18
Laborers	28	10	31	30	32	27	21	9

## Appendix D: Housing Characteristics of Fishtown/Kensington from 1980 Census

	<u>FISHTOWN</u>			<u>KENSINGTON</u>					
<b>TRACT:</b>	<b>CENSUS</b>	<u>143</u>	<u>158</u>	<u>177</u>	<u>186</u>	<u>188</u>	<u>192</u>	<u>193</u>	<u>194</u>
Avg. # Persons/Household		2.59	2.83	2.67	2.51	2.74	2.83	2.73	2.42
# 1 person occ. Units		205	704	798	668	754	709	10	34
# 2 person occ. units		175	626	885	680	739	754	16	41
Median house value (\$)		14,400	14,600	11,300	19,800	16,000	14,200	20,500	17,000
% Homeownership		71	76	73	87	78	42	73	40

Appendix E: Demographic Characteristics of Fishtown/Kensington  
Residents from 1990 Census

CENSUS TRACT:	<u>FISHTOWN</u>		<u>KENSINGTON</u>					
	<u>143</u>	<u>158</u>	<u>177</u>	<u>186</u>	<u>188</u>	<u>192</u>	<u>193</u>	<u>194</u>
<b>Median age (years)</b>	34.4	33.7	29	39.4	32.1	29.8	30.5	30.4
<b>Income</b>								
Median HH income (\$)	26,970	25,205	16,217	21,154	23,453	20,377	40,750	16,250
Per capita Income (\$)	13,268	11,192	6,929	11,122	9,788	8519	14,478	8,830
<b>Marital Status</b>								
Married %	36	41	39	48	46	43	50	46
Divorced %	20	12	15	9	12	13	15	16
Widowed %	10	11	12	15	12	12	7	10
Never Married	34	36	34	28	30	32	28	28
<b>Race (%)</b>								
White	95	98	90	99	99	96	90	75
Black	4	<1	1	<1	0	0	0	10
Asian	<1	1	2	<1	<1	1	0	6
Other	<1	<1	7	<1	<1	3	10	9
<b>Education</b>								
% Adults H.S. Grad.	31	32	30	35	36	38	32	26
% College grad. or more	14.4	8.3	3.4	7	3.9	2.2	0	0
<b>Occupation (% EACH)</b>								
Manage/Professional	31	24	11	21	10	10	0	17
Tech/Sales/Admin.	20	15	34	29	33	33	32	48
Service	7	17	12	9	11	13	22	8
Production, Craft & Repair	28	18	15	16	19	17	7	18
Laborers	17	26	27	25	27	27	39	9

Appendix F: Demographic Characteristics of Fishtown/Kensington  
Residents from 1990 Census

		<u>FISHTOWN</u>			<u>KENSINGTON</u>				
<b>TRACT:</b>	<b>CENSUS</b>	<u>143</u>	<u>158</u>	<u>177</u>	<u>186</u>	<u>188</u>	<u>192</u>	<u>193</u>	<u>194</u>
Avg. # Persons/Household		2.4	2.62	2.87	2.36	2.69	2.78	3.05	2.78
# 1 person occ. Units		205	704	798	668	754	709	10	34
# 2 person occ. units		171	586	718	634	669	633	12	31
Median house value(\$)		49,200	43,400	19,000	43,300	29,900	25,200	36,800	28,600
% Homeownership		70	72	71	87	75	52	73	55

## APPENDIX G: Social Participation Inventory

Before we start the interview, I will not use your name, and you can stop the interview at any time. I am interested in what types of organizations you belong to, how you participate in the group's activities (go to meetings, functions, and/or rallies, and or contribute money), how often you participate, and whether the organization is located inside of Fishtown or outside. So I will read this list to you, and if you are involved with any of the groups on the list, we will fill out the necessary information for that organization.

## a) Types of Participation (list all that apply)

1=donates money      2=serves on committees  
 3=attends meetings    4=volunteers      5=membership  
 6=fundraising        7=other

## b) How often he/she participates

0=never              1=3x/year or less      2=4 to 11x/year  
 3=once/month      4=1-3 times/month    5=1/week  
 6=2-4 times/week    7=5 times/week or more

## c) Location inside/outside of Fishtown      0=out      1=in

Organization

Type of Part. (a) Freq. part. (b) Loc. (c) Last time

Church

Which:

Church choir

Which:

Church club

Which:

PTA

Women's group

Which:

Political group

Which:

Animal right's

Which:

Union

Which:

1) Club

Which:

2) Club

Which:

3) Club

Which:

Other group

Which:

Sports groups

Which:

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## Appendix H: Original Open-ended Interview

- 1) Has Fishtown changed since you were younger/moved here/left?
  - a) How?    b) When did you notice the changes?
- 2) Did you read about these changes in any newspaper?
  - a) Which changes did you read about?
  - b) In which newspaper(s) did you read about this?
  - c) What did the newspaper say?
- 3) Did you hear about these changes on television?
  - a) Which changes did you hear about?
  - b) Which television show(s) did you hear about this on?
  - c) What did they say on the show(s)?
- 4) Are the changes in the neighborhood positive or negative (good or bad)?
  - a) Why?
- 5) Why do you think these changes happened?
- 6) Have you ever done anything to change the neighborhood or something in the neighborhood?
  - a) What?                    b) Why/Why not?
- 7) Have you ever noticed any new types of stores or businesses in Fishtown?
  - a) What are they?
  - b) Where are they?
  - c) When did you notice them?
  - d) Have you used any of them?
    1. Which ones?

2. Why?
3. Would you use any of them? Why not?
  - e) How do you feel about the new businesses/stores?
    1. Are they good for the neighborhood? (Why/Why not?)
    - f) Who do you think uses these new businesses?
- 8) Thinking about how the neighborhood has changed, is there a place or places that you have good memories of that are not here anymore?
  - a) What was it?
  - b) Where was it?
  - c) Why did you like it so much?
  - d) Do you know why it's not here anymore?
- 9) Is there a place or places that are not here anymore that you are glad to get rid of?
  - a) What was it?
  - b) Where was it?
  - c) Why didn't you like it?
  - d) Do you know why it's not here anymore?
- 10) Have you ever thought of moving from Fishtown?
  - a) When?
  - b) Why were you thinking of moving?
  - c) Why did you stay?
- 11) Do you have plans to move from Fishtown in the future?
  - a) Why?
- 12) Would you like to move from Fishtown?
  - a) Why?

- b) Why do you stay?
- 13) Do you feel attached to Fishtown in any way?
- a) How?
  - b) Why/Why not?
- 14) Do you have a set of values or beliefs that affect what you do or how you feel?
- a) What are they?
  - b) How do they influence what you do and how you feel?
  - c) How did they develop? Where did they come from?
- 15) Do you have something that you would call a philosophy of life or a point-of-view that influences what you do?
- a) What is your philosophy of life?
  - b) How did it develop? Where did it come from?
  - c) Does it influence your daily life?
    - 1. How?
  - d) How would you say it has affected your actions or what you do?

## Appendix I: Events Analysis #1

In the following set of questions, I will be asking you to discuss 2 events which have happened in Fishtown during the past twenty years. Take your time and think about 2 events that you would like to discuss.

1) Which 2 events would you like to discuss?

event 1:                      event 2:

2) Tell me what you know about event 1.

3) How did you find out about event 1?

a) Were you involved?      b) If yes, how?

4) How do you feel about event 1?

5) Has event 1 affected Fishtown?

a) How has event 1 affected Fishtown?

6) Has event 1 affected your life in any way?

a) How has event 1 affected your life?

7) Why did you choose to discuss event 1?

8) Tell me what you know about event 2.

9) How did you find out about event 2?

a) Were you involved?                      b) If yes, how?

10) How do you feel about Event 2?

11) Has event 2 affected Fishtown?

a) How has event 2 affected Fishtown?

12) Has event 2 affected your life in any way?

a) How has event 2 affected your life?

13) Why did you choose to discuss event 2?

### Appendix J: Events Analysis #2

In the following set of questions, I will be asking you to discuss 2 events which you mentioned when I asked you how Fishtown has changed. Take your time and think about 2 events that you would like to discuss.

1) Which 2 events would you like to discuss?

event 1:            event 2:

2) Tell me what you know about event 1.

3) How did you find out about event 1?

a) Were you involved?                      b) If yes, how?

4) How do you feel about event 1?

5) Has event 1 affected Fishtown?

a) How has event 1 affected Fishtown?

6) Has event 1 affected your life in any way?

a) How has event 1 affected your life?

7) Why did you choose to discuss event 1?

8) Tell me what you know about event 2.

9) How did you find out about event 2?

a) Were you involved?                      b) If yes, how?

10) How do you feel about event 2?

11) Has event 2 affected Fishtown?

a) How has event 2 affected Fishtown?

12) Has event 2 affected your life in any way?

a) How has event 2 affected your life?

13) Why did you choose to discuss event 2?

### Appendix K: Events Analysis #3

In the following set of questions, I will be asking you to discuss 2 events which you can choose from a list which I have. I developed this list by asking four long-term residents to list 2 to 4 changes which have occurred in Fishtown over the past twenty years. Take your time and think about 2 events that you would like to discuss.

The list is:

1. The new mall on Aramingo Avenue
2. More drugs
3. New people moving into Fishtown
4. More crime and violence
5. People care less about the neighborhood
6. Not as many stores in the neighborhood.

1) Which 2 events would you like to discuss?

event 1:                      event 2:

2) Tell me what you know about event 1.

3) How did you find out about event 1?

a) Were you involved?                      b) If yes, how?

4) How do you feel about event 1?

5) Has event 1 affected Fishtown?

a) How has event 1 affected Fishtown?

6) Has event 1 affected your life in any way?

a) How has event 1 affected your life?

- 7) Why did you choose to discuss event 1?
- 8) Tell me what you know about event 2.
- 9) How did you find out about event 2?
  - a) Were you involved?
  - b) If yes, how?
- 10) How do you feel about event 2?
- 11) Has event 2 affected Fishtown?
  - a) How has event 2 affected Fishtown?
- 12) Has event 2 affected your life in any way?
  - a) How has event 2 affected your life?
- 13) Why did you choose to discuss event 2?

Appendix L: Environmental Autobiography from Original  
Interview

I would like you to tell me your life story, starting from the time you moved to Fishtown. If you were born here, then you would begin back as far as you can remember. If you were not born here, start with why you moved to Fishtown. I am interested in whether what went on in Fishtown, the places, people, and events in the neighborhood have influenced your life. For example, I was born in Fishtown. We lived on Richmond Street. The first house I remember was our house on the corner of Richmond and Earl Streets. I remember our next-door neighbors, the Cramers, and how their daughter Kim and I used to get up early in the morning and climb around on chairs in their kitchen cabinets to get ourselves some cereal. My father died while we lived in that house. My mother felt that house had too many memories, so we moved to Hewson Street after he died. So memories of my childhood are tied to the people, places and events of the neighborhood. This is how I would like you to tell me your life story.

For the People Who Have Moved From Fishtown:

I would also like to know why you moved away from Fishtown?

Do you ever go back?

What do you do there?

How do you feel there?

Has your life changed since you moved?

How?

Would you ever move back?

How do you feel about Fishtown since you have left?

Have you kept in touch with any people in Fishtown?

Do you ever think about your life in Fishtown?

## APPENDIX M: Open-Ended Questions (Current Residents)

I would like to ask you some questions about Fishtown. Take as much time as you need to think about and answer the questions.

1. Has Fishtown changed since you (were younger/moved here)?
  - a) How?
  - b) When did you notice these changes?
  - c) What made you notice/Why?
  
- 2) Did you read about these changes in any newspaper?
  - a) Which changes did you read about?
  - b) In which newspaper(s) did you read this?
  - c) What did the article say?
  - d) How often have you seen articles about this?
  - e) Do you read any other newspapers?
  - f) Do you agree with what the article said?
  - g) Have you talked about any of the articles with anybody?           Who?           Which articles?           Why?
  
- 3) Did you hear about these changes on T.V.?
  - a) Which changes did you hear about?
  - b) Which television show(s) did you hear about this on?
  - c) What did they say on the show?
  - d) How often have you seen shows or stories about this?
  - e) Do you agree with what the show or story said?

- f) Have you talked about any of the shows or stories with anybody?           Who?           Which shows/stories?           Why?
- 4) What do you know about each of these changes?  
a) How did you find out about these changes?  
b) Were you involved in them in any way?           How?
- 5) Are the changes in the neighborhood positive or negative (good or bad)?           Why?
- 6) Have they affected the neighborhood?           How?
- 7) Have they affected your life in any way?           How?  
a) Is there anything that you do differently because of any of these changes?           What?           Why?
- 8) Do you expect them to affect your life in the future?  
a) Why  
b) How?
- 9) Why do you think these changes happened?
- 10) Have you seen any new people moving into Fishtown?  
a) What do you know about these people?  
b) Have they had any affect on Fishtown?  
c) Have they had any affect on your life?

11) Have you ever done anything to change something in the neighborhood?

- a) What?
- b) Why?
- c) Why not?

12) Have you noticed any new stores or businesses in the neighborhood?

- a) What are they?
- b) Where?
- c) When did you notice them?
- d) Have you used any of them?
  - 1) which ones?
  - 2) why?/why not?
  - 3) would you use any of them in the future?
  - 4) why/why not?
- e) Has the fact that they are there affected your life in any way? How?
- f) Who do you think uses them?
- g) How do you feel about the new businesses/stores?
- h) Are they good for the neighborhood?
  - 1) why/why not?

13) Thinking about how the neighborhood has changed, is there a place or places that you have good memories of that is no longer here?

- a) What was it?

- b) Where was it?
- c) Why did you like it?
- d) Do you know why it is no longer here?

14) Are there places that are no longer here, that you are glad to get rid of?

- a) What were they?
- b) Where were they?
- c) Why didn't you like this place?
- d) Do you know why it's gone?

15) Are there places still here that you don't use anymore?

- a) What are they?
- b) Why don't you use them anymore?

16) What was it like for you to grow up here/What was it like for you to move here?

- a) Did you have friends here?
- b) Are you still friends?
- c) Do you have any relatives who live in Fishtown?

17) Are you glad you (grew up/moved) here? Why?/Why not?

- a) Were there any good things about (growing up/moving) here?      What?
- b) Were there any bad things about (growing up/moving) here?      What?

IF APPLICABLE:

18) What was it like to raise your children here?

- a) Are you glad you raised (are raising) your children here?
- b) Why?/Why not?

19) Have you ever thought of moving from Fishtown?

- a) When?
- b) Why?
- c) Why did you stay?

20) Have you ever lived outside of Fishtown?

- a) When?
- b) For how long?
- c) Why did you move out?
- d) Why did you move back?
- e) How do the other places where you have lived in compared to Fishtown?

21) Do you have plans to move from Fishtown? Why?

22) Would you like to move from Fishtown?

- a) Why?
- b) Why do you stay?

23) Do you feel attached to Fishtown in any way?

- a) How?
- b) Why/why not?

24) If you have a problem in the neighborhood, or something that you would want to get rid of or stop, for example, a

noisy neighbor or an abandoned house, what do you do about it?

25) What do you do if there is something that the neighborhood needs, for example, a new traffic light or a new program at the recreation center?

26) Do you have a set of values or beliefs that affect what you do or how you feel?

a) What are they?

b) How do they influence what you do and how you feel?

c) How did they develop? Where did they come from?

27) Do you have something that you would call a philosophy of life or a motto that you live by?

a) What is it?

b) Will you explain it to me? What does it mean?

c) How did it develop, where did it come from?

d) Does it influence your everyday life? How?

e) How would you say it affects what things you do or how you do them?

28) Does your philosophy of life, or motto, affect how you would handle a problem, or something you don't like in Fishtown?

a) If yes how, if no, why not?

29) How would you describe people in Fishtown?

30) Would you say there's such a thing as a "Fishtowner"?

a) Describe a "Fishtowner" for me.

b) Are you a Fishtowner?

c) Why/Whynot?

When I asked you about how Fishtown has changed, you mentioned.... There are some other changes that interested me. You did not mention \_\_\_ of these changes. There is no wrong or right answer, but I wanted to ask you what you knew about the changes that I had in mind. These changes are: the upgrading of Penn Treaty Park, the closing of Chandler School, and the new people in the neighborhood(yuppies).

1. Have you heard about these?

2. What do you know about:

a) The upgrading of Penn Treaty park

b) the closing of Chandler school

c) new people in the neighborhood?

3. How do you know this?

4. Is there a reason that you did not mention any of these when I asked about changes in Fishtown?

5. Do you feel that these changes are important? Why/Why not?

6. Have any of them affected Fishtown in any way? How?

7. Have any of them affected your life in any way?

Appendix N: Introduction # 1: PEOPLE CURRENTLY LIVING IN  
FISHTOWN

For People Who I Interview by Knocking on their Door:

Hi. My name is Doris Hunt. I grew up in Fishtown, and now I'm working on my Ph.D. In order to finish I am doing a study of Fishtown.

Do you have a minute?

NO: Is there a better time for us to talk? (make Appt.)

If not, thank you for your time.

YES: I am doing a study of Fishtown, and whether the people who live here feel it has changed since you've lived here. I would like to ask you questions about this, and how you feel about the neighborhood. The interview takes about 2 and one-half hours.

Do you have the time now?

NO: Make appt.

YES: Thanks, I appreciate your help.

How long have you lived in Fishtown? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you mind if I tape record the interview? That makes it easier for me to remember what you said. You can also listen to the tapes if you would like. I will only use what you feel comfortable with. I will not use anybody 's name, and you can end the interview at any time.

Appendix O: Introduction # 1: PEOPLE CURRENTLY LIVING IN  
FISHTOWN

People who were referred to me:

Hi. My name is Doris Hunt. I was given your name by  
\_\_\_\_\_. I grew up in Fishtown, and now I'm working  
on my Ph.D. In order to finish I am doing a study of  
Fishtown. Do you have a minute?

NO: Is there a better time for us to talk? (make Appt.)

If not, thank you for your time.

YES: I am doing a study of Fishtown, and whether the people  
who live here feel it has changed since you've lived here. I  
would like to ask you questions about this, and how you feel  
about the neighborhood. The interview takes about 2 and one-  
half hours (see page 118). Do you have the time now?

NO: Make appt.

YES: Thanks, I appreciate your help.

How long have you lived in Fishtown?\_\_\_\_\_

Do you mind if I tape record the interview? That makes it  
easier for me to remember what you said. You can also listen  
to the tapes if you would like. I will only use what you  
feel comfortable with. I will not use anybody's name, and  
you can end the interview at any time.

APPENDIX P: Social Participation (people NOT living in  
Fishtown)

Before we start the interview, I do not use anybody's name and you can stop the interview at any time. I am interested in what types of organizations you belonged to in the last two years you lived in Fishtown, how you participated in the group's activities (go to meetings, functions, and/or rallies, and or contribute money), how often you participated, and whether the organization was located inside of Fishtown or outside. So I will read this list to you, and if you are involved with any of the groups on the list, we will fill out the necessary information for that organization.

(a) Types of Participation (list all that apply)

1=donates money      2=serves on committees  
3=attends meetings   4=volunteers      5=membership  
6=fundraising      7=other

(b) How often he/she participates

0=never      1=3x/year or less      2=4 to 11x/year  
3=once/month   4=2-3 times/month      5=1/week  
6=2-4 times/week      7=5 times/week or more

(c) Location inside/outside of Fishtown      0=out      1=in

Organization

Type of Part(a)    How often part.(b)    Located(c)    Last time

Go to Church

Which:

Church choir

Which:

Church club

Which:

PTA

Which:

Women's group

Which:

Political group

Which:

Animal right's

Which:

Union

Which:

1) Club

Which:

2) Club

Which:

3) Club

Which:

Other group

Which:

Sports groups

Which:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix Q: Open-Ended Questions for Non-Residents

I would like to ask you some questions about Fishtown. Take as much time as you need to think about and answer the questions.

1) Has Fishtown changed since you (grew up there/first moved there)? How?

a) When did you notice these changes?

b) What made you notice/Why?

c) Has it changed since you left? How?

How do you know this?

2) Did you read about these changes in any newspaper?

a) Which changes did you read about?

b) In which newspaper(s) did you read this?

c) What did the article say?

d) How often have you seen articles about this?

e) Do you read any other newspapers?

f) Do you agree with what the article said?

g) Have you talked about any of the articles with anybody? Who? Which articles? Why?

3) Did you hear about these changes on T.V.?

a) Which changes did you hear about?

b) Which television show(s) did you hear about this on?

c) What did they say on the show?

d) How often have you seen shows or stories about this?

e) Do you agree with what the show or story said?

- g) Have you talked about any of the shows or stories with anybody? Who? Which shows/stories? Why?
- 4) What do you know about each of these changes?
- a) How did you find out about these changes?
- b) Were you involved in them in any way? How?
- 5) Are the changes in the neighborhood positive or negative (good or bad)? Why?
- 6) Have they affected the neighborhood? How?
- 7) Did they affect your life in any way? How?
- a) Was there anything that you did differently because of any of these changes? What? Why?
- 8) Why do you think these changes happened?
- 9) Did you ever do anything to change something in the neighborhood?
- a) What? b) Why?/ Why not?
- 10) Did you notice any new stores or businesses in the neighborhood?
- a) What were they?
- b) Where?
- c) When did you notice them?

- d) Did you use any of them?
    - 1) which ones?
    - 2) why?/why not?
  - e) Did the fact that they were there affect your life in any way? How?
  - f) Who do you think uses them?
  - g) How did you feel about the new businesses/stores?
  - h) Are they good for the neighborhood?
    - 1) why/why not?
- 11) Did you notice any new people moving into Fishtown?
- a) What do you know about them?
  - b) Have they had any effect on Fishtown?
  - c) Have they had any effect on your life?
- 12) Thinking about how the neighborhood has changed, is there a place or places that you have good memories of that is no longer there?
- a) What was it?
  - b) Where was it?
  - c) Why did you like it?
  - d) Do you know why it is no longer here?
- 13) Are there places that are no longer there, that you were glad to get rid of?
- a) What were they?
  - b) Where were they?

c) Why didn't you like this place?

d) Do you know why it's gone?

14) Are there places still there that you would not use anymore?

a) What are they?

b) Why don't you use them anymore?

15) Are you glad you (grew up/moved) there? Why?/Why not?

a) What were some of the good things about (growing up/moving) there?

b) What were some of the bad things about (growing up/moving) there?

16) What was it like for you to grow up there/What was it like for you to move here?

a) Did you have friends there?

b) Do you still have friends there?

c) Did you have any relatives who lived in Fishtown at the time?

17) Are you glad you raised your children there?

Why?/Why not?

18) Did you think of moving from Fishtown before you actually did?

- a) When?
  - b) Why?
  - c) Why did you stay?
- 19) Have you ever lived outside of Fishtown before this?
- a) When?
  - b) For how long?
  - c) Why did you move out?
  - d) Why did you move back?
  - e) How do the other places where you have lived in compare to Fishtown?
- 20) Do you feel attached to Fishtown in any way?
- a) How?
  - b) Why/why not?
- 21) If you had a problem in the neighborhood when you lived there, or something that you would want to get rid of or stop, for example, a noisy neighbor or an abandoned house, what do you do about it?
- 22) What did you do if there was something that the neighborhood needed, for example, a new traffic light or a new program at the recreation center?
- 23) Do you have a set of values or beliefs that affect what you do or how you feel?
- a) What are they?

- b) How do they influence what you do and how you feel?
- c) How did they develop? Where did they come from?

24) Do you have something that you would call a philosophy of life or a motto that you live by?

- a) What is it?
- b) Will you explain it to me? What does it mean?
- c) How did it develop, where did it come from?
- d) Does it influence your everyday life?       How?
- e) How would you say it affects what things you do or how you do them?

25) Did your philosophy of life affect how you would have handled a problem, or something you didn't like in Fishtown?

- a) How or Why not?

26) How would you describe people in Fishtown?

27) Would you say there's such a thing as a "Fishtowner"?

- a) Describe a "Fishtowner" for me.
- b) Are you a "Fishtowner"?
- c) Why/Why not?

When I asked you about how Fishtown has changed, you mentioned.... there are some other changes that interested me. You did not mention \_\_\_ of these changes. There is no wrong or right answer, but I wanted to ask you what you knew about the changes that I had in mind. These changes are: the upgrading of Penn Treaty Park, the closing of Chandler School, and the new people in the neighborhood(yuppies).

1. Have you heard about these?
2. What do you know about:
  - a) The upgrading of penn Treaty park
  - b) the closing of Chandler School
  - c) new people in the neighborhood
3. How do you know this?
4. Is there a reason that you did not mention any of these when I asked you about changes in Fishtown?
5. Do you feel that these changes are important? Why/Why not?
6. Have any of them affected Fishtown in any way? How?
7. Have any of them affected your life in any way?

## Appendix R: Relations to Fishtown for Non-Residents

1. I would like to know why you moved away from Fishtown.
2. Do you ever go back?      What do you do there?
3. How did you feel when you were there?
4. Has your life changed since you moved?      How?
5. Would you ever move back?
6. How do you feel about Fishtown since you've left?
7. Have you kept in touch with people there?
  - a) Do you have friends/relatives there?
8. Do you ever think about your life there?
9. Do you ever talk about it?

## APPENDIX S: Background Information

Next, I would like to ask you to complete this sheet, which contains some questions about your background. I will ask everybody in the study to do this just so I can describe the people I interviewed. For example, if I interview thirty-five people and all of them were women, I would have to say this is a study of women's ideas about Fishtown. If you feel that any question is too personal, please skip it. But let me remind you that I will not be using anybody's name or address in the study.

1. Were you born in Fishtown? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your occupation \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2a) Where is your job located \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you have children? \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3a) How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3b) How many live in Fishtown? \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3c) How old are they? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do your children go to school in Fishtown? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the highest level of school which you have completed? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are you living:
  - a) alone
  - b) with a spouse
  - c) w/partner
  - d) w/children

- e) other \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you own or rent your home? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Have you had a vacation in the past year?
- IF YES: Where did you go?            For how Long?
9. What was your total family income for the past year?
- Please circle one:
- |                    |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. 0- \$5000       | 4. \$15,001-20,000 | 7. \$30,001-35000  |
| 2. \$5001-10,000   | 5. \$20,001-25,000 | 8. \$35,001-40,000 |
| 3. \$10,001-15,000 | 6. \$25,001-30,000 | 9. \$40,001-50,000 |
| 10. over \$50,000  |                    |                    |

## APPENDIX T: Background Information (Non-Residents)

Next, I would like to ask you to complete this sheet which contains some questions about your background. I will ask everybody in the study to do this just so I can describe the people I interviewed. For example, if I interview thirty-five people and all of them were women, I would have to say this is a study of women's ideas about Fishtown. If you feel that any question is too personal, please skip it. But let me remind you that I will not be using anybody's name or address in the study.

1. Did you grow up in Fishtown? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2a) Where is your job located? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3b) Do any live in Fishtown? \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3c) How old are they? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did your children go to school in Fishtown? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the highest level of school which you have completed? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are you living:
  - a) alone
  - b) with a spouse
  - c) w/partner
  - d) w/children
  - e) other \_\_\_\_\_

7. Did you own or rent your last home Fishtown? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Have you had a vacation in the past year?

IF YES: Where?                      For how long?

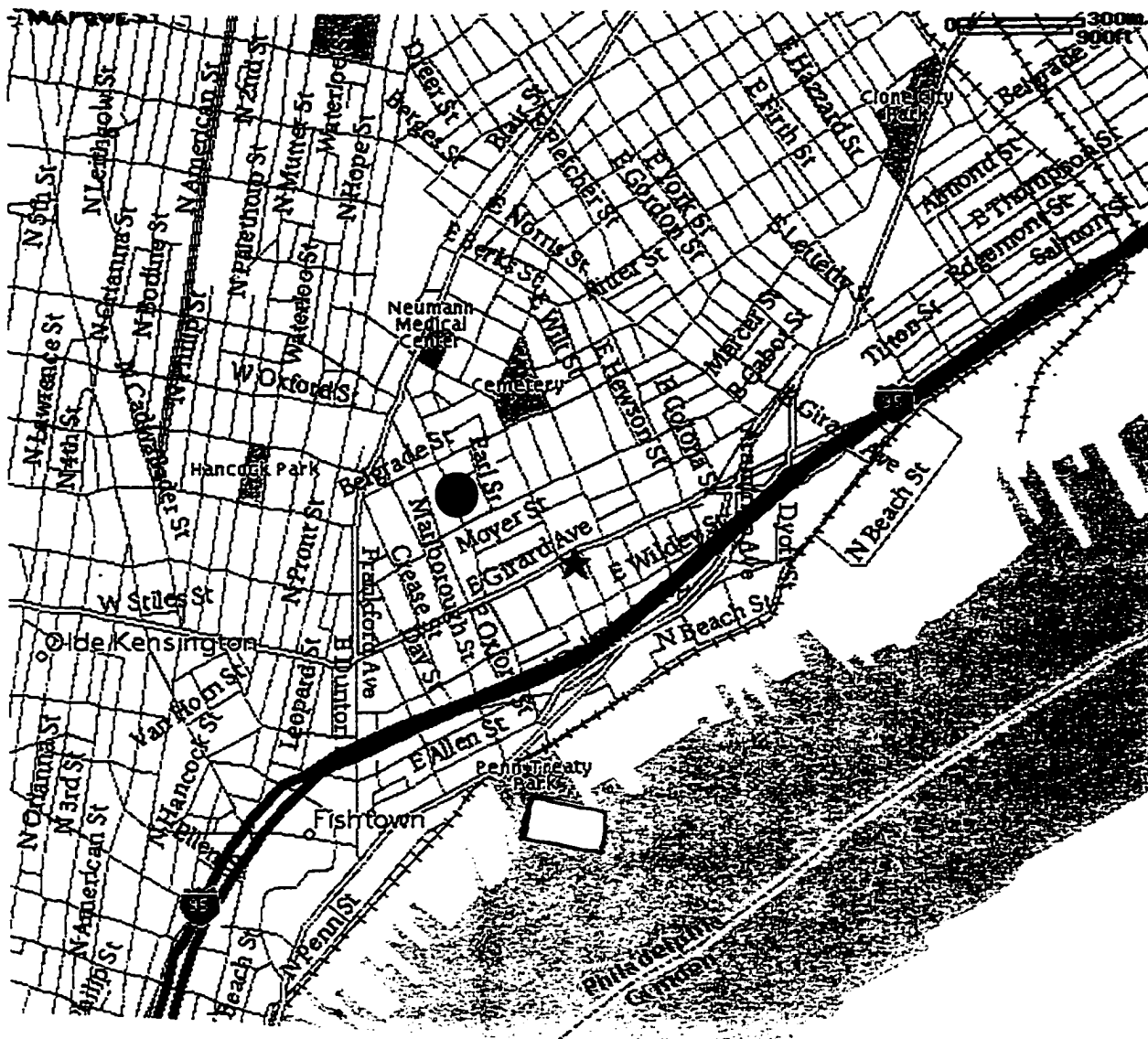
9. What was your total family income for the past year?

Please circle one:

- |                    |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. 0- \$5000       | 4. \$15,001-20,000 | 7. \$30,001-35000  |
| 2. \$5001-10,000   | 5. \$20,001-25,000 | 8. \$35,001-40,000 |
| 3. \$10,001-15,000 | 6. \$25,001-30,000 | 9. \$40,001-50,000 |
| 10. over \$50,000  |                    |                    |



Appendix V: A Map of the Frequently Mentioned Sites in  
Fishtown



- = Penn Treaty Park
- = Hetzell's Playground
- ★ = Chandler School

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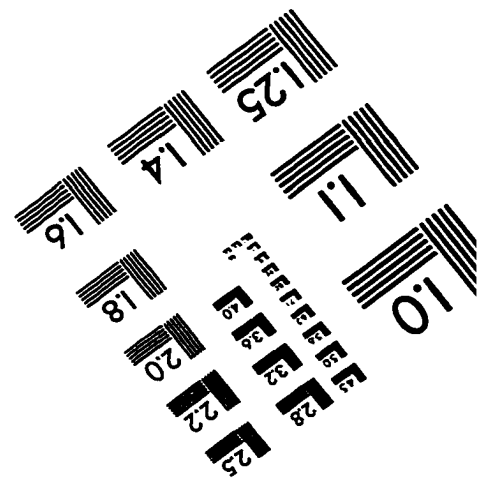
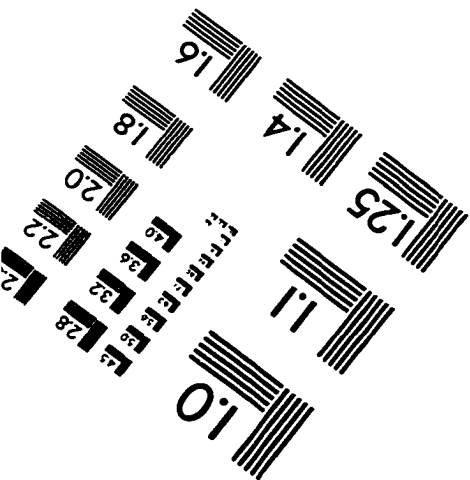
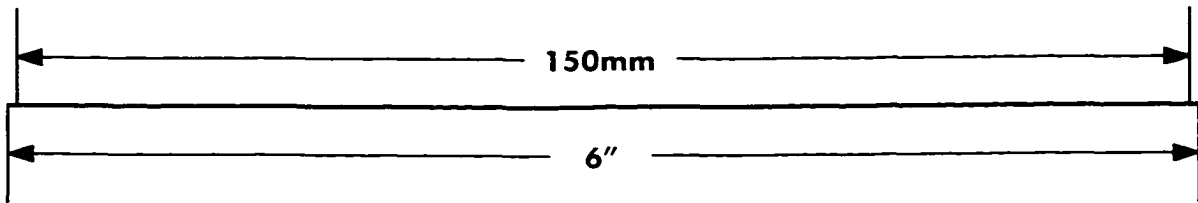
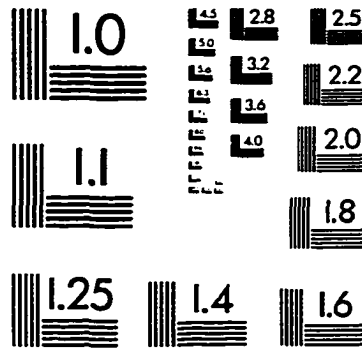
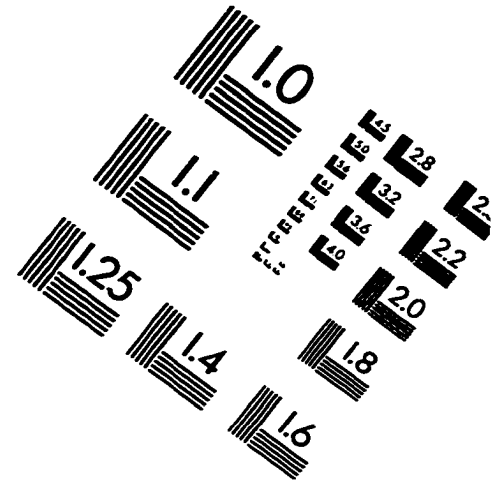
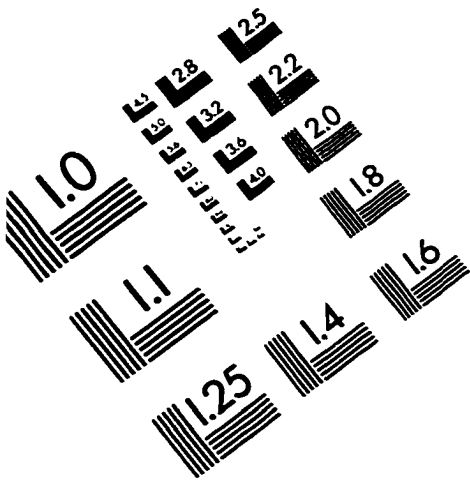
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