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A DEFENSIVE COMMUNITY AND ITS ELDERLY POPULATION

by

Kenneth H. Brook

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty
in Anthropology in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Anthropology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Located in the Bronx, a borough of New York City, Co-op City is both the largest housing cooperative and the largest apartment complex in the United States. It is home to 45,000 people. The following study of its aged population within this urban, yet semi-isolated community, is presented as a contribution in three areas: two of them are ethnographic, and one is methodological. Within the last-mentioned area there is an ever-growing interest in urban or "complex society" anthropology as opposed, on the one hand, to the traditional study of more or less small-scale societies or, on the other hand, to sociology. The techniques usually confined to classic field work, the most familiar being participant observation, are now being increasingly applied to modern and heterogeneous societies. Within these, the units to be studied may be "statistically insignificant" vis à vis the entire culture but ecologically related to it.

Such work--and the debates surrounding it which will be discussed later--involves the union of ethnological orthodoxy with relevant sociological techniques of data

collection and analysis, including the utilization of computers. Just such an integration of methods was used for this study and will be explained in detail in the body of this report.

Ethnographically, the focus of research was on the socio-cultural aspects of aging: a major objective being to provide some heretofore sparse anthropological data on that process within an age integrated, urban enclave (rather than in a "geriatric ghetto") which to a large extent shapes and is shaped by its elderly residents. Also, it is hoped that the findings about the universe of these people will provide new knowledge about community types in accordance or dissonance with models already constructed, as well as offering useful insights with which to implement future community building.

The use of interaction theory (Arensberg 1972, Boissevain 1968, Homans 1950, 1958) provides a means of discovering recurrent patterns of the action of people with respect to one another. Such regularities can be found by enumerating the frequency, direction and timing of social interactions. Once this is accomplished, models of behavior can be constructed which allow for a wider degree of generalization about the organizational principles of society.

The setting and the people will be briefly discussed in this introduction. The methodology involved will be

the topic of Chapter II.

A. The Setting

Co-op City is the largest cooperative housing development with some fifteen thousand apartments for low-middle income people. Dispersed among its high-rise structures and three-story town houses, are three shopping/community centers, an educational park, eight multi-story garages, an electric power plant and several recreational or meeting facilities. Occupancy of the project began in December, 1968 and was completed in March, 1972.

Seen from the roaring six lane New England Thruway, its buildings rise spectrally up through the smog, and the more affluent suburbanites commuting northward to Westchester County are appalled by its massive size and stark architecture.

Upon arrival within the perimeter of Co-op City, an outsider is first overwhelmed by the sheer enormity of it. Monolithic habitats for thousands of human beings isolated in cells from the world and each other might well be a first impression, as might awe at the very existence of such housing needs or of the rape of the natural environment.

As one walks around Co-op City, its appearance is not only less overwhelming and over-scaled, but quite ordinary. Its apartments are located within thirty-five

high-rise residential buildings of three different designs, varying in height from 24 to 33 stories. Grouped near the high-rise buildings are 236 low-level town houses, containing 472 apartments. All buildings are constructed with reinforced, serrated concrete block and faced with bricks of different hues, from dark red to chocolate, which offers some relief from the bane of uniformity characteristic of most large housing developments. The concrete blocks seem to rise in vertical bands giving a columnar effect. Because of Co-op City's innovative landscaping, the planting of some twenty thousand trees, and the openness of the towers' ground floors, the large scale of its buildings is relieved.

At the base of each building is a gentle rolling green mound which serves to hide the flowing street traffic at its edge. Within the courtyard of a cluster of high-rise buildings are located gigantic sand-gardens with short pine tree islands, bordered by wooden blocks, which are certainly more attractive than concrete. These sand oases serve as play areas for toddlers and are equipped with sculptured objects such as teepees and wooden frame structures. The many trees located about Co-op City serve to muffle the noise of the surrounding highways, hide awkward spots between buildings and garages and add to its park-like quality. All of these design features soften the ground level view of Co-op City.

The population is comprised of slightly less affluent than middle-class, slightly older than middle-aged, small families which are almost entirely Jewish, black and Puerto Rican in that order (Linton, Miels and Costen, Inc. 1972:6). But at any time, it is the elderly of Co-op City who appear to be omnipresent. It is predominantly this group which may be found sitting on benches, shopping, coming and going from various social centers, including clubs, churches and synagogues, and chatting among themselves--or just watching the passing parade.

As the name suggests, Co-op City is a conglomerate of tenant-owned apartments. Applicants are screened according to annual income (which may not exceed \$26,000) and, if acceptable, are offered apartments the size of which is determined by their family composition--thus establishing a socio-economic base-line for the development.

Being a non-profit venture, Co-op City residents purchase a one-time stock subscription on top of which they pay monthly carrying charges (or "rent" or "maintenance") which are exceptionally low by New York City standards. As "cooperators," if there are any end-of-year surpluses, residents may receive rent rebates or such funds may be funnelled back into the project for overall improvements.

Barring almost unknown criminal or extremely destructive activity, cooperators own their apartments for as long as they wish and can meet the carrying charges, but if they wish to relocate, it is mandatory that they sell their units back to the cooperative. Upon the death of cooperators, their heirs may inherit the "stock" value of the apartment, but not the apartment itself.

Co-op City has attracted the attention of a variety of city planners, architects and engineers. Various metaphors have been used by these writers to refer to Co-op City. These include: "instant community," "Coop City," "geriatric ghetto," "new-town-in-town," and even "Co-op City" itself. This last term is a nickname for "The Riverbay Corporation." The other labels tend to emphasize, with greater or lesser degrees of accuracy, one or more of the development's varied attributes. "Instant community" is a reference to the speed of the creation of a wide variety of voluntary organizations and to the high degree of participation of its residents rather than to the mere seven years which elapsed between the conception and completion of Co-op City. "Coop City" is an attempt to convey an outsider's impression of it as a place of confinement for a huge number of families in separate but look-alike cubicles. Co-op City has been termed a "geriatric ghetto" because of the many and visible older residents who were attracted to it when their former

neighborhoods deteriorated.

A survey of the existing literature about Co-op City reveals certain selected, narrowly focused interests. They include factors influencing intraurban migration; the impact of Co-op City on other Bronx neighborhoods, the relationship between high-rise housing and the local incidence of crime as well as various architectural assessments.

Boswell and Greenberg (1972) have attempted, in a very limited study, to locate the priority of factors which motivated Co-op City residents to move out of their previous homes. A second and larger study, conducted by Linton, Miels and Coston, Inc. (1972) for the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (H.U.D.), was initiated to assess the impact of Co-op City on other Bronx neighborhoods, especially the Grand Concourse area.

Newman, a city planner and architect, in his book Defensible Space (1973) attempts to demonstrate a thesis that ". . . high-rise equals high crime" (Newman 1972:34). He indicates, however, that Co-op City is a comparatively safe high rise community because its ". . . environment is a self-imposed ghetto and strangers are conspicuous. . . . But [Co-op City] cannot be considered a working model for an average residential development" (Newman 1972:34). When Newman is confronted by this single

largest high-rise development and its low crime rate, he offers the specious argument that Co-op City is unique and prognosticates future difficulties rather than attempting to alter his model by looking for other significant variables to explain the present phenomenon.

Several architects and city planners, the most notable being Brown and Venturi (1970) and Huxtable (1972), have written articles describing, condemning or condoning Co-op City. The major thrust of its critics is that Co-op City is representative of many deplorable features of urban-industrialized society: uniformity, quantity, and mediocrity. The harshest critics believe that these factors will promote the alienation of man both from his natural setting and from other people. Brown and Venturi (1970:70), however, view such conventionality and ordinariness as virtues rather than vices insofar as they visually reflect the actual goals of the development.

Since an in-depth community study of Co-op City has not been made, this research will provide the missing ethnographic substance. I feel that the recent construction of the development, its quasi-spatial isolation from surrounding neighborhoods, its sizable population over sixty, its racial, ethnic and religious diversity all make it an excellent setting within which to investigate behavior and attitudes in vivo.

Obviously, however, such a study of internal processes requires profound understanding of the "external imperatives" (Mitchell 1966:49) as well. These include historical factors; demographic features; spatial-temporal patterns; and, political and administrative organization including the availability of services, or the lack of them.

B. The Elderly: General Considerations

The process of aging (like any biological process) has universal dimensions in that it is inevitable and irreversible and everybody ultimately faces threats to the continuation of his physical capabilities, social world and, perhaps, the maintenance of his persona. However, the experiences of old age and even its definition and attitudes toward it are related to the adaptations provided by each sociocultural system.

With few notable exceptions, there have not been any major anthropological works specifically on the aged. In fact, the ethnographic approach is traditionally inconsistent with any narrow focus on a single age segment of a society. Also, many cultures studied by anthropologists do not contain sizable elderly populations. However, such factors are still not sufficient to explain why there are so few anthropological (or, indeed, other hard) data about older people. It has been suggested that the "youth

orientation" of Western mainstream culture has led to a suppression or denial of the process of aging--both in actuality and in research. Although gerontology has emerged as a special study-area, it has gained momentum only within the last decade. So, to accuse anthropology or any other discipline of ethical-moral or subconscious bias is to obfuscate the issues at hand and to adopt a philosophical rather than an investigatory position.

Among the gerontological investigators, Kent has warned that ". . . much early gerontological research focused on groups easily studied, the institutionalized aged, the sick, the feeble, the dependent" (Kent and Hirsch 1972:1). Thus, the concentration of research on a minority of older people may have created a distorted picture of the majority, who are not institutionalized, relatively healthy, vital and independent. Since 1900, especially in urban-industrialized societies, there has been a substantial increase in the number and proportion of long-lived citizens. This demographic trend is the result of the combination of the steadily declining death rate and the recently declining birth rate. The phenomenon has given rise to some further research and theoretical ground-work, including the "disengagement" versus the "activity" schools of thought.

The disengagement theory, as presented by Cumming and Henry (1961), states that as individuals grow old

they become increasingly self-preoccupied, which leads to a triple retreat from society: loss of social roles; a contraction of informal relationships; and, a decline in responsiveness to normative controls. Aging is viewed as withdrawal of the individual from society and of society from the person. The events heralding this process are considered to be retirement for men and widowhood for women.

The disengagement process is believed to be an intrinsic and inevitable physiological process and not the consequence of any social or cultural forces. Disengagement is viewed as functional for the individual and for society in that it prepares him for death and minimizes the effects of his loss on the social system.

In contrast to the disengagement theorists, the activity theorists (Albrecht 1951, Cavan et al. 1949 and Neugarten 1964) maintain that optimal personal adjustment for the elderly is achieved by maintaining high levels of social activity and growth. They hold the position that: the maintenance of high levels of physical, mental and social activity in old age is desirable both for society and the individual; the majority of older persons can maintain high levels of social activity and personal involvement; and, the degree of engagement is influenced by socio-cultural and environmental forces rather than by physical ones.

The controversy between these approaches is far from resolved. With the disengagementists claiming "natural" and social imperatives for the problems of aging and the activists espousing culturally dictated factors as mitigating these problems, it seems to me that both arguments are judgmental. They offer a false dichotomy and neither has been adequately tested empirically. Furthermore, each point of view is in effect a tautological one insofar as the major problem of aging is that of maintaining a sense of personal worth and well-being in the face of approaching disability, the discontinuity of role-relations and death. Juliet said, "My dismal scene I needs must act alone." This is true for all of us, but the how, when, why and sequence of events leading to that scene are both physically and culturally determined, as are attitudes toward it.

Despite the apparent biological determinism of Cumming and Henry, their concept of "perceived life-space" (1961:96) attempts to elicit a respondent's view of the scope of his social universe. Their omnibus concept of "morale" is composed of a series of variables designed to reveal an individual's attitudes about his health, happiness, etc. These variables offer a useful tool in any empirical study of the aged and have been utilized in the present research to assess cognitive attitudes (Cavan et al. 1949, Cumming, Dean and Newell

1958, Cumming and Henry 1961, Havighurst and Albrecht 1953, Kutner et al. 1956, Lawton 1972, Tobin and Neugarten 1961).

An anthropological source of theoretical and methodological guidance is Clark and Anderson's study of the elderly in Culture and Aging: An Anthropological Study of Older Americans (1967). Utilizing their exegesis of the modes of conduct and the expressed attitudes of the aged, the kinds of adaptations they make in response to various life challenges can be assessed. To make this assessment, I shall utilize Clark and Anderson's "Social-Status Index" (1967:134) in addition to my own construction of an original social continuum.

Although some anthropologists have concerned themselves with a few aspects of aging in both simple and complex societies, most of their work has tended to generate gerontological models rather than to place the phenomenon of "later life" in the general socio-cultural setting. We all agree as to the universality of some aspects of aging, but place different emphases on the varied dynamics or levels of analysis of the phenomenon. Nor has the inevitably circular nature of the adjustment to aging been discussed.

Although the omnipresence of the elderly within Co-op City has been noted, surprisingly they constitute only 19 per cent of the population, dispersed through

37 per cent of all apartments. Of even more interest is their unique position relative to the entire community shown by their high degree of participation in numerous local organizations. This makes them the most influential population segment, as does their self-appointed role as guardians of the community--which provides an informal surveillance force. Through them, then, the housing development has a distinctive and seemingly paradoxical flavor of defensiveness.

Having chosen the elderly residents of Co-op City as the focus of this community study, I first made some basic assumptions. Next I studied the population through both field and sociometric methods. Finally, I came to definite conclusions about the specific group studied and, by extrapolation, about other similar groups and their needs within the larger culture.

My basic assumptions are that old age brings a negative self-image in a society reputed to be "youth oriented," and that role-discontinuities lead to a need for social and personal readjustment. I further assume such readjustment to be desirable both for the individual and those around him, whether they be family, friends, neighbors, or the personnel representing various public agencies.

Another assumption of this study, involving certain aspects of interaction theory (Arensberg 1972, Homans

1958), is that a direct and dynamic relationship exists between the continuity of an individual's social universe and the maintenance of a sense of personal well-being. This position is consistent with Rosow's (1963) contention that the key to good adjustment lies in the continuity of life patterns between middle and old age. Or, conversely, the greater the disruptions of social activity the greater the threat to personal well-being.

Given this general focus, questions framed in the research included asking whether and to what degree the setting provides a means for its residents to perpetuate their accustomed life patterns and/or to establish new ones. Many theorists have promoted the notion that high-density housing produces social pathologies. A recent N. Y. Times editorial (11/30/73) stated, "Today's . . . [housing developments] are people-containers with life-support systems, as if built on the moon." The conclusions, however, derived from the present study suggest that Co-op City generally provides a good means for its elderly residents to adapt to their age related problems. Urban man's last adaptive challenge may well be to what The Times called, "The . . . completely artificial, sealed, climate-controlled and standardized world [of the architects and builders]," in which case Co-op City will be shown to be a challenge well met.

These dynamics of adaptation could be subsumed under the gross heading of "ecology." I will show that, following a highly developed theory of community-type, Co-op City can be viewed as a defensive community, indeed a fortress against urban threats.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

A. Methodology

This study of a complex society utilizes the techniques of participant observation along with social survey research methods and computer science. As some anthropologists have shifted their traditional fieldwork sites from small-scale, far-flung societies to urban locales, they have adopted additional research tools to span the heterogeneity and complexity of their new interests. Some have called for multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary team research efforts (Lloyd, Mabogunje, and Awe 1967, Pleto 1972). Others have used a combination of participant observation and quantitative research techniques (Johnson 1971, Clark and Anderson 1967). Still others have decided to use only participant observation (Hannerz 1969, Plotnicov 1973, Spradley 1970, Spradley and McCurdy 1972).

It seems that the material anthropologists study and the breadth of view they wish to achieve dictates the necessity of possessing a corresponding array of research

tools and methods. Since the anthropologist cannot describe everything, it is necessary to establish "priorities of relevance" (Arensberg and Kimball 1965:31) and then to utilize the appropriate techniques for subsequent investigation.

For purposes of this study, quantitative research procedures were used in the selection of a random sample of the aged population of Co-op City; in the administration of a structured interview schedule and in the analysis of the data collected. Especially useful was the "Statistical Package for the Social Sciences" (Nie, Bent, Hull 1970), a system of computer programs designed for the analysis of social science data. The S.P.S.S. provides a convenient method to obtain descriptive statistics, frequency distributions and cross-tabulations as well as to perform simple correlations and other statistical tests. The use of such "hardware" allows a more sophisticated description of many observations. In tandem with these research tools, participant observation encourages the establishment of rapport with people and provides relief from the maintenance of interviewer neutrality. Such interaction enabled me to gain the insiders' point of view and to cross-check the internal consistency of many responses derived from the schedule. Sometimes pre-set, framed questions can carry different meanings for respondents from those originally intended by the researcher. Such semantic

confusions can be clarified by gaining the confidence of informants, observing their behavior and re-wording the instrument where necessary.

Whatever investigative methods are used, anthropologists must not abandon the tradition of participant observation or co-opt alien research methods which might endanger their own realm of understanding. Indeed, some scholars maintain that the very integrity of anthropology is jeopardized by such hybridization of technique.

Fortunately, the characterization of anthropology as having special and limited proveniences has not been heeded by a large number of other social scientists who, in recent decades, have come increasingly to work in those areas associated with traditional anthropological endeavors. In doing so, these behavioral scientists have shown little or no concern about transforming their own research methods and techniques. If they have maintained the integrity of practicing their own crafts, why does the obverse condition not hold when anthropologists undertake research in the modern urban setting? (Plotnicov 1973:251).

To so cavalierly foreclose the possibility of adopting other research techniques as needed is indicative of an "identity crisis" which I feel to be long outdated. As the world's various cultural systems proliferate, grow, change and interact increasingly with each other, the anthropologist's approach to the field must adapt. Certainly the present research would have been impossible without the judicious adaptation of varied methods.

However, the anthropologist does face two problems in adapting his research techniques to an urban setting:

1) locating a unit of study small enough to allow for the use of participant observation; and, 2) considering the expectations of an urbane, literate population--while remaining cognizant of the practical and political implications of the research. These two problems are by no means unique to urban anthropologists, but I would like to discuss them in the following pages in reverse order.

B. Give and Take in the Field

Just as the anthropologist must choose which methods of research best meet his needs and the mores of his respondents, so too he must assign himself a definite role in the field. His options range from the strictly conventional "hands off" approach in which he assiduously avoids changing the date by his own intervention (Mitchell 1973), to fieldwork planned in advance as instrumental (O'Dea 1958), to sharing the lives and problems of his subject, to active post-fieldwork policy-making.

In the case of my research among the elderly residents of Co-op City it was essential that I become not only a participant-observer but an involved participant and ultimately, I hope, a contributor to policy. Many of the residents of Co-op City react intelligently and perceptively to intellectual, ethical and aesthetic issues and values. A prevailing attitude among many of

the urbanites studied by social scientists is the hope that their participation in the research efforts will contribute toward improving their lives in tangible ways. Such demands are freely expressed by the elderly of Co-op City. To counteract any negative attitudes toward "research-for-research's-sake," as well as to establish rapport with the elderly, I accepted various invitations to address their organizations to tell them about the nature of my research and my hopes for its utilization. In these talks I took the opportunity to indicate the best means of applying for a variety of benefits and services which are available to the elderly. I also hope their levels of consciousness were raised both about the nature and the value of anthropological research.

To summarize my own position and actions in the field, I have followed the recent policy of the American Anthropological Association stating that the researcher's ". . . paramount responsibility is to those he studies" and that ". . . There is an obligation to reflect on the foreseeable repercussions of research and publication on the general population being studied" (American Anthropological Association 1973:1).

C. The Unit of Study

Ethnological and socio-psychological studies of urban life have tended to focus on the following units of observation: 1) "a single family" (Lewis 1961, 1965); 2) "street corner men," and "gang" (Keiser 1969, Liebow 1967, Thrasher 1927, Whyte 1943); 3) "total institution" (Bateman and Dunham 1948, Bettelheim 1943, Caudill 1958, Clemmer 1958, Goffman 1961, Hayner and Ash 1940, Wilner 1953); 4) "a housing development" (Moore 1969, Rainwater 1970, Young and Willmott 1957); 5) "neighborhood," "ward," "quarter" (Cohen 1969, Gans 1962, Hannerz 1969, Hellmann 1948, Mangin 1967, Padilla 1958, Suttles 1968, Ware 1935); 6) "community" (Lynd and Lynd 1929, 1937, Park and Burgess 1925, Vidich and Bensman 1958, Warner and Lunt 1941); and, 7) "suburb" (Gans 1967, Seeley et al., 1956).

Each of these units of observation presents certain advantages and also limitations. Generally, these units are either too broad or too restrictive to permit the anthropologist to gain an understanding of the full round of the life in which they exist. The neighborhood as a unit of observation is sometimes too large or too vague a notion to permit rigorous and systematic investigation. How are the spatial boundaries of a neighborhood to be determined, especially in an urban setting? Whose

evaluations are to be accepted as accurate or adequate in delimiting such areas? If the researcher decides to define the boundaries of a neighborhood, this may result in non-congruence between his perception of its dimensions and those of its residents. By definition, the suburb represents only a partial unit of observation. They are part and parcel of cities and cannot be understood apart from them. Such units as the single family, total institutions (e.g., prisons, hospitals, convents, schools, etc.), street-corner men and gangs are certainly well suited to the research method of participant observation, but they represent extremely limited segments of life. A housing development is a much more manageable unit of ethnography and is usually a potential community, at least insofar as its residents are either selected according to some pre-established criteria or are self-selecting. It would appear that a housing development which is somewhat spatially isolated and self-sufficient with regard to goods and services would make a workable unit of observation within which to investigate a form of urban life and culture.

Anthropologists have often used the community in order to provide a "mirror image" of the larger society. They have tried to select communities for study which are complete, cohesive and representative of an entire culture. In contrast to the holistic perspective of ethnography,

other social sciences utilize the community as an arena in which to explore specific social problems. Some of the sociologically oriented community studies involve a discussion of such problems as "the small town in mass society" (Vidich and Bensman 1958); "the effects of industrialization on a Midwest town" (Lynd, R. and Lynd, H. 1929, 1937); "the social structure of an Italian slum community" (Whyte 1943); "the effects of caste and class on a Southern town" (Dollard 1937); and many others. Social psychologists have utilized the community study method in order to investigate such problems as: the etiology of mental illness (Bateman and Dunham 1948); the geriatric problem (Britton and Britton 1972); the nature and causes of drug addiction, juvenile delinquency and crime, the means of maintaining public health, and folk-medical beliefs and practices.

D. The Community Model

Various anthropologists have advanced differing notions of the community. Firth defines the community as:

. . . a body of people sharing in common activities and bound by multiple relationships in such a way that the aims of any individual can be achieved only by participation in action with others (1951:41).

Such a conception of community leaves unspecified the nature of the "body of people" to be included as members. It also fails to distinguish the community as a distinctive social

category in that it may have various bases of organization--familial, national, ethnic, occupational, etc.

The Wilsons conceive of communities as ". . . areas and periods of common life of more or less intensity" (1945:30). A common life is demonstrated by: 1) an interdependence of individuals; 2) an awareness of a unique identity; and, 3) the shared interests and goals which motivate its members. In opposition to Firth, their approach is to build the community around the subjective criteria of "consciousness of kind" and the sharing of common interests. It seems to me, that these are empirical matters to be proven by study rather than assumed and, in fact, that it is unrealistic to expect all members of an urban community to share a common ethos.

Redfield advocates the selection of a small community for study, which is both representative of the larger culture and feasible to observe. He states the community:

. . . is small, so small that either it itself is the unit of personal observation or else, being somewhat larger and yet homogeneous, it provides in some part of it a unit of personal observation fully representative of the whole (1960:4).

Among the anthropologists who have considered the notion of community, Conrad M. Arensberg (1961) presents the most comprehensive and systematic analysis of it "as object and as sample." He provides the most workable

model and assessment of the problems and techniques of the community study. His conceptions will be described in detail in order to show how they were utilized for the discovery of Co-op City as a distinctive type of community. I have chosen to utilize his paradigm of community as opposed to that of others because its parameters lend themselves to operational definition.

Arensberg's community study method provides an opportunity to explore the interconnections between social and psychological dynamics (Arensberg and Kimball 1965: 29). It involves an attempt to describe a full round of life, on a collective basis for the resolution of universal life events. It is a ". . . method of observation and exploration, comparison and verification" (Arensberg and Kimball 1965:30).

Arensberg's model of community is composed of several interrelated, universally applicable dimensions: spatial-temporal or "ecological"; demographic; and structural-functional. One reason for the workability of his model is that its dimensions can easily be applied to every occurrence of the phenomena under investigation. All community models are comparable, even though they vary, because the variations may be described along the common criteria provided by the dimensions listed.

1. Ecological Dimension: Spatial-Temporal Aspects of Community

Every community exhibits distinctive spatial-temporal patterns which can be measured and mapped. All communities produce modifications of their occupied spaces (houses, roads, churches, shops, etc.) and all assign space ". . . differentially to their members" (Arensberg and Kimball 1965:101). Any community therefore, can be described, in part, by its settlement pattern, points of assembly and dispersal, areas of occupational specialization and the distribution of its personnel by age, sex, race, ethnicity, class, etc.

Just as the spatial patterns vary from community to community, so do temporal ones, showing many different cycles and rhythms. There are dispersals of population at given times (to the office, to recreational activities, to public events, etc.) and assemblages of them (at markets, town-hall meetings, religious rituals, etc.). "There are climatic and economic rounds, . . . monthly, weekly, daily periodicities" (Arensberg 1961:252). There are calendrical rites of intensification (fairs, rallies, religious and secular rituals, etc.) and unpredictable, sporadic crises (fires, epidemics, floods, strikes, etc.). In sum, each community creates its own "ritualized temporality" (Arensberg and Kimball 1968:695).

2. Demographic Aspects of Community

Among the most significant dimensions of a community are its size, composition (e.g., ages, sexes, races, occupations, etc.), the distribution of its members and changes therein (e.g., birth, death, and migration). These demographic dimensions are subject to measurement by a complete or partial census, which yields a synoptic portrait of the population.

Arensberg more specifically indicates that

. . . three generations and two sexes is inherent in the community and is thus part of its definition. The human community, like that of any animal, is such a minimal unit of population as must coexist in order to insure the continuance of the species. In the human case, it necessarily counts among minimal personnel some instance of every kind of individual in which the species manifests itself: baby, child, adolescent, adult, and oldster, of each sex (Arensberg and Kimball 1965:16-17).

Communities are collectivities whose members distinguish themselves from outsiders. Freilich (1963:121) states that all communities contain a series of inter-related nodal points at which members know where to find one another and at which vital information is disseminated. These areas serve as foci of interaction which may be "fixed" (e.g., markets, churches, long-houses, etc.) or "moving" (e.g., floating poker game, conventions, etc.).

According to Arensberg, a community can be considered representative of a culture when it meets the demographic components of his definition:

. . . knows two sexes, several ages, several classes
 . . . several or many professional or full-time
 specializations, of occupation or technical and
 economic function, then the community we choose
 must have some at least of all these people, enough
 to man at least minimally their roles and statuses
 (Arensberg 1961:253).

Second, this personnel must constitute a succession of
 lives:

. . . [the community] is the minimal group capable
 of re-enacting in the present and transmitting
 to the future the cultural and institutional
 inventory of [its] distinctive and historic tra-
 dition. . . . And from it, in it, the child
 learns, from peers, and the street as well as
 from parents and teachers, the lore of his people
 and what must be learned to become one of them
 (Arensberg 1961:253).

3. Structural-Functional Aspects of Community

Social structure is the out growth of the shared
 behavior and expectations of the members of a society.

Firth has insisted that:

The essence of this concept is those social re-
 lations which seem to be of critical importance
 for the behavior of members of the society, so
 that if such relations were not in operation,
 the society could not be said to exist in that
 form. . . . In the aspect of social structure
 is to be found the continuity principle of
 society . . . (1961:31ff).

Firth juxtaposes a static notion of social structure to
 the dynamic idea of social organization.

Generally, the idea of organization is that of
 people getting things done by planned action. . . .
 the systematic ordering of social relations by
 acts of choice and decision. . . . In the aspect
 of organization is to be found the change principle

--by allowing evaluation of situations and entry of individual choice. (1961:36ff).

Each community has a particular social structure which aids its personnel in carrying out those tasks which are vital. The social actions of individuals which contribute to the social system are considered social functions. Merton (1957) in his seminal essay on functionalism makes a dichotomy between overt or manifest versus latent functions. On the one hand, manifest functions are obvious upon inspection of a series of social actions; such as the function of pig killing among the Tsembaga is to provide protein (Rappaport 1967); the function of the Kula Ring is to facilitate trading (Malinowski 1922); and the function of Co-op City is to provide housing. On the other hand, latent functions are based on inferences about the contribution of such social actions to the viability of the system. For example: the function of the ritual of pig-slaughtering is to maintain the economic, political and ecological equilibrium; the function of the Kula Ring is to integrate a series of island peoples; and the function of Co-op City is to provide a defensive environment for its residents. Thus the form, spacing and timing of human activities reveal a great deal about the modus vivendi of a community. By mapping its spatial features and ordering its temporal sequences we can see the unfolding of its social

organization. Given the minimum population aggregate, the community becomes a ". . . structured field of inter-individual relationships unfolding through time" (Arensberg 1961:262). It organizes its personnel into those roles and statuses found within the community or which are known to exist within the culture. That is, the community is:

. . . an enduring temporal pattern of coexistences, an ordered time-progress of individuals, from their births to deaths, through roles and relationships of each kind known to the species or their culture (Arensberg 1961:252).

Each community exhibits an internal and an external aspect of its social life. Viewed internally a community comprises many varied groups which are cohesively bound together to form a whole. And it has links to other similar and different communities, such as kinship ties binding families together over large distances, memberships in various organizations and overarching governments on a national, state or local level which influence its character. Extra-community influences have an impact on many features of intra-community daily life.

Manners criticizes Arensberg's community study method:

Communities which exist in isolation from other communities certainly demand different conceptual tools and methodological techniques of analysis than do those which are in contact with or dependent upon a larger social, economic, and political universe . . . (Manners 1960:81).

Both Manners and Steward doubt that an understanding of a community or of the many institutions which influence it but have their policy making loci elsewhere can be achieved.

Arensberg rebuts:

Of course. . . . But we can see well their impact, their re-working, their evasion or subversion, in the local culture (or subculture). We can see what influences they have in local culture production and what functions in local culture to meet their pressures on the way of life of local people. . . . It is quite enough that the anthropologist . . . record with his special methods of local participation and interview their working and impact locally. That the anthropologist must also, as an educated man and a scholar of modern science, master sufficient understanding of the institution whose impact he follows so as not to distort his local evidence and his synthesis of it, goes without saying. The fact that seems to have escaped Steward and Manners is that it is only the local evidence that our anthropologist gets by the community-study method or by any anthropology. The other information, however necessary, he gets from reading or from others in some other way (Arensberg 1960:93-94).

Steward and Manners indicate that there are supra-community levels of organization which are not amenable to analysis through the community study method. This point is well taken, but it does not present any apparent contradiction to Arensberg's approach. Their own study of Puerto Rico (1956) was based on an analysis and a composite of the diversity of its community-types.

The term community has been applied to a variety of unipurpose, spatially-bounded institutions and associations.

Included among them are the variety of total institutions and professional groups, which Goode (1957) has referred to as a "community within a community." Others have made colloquial references to the "jazz community" (Merriam and Mack 1960), the "scientific community" (Hagstrom 1965), etc. The labeling of such units as communities appears to be metaphoric attempts to convey a sense of instrumental unity rather than of community.

Arensberg's model excludes occupational groups, total institutions and the like from being categorized as community types. These social units do not satisfy his criteria of community. His community constitutes a full round of life and a succession of lives within which these other social units may be a part.

An obvious and immediate reaction to the definition of Co-op City as a community will be that its residents--and especially the elderly--are not self-perpetuating in a procreative sense. However, I feel that their individual, family and ethnic mores are viable and transmitted by both formal and informal socialization processes--amongst themselves and vis-à-vis outsiders. In this case (as in other anthropological studies of distinctive groups within larger societies), self-perpetuation is a function of selective recruitment, example, sanction and replacement of personnel through non-biological but equally dynamic means. This point of view, at first impressionistic, was

substantiated by actual fieldwork and verified by the data.

Thus, upon inspection, Co-op City meets almost all of the criteria of Arensberg's community model: it exists within a finite spatial domain; is comprised of both sexes and three generations; maintains nodal points of communication and interaction, exhibits a variety of roles and statuses (achieved and ascribed) known throughout the culture and is self-defining in "we-they," "insider-outsider," "consciousness of kind" terms. Furthermore, institutions such as the Federal, State and local governments potentially or actually influence all of its members.

Lacking from a "perfect" community model are subsistence activities available within the boundaries of Co-op City. This absence of a local, gainful employment base means that each morning a massive exodus of residents occurs--mostly by the men--to jobs away from their homes and among "outsiders" with and among whom interaction is not community-oriented. However, such diurnal activity is not qualitatively different from that in many peasant, pastoral, fishing or even hunting communities where, often, subsistence activities keep people away from their homes for days, weeks and months at a time. Co-op City's wage earners return to their homes each evening and, by doing so, daily re-affirm their identities as members of their

community.

E. The Sample

In 1971, the management of Co-op City conducted a census of its 15,372 applicants, drawing its data from the completed applications for apartments. These applications were received over a six-year period from 1965 to 1970. They included such information as family size, occupation, sex, age, relationship of household members, total annual income and the place of origin. This information for each household was punched on a single I.B.M. card. After a long search, I was able to locate and to acquire these cards from the management. However, in the interim, 2,371 of the cards had been lost by management personnel. A comparison of the frequency distributions of the original census with that of the remaining cards showed that the two groups were remarkably similar. The high degree of congruence between these two censuses means that there was no significant pattern to the contents of the missing cards. Therefore, it was not unreasonable to view these 13,001 remaining cases as the total population of Co-op City from which to construct the sampling scheme.

For purposes of this research, individuals 60 years of age or older are the primary conceptual and sampling units. Sixty, rather than 65, was selected as the lowest

age for eligibility because I wished to interview people who were apt to be still employed in order to assess their work situation, pre-retirement plans, and their attitudes toward work and retirement. Thus, the 13,001 applicants were initially screened and classified according to their ages. Those applications from households containing at least one individual 60 years of age or older were assigned to one of four age categories (i.e., 60-64, 65-69, 70-74, 75 or over), two sex divisions, and two income groups, which were divided at approximately the median annual income figure of \$6,800.

The entire population of applicants was examined with the expectation of determining the incidence of individuals fitting into one of the above categories. Such a computation made it possible to ascertain the number of apartments which would have to be sampled in order to guarantee that each of the categorical divisions would be populated by at least ten cases. An analysis of the 13,001 cases indicated that if a random selection of five hundred applications of the present residents were taken, it would yield the desired results.¹ All age eligible members of a single apartment would be

¹See Appendix A for the percentage distribution of the generalized sample of prospective respondents that would result from a random selection of five hundred applicants for apartments at Co-op City by age, sex and income, 1965-70.

interviewed, if possible, in order to permit all potential respondents an equal chance of being selected.

Instead of randomly selecting five hundred of the 15,372 households of Co-op City through an examination of present tenants' application forms, it was decided that a selection of ten samples of fifty households each would offer some advantages. Such a procedure would permit the termination of interviewing of potential respondents before utilizing all of the ten random samples, and still give a random sampling of the elderly population. The process of randomizing involved picking ten three-digit numbers from a table of random numbers, each of which represented the starting points for the selection of the ten samples. For example, if the first number selected was 001, the first application on file with the management would be selected and the next application to be picked would be the 308th on file ($50/15,372 = 307$), the next 615, 982, etc. All those potential respondents of the first randomly selected sample were interviewed first, before continuing on to the second sample and so on.

A comparison of the distribution of the demographic features of the generalized sample and the prospective respondents indicates that changes have occurred in the

original population.¹ Quite expectedly, the age distribution of Co-op City's elderly population had changed in the seven-year period that might have elapsed from the time a family applied for an apartment and being selected as a prospective respondent. Since the overwhelming majority of applicants did eventually move into Co-op City and the resident population remained relatively stable, with an apartment turnover rate of only 2 per cent per year, the population sampled is older than the original population of applicants. Also, since females have a greater life expectancy than males, the slight increase in the female to male ratio in the selected sample is expectable. Also, the increase in the number of females among the low income group may be explained by the increase in the number of widows with attendant financial problems.

The reduced numbers in the age category 60-64 can be explained by the tendency of the original applicants, who were then in their fifties, to withdraw their applications at a greater rate than for other age categories (Personal Communication:Management). The dearth of people in this age segment is probably a reflection of their greater flexibility in the selection of a place of residence. It seems plausible that many of these families

¹See Appendix A for a detailed discussion of the comparison of these two groups.

followed the increasing pattern for the younger elderly of New York City to move to nearby retirement villages or to Florida. In sum, the differences between the original population and the sample of prospective respondents were predictable. Such a finding offers reassurance that the selected sample is indeed representative, for age, sex and income categories, of the elderly of Co-op City.

Much more important than the above demographic situation is the comparison between the group of prospective respondents and the actual participants in the study. Two hundred of the 311 (64.3%) potential respondents participated in the study (See Table II-1). The characteristics of both the sample selected for interviewing and the final participants shows a remarkable degree of similarity. The sex and income ratios, age distributions for both sexes, for each sex as well as the distribution by age, sex and income of both groups are very similar.¹

¹See Appendix A for a comparison of these two groups.

Table II-1

Distribution of Participants by Age, Sex and Income, 1972

<u>Age</u>	<u>Low Income</u>						<u>High Income</u>					
	<u>Both Sexes</u>		<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>		<u>Both Sexes</u>		<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
60-64	11	9.5	1	2.1	10	14.3	24	28.6	14	28.0	10	29.4
65-69	36	31.0	11	23.9	25	35.7	29	34.5	17	34.0	12	35.3
70-74	37	31.9	13	28.3	24	34.3	20	23.8	12	24.0	8	23.5
75+	<u>32</u>	<u>27.6</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>45.7</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>15.7</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>13.1</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>14.0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>11.8</u>
	116		46		70		84		50		34	

One hundred and eleven people (35.7%) refused to participate in the study. Such a refusal rate was higher than originally desired. It is approximately 10 per cent higher than several of the classic studies of the aged (Britton and Britton 1972, Kutner et al. 1956, Lowenthal and Berkman 1967, Rosow 1967). However, since this study was conducted by a relatively small staff on a meager budget, I was not terribly disappointed. The reasons most often given, especially by men, for refusing to participate were "being too busy" or "not interested in the study."

Table II-2

Participation in the Study
of Co-op City's Elderly Population

<u>Extent of Participation</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Number of eligible persons selected	326	
Unable to contact (e.g., died, moved etc.) and removal from sample	15	
Total number of persons contacted	311	100
Number contacted but declined to participate	111	35.7
Reasons given for declining:		
1. Too busy	40	36.0
2. Too ill	28	25.3
3. Negative reason or no reason given for refusal	20	18.0
4. On vacation	17	15.3
5. Appointment cancelled by spouse or other relative	6	5.4
Total number of interviews completed	200	64.3

Several female respondents had agreed to be interviewed, only for their spouses or children to call later and cancel their original appointments. Return calls to the respondents were to no avail. In general, the female respondents were much more able to express their attitudes and opinions and provided much richer detail about their own lives and those of their relatives and friends. Male respondents were more suspicious, secretive, less articulate and just less knowledgeable about their relatives and friends as well as about their own attitudes and opinions on many issues. It was not atypical for a man, while being interviewed, to call into his wife, in the next room, and ask, "Hey, hon, how do I feel about . . .?"

A comparison of the characteristics of the participants and non-participants reveals that the two groups are very similar in most respects. They are of nearly identical sex composition, similar age and income status, although the oldest people of the higher income category were somewhat more reluctant to participate than their counterparts in the lowest income group. It would appear that the higher income people are more likely to distance themselves from a study of the aged than the low income respondents, perhaps because their actual needs are less and they don't see "exchanging favors" with the interviewer. Also, the oldest people, who are more apt to be living alone, are often too timid to allow a stranger into their homes. In

sum, the participants are representative of the entire field of eligible respondents.

Any discussion of refusal rates emphasizes the negative aspects of a research project. There were many respondents who reacted enthusiastically to being interviewed and some even prolonged the session by offering the interviewers snacks or even elaborate meals. One respondent demanded that I attend a Passover seder in his home before consenting to be interviewed. Most informants were more than responsive, many searched feverishly for various sorts of documents, photographs, tape recordings or other souvenirs in order to highlight their responses to certain questions. Many obviously enjoyed reminiscing about their own lives, their family and friends. An indication of the patience, warmth and cooperation of the respondents is that only one interview was terminated before its completion.

F. Interviewing Procedures

This section discusses the mode of contacting respondents, the interview schedule, the interviewers and the refusals.

Initially, I mailed letters to each of the intended respondents introducing myself and the staff as conducting a scientific study of the life styles of the aged. The letter expressed the belief that the best way to find out

about how the elderly live is to ask the people themselves. It was decided not to identify ourselves too closely with management at that point, because residents had just been notified of two intended large rent increases and such cost of living hikes are particularly unpopular among the elderly. The letter also indicated that the respondent would be contacted within a week in order to arrange an interview at a mutually convenient time. All interviewers carried identification cards.

The interviews were often conducted within the respondents' homes or at one of the three community centers. An interview could last anywhere from one to four hours and most averaged about three, depending on the skill of the interviewer and the gregariousness, articulateness or loneliness of the respondent.

An outline of the interview schedule, which draws on material used in other studies as well as material developed for the purpose of this study is supplied below.

1. Demographic items: such as age, sex, race, birth-place, length of residence in New York City, residential mobility, marital status and history, religion and ethnic identification;

2. Socioeconomic characteristics: such as education, annual income, employment status, and main gainful occupation;

3. Social involvements: household composition, number of living children, siblings, parents and grandchildren, best-liked cousin, best friend, neighbors, voluntary association memberships and religious activity. Each respondent was questioned about the age, residence, occupation, education, marital status, the frequency of seeing and phoning and degree of closeness to each child, sibling, best-liked cousin, and best friend. General questions were also posed concerning the varied kinds of services given and received between these people;

4. Work and retirement: career lines, attitudes about work and retirement, plans for the future;

5. Attitudinal items: self-evaluation of age, health, marriage and annual income as well as feelings of personal well-being, desire for social activity, rights and obligations of kin and friends.

All four of the interviewers were male, white, under 30 years of age, predominantly Jewish, and college educated. I was the only person with previous interviewing experience. Approximately 60 per cent of the interviews were completed by myself and the remainder were evenly distributed among the other three interviewers. Each interviewer was trained over the course of a week. Such training involved conducting initial mock interviews and then doing an actual interview at one or another of the senior citizens clubs at Co-op City. These interviews served the dual purposes

of increasing the sense of confidence and competency of the interviewers and of determining what revisions the questionnaire needed (i.e., changes of language, sequence of questions, uninformative queries, ambiguous wordings, etc.).

With regard to refusals for interviews, it was decided to make three personal contacts with each prospective respondent. After a second refusal, a letter was mailed to him by the Director of Cooperative Education at Co-op City, at my request. The letter summarized the significance of the study and urged the respondent to participate. This technique was only moderately successful.

All interviewers were responsible for keeping a log of the happenings of each contact with a respondent and noting the reasons for refusal to participate. After each interview, the interviewer privately completed a final section of the schedule within which were recorded the attitudes of the respondent toward the interview and the interviewer, the appearance of the respondent's apartment, personal grooming and any other supplemental remarks the interviewer cared to make. Each completed interview was then reviewed for consistency, errors of omission or commission, penmanship, etc. Upon the completion of an interview, each respondent was promised a summary copy of the final report.

The procedures for coding the questionnaires followed those of most such studies and, in addition, categories

of my own were introduced. Three trained coders prepared the data for key punching and analysis, having verified the original coder's work. Punched cards were also verified. All of this was done under my supervision.

CHAPTER III

THE BRONX: PAST AND PRESENT

In order to understand the significance of the construction of Co-op City, it is important to cite some of the demographic changes that occurred in the Bronx between 1960 and 1970. Such an analysis should account for the attractiveness of Co-op City to approximately 35,000 Bronx residents.

The borough of the Bronx is located due north of Manhattan and south of Westchester County. It is surrounded by water on three sides: the Hudson River to the west, the Harlem River to the south and Long Island Sound to the east. The second smallest of the city's five boroughs, the Bronx is equal in size to the largest cities of the world. Its 1970 population of nearly one and one-half million makes it twice as large as Boston, St. Louis, Johannesburg, Liverpool, Dusseldorf, Maracaibo or Addis Ababa, and a half-million persons larger than Baltimore, Dallas, Odessa or Amsterdam. It is comparable in population to Detroit, Montreal, Kyoto, Ankara or Casablanca.

The Bronx, if it were a city, would be the sixth largest in the United States. However, its total land area does not

compare as well as its population size to other cities as it comprises only 41.2 square miles. In area the Bronx is larger than Miami or Savannah, equivalent to Boston and San Francisco, but only half the size of Baltimore, Cleveland or Honolulu. Its large population and comparatively small land area makes the Bronx one of the most densely populated "cities" in the world. With 36,000 people per square mile, it is twice as thickly populated as any other U. S. city, excluding New York City.

Over 21 per cent of the land area of the Bronx is devoted to parks and educational facilities. The most notable parks being the famous Bronx Zoo and Botanical Gardens, and such lesser known parks as Van Cortlandt, Pelham Bay, Crotona and others. Many of these once-lovely, large parks have become no-man's lands, especially at night, to be entered only in fear and at risk of ones' survival. The Bronx is also the home of eight institutions of higher learning: Fordham University, Manhattan College, Herbert H. Lehman College and Albert Einstein College of Medicine among others. It contained the fabled Yankee Stadium, and many other public facilities. Its four hospitals provide only adequate medical services to Bronx residents. In comparison to the other boroughs, the Bronx devotes more of its land space--approximately 8 per cent--to public institutions (Institute for Urban Studies 1967: 3).

A short history shows that in 1895 all of the territory now called the Bronx, was part of the City of New York. In 1898, New York was able to annex Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island and the borough system as well as the City of Greater New York were created. By the beginning of the twentieth century the Bronx had made the transition from a pastoral area to an urbanized one. Since then the borough has attracted upwardly mobile families of diverse ethnic groups, previously living on the Lower East Side of Manhattan or in Harlem. The people moving into the five story walk-up houses and later into the elevator buildings were predominantly Jewish, Italian or Irish. Many of the Jews settled in the Grand Concourse area of the Bronx, a substantial number living "on the Concourse," in elevator buildings, or "just off the Concourse" in walk-ups. The wide, tree-lined Grand Concourse offered this population relatively high status and decent housing. Furthermore, the I.N.D. subway, completed in 1933, allowed them to be at work in Manhattan within thirty-five minutes.

Most Americans who have never seen the Bronx have nevertheless an almost folkloric feeling about it. The accent, the "Bronx Cheer," the legendary success of the New York Yankees or the "Bronx Bombers," the bustling and cheery streets in which neighbors were also friends and whole families lived within eyeball or shouting distance of each other all form part of the Bronx's image.

So too do an admixture of shrewdness both in business and street survival and of "dumbness," exemplified by the "dese and dem" vernacular. All of these stereotypes were, to some degree, accurate and reflect the old combination of homogeneity arising despite, or perhaps because of, heterogeneity of peoples. Within ethnic enclaves there was real "togetherness," but between them--as fellow Bronxites--there was also a certain bond: the Bronx-born sons of a Polish, Jewish and an Italian immigrant would immediately recognize each other thousands of miles away as "Bronx Brothers" and would be perceived by non-Bronxites as unique.

But today the Bronx must be characterized as a borough of widely disparate neighborhoods existing only in physical juxtaposition to one another. These contrasts are apparent as one moves from the South Bronx poverty-stricken, non-white areas, recently portrayed as a "jungle stalked by fear, seized by rage," (Tolchin 1973:1,22) to the Grand Concourse, that major boulevard bisecting the Bronx in a north-south direction, bounded at one end by rapidly changing and deteriorating neighborhoods and to the north, by Riverdale and other secluded, affluent communities overlooking the Hudson River.

The Grand Concourse area, from which many of the Jewish elderly and others migrated to Co-op City, began to decline in the early nineteen-sixties. The physical signs of decay were evident in the vacant shops, shuttered stores

and housing which was deteriorating or already condemned. As the traditional Jewish population vacated the area and was replaced by blacks and Puerto Ricans, superimposed upon physical changes were intangible psychological fears for one's property and personal safety. All these processes created an aura of economic uncertainty, which resulted in declining profits for shop-keepers, hardships in obtaining loans for new enterprises, a general lack of investment, and the reluctance of landlords to maintain their buildings.

A. Bronx Population Trends: 1960-1970

Since World War II the whole American economy has been undergoing a transition from that of an agricultural-industrial society to a post-industrialized one. The major effects of this period of change have left scars in the hearts of America's central cities. The symptoms of this transition are: 1) unabated emigration of the white middle-class population from the central cities to the suburbs; 2) their replacement by the immigration of poorer minorities; 3) loss of the most productive age segments of the population (i.e., those between the ages of 25 and 59), and the retention of such non-productive age segments, as school-agers and the elderly; and, 4) continued loss of urban employment opportunities with concomitant rise in underemployment. The physical manifestations of these changes appear in the substitution of the suburban split-level

house for the apartment building and the office building for the factory, with the interlacing of these structures by auto routes of safe passage. America's suburbs, which now have greater populations than the metropolitan areas which spawned them, allow their residents to be spectators on the fringe of city life.

The agonies of these major socio-economic transitions are especially difficult for Bronx County which may be considered prototypical of the phenomenon. The litany of resulting maladies is apparent upon inspection of the demographic changes which have occurred over the last decade. It is only within the context of these changes that Co-op City, and especially the elderly segment of its population, can be understood.

The 1970 U. S. census report indicates that the temporary decline in population which occurred between 1950 and 1960 was reversed in 1970.

Table III-1

Total Population of the Bronx: 1950 to 1970

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population Size</u>
1950	1,451,815
1960	1,424,815
1970	1,471,701

Since World War II, births have exceeded deaths in the Bronx by an average of about 13,000 per year. However its population has not increased comparably to the natural

increase, which is accounted for by the process of migration (Institute for Urban Studies 1967:14-15). From 1960 to 1970 the total population of the Bronx increased by only 3.3 per cent. The natural increase, for the same period, was 136,000 and when subtracted from the total population increase of 47,000 yields an exodus of almost 90,000 (Linton, Miels and Coston, Inc. 1972: Appendix 1).

The composition of the migrants has more dramatically altered the Bronx population than the above figures indicate. According to the U. S. Census, the non-Puerto Rican white population has emigrated from the Bronx in large numbers, while the black and Puerto Rican populations increased both absolutely and relatively. By 1970 there were almost 130,000 more Puerto Ricans and 200,000 more blacks in the Bronx than a decade earlier and the white population had decreased by about 300,000 people.

Table III-2

Ethnic Composition of the Bronx Population:
1960 and 1970

	<u>1960 U.S. Census</u>		<u>1970 U.S. Census</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Total Population	1,424,815	100	1,471,701	100
White	1,069,399	75.1	769,082	52.3
Black	158,700	11.1	357,681	24.3
Puerto Rican	186,885	13.1	316,772	21.5
Other	9,831	.7	28,166	1.9

The pattern of migration not only altered the ethnic composition of the Bronx, but has produced a dramatic shift in its age distribution, with the population becoming significantly younger than it had been in 1960. The median age of the Bronx population in 1960 was about 34 years as compared to 30 in 1970. The most significant change in the age composition of the population is in the age segment 30-59. In 1960, 40 per cent of the people were between 30-59 but by 1970 this age subgroup had declined by 7 per cent. While the population aged 0-29 increased by 6 per cent, the elderly population of 60-plus years remained relatively stable.

Even though the total population of the Bronx increased by some 3 per cent from 1960 to 1970, the 30-59 age segment decreased by 14 per cent while the 0-19 and the 65-plus age groups rose by 16 per cent and 12 per cent respectively.

Table III-3

<u>Ages</u>	Percentage Change in Population of Selected Age Groups: 1960 to 1970		<u>Change</u> #	Per cent of <u>Change</u>
	1960 U.S. <u>Census</u> #	1970 U.S. <u>Census</u> #		
Total Population	1,424,815	1,471,701	+46,866	+ 3.3
Under 65	1,272,412	1,300,781	+28,369	+ 2.2
0-19	441,630	512,807	+71,177	+16.1
30-59	563,759	482,805	-80,954	-14.4
60+	232,159	245,077	+12,918	+ .06
65+	152,403	170,920	+18,517	+12.2

The group aged 0-19 now constitutes almost 35 per cent of the Bronx population. The Bronx Planning Commission has indicated that most Bronx schools are over-enrolled. The combination of crowded classrooms, the dramatic rise in the ratio of black and Puerto Rican students, the increased demand for community control of schools and for quality education all create a volatile situation. This situation is exacerbated by the resurgence of youthful gangs seeking to control the "turf" in their respective neighborhoods. Their anti-social acts disrupt the daily routines of the Bronx citizenry and engender an atmosphere of fear and panic. The decline in the age group 30-59, has several ominous social and economic implications. Among these are that the level of individual and family incomes are usually at their highest point between these ages and that individuals in this age group utilize the least public services--especially the older portion of this group which have few, if any, school age children.

The Bronx's largest increment of a single age group was that between 20-24, reflecting the national trend resulting from the post-war baby boom. This group has the largest unemployment rate, particularly among its blacks and Puerto Ricans. The black population in this age category doubled over the last ten years. Also, these two population segments generate the greatest number of new households, each of which requires housing and, eventually,

educative facilities, not to mention other public services.

The growth of Bronx County's elderly population in relation to the growth of its total population is also a significant factor economically and has its own impact upon the character of the medical, welfare and other services as well as type of housing needed. During the twentieth century, the population of the nation in its older age groups has grown steadily higher.

Table III-4

Proportion of the United States Population
Sixty-five and Over: 1890-1970

<u>Census Year</u>	<u>Per cent of Total Population</u>	<u>Census Year</u>	<u>Per cent of Total Population</u>
1890	3.8	1930	5.5
1900	4.1	1940	6.9
1910	4.3	1950	8.2
1920	4.7	1960	9.2
		1970	10.2

The 1970 Federal census reports that persons 65 and over in the Bronx make up 12 per cent of the borough's population as compared to 10 per cent nationally. In many of the larger cities of the nation such as Pittsburgh, Boston and San Francisco, the 65 and over age category formed an even larger proportion of the total population in 1970 than in the Bronx. But, in none of these cities did the absolute number of persons 65 and older equal 100,000 people compared with 171,000 in the Bronx.

During the last decade, the Bronx population 65 and over increased by 12 per cent, while its entire population increased only by 3 per cent. Looking at the detailed data by age, sex and race for all Bronx residents who were 60 years of age and older in 1960 and 1970 reveals some interesting figures: 1) that the percentage increase for both sexes was highest for the oldest group among the aged--75 years or more; 2) that the ratio of females to males 65 and over is 3 to 2; 3) that older residents both in 1960 and in 1970 were predominantly white; and, 4) that though still a small percentage of the total aged group, black older residents doubled in number between 1960 and 1970. These trends, which also reflect the national figures, indicate that even as the ratio of older people to the total population is rising, so the older population itself is aging. The age segment 65-69 of the 65-plus group is getting smaller, while the numbers aged 75-plus are increasing.

Table III-5

Number and Percentage of Selected Age Segments
of the Bronx Population: 1960 and 1970

<u>Age</u>	<u>1970 U.S. Census</u>		<u>1960 U.S. Census</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
All Ages	1,471,701	100	1,424,815	100
Under 65	1,300,781	88.4	1,272,412	89.3
60+	245,077	16.7	232,159	16.3
65+	170,920	11.6	152,403	10.7
60-64	74,157	30.3	79,756	34.3
65-69	63,558	25.9	65,359	28.2
70-74	48,107	19.6	45,725	19.7
75+	59,255	24.2	41,319	17.8

The data show that the number of women age 60 and over has increased by 12 per cent, while the percentage of males in this age group has decreased by 2 per cent. The number of women 65 and over has increased by almost 20 per cent, while that of men by only 3 per cent. Also, the number of women in each of the subcategories, age 60-64, 65-69, 70-74 and 75-plus, has increased substantially more than that of the men. The greatest increase was in the 75 and older group and holds true for both sexes. Since 1960 the number of men 75-plus increased almost 34 per cent, while the number of men 65 to 74 decreased by almost 9 per cent. The oldest female population increased by 50 per cent as compared to an 8 per cent increase in their 65 to 74 group.

Several tentative explanations have been offered, by the New York City Office for the Aging, for these

trends. These include:

1. The number of men entering the 65-74 age bracket is sharply reduced by higher male mortality in the 55-64 age cohort.
2. Out-migration upon retirement has reduced the number of elderly, both men and women, 65-74 in New York City. Married couples . . . with higher incomes are more likely to move to retirement developments in Florida, etc. . . .
3. However by 75 anyone who has not left the city is less likely to move . . . (1972:2-3).

B. Family Income in the Bronx

Over the last decade family income in the United States, New York City and the Bronx rose continuously. Many Bronx families shared in this financial trend, but they have lagged behind the national and the New York City median income levels. The 1969 level of Bronx family income shows a median of \$8,300 or an advance of 43 per cent over the 1959 median, which increase was almost the same nationally. But, the median income for New York City rose by 59 per cent over that period.

Table III-6

Selected Median Incomes

	<u>All Families: 1959</u>	<u>All Families: 1969</u>
United States	\$5,620	\$9,867
New York City	\$6,091	\$9,682
Bronx	\$5,830	\$8,308

A comparison of the income distributions of 1959 and 1969 for Bronx families indicates very little change in

the percentage of families with incomes below \$3,000 a year. The percentage in the income category \$5,000-\$9,000 declined from 47 per cent to 34 per cent. There was a striking increase in both the absolute and relative number of families with incomes over \$10,000, from 15 per cent in 1959 to 40 per cent in 1969. During the period from 1959-1969, the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicated that the Consumer Price Index for the New York City area increased 29.3 per cent. If this change is used to adjust 1959 family income distribution to 1969 dollars, we would obtain a very different picture of the "real" advances in family income. The advances in all categories would be much more modest and in some categories there would be no advance at all.

Table III-7

Distribution of Bronx Family Income:
1959 and 1969

<u>Family Income</u>	<u>1959 U.S. Census</u>		<u>1969 U.S. Census</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent of Families</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per cent of Families</u>
All families	390,627	100	390,667	100
Below 3,000	62,231	15.9	53,200	13.6
3,000-4,999	87,269	22.3	50,916	13.0
5,000-6,999	99,733	25.5	55,304	14.2
7,000-9,999	82,420	21.1	78,201	20.0
10,000-14,999	43,977	11.3	87,166	22.3
15,000 or more	14,997	3.9	65,880	16.9

An examination of income distribution by ethnic groups in the Bronx clearly reveals the disadvantaged position of

blacks and Puerto Ricans. The 1969 median income of black families is \$6,859 which is almost equal to the 1960 New York City figure of \$6,091 and the Puerto Rican median family income is \$5,578 which is below the 1960 figure for New York City. Almost two-thirds of the Puerto Rican families and one-half of the black families had incomes below \$7,000 in 1970.

From 1960 to 1970, the Bronx labor force, which is composed ". . . of all resident individuals with a job, plus all individuals, able and willing to work, who are actively seeking employment" (Institute for Urban Studies 1967:23) declined sharply.

Table III-8

Bronx Civilian Labor Force: 1960 and 1970

	<u>1960 U.S. Census</u>	<u>1970 U.S. Census</u>
Employed	586,033	529,105
Unemployed	31,427	23,337
Total	617,460	552,442

CHAPTER IV

CO-OP CITY: A DEFENSIVE COMMUNITY

Thus far I have concentrated on some of the social and economic realities of the Bronx today which characterize its social problems and future promise. Within the heterogeneity of its present large, dense population and the increased need for formal methods of social control, the United Housing Foundation (U.H.F.) developed Co-op City. It is my intent to utilize Arensberg's universally applicable model of community in order to develop the idea of Co-op City as a defensive community.

Speaking specifically to the issue of the nature of urban communities, Suttles, in his book The Social Construction of Communities (1972), has created a taxonomy of communities. He develops a dichotomy between "natural" and "contrived" communities. The natural community is based upon such traditional forms of affiliation as race, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, etc. The contrived community emerges from the combined efforts of local interest groups and organizations beyond local control. Within the former category, he includes "the defended neighborhood," the dimensions of which

follow: 1) it is a residential area with sharp boundaries, laid out by a developer, whose architects create a uniform design; 2) it possesses a name, usually well advertised even before occupancy. Such publicity fosters an "image" of the settlement which distinguishes it from other residential locales; 3) the population, for the most part, shows a high degree of similarity achieved through both target-advertising and the screening of applicants according to established criteria; 4) it has an administrative staff responsible for daily operations and security; 5) it encourages a high degree of participation on the part of its members in the establishment and enforcement of formal and informal sanctions; 6) management and/or indigenously created formal associations provide the machinery for competing with other communities for Federal, State and local monies and services; 7) the development provides a fortification against criminal activity, through the use of various techniques which serve to separate potential victims from potential offenders; and, 8) it provides a setting within which its residents can re-establish cultural patterns fallen into disuse or create new ones around which they can pledge their allegiance.

In defining Co-op City as a defensive community the aforementioned attributes all prevail as do the further dimensions of flight from a former, dangerous dwelling place; formal and informal safety measures taken by

residents and management alike; and, perhaps, most important the perception of residents of their environment as "safe." This can be seen both relatively and in absolute terms. Although many buildings in America's beleaguered cities may be said to be defensible in that they provide doormen, intercom systems, closed circuit T.V. and other formal surveillance methods, the residents usually do not interact with one another to form cohesive units. In fact, such lack of communion is deplored by many tenants. In contrast, Co-op City can be characterized as a community within which its residents actively pursue common interests and have developed a consciousness of kind.

Of all urbanites, no group is more vulnerable to criminal assault than the elderly. Literally adding insult to injury they are powerless to do anything about it. Most of the elderly respondents realistically felt that their former neighborhoods were unsafe. The Bronx Planning Commission's study (Personal Communication: 1972) of the elderly living on the Grand Concourse indicates that slightly over one-third of them had been mugged at least once. Yet, only 5 percent of the elderly persons I interviewed had had any problem with crime in Co-op City. The elderly perceive the police as being ineffective in controlling mugging or other forms of crime. Even if a mugger is apprehended, which occurs rarely, there is little hope of receiving satisfaction for loss of property or for

personal injury.

Mugging is an unpredictable trauma which usually occurs within the victim's everyday setting and serves to erode his personal views of "invulnerability and trust" (Lejeune and Alex 1973:263). The acquisition of these attitudes eventually engenders the belief that the rules for urban living are based upon a Hobbesian notion of the nature of man at war with every other man rather than a Lockean concept of the mutual advantages of peaceful coexistence (Lejeune and Alex 1973:263-264). Such predispositions are evident when the elderly respondents as well as the media repeatedly refer to the urban environment as a "jungle."

The central theme pervading the elderly's response to a question about the nature of their previous neighborhoods is "I lived in fear."

I was a prisoner in my own home. I felt fearful about travelling, going to the store, sitting on a bench, riding in an elevator or even relaxing in my own living room.

-or-

I was mugged several times as were many of my friends. The muggers wait for us to cash our social security checks and attack us as we make our way to the store or home. It's a jungle with the strongest beasts preying upon the weak and defenseless.

For those elderly and others who could afford to migrate from the Bronx's current high crime areas, Co-op City provided one avenue of escape from the forces of affliction.

A variety of types of housing is available to Bronx residents. These include private, cooperative, condominium,

and public housing. A cooperatively organized community, such as Co-op City, is quite distinct from other kinds of housing. Its creation performs a special social and economic role in offering its residents the following opportunities:

1. Cooperators who join to pool their financial resources by purchasing stock in the cooperative, only have to pay their proportionate share of its actual operating expenses. The cooperative is a non-profit, non-speculative venture which aims to provide safe, decent housing at reasonable prices;
2. Cooperators democratically assume control of the cooperative and are responsible for establishing policy as well as the rules and regulations for living in it;
3. The cooperative is predicated upon the following principles: a) membership without regard to race, sex, creed, ethnicity or age; b) one apartment, one vote; and, c) non-affiliation with any religious or political group;
4. Its residents ultimately have the responsibility for the selection of a management agent;
5. Cooperators can join together for the development of a multitude of indigenous social, recreational, and educational activities. These groups are under local leadership;
6. Cooperators may deduct from their income taxes their proportionate share of the monies allotted for the payment of real estate taxes and interest on the mortgage;
7. Cooperators are semi-formally socialized for cooperative living.

A. Description of Co-op City

In February 1965 the United Housing Foundation announced its plans to construct Co-op City. Its location in the northeast section of the Bronx provided a semi-suburban setting within the city for approximately 45,000 people. The development is divided into two areas: the northern site, the larger of the two with 220 acres, is bounded by the New England Thruway, the Hutchinson River and Bartow Avenue. The 80 acre southern site is bounded by the Hutchinson River Parkway, the New Haven Railroad and the Hutchinson River (See Chart 1).

Across the New England Thruway and on the western front of Co-op City is the Boston Post Road (U.S. 1) along which are located a string of service stations and fast-food franchises. To the north are two Westchester suburban communities. Along the southern edge of Co-op City are a few old, single family homes, which seem out of place juxtaposed against the monumental size of Co-op City. For the most part, the boundaries of Co-op City are clearly demarcated and the project does not merge into other neighborhoods.

Co-op City is laid out in a once desolate, salt-marsh area and, except for the ill-fated Freedomland Amusement Park, the building site was vacant. Therefore, the problem of business and family relocation was non-existent

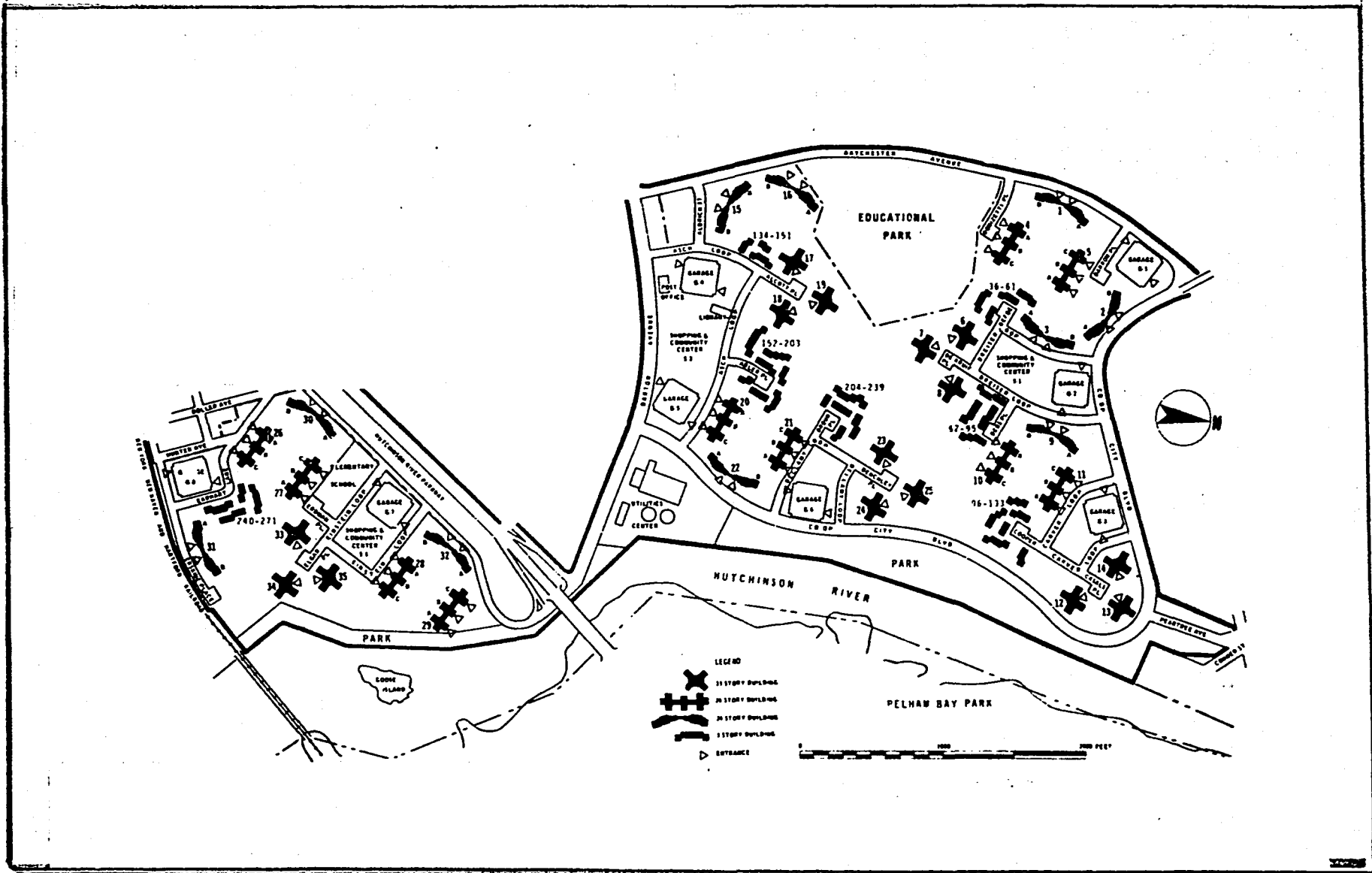


Chart IV-1. Site Plan of Co-op City (Courtesy of Co-op City Management)

and the need for demolition negligible. The site was low tidal land that had to be raised by hydraulic fill in order to be above hurricane tide level. Site preparations were begun in 1965 and three years later Co-op City welcomed its first settlers. They encountered an incomplete housing development with inadequate transportation, roads and schools as well as a shortage of shopping facilities. Mounds of dirt were everywhere, broken by patches of landscaped green in front of completed buildings. The blight of construction was omnipresent, but acceptable to most residents because it symbolized development rather than decay. Co-op City achieved full occupancy in 1972.

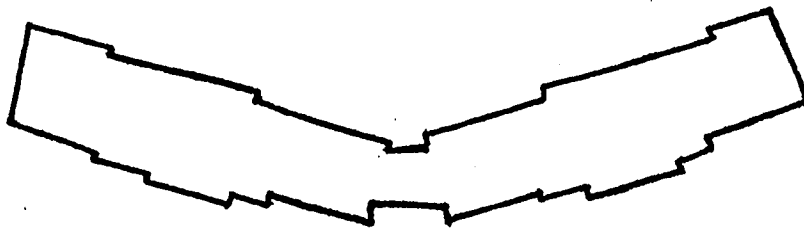
After clearing the site, a street pattern was devised which controlled the flow of traffic and provided for the safety of pedestrians. All high-rise buildings front on cul de sac interior streets and heavy traffic is kept at the perimeter on a belt of wide roads which surrounds Co-op City. Eight six-story garages provide parking facilities for some 11,000 cars at a cost to tenants of \$17 per month per car.

The development's 80 buildings are located on only 15 per cent of the land area. Ninety acres were utilized by the city for streets, schools, parks, a fire station, and play areas. The remaining land was used by Co-op City for the construction of other parks, gardens, bike paths, play and sitting areas.

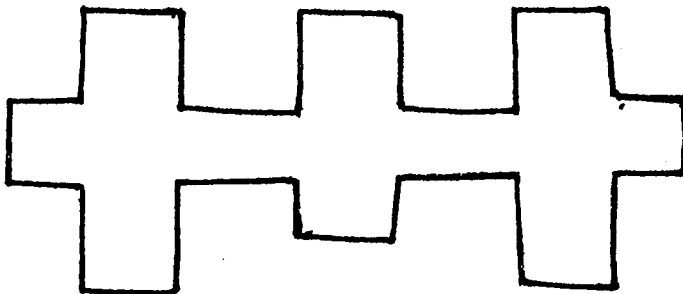
Within its four types of residential buildings are located 15,372 apartments, including 73,550 rooms, with a total of 17 million square feet of living space. There are 10 Chevron, 10 Tricore, 15 Tower buildings and 236 town houses each having 414, 500, 384, and 472 apartments respectively.

Chart IV-2

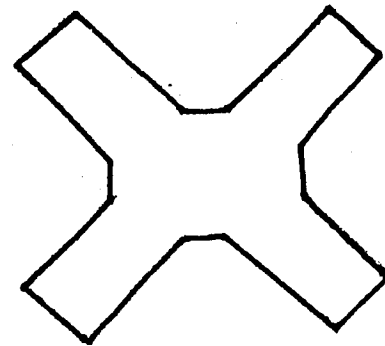
Building Floor Plans



Chevron



Tricore



Tower

The percentage distribution of apartments by size is as follows:

<u>Size of Apartment</u>	<u>Percentage of Apartments</u>
One bedroom	36%
Two bedrooms	37%
Three bedrooms	27%

Each apartment is centrally air-conditioned, heated and fireproof. There are 31 different layouts of apartments and

single bedroom apartments are predominantly occupied by the elderly.

The first educational park in New York City was built by U.H.F. at Co-op City and upon completion, was turned over to the City at no profit to the builder. This unprecedented event required the approval of the State legislature. The educational park is located on a 26 acre campus and contains two intermediate schools, two elementary schools and a high school, all of which serve approximately 10,000 students. A third elementary school is located in the southern area. Co-op City also has five cooperatively run nursery schools, each of which takes about 100 pre-school children.

The three shopping community/centers, containing some eighty stores, are located within easy walking distance of the residential buildings. The shopping centers contain a variety of shops including: supermarkets, pharmacies, stationery stores, bakeries, kosher butchers, barber shops and beauty parlors, dry cleaners, restaurants, delicatessens and food-take-out services, clothing and shoe stores. In two of the three shopping centers are banks, a hardware and paint store, optical center, record shop and travel agents. Also, among the shopping centers are a movie theater, jewelry store, a branch of the Public Library, bookshop, liquor store, florist, local newspaper publishers, an insurance agency and a general clothing store. A post

office is housed in a mobile trailer within Co-op City.

Also, within the shopping centers are several religious congregations. In one shopping center are the Young Israel Synagogue, St. Michael's Church and St. Joseph's Church. In another center are the Community Protestant Church of Co-op City and the Co-op City Baptist Church. In a third are the Young Israel of Baychester Temple and a Jehovah's Witness congregation. There are also smaller synagogues located in four of the high-rise buildings and a branch of St. Michael's Church in another building.

Within each of the shopping centers are located cooperatively owned supermarkets, optical and pharmacy centers. These cooperatives are part of the Riverbay Consumers' Cooperative Society, Inc. The Society is owned by families that have purchased at least one \$50 share of stock. Some members of the Society are not residents of Co-op City, but live in the vicinity and shop in its stores. The Society is a member of the Federation of Cooperatives, an affiliate of U.H.F., which provides management services as well as supervises the purchase of supplies on a fee-for-service basis.

Each year the Board of Directors of the Society returns its surplus earnings to its consumers. For example, in February, 1972 the Board declared a record annual rebate of 3 per cent, which was paid to customers on the basis of their total annual purchases, documented by their

sales slips. In addition, the Board voted to pay a 6 per cent dividend to stockholders who owned at least one \$50 membership in the Society.

Co-op City also has a Consumers' Credit Union, a non-profit savings and loan association. Management urged each family to purchase a minimum of one \$10 share in the association. By pooling the savings of its members the Union can provide low-cost loans to members, who, if borrowing money are paying interest to themselves. The Union permitted future Co-op City residents to borrow funds for their equity investments and other expenses. Although the Union is a separate organization from U.H.F. and the Riverbay Corporation, many members of its Board of Directors are also officers within the latter organizations.

Within each shopping area is located a community center comprising approximately 50 meeting rooms and an auditorium which accommodates 1,600 persons. These rooms are leased to various voluntary associations, clubs and educational groups at nominal fees. Additional space for community activities is available in some of the basements of high-rise buildings and on playing fields.

There are more than two hundred community organizations --civic, recreational, social, political, charitable and educational--which serve the needs and interests of the residents of Co-op City. Their membership ranges from a few to hundreds of residents. A representative list of

these groups follows:

A. Organizations for Children

3 Boy Scout Troops
 1 Brownie Program
 5 Cub Packs
 Little League
 Bowling Junior League
 Astronomy Club
 Teenage Lounge

Classes

Judo and Yoga
 Dance
 Instrumental Music
 Chess

B. Organizations for Adults

Ethnic Clubs

Hispanic Club
 Black Caucus
 Jewish Cultural Club
 B'nai Brith
 Free Sons of Israel
 National Council of Negro Women
 National Council of Jewish Women
 Jewish War Veterans

Political Clubs

United Democratic Club
 Civil Liberties Club
 Republican Club
 Independent Democratic Club
 Peace Committee

Health and Charitable Organizations

Association for the Deaf
 Kidney Foundation
 American Cancer Society
 Hadassah
 Tay Sachs Club
 3 Pioneer Women Organizations
 New York Diabetic Association

Social and Educational Clubs

Mr. and Mrs. Club
Guys and Dolls Club
Stamp and Coin Club
Community Glee Club
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Singletons
Actors Workshop
Transcendental Meditation Club
Belly Dancing Club
Poetry Club
Four Senior Citizen Clubs

Fraternal Orders

Knights of Pythias
United Odd Fellows

Co-op City contains three adult-educational programs, two of which are satellite schools of New Rochelle College and Pace University, and the third is the Co-op Community School. New Rochelle College's program is designed for adults desiring a Bachelor of Arts degree and the Pace University program offers courses leading to the Associate of Arts degree. The Co-op Community School was organized by cooperators, with the assistance of management, in order to offer a variety of instructional, social and cultural activities for all ages within the community. Also, the educational park operates an Evening Adult Center which offers thirty different programs.

Scattered throughout the community are a number of professional offices offering a variety of medical and dental services. There are four general practitioners and six internists, three obstetricians and gynecologists, two pediatricians, and eleven other doctors in a variety

of specialties. There are ten dentists, a medical insurance group (H.I.P.) and the Jewish Family Service, which offers family counselling.

Two local newspapers provide the residents with information specifically related to events occurring within Co-op City and the northeast Bronx. Now in its fifth year of publication, the Co-op City Times is the weekly house organ which is distributed gratis to each resident family. It publishes official reports released by management, a wide variety of information about local organizational activities and advertisements from local stores.

The City News is a private, independent weekly newspaper covering the news in the northeast Bronx. The News is devoted to watch-dogging the management of Co-op City in order to insure maximum efficiency and minimal corruption. It vigorously supported the tenants in their efforts to obtain the cancellation of a 33 per cent proposed rent increase.

Co-op City has a \$15 million electric power plant which supplies energy for heating and air-conditioning. It acts as an emergency generator as well, to assure continuity of basic services in the case of municipal power failures.

B. The Critics

Co-op City came under fire from several architectural and art societies (e.g., the Committee for Excellence in Urban Architecture, the Municipal Art Society, and the American Institute of Architects) for its ". . . sterile site-planning and uninspired architectural design" (Huxtable 1972:79). Other critics predicted that ". . . the spirits of the tenants would be dampened and deadened by the paucity of their environment" (N. Y. Times 5/13/65). These architects evaluated Co-op City as a staggering array of supersized buildings guaranteed to increase man's sense of alienation from both his physical and social environments. The height of the buildings and the density of population symbolized ". . . a disgrace to humanity" and ". . . a negation of the principles of the Great Society" (Farrell 1965).

The sponsors of Co-op City countered these criticisms by maintaining that until the beautiful in mass housing is economically feasible projects such as theirs must be devoted to meeting the vast need for decent housing for moderate income people. Even Ada Louise Huxtable (1972:79) has admitted that Co-op City provides ". . . good apartments at unbeatable prices." The Vice-President of U.H.F. indicated that buildings are not the etiology of the pathologies of our society. At this point, any evidence

linking population density, building size, ugly or elegant architecture or other such variables with the incidence of anti-social behavior is at best inconclusive. In the meantime, the art critics have substituted literary license for empirical fact.

I am in agreement with Brown and Venturi that Co-op City is neither "hideous" nor "sterile" but as "conventional" and "ordinary" as the latest medium-priced cars.

The city or state should not be asked for extra funds for 'urban design.' If government has more money it should go for more housing and we architects and planners are going to have to learn, as painters and sculptors have learned before us, to accept the ordinary on its own terms and do it well. If 'good design' costs twice as much, then good design is out of step and needs redefinition (Brown and Venturi 1970:70).

Salient criticisms of Co-op City are not so much against its design but directed at the lack of coordination between the developers and New York City agencies as well as against its failure to achieve a higher degree of integration into the urban network of Bronx County. Instead of city agencies working in tandem with U.H.F., there were serious delays in the provision of schools, paved roads and transportation for strap-hangers. Schooling was conducted in makeshift classrooms, drivers were mired in mud holes, and commuters were as far from Manhattan as "Brasilia is from Rio de Janeiro" (Newsweek 1970:91).

At this time Co-op City appears to be a housing oasis with few facilities for other Bronx residents. Its

physical isolation is evinced by its lack of access and egress arteries connecting it to the rest of the borough. This lack has been documented by the Bronx Planning Commission (Personal Communication 1972), which recommended the construction of both an overpass and an underpass that would provide two more roadways and walkways to facilitate the circulation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. At two different town-hall meetings held in Co-op City, both management and cooperators vigorously denounced such proposals as a "blight on the community," "an affront to Co-op City and its residents," and "an ecological horror" (Co-op City Times:1/20/73). Each of the Commission's recommendations was eventually defeated. Whether or not it is just these traffic plans or whether any such proposals would be acceptable to Co-op City residents and management is unclear, but I feel such negativism to be reflective of parochialism, or social isolationism. The management and urban planners have indicated that Co-op City and its surrounding vacant areas have the potential for being developed into one of New York City's major commercial, educational and cultural centers. But this possibility remains as dormant as the empty lots.

C. Financing Co-op City

The cooperative housing movement in New York City began in the 1920s under the aegis of the Amalgamated

Clothing Workers' Union, when an acute housing shortage prompted the Union to become involved in the construction of the first cooperative housing development. The movement floundered due to financial shortages and organizational weaknesses. However, with the passage of the 1949 Housing Act and its provision for the granting of Federal funds for slum clearance came a resurgence of the cooperative movement. In 1951 U.H.F., a federation of non-profit organizations, including labor unions (e.g., the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union, etc.), civic groups (e.g., Workmen's Circle, Farband, etc.) and various other cooperative housing projects, was created. In 1955 a second piece of significant legislation, the New York State Limited Profit Housing Companies Law, popularly known as the Mitchell-Lama Law, was passed. This act established the New York State Housing Finance Agency, which has the power to sell bonds to finance housing, thereby providing a source of mortgage loans for cooperatives. Also, U.H.F. established Community Services, Inc. to act as its general contractor in providing technical services related to the construction and sale of cooperative housing on a fee-for-service basis. This maneuver permitted U.H.F. to be its own contractor, thus avoiding substantial contracting fees.

A reconstruction of the events leading to the development of Co-op City follows:

1. In 1965 U.H.F. approached the State of New York with the idea of building Co-op City, at a \$23 per-room rental fee.
2. After considerable bickering, U.H.F. was able to obtain zoning law revisions and an agreement for tax abatement from the City, which would keep down the monthly carrying charges for apartments. U.H.F. decided to invest the 10 per cent of the land cost equity for acquiring the \$15 million site. They purchased the site on the expectation that sufficient capital could be raised quickly from initial applicants for apartments to cover their costs. Within one year after the announcement of Co-op City, 4,000 applicants had each submitted a deposit of \$500, totalling \$2 million.
3. The New York State Housing Agency approved the project and provided a 45 year permanent mortgage loan covering 90 per cent of the construction costs. The original estimated cost of the project was \$284 million, of which \$33 million was to be provided by the equity payments of stockholder-subscribers. The total construction costs to be paid to Community Services was \$259 million. This figure changed five times, from April, 1967 to July, 1971, raising the final costs to \$423 million. The parallel increases in the mortgage resulted in the average monthly carrying charges increasing from \$23 per room in 1965 to \$37 in 1973.

In sum, Co-op City was sponsored by U.H.F., constructed by its general contractor, Community Services, and owned by the Riverbay Corporation, a subsidiary of U.H.F. Without any major capital investment of its own, U.H.F. was able to build Co-op City. All that was needed for success was the large number of consumers who invested in the project even before the site was cleared.

D. Costs to Cooperators

Each family must purchase a one-time stock subscription of \$450 per room, which means that a six-room apartment requires an investment of \$2,700. The monthly carrying charges meet the expenses of mortgage payments, taxes and managing the project.

According to the Mitchell-Lama Law, the maximum income ceiling of a family occupying an apartment at Co-op City is determined by a formula relating to annual income, family size and space allocated. The maximum allowable income is equal to the yearly rent for the apartment, plus a 6 per cent allowance on the original investment, plus \$17 per room for refurbishing, and multiplying the total by 6 for a family of three persons or less, or by 7 for a family of four or more. The following table shows the maximum allowable income for the smallest, medium and largest apartments calculated by the 6X and 7X formulae.

Table IV-1

Income Ceilings For Selected Apartments
by the 6X and 7X Formulae

<u>Apartment Size</u>	<u>Lowest Yearly Carrying Charge</u>	<u>6X</u>	<u>7X</u>
		<u>Maximum Allowable Income</u>	<u>Maximum Allowable Income</u>
3	\$1,245	\$8,262	\$9,639
5	\$2,031	\$13,506	\$15,757
7	\$3,216	\$21,144	\$24,688

A 5 per cent grace on the maximum allowable income is granted, but any income greater than the ceiling is subjected to a surcharge payment. The surcharge is computed at 5 per cent steps at 5 per cent intervals of income above the maximum. For example, on \$12,000 maximum permissible income the surcharge would begin as follows:

	<u>Income</u>		<u>Rent</u>	<u>Monthly Surcharge</u>
	6X	7X		
5% income	\$12,600	\$14,700	\$150.00	\$7.50
10% income	13,200	15,400	\$150.00	\$15.00
15% income	13,800	16,100	\$150.00	\$22.50
Maximum	50%			\$75.00

Cooperators, who itemize their deductions, may take from their gross income for Federal, State and Local taxes their proportionate share of the real estate taxes and interest paid on the mortgage. For example, John and Jane Doe and their two children live in a five room apartment and pay a monthly carrying charge of \$192.50. In 1972, they could deduct \$175.00 in Real Estate Taxes and \$1609.00 for mortgage interest payments from their gross annual income.

Legislation spearheaded by U.H.F. permits the elderly to receive a rent subsidy paid for by the monies collected from surcharge payments. To be eligible for a subsidy, a head of household must be 62 years of age or older, the total annual family income may not exceed \$5,000 and the total carrying charges must amount to more than one-third of

the income.

E. The Spatial-Temporal Orbits of
Co-op City's Residents

Of all residents of Co-op City it is young mothers, children and the elderly who are most regularly confined to its borders. The major mode of transportation is walking, which results in their mingling along the streets and pathways which connect buildings with each other and with shopping areas. Weather permitting, young mothers can be found socializing in play areas while watching their youngsters. After school, teenagers hang out and rap in their favorite corner of a shopping center or building. The elderly occupy the benches in front of their buildings to "shmooze" (chat) or just "to get the sun." Mothers can be overheard repeatedly admonishing their children not to play in front of buildings, near elevators or by stairways. Each day the elderly make their way to their respective club rooms to engage in the day's activities (e.g., card playing, sing-a-longs, lectures, arts and crafts, etc.). The men arrive earlier and stay later. After having completed their domestic chores, the women start trickling into the club rooms. On Fridays women are noticeably absent, as this day is traditionally reserved for intensive household cleaning and the preparation of elaborate meals, in anticipation of the visits from their children and

grandchildren.

At times, the shared orbits of youngsters and oldsters is a source of friction, as when, after school, an army of youngsters descends on the streets with bicycles. Such a situation is potentially hazardous to the elderly, who generally retreat to safer areas, such as their own or neighbor's apartments or their social club rooms.

Within Co-op City there is a clear demarcation between public and private places. Its high degree of safety from criminal activity is, in large part, due to the fact that, although residents and strangers use its public areas freely, residents focus their attention on such areas for prolonged periods of time. The elderly especially enjoy watching the traffic, children playing and each other. They observe the street scene from benches as well as from their apartments and thus provide informal surveillance of the community. In their previous neighborhoods such outings would have made them easy targets for intimidation and victimization by rowdy youngsters and criminals. Also, Co-op City maintains a formal security force of 75 guards, who systematically patrol the community. Beside this, each building has a tenant lobby patrol to control the movement of people within their respective buildings. Co-op City's Chief of Security has indicated that of all population segments of Co-op City it is the elderly who report the greatest number of misdeeds--real

or suspected.

The spatial-temporal patterns of the personnel of Co-op City were ascertained by observation and by presenting the elderly subjects with a list of available facilities (e.g., grocery and clothing stores, church or synagogue, bank, movie theater, place of employment, restaurant, doctor and club). The respondents were asked if they ever used these facilities, if so, whether the one they used most often was located within Co-op City and how often it was used by them (Cantor 1973:7). The New York City Office for the Aging, under the direction of Marjorie Cantor, urged that such data be gathered about the activities of Co-op City residents in order to make later comparisons with their own study of the cities' elderly poor.

Most of the facilities utilized by the elderly, apart from the ubiquitous laundry rooms, are located within Co-op City. The most frequently used, by the greatest number of respondents, is the supermarket. If possible almost everyone walks to the nearest shopping center more than once a week. Over 60 per cent of the Jewish elderly buy their meat and poultry at a kosher butcher.

Eighty-five per cent of the respondents reported attending a church or synagogue during the past year: 75 per cent of these go more than several times a year, within Co-op City. Seventeen per cent of the respondents attend temple at least once a week, and of these 7 per

cent go more than once a week.

Banks and clothing stores were visited by 75 per cent of the sample. Banking was done almost exclusively within Co-op City, but shopping for clothes was an extra-local activity. Such shopping occurred about once a month and was an occasion for travelling to large department stores located in the northeast Bronx or Westchester County. Some of the women indicated that they particularly enjoyed shopping and bargain hunting.

As expected 94 per cent of the elderly had seen a physician during the past year. Even though Co-op City has an impressive array of doctors, over 50 per cent of the elderly utilize public transportation to visit their "old-family" doctors outside Co-op City.

Very few of the aged go to the movies or eat in restaurants. Most of them indicated that these activities are "just too expensive" and besides the movies are "not for me"--they are either too "dirty" or too "incomprehensible." However, over a majority of the respondents have seen the films "Fiddler on the Roof" and "Funny Girl." Also, they are over-represented in the audiences attending concerts given at Co-op City.

Eighty-two per cent of the elderly belong to at least one voluntary association (excluding labor unions and religious institutions). Over half of them attend some club meeting more than once a week at Co-op City.

Although 65 per cent of the elderly respondents leave the confines of Co-op City once a week, such journeys are made with fear and kept to a minimum. These trips, other than going to work, are to visit relatives, friends and doctors, or for shopping for specialized items or vacationing.

The figures clearly indicate that the elderly utilize Co-op City's facilities for most socializing, for acquiring vital goods, and even for such needs as medicare, food stamps, banking, etc. The easy accessibility of these various resources makes possible a high degree of social interaction within Co-op City.

F. Attributes of Co-op City's Population

Demographic attributes of Co-op City's residents are described in respect to such usual characteristics as age, sex, household composition, occupation, income and number of wage-earners per household. Since this study is concerned with the elderly, I have paid particular attention to those families containing at least one person 60 years of age or older. The description of the composition of Co-op City's population will also be compared to those of Bronx County's and New York City's in 1970, wherever possible.

Co-op City's population is approximately 70 per cent (31,500) Jewish and 20 per cent (9,000) black and

Puerto Rican. The proportion of Jews in New York City and Bronx County constitutes approximately 23 per cent and 35 per cent respectively of their entire populations. Within the United States, there are only about a dozen cities, excluding New York City and its periphery, which contain larger Jewish populations than Co-op City. Such cities as Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, Miami, Washington, D.C. and Baltimore each have over 100,000 Jews, while Cleveland, Detroit, San Francisco and St. Louis each have 50,000 or more Jews. Outside the United States, there are some twenty-five cities whose Jewish populations out-number that of Co-op City. Excluding several cities in Israel, the following urban areas contain 100,000 or more Jews: Buenos Aires, Paris, Moscow, London, Leningrad, and Montreal, while such cities as Toronto, Sao Paulo, Marseilles, Budapest, and Johannesburg have over 50,000 Jews each.

1. Age and Family Composition

Consideration of the factor of age indicates that Co-op City has attracted a population slightly older than that of Bronx County at large.

Table IV-2

Percentage Distribution of Co-op City's
Population by Age and Sex, 1965-1971

<u>Age</u>	<u>Both Sexes</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
0-19	31%	33%	26%
20-59	50%	49%	54%
60+	19%	18%	20%
All ages	100%	48%	52%

Co-op City houses proportionately fewer individuals between the ages of 0-19 and more of the other age groups than Bronx County. These differences hold true for both sexes.

Heads of household can be characterized as being slightly older than middle aged. The median age is 52 and the mean age is 50.

Table IV-3

Percentage Distribution of Heads
of Household by Age

<u>Age</u>	<u>Per cent of Household Heads</u>
20-29	10.8
30-39	16.0
40-49	20.9
50-59	22.0
60-69	21.8
70-79	7.9
80+	.6

Sixty-three per cent of the heads of household are 45 years of age or more, of whom 40 per cent are 55 and over and 30 per cent are 60 years of age and over. It seems that Co-op City has not attracted large numbers of young

families, which is another reflection of the relatively small number of occupants per household and the migration of younger, more upwardly mobile families from the Bronx.

Table IV-4

Percentage Distribution of Number of Household Members Per Apartment

<u>Occupants per Apartment</u>	<u>Per cent of Apartments</u>
1	12.6
2	33.8
3	22.1
4	21.2
5	8.0
6	2.1
7+	.2

Almost half of the apartments contain two individuals or less and only 10 per cent are occupied by five or more people. The mean is 2.9 individuals per household and the median is 2.6. The median figure is quite small when compared to the 3.2 figure for the nation as a whole. Almost 50 per cent of all Co-op City households contain no children and, of the 12.6 per cent of the residents living alone, 60 per cent of them are 60 years of age and older.

The original census conducted by Co-op City's management necessitated grouping family composition into three broad categories:

1. Subconjugal families (i.e., the presence of a single person, with or without other household members);
2. Conjugal families (i.e., a married couple, with or without children);

3. Supraconjugal families (i.e., a conjugal family, plus "other" household occupants, usually from the extended family).

Almost 75 per cent of the families at Co-op City are conjugal. Of these, 40 per cent contain only two persons and about 25 per cent each three or four persons. Almost all are headed by males, of which 50 per cent are between the ages of 40-65.

Subconjugal families constitute 18 per cent of the families at Co-op City. They are five times more likely to be headed by a female than a male. Eighty-five per cent of the subconjugal families consist of a female living alone and, of these, 70 per cent are over the age of 50. There are no grandparent/grandchild families at Co-op City.

The supraconjugal families constitute 6 per cent of Co-op City's families. They are predominantly headed by a male, of whom a majority are between the ages of 40-59. Three-quarters of the "other" household occupants are females of whom 65 per cent are over the age of 60, indicating that older women are much more likely to be living with their children than are men.

The remaining 1 per cent of the families of Co-op City are predominantly siblings living together.

The distribution of the elderly population by apartments shows that 37 per cent of all the apartments at Co-op City house at least one person 60 years of age

or older, although this age group constitutes only 19 per cent of the total population.

2. Occupational Distribution

Turning to socio-economic status, I shall examine first the occupational profile of the heads of household, the number of wage-earners per household and, finally, total family annual income. The residents' modal occupational level may be summarized as lower middle class.

It appears to the residents of Co-op City that there is a wide diversity of occupations represented among them. After all, there are 267 accountants, 519 teachers, 33 physicians, 940 office managers, 1,500 garment workers, 90 small store owners, 164 laboratory technicians, 329 transit workers, 402 policemen, 1,023 postal workers and 219 elevator operators. However, when these occupations are sorted into standard categories, the diversity is not very great. The two leading categories occupied by heads of household are clerical or sales personnel and skilled workers, which accounts for half of all the occupations.

Table IV-5

Occupational Classification
of Household Heads

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Per cent of Household Heads</u>
Professionals	2.2
Administrative personnel	11.8
Clerical and Sales workers	26.2
Skilled Workers	24.9
Semi-skilled workers	9.2
Unskilled workers	3.7
Retired	13.1
Self-employed	8.2
Other	.7

These various occupations reflect the gamut of endeavor traditionally associated with East European Jews in Urban America. The older residents are found in all phases of the garment industry as well as being bookbinders, watch-makers, cigar makers, jewelers, house painters, butchers, grocers and bakers. According to management (Personal Communication 1972), the younger Jewish population of Co-op City is over-represented in such professional or clerical occupations as physicians, lawyers, teachers, pharmacists and accountants or computer programmers.

3. Number of Wage-Earners Per Household

Approximately 23 per cent of the households contain more than a single wage-earner. Cross-tabulation of the number of wage-earners per household by the age of the household head reveals that those families with household heads age 20-24 have the greatest number of wage-earners,

followed closely by the 40-50 age group. It appears that those households lacking children or those with grown children are likely to have more than a single wage-earner. But the elderly are, at most, single wage-earner families, even to a greater extent than those families headed by a person 30-40 years of age, in which young children are likely to be present.

4. Total Annual Family Income

The mean total annual income reported by Co-op City residents is \$8,325 and the median is \$8,250, which was almost identical to that for Bronx County as a whole in 1970.

Table IV-6

Percentage Distribution of Total Family Income

<u>Income</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Less than 2,999	3.9
3,000-5,999	20.7
6,000-8,999	35.8
9,000-11,999	26.6
12,000-14,999	9.9
15,000-17,999	2.6
18,000 or more	.5

The range of incomes is from \$1,000 to \$18,000 or more per year. About one-quarter report that they have total family incomes of \$6,000 or less, while 13 per cent report incomes of \$12,000 or more per year. Those residents in the lowest income bracket are predominantly widows, whose adult

children have formally contracted to meet their carrying charge costs. Those residents in the highest income bracket are the top management personnel (who are required to live on the premises) of Co-op City and several physicians and dentists.

The distribution of average income by the age of the household head indicates that the highest mean incomes are found between the ages 30-50 and from then on fall steadily.

Table IV-7

Distribution of Average Income by Age
of Household Head

<u>Age of Household Head</u>	<u>Mean Income</u>
20-24	\$8,110
25-29	9,440
30-34	9,678
35-39	9,687
40-44	9,682
45-49	9,770
50-54	9,176
55-59	8,225
60-64	7,274
65-69	5,779
70-74	5,212
75-79	4,646
80-84	4,844
85-89	4,061
90+	2,688

A relationship exists between total family income, size of family, number of wage-earners and the age of heads of household. That is, the heads of household between the ages of 30-50 have the highest total annual incomes, the

largest families and the greatest number of employed members. It is not unreasonable to suggest that as the head of household cannot earn sufficient income to support his growing family at the present living standard, another family member enters the labor force in order to maintain, not advance, the status quo. Such equilibrium, however, must also be seen both in the very real light of spiraling costs of living on the negative side and of child-care facilities available to Co-op City residents on the positive side.

G. Motivations for Moving to Co-op City

An examination of the addresses of the applicants reveals that 74 per cent of them lived within Bronx County. Other applications came from Manhattan, Brooklyn, Nassau County and other locales.

Table IV-8

Distribution of Applicants by Place of Residence

<u>Location</u>	<u>Number of Applicants</u>
Bronx	11,134
Manhattan	1,319
Brooklyn	1,027
Nassau County	536
Multiple locales	1,356

Co-op City attracted a vast majority of its residents on a very uneven basis from the Bronx. According to the Linton, Miels and Coston report (1972) two of the 14

Bronx Planning Districts, which cover the Grand Concourse, accounted for nearly half of all families that applied from the Bronx and for one-third of all the applicants.

Knowing where the residents of Co-op City originated, a consideration of some of the motives which prompted their eager migration is in order. Boswell and Greenberg's study of "Neighborhood Deterioration as a Factor in Intra-urban Migration: A Case Study in New York City" (1972) indicates that the spatial distribution of applicants to Co-op City is most significantly correlated with the following variables in the order presented: perception of neighborhood deterioration; Jewish housing preferences; and, alterations in family composition.

Newspaper articles, T.V. programs, radio talk-shows and citizens' groups had documented the deterioration of housing, the increase of criminal assaults, and the movement of blacks and Puerto Ricans closer to white areas. However, the mere presence of these minority groups is not sufficient to explain the huge urban migration of whites. After all, Co-op City itself is approximately 20 per cent black and Puerto Rican. According to Boswell and Greenberg's view of the process of neighborhood deterioration, it was the "velocity" of the movement of blacks and Puerto Ricans closer to formerly white enclaves that prompted the massive migration of whites.

The second variable cited by these authors is "the Jewish population factor" (1972:14). Clearly, ethnic and racial groups were differentially attracted to Co-op City. Another author, Sklare, has suggested that:

For non-Jews the one-family house has typically been the preferred mode of residence, boasting as it does a commodity that is abundant in the village but scarce in the urban environment--namely physical privacy. Jews, however, do not necessarily experience the proximity of neighbors as an invasion of privacy. Accordingly, until the most recent decades, Jews were characteristically apartment-renters rather than home owners. . . . Wherever Jews have formed an important segment of the urban American population, they have been the prime developers and prime residents of apartment houses, especially of the so-called 'elevator buildings,' those bastions of the urban middle class. . . . The elevator building was designed for people who had moved up from the working class and the walk-up building, and who, though financially able to buy a one-family house in the suburbs, chose to remain in the city. Such construction reached its apogee along the great boulevards of Brooklyn, the Bronx, and more recently, Queens. . . . These were essentially 'Jewish' avenues, built by Jewish developers for a Jewish clientele (1972:72).

Indeed, U.H.F. is a "Jewish developer" constructing housing "predominantly for Jews." Since many of its affiliates are either controlled by or whose membership is predominantly Jewish, it is reasonable to conclude that the flow of information about Co-op City spread efficiently among Jews.

It is my impression that Italian and Irish working class neighborhoods tend to preserve their ethnic homogeneity for longer periods of time than do Jewish enclaves.

Two dynamic factors responsible for this pattern are strong peer group identification and loyalty to locale among non-Jews, often at the cost of upward mobility. Gans, speaking of the West Enders, a working class Italian community in Boston, states that:

West Enders . . . are not interested in careers, but in jobs that pay the most money for the least amount of physical discomfort, because they want to make money and save their energy for person-oriented behavior within the peer group (1962:93).

William Foote Whyte in his study of Street Corner Society (1943), an Italian slum community, shows the relationship between peer group loyalty and occupational mobility. He uses two local gangs, "Doc's gang" and "Chick and the College Boys" to illustrate the relationship.

Both Doc and Chick recognized that the free spender does not receive an equal financial return, but they drew different conclusions from that observation. While Doc sometimes wished that he could have back a portion of the money he had spent and lent, he thought of spending in terms of personal relations and not in terms of profits, losses, and savings.

Chick needed to save in order to advance himself. Doc needed to spend if he was to maintain his position . . . (1943:106-107).

Marc Fried's article "Grieving for a Lost Home" (1963) demonstrates the deep emotional attachment of West Enders to their neighborhood, which underwent urban renewal. Their feelings of grief were expressed by:

. . . the continued longing, the general depressive tone, frequent symptoms of psychological or social or somatic distress, the active work required in adapting to the altered situation, the sense of

helplessness, the occasional expressions of both direct and displaced anger, and tendencies to idealize the lost place (1963:151).

These three studies indicate pressures to maintain loyalty to peers and to place which act as deterrents to upward mobility among the non-Jewish working class.

The Jewish population, with its reduced amount of self-employment, its increase of higher levels of education, occupational mobility, and the larger population's lessening of anti-semitism has shown wider dispersal across the United States (Goldstein 1971). It seems reasonable that a combination of historical, cultural and psychological forces have contributed to the lack of peer group pressures promoting senses of loyalty to place which, combined with upward mobility, have lead to the erosion of concentrated Jewish enclaves.

A third factor cited by Boswell and Greenberg, prompting migration to Co-op City is alteration in family size. Young, growing families requiring more space and small, contracting, older families needing less space were attracted to Co-op City.

Although Boswell and Greenberg appear to offer a logical argument for the factors influencing such a large number of people to move to Co-op City, it is worth remembering that correlations are not necessarily indicative of causative relationships.

Many Co-op City residents had filed their applications previous to the massive ingress of blacks and Puerto Ricans to "their" neighborhoods. Also, their migration out of these areas was occurring long before Co-op City was planned (Linton, Miels and Coston, Inc. 1972). It is quite reasonable to postulate another sequence of events, somewhat at variance with Boswell and Greenberg's thesis. Thus, I agree with the Bronx Planning Commission (Personal Communication 1972) that the movement of whites--predominantly Jewish--from their old neighborhoods, especially the Grand Concourse, was motivated by a combination of forces and that the migration of blacks and Puerto Ricans closer to these areas only served to accelerate the on-going exodus.

Throughout the 1960s the Jewish population of the Grand Concourse was declining due to the forces of attrition, migration and lack of generational succession. Just as the physical structures were aging, so was the population. The middle-aged and younger elderly population had already started to leave the area seeking newer and better housing elsewhere. The migrating population was not being replaced by their upwardly mobile children. Their children's occupational success promoted their geographic dispersal and those that remained in the city were attracted to other neighborhoods which would reflect their success.

The 200 elderly persons interviewed overwhelmingly responded (84%) positively to the question: "Should a child accept a better job that might take him a distance from his parents?" The responses of Jews to this question are reflective of the attitudes of the entire sample. Most felt that occupational mobility is more important than geographic propinquity. Many respondents commented that their children's success would bring them happiness and prestige and such nachas fun kinder (gratification from children) would be enough to overcome their being far away.

The success of my children is the most important thing. It shows what a good parent I have been and the sacrifices that I have made for them. I am very proud of them. And as long as I can see them two or three times a year and talk to them on the phone every week or so, its a small price to pay.

A few respondents (12%) were more ambivalent about their children leaving:

Nothing I could say could stop them anyway. I would only be interfering in their lives and that would make trouble. It's their decision, they are responsible for their families and they must do what is necessary and best for them.

A small minority (4%) indicated that their children should stay close to home even though this meant the possibility of sacrificing occupational success. Generally they felt that the price of occupational success far away is not worth the disruption of family life.

Blood is thicker than water. Strangers are of no help. You can only rely on and trust your family. They provide love, help, affection--it is just too difficult to adjust to a new place.

With the lack of generational succession and an ever decreasing traditional Jewish population came the decline of various cultural institutions: the kosher butchers and delicatessens, the mom-and-pop groceries and bakeries, the lunch counters, candy stores, newspaper stands and cigar stores began to close or move elsewhere and the synagogues' congregations declined. Unable to find new tenants among the Jewish population, landlords began to lease apartments to blacks and Puerto Ricans. The process of succession and invasion was in motion. As more and more Jews vacated the area, decent housing at reasonable prices became available to other minorities. With fewer neighbors of similar cultural backgrounds, with the decline of the outward manifestations of Jewishness, with the diminishing members of congregations, with the increase in mugging, vandalism, burglary and intimidation, those remaining Jews who could afford to, left the area en masse.

In their search for a new community, a massive number of urban consumers decided to relocate at Co-op City. It was here that many said they felt they could escape the fear and ravages of urban decay and violence as well as the acculturative or corrosive forces of the larger society. One cooperator indicated:

Co-op City is like the Promised Land for the middle-class, retired people and young families.

"Historically, when political institutions have failed to protect the public, individuals have taken steps to safeguard themselves, their families, and their property" (Gold 1970:152). The alternatives usually opted for are acquisition of weapons, organization of citizens' patrols, vigilante groups or other such deterrents to outside threats. Traditionally, Jews are not militant but, rather, tolerant--until pushed too far--and then émigrés. For the most part, in ethnological terms, many among Co-op City's population had decided to flee their former homes rather than to fight the forces of affliction.

In fact, the respondents' stated reasons for moving to Co-op City divided them into two groups: the positively oriented "seekers" and the negatively motivated "shunners." Of the total sample, the seekers cited as their reasons for moving to Co-op City: reasonable rents (15%); new apartments (15%); of the proper size (2%); and, facilities for socializing and shopping (20%). On cross-tabulation the seekers also turned out to be, by and large, the younger, employed elderly (i.e., ages 60-69, instead of 70-plus) and native-born Americans. Impressionistically they conveyed a strong sense of having planned their years at Co-op City partially for retirement purposes but also in a spirit of pioneering and community-building.

The shunners listed as their reasons for moving: physical deterioration of their former neighborhoods (20%); the influx of blacks and Puerto Ricans (14%) and the lack of personal safety (14%). Being older and more likely retired, the shunners may be said to have been more alienated from old neighborhoods than positively attracted to Co-op City except insofar as they saw the move in terms of bettering their chances for serene survival throughout the rest of their lives. These responses are like the proverbial half-full or half-empty glass question: Is Co-op City more attractive than the old neighborhood or is the old neighborhood less attractive than Co-op City? Thus, where there were two groups of people insofar as initial motivation to move to Co-op City was concerned, we now have one: Co-op City community members. Both seekers and shunners share in a positive evaluation of their new homes, citing almost equally the safety, conviviality, conveniences and re-affirmation of their ethnicity as salient features.

H. Attitudes Toward Living in Co-op City

Each of the 200 elderly respondents was asked a series of questions eliciting their evaluations of Co-op City as a place of residence and to indicate specific reasons for their assessments. Respondents were also asked to compare their previous neighborhoods to Co-op City as well as to

forecast Co-op City's future development.

Specifically, although the respondents divided almost equally, 51 per cent and 40 per cent, respectively, positive and negative about New York City as a place to live, their feelings about living at Co-op City now merge these groups as well. Eight out of ten respondents indicated that Co-op City is a better place to live than their previous neighborhoods. A typical response of a retired man was:

Co-op City is a good place because of all the activities for people. I used to be bored, almost to death, but now I go to the club, to concerts, on trips, or just shmooze on the benches. Everyday there's something to do. It's a new life and I like it.

Most of the women like Co-op City because it offers convenient shopping, new apartments, and places for their husbands to go while they do their housework. A typical female response was:

I have everything I need here. But most important my husband gets out of my hair by going to the club. He has something to do besides sitting around and watching television. He's less moody. I can get my work done. It's a good thing.

The employed elderly also positively evaluated Co-op City, but for different reasons. Their assessments emphasized the safety aspects of Co-op City above all else.

I can go to work and not be afraid of being mugged. I also do not have to worry about my wife having her pocketbook snatched as she goes shopping. On the weekend, I can enjoy visiting with my friends, going to the club or just sitting on the benches.

Other positive attributes assigned to Co-op City included, friendliness, reasonable rent, "my kind of people" and such general remarks as "I like everything about it."

For the elderly, friendliness and sociability are the primary values of living at Co-op City. In case of illness there is the certainty that a neighbor will come to see what is wrong and to help if possible. However, along with this desire for sociability on which the elderly rely, there is also a desire for independence and privacy. One respondent indicated that:

There are so many yentas [gossips] living here sometimes I can't stand it. All they want to know is your business and to gossip about everybody. They sit on the benches and talk about everyone that passes by. There is no privacy.

However, combined with the high praise for Co-op City is a creeping pessimism about its future. Over 60 per cent of the respondents feared that Co-op City will be a less desirable place to live within the next five years. The subjects' statements include:

It's going to be like a ghetto, just like the old neighborhood. There is nothing anyone can do about it.

The youngsters are destroying the place, the vandalism is terrific.

I'm not a racist. But the blacks are just destroying the community.

Many of the younger families are moving out and buying homes and the older people are either moving to Florida or dying. Only bad elements are moving in to replace them. It's going to be a slum in five years.

It would appear that the original, optimistic spirit of some of the residents and others is being converted into a misanthropic prediction of the future. This dooms-day attitude, however, must be seen in the light of real change. The original tenants were not only able to tolerate the blight of construction, the absence of schools, roadways and shopping centers, but to transcend these temporary problems by organizing task forces to solve them and, often even idealizing them as in keeping with pioneering. But this spirit is dissipating as the original challenges are overcome and the composition of the potential new population changes. Where the binding goals and sentiments of a common culture and mutual dependence in an unfriendly world once brought people together, it can now divide them. Many feel powerless to deal with the more intractable problems of race relations, vandalism and rent increases. Indicative of these feelings is that for the first time in Co-op City's short history, sufficient cooperators were not obtained to represent each building on the Advisory Council. Also, the composition of its membership changed from younger to older participants and the rate of resignations has risen. A survey conducted by the Advisory Council, to ascertain the reasons for the increased rate of resignations, revealed that "hopelessness" in dealing with the threats to Co-op City's viability most often accounted for

the withdrawal of participants.

Yet there still remain a significant number of dynamic individuals, young and old, men and women, actively attempting to ameliorate Co-op City's problems. The elderly still display a willingness to maintain their efforts to secure benefits for themselves and their community. However, the attitudes and moods of some residents are shifting from a demonstrated ability ". . . to take arms against a sea of troubles" to a willingness ". . . to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."

I. Sense of Community

If we define sense of community as a feeling of belonging, of oneness, then I can say that very strong evidence for this was found among the elderly respondents. Their esprit de corps is shown by high participation in a variety of community activities, social and political clubs, ranging from protest-picketing to sponsoring a Spring Fair.

This sense of community is further fostered by the attitude of the outside world, which is still ill-disposed toward Co-op City, identifying it with the blight of public housing projects. One informant said:

Other people think that a lot of welfare and subsidized families live at Co-op City. That's just not true. We all pay our own way.

Also, many outsiders feel that Co-op City residents receive more fiscal benefits from the government than they do. This

may be so in that they have actively and collectively sought such benefits, but this issue is a particularly sensitive one, insofar as many cooperators feel that they deserve all the assistance they can get because of the hardships they have had to endure in the past.

A vivid way in which Co-op City dwellers show a feeling of togetherness is through the Spring Fair. This single most important annual group rite is coordinated by the Community Life Forum, a confederation of local groups, in cooperation with management. More than one hundred of Co-op City's organizations participate in the day's activities by erecting booths and pushcarts which offer informational displays, merchandise for sale, snacks, games, raffles, etc. The fair is attended by approximately twenty thousand people from Co-op City and the Bronx.

The day begins with a parade that winds through Co-op City's streets. There is a flag raising ceremony conducted by the local veterans' organizations and a drum and rifle corp provides the tempo with veterans, scouts, ambulance corp and the security force marching sharply. Many political dignitaries are on hand to review the parade and make speeches. The festivities include performances by Co-op City musicians, singers and dancers. The fair provides something for everyone: entertainment and information for adults and rides and games for children. One informant commented:

Today is our day to have one huge block party. We invite anyone that would like to attend and enjoy the festivities. It is our day to show other people how we can cooperate to achieve common goals.

In general terms, the carnival can be considered a rite of intensification (Chapple and Coon 1940:507) which provides a regular opportunity for intense, harmonious and pleasurable social interaction between local groups and individuals around goals they value. It brings together a large number of people and thus provides a means for residents to identify with Co-op City as home and to set it apart from other communities. The fair reinforces group solidarity by superceding the segmental loyalties which otherwise strain the fabric of Co-op City's social cohesion. This day overrides the struggles between management and cooperators, blacks and whites, young and old. Also, just as other rites of intensification occur in conjunction with alternations in the seasons (e.g., harvest or spring renewal ceremonies) the fair occurs at the transition from spring to summer. This seasonal change heralds a variation in social interaction patterns. During the summer months there is a lull in group activities as many residents leave for vacation. At the end of a year of factionalism and in anticipation of dispersing, all groups gather and express their solidarity.

In summary, Co-op City's residents are and perceive themselves to be members of a self-contained enclave

physically and psychically separated from the larger, often-threatening society. Both manifest and latent functions may be clearly seen in the form that their community has taken vis à vis other possible urban living conditions. Despite internal dissensions it exists as a defensive community with a selected and congenial population.

U Social Structure and Process

Following Arensberg's paradigm, every community develops methods of grouping its personnel in order to carry out tasks which are necessary for the maintenance of social cohesion. In addition, the ability to thwart threats to internal order gives some indication of the group's strength. On this point, in an urban setting, there is debate about the cause and effect of such threats.

Newman and others have claimed that:

The physical environments we have been building in our cities for the past twenty-five years actually prevent . . . amity and discourage the natural pursuit of collective action (1973:2-3).

As a case in point, it is his belief that Co-op City constitutes an indefensible physical space and that its tenants will eventually be subject to victimization by outsiders. Speaking generally, about urban housing Gold states:

The present emphasis on different forms of community participation is based on the premise that the entire process of planning, building, and managing

the urban environment can be used to create identity between people and physical features. . . . The idea that the urban environment should be designed more to facilitate repair rather than to resist breakage suggests that the particular design of a building . . . may be less important in shaping human behavior than the process by which it is designed and built (1970:158).

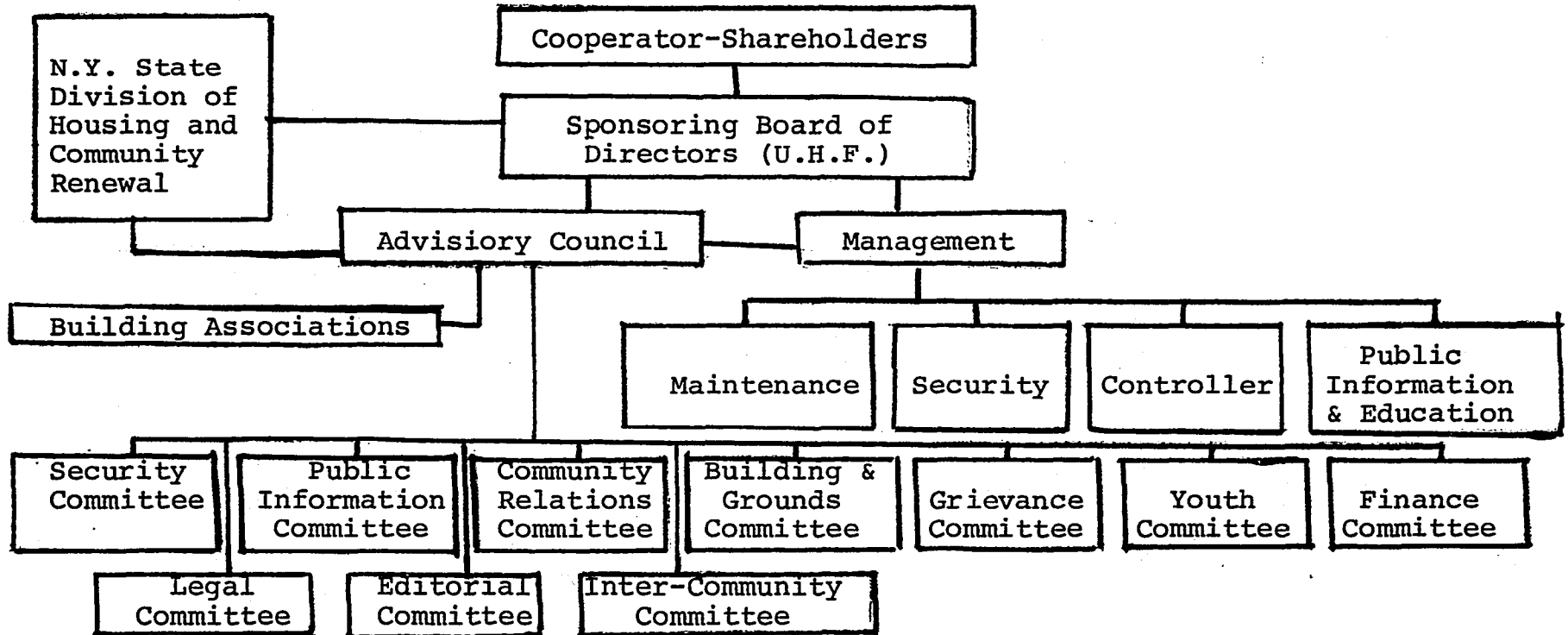
It is Gold's contention that an aggregate of people who control their territory can more easily create an atmosphere which encourages positive forms of behavior and attitudes of personal pride in the setting. It follows that once such internal cohesion is achieved, external sovereignty becomes a possibility.

It is my belief that the social dynamics within a given housing complex affect its cohesiveness more than its physical structure or the environment at-large. Thus, analysis of the social structure and function of Co-op City is essential to understanding the dynamics of that community.

The social structure of Co-op City is in part predetermined by legal statute, planned and directed by the sponsoring agency in interaction with the cooperators. The overall structure of Co-op City is schematically presented in Chart IV-3, derived from several written organizational descriptions given me by management. First I will present a description of the functions of each of the constituent parts of the structure. Then, an analysis of the social organization of Co-op City is presented, using

Chart IV-3

Organizational Structure of Co-op City



Turner's (1957) concept of social drama to demonstrate how the interests of individual cooperators are represented and alterations in structure and function are devised as needed.

1. The State

The New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal is the watch dog of the State's and cooperators' financial investments in Co-op City. It has the responsibility for the approval of the sponsor for the development, for supervising construction and for the issuing of a certificate stating that the buildings have been erected and are maintained in accordance with legal specifications. Also, the division appoints a representative of the Commissioner to sit on Co-op City's Board of Directors.

2. The Riverbay Corporation (Co-op City)

The United Housing Foundation acting as the approved sponsor of Co-op City promoted the organization of the Riverbay Corporation, the owner of Co-op City. The Board of Directors of Co-op City is composed of 15 individuals. They serve the cooperative through the construction and development stages, until the State issues a certificate of acceptability and authorizes the first stockholders' meeting. At such a meeting of cooperators the permanent Board of Directors, usually composed of residents and non-resident-civic-minded individuals, is elected.

In view of the long period of time before a certificate can be issued by the State, the temporary Board of Directors, drawn from the leadership of the member organizations of U.H.F., voted to amend its by-laws so that one resident-cooperator for every seven buildings can be elected to the Board. The Board acts as a collective body to determine policies to be implemented by management. Its major duties are to control expenditures as well as to perpetuate cooperative principles of living.

3. The Management Agent

The management agent is responsible for the daily operations of Co-op City. The duties of the agent include:

1. Hiring and supervising of personnel responsible for the maintenance and security of the buildings and grounds.

2. All record keeping activities.

3. Preparing the budget.

4. The Advisory Council

The Advisory Council represents the interests of cooperators to the Board of Directors and to management. Ideally, the Council works in cooperation with these bodies in the formulation of policy and the resolution of community problems. It is expected that service on the Council should provide the necessary experience for cooperators eventually to become elected members of the Board of

Directors. The Council is not a policy making body, but acts as a voice for cooperators in making recommendations to the Board and to management.

Council membership is limited to resident-shareholders in the cooperative. Four members are elected from each high-rise building and seven representatives are elected from all the town-houses. Every member of the Council must serve on at least one standing committee and the Council members representing their respective buildings must hold two building meetings a year. To facilitate the operations of the Council, the following standing committees have been created: buildings and grounds; community relations; cooperative education; finance; grievance; inter-community; legal; public information; security; editorial and youth.

The major lines of communication of the Council, the Board of Directors and management with the residents of Co-op City are through the Co-op City Times, letters and flyers, bulletin board notices in each building and town-hall meetings.

5. Building Associations

Almost half of the high-rise buildings of Co-op City have organized building associations. The first was organized in 1970 at about the time the Advisory Council was being formed. These organizations are seen by both

management and the Council as constructive. They provide means: to assure better security of buildings through the organization of lobby patrols; to improve communication within buildings through the publication of newsletters; to maintain the cleanliness of buildings; and, to provide social and recreational activities for residents.

The management of Co-op City has attempted to explain to the building associations the functions of the Board of Directors, the Advisory Council and of management itself. Such explanations were offered in an effort to define lines of authority, to avoid duplication of efforts and to smooth operations generally. Obviously, management, which has worked closely with the Advisory Council, is devoted to the maintenance of its powers and those of the Council-- and any attempt on the part of other community groups to usurp their prerogatives is met with hostility.

K. Social Organization of Co-op City

The basic social organization of Co-op City pivots on cleavages between management and cooperators as well as among cooperators themselves. An analysis of the various bodies organized to represent the interests of their respective constituencies and to assume the responsibility for decision-making in their behalf will reveal patterns for resolution of conflict and the institutionalization of change.

Gluckman suggested that:

. . . conflicts in one set of relationships, over a wider range of society or through a longer period of time, lead to the re-establishment of social cohesion. Conflicts are a part of social life and custom appears to exacerbate these conflicts: but in doing so custom also restrains the conflicts from destroying the wider social order (1959:2).

Turner (1957) presented the most detailed ethnographic analysis of Gluckman's theory of cross-cutting alliances as a means of maintaining the cohesion of society. Through the development of the processual structure of "social dramas," he shows how the organizational principles of society can be observed in action. A social drama can be defined as a patterned sequence of events in which individuals or groups compete for power.

The social drama shows vividly how these social tendencies operate in practice; how, in a given situation, some may support and others oppose one another; and how conflict between persons or groups in terms of a common norm or in terms of contradictory norms may be resolved in a particular set of circumstances. In the social drama latent conflicts of interest become manifest . . . (Turner 1957:93).

Turner, Swartz and Tuden (1966) indicate that social dramas go through six distinct phases which I will outline below, so that they may be used to analyze two such dramas which occurred within Co-op City.

The Processual Structure of Social Dramas

1. Mobilization of Political Capital

The prospective contending parties attempt to rally support through the use of a diversity of political techniques.

2. Breach of the Peace

One of the contending parties violates the norms governing social relationships and thus precipitates a crisis.

3. Crisis

A crisis ensues in which ". . . covert antagonisms become visible" (Turner, Swartz, Tuden 1966:33). At this point, the battle lines are drawn.

4. Countervailing Tendencies

Such cleavages might be restrained from splitting the community by the use of ". . . cross-cutting conflicts of loyalty and allegiance" (Turner, Swartz, Tuden 1966:35).

5. Deployment of Adjustive or Redressive Mechanisms

Various mechanisms are employed to heal the breach, which include: informal settlements, intermediaries, arbitration, public ritual, legal machinery, etc.

6. Restoration of Peace

If the redressive machinery operates effectively, it may lead ". . . either to a reestablishment of relations between the contending parties or to a social recognition of irreparable schism" (Turner, Swartz, Tuden 1966:37).

Of the two social dramas, data about the first were gathered ex post facto from newspaper articles and the recollections of participants. The unfolding of the second drama was witnessed directly by me through participant observation, perusal of newspapers and legal briefs and interviews with the actors themselves. In the interest of brevity, these two dramas of conflict, the first internicine and the other community-versus-management will be presented in condensed form. Both, however, show that when adversaries share common goals their conflicts can lead to a resolution which ultimately promotes community

integration.

The first social drama occurred in 1970 between black and white cooperators and revolved about principles of racial equality and democracy. Almost before the newly created and elected Advisory Council could consider its organizational structure, the issue of minority representation came into focus. No black or Puerto Rican candidates for the Council had been elected to serve on it. In an open letter (Co-op City Times:4/18/1970), three black candidates for the Council, who had withdrawn from the election, announced the formation of the Committee for a Black Advisory Council. They felt that the so-called democratic process was actually a method to exclude blacks from the decision making process. They indicated their disgust at the "racists of Co-op City" and doubted the legitimacy of the Council to represent the interests of all cooperators. They threatened to "use any means necessary to insure that it [the Advisory Council] has a short and uncomfortable life." Unless the Council could resolve this issue, factionalism would exist at Co-op City which would render the Council impotent in its dealings with management. Ultimately, the biggest problem facing the Council was--and still is--the establishment of credibility (i.e., the avoidance of becoming a rubber stamp for management policies).

Reactions to the allegations of these black cooperators, which appeared in the "Letters to the Editor" column of Co-op City's two major newspapers ranged from a defense of the election procedures to charges and countercharges of racism. Although the President of the Board of Directors and management expressed dedication to the principles of racial equality and democracy, they neither urged the election of minority candidates nor did they propose a means by which such representation could be achieved. Many cooperators felt that the political neutrality of management was desirable, but that it had abdicated the responsibility for educating residents as to norms of cooperative living. Several cooperators condemned the blacks. One cooperator wrote:

Shame on you! You sound like a bunch of sore losers! What makes you think that the members of the Advisory Council who were elected will not represent you simply because they are not black? (Co-op City Times 5/2/1970).

The minority groups felt that the election results indicated that many cooperators had indeed voted on the basis of race rather than merit. Such violation of the principles of cooperative living served to polarize the population. The initial breach of the peace was soon followed by allegations and counter-allegations signalling a mounting crisis.

The Advisory Council voted to hold a town-hall meeting on the minority representation issue in order to begin to bridge the rift. About 1,000 cooperators attended the

meeting, of which 30 whites and a dozen blacks addressed the Council and the community. Speakers were committed to the principle that all groups should be represented on the Council. The town-hall meeting gave a mandate to the Council to develop a procedure which would guarantee black and Puerto Rican membership. After careful deliberation, the Council decided to hold a special election in which only blacks and Puerto Ricans could be candidates. For future elections, the Council adopted a plan that guaranteed 25 per cent minority representation on the Council. Four representatives were to be elected from each building and at least one of them had to be black or Puerto Rican. The four top vote-getters would win, except if there weren't any blacks or Puerto Ricans among them. In which case, the top three vote-getters would win and the minority candidate receiving the greatest number of votes would automatically be elected.

The disruption of social intercourse which originally thrust these groups into conflict rested upon principles generally shared by the population. Such consensus ultimately permitted the Council to close the breach by holding a public forum which allowed conflicting parties the opportunity to appeal to common norms, thus giving the Council a "mandate to innovate" (Press 1969:205) for a resolution to the conflict.

The second social drama was in 1971 between the Board of Directors and the Advisory Council, involving another basic principle of cooperative living, namely the right to community control. The conflict was precipitated by the announcement by the Board of its intention to impose two large rent increases following a previous one. Such action was defended by the Board on the grounds of spiraling costs.

After the implementation of the earlier rent increase, the President of the Board had pledged, in writing, that no further increases had been applied for and that the Advisory Council would be consulted before any such application was made. Furthermore, in March, 1971 he told 1,200 cooperators at a town-hall meeting that no carrying charge increases were expected until at least early 1973.

During this schism dividing management's and cooperators' interests, a potential dimension for conflict among cooperators was added--one which, however, brought management to the side of the elderly residents. The New York State legislative liaison for U.H.F. reported that several area legislators and U.H.F. were supporting a rent subsidy bill for the elderly. This bill was vetoed by the Governor (only to be passed a year later, with alterations).

In June, 1971 the Board President announced that balancing the budget would require a two-stage increase in

carrying charges, the first to be effective January, 1973, was set at 20 per cent and the second, to take effect July, 1974, was to be 12 per cent. One week after the announcement of the proposed increases 1,400 angry cooperators attended an open meeting of the Advisory Council. That evening, the Advisory Council passed several resolutions the most important of which were that: 1) the Board cancel the proposed carrying charge increases on the grounds that they were in violation of the written commitment not to take such action without prior consultation with the Council; 2) the Finance Committee of the Council investigate the propriety of the carrying charge increases; and 3) the Board permit two Councilmen to attend all their committee meetings so that the Council could be assured of receiving all pertinent information.

Many tenants, especially the elderly, indicated that one reason for moving to Co-op City had been its reasonable rents. Now, they felt that U.H.F. was simply trying to sell apartments to unsuspecting people at rents which they knew could never be maintained. Once cooperators had moved in, it was felt, they would tolerate any rent-increase rather than face relocating. The President of the Advisory Council wrote a blistering attack on the Board charging that it had betrayed all of the principles of cooperative living, that it had deceived the Council by not informing them of the impending rent increases and that it had failed

to inform the cooperator-trustees of the financial difficulties of Co-op City, so that they could only offer token resistance to the increases (Co-op City Times 7/3/71).

The President of the largest senior citizens' club at Co-op City urged the Council to organize a demonstration against the proposed increases. The Spanish-American club, several civic groups and senior citizen's clubs urged a coalition to fight the rent increases. Other cooperators suggested that the Council organize a fund-raising campaign to hire legal counsel to petition the courts to rescind the increases. The Council voted to adopt the latter proposal and declared a fund-raising day at Co-op City. They collected \$14,500 and the campaign was on to fill a "war-chest" that would eventually hold \$150,000.

In an effort to pacify the community, the Board established an Operating Budget and Management Committee to investigate the possibilities of generating sources of income other than rent increases. The Board also approved the Council's recommendation that two councilmen be permitted to attend Board meetings.

In August, 1971 the President of the Board of Directors apologized to the Advisory Council for not having consulted them regarding the rent hikes but, in September, 1971, again defended them before an angry crowd of cooperators, as necessary. The inflamed residents countered with

accusations of deception, mismanagement, stock fraud and wasteful spending.

Adding fuel to the already raging fire, the City News (10/21/71) published an article declaring that the Riverbay Corporation had leased a number of commercial stores to speculators who had reaped windfall profits amounting to half a million dollars. The Board-President denied any wrong-doing on the part of the Riverbay Corporation branding the article a "scandalous, immoral example of yellow journalism" (Co-op City Times 10/30/1971). He stated that the City News had assailed the Riverbay Corporation in order to force the Co-op City Times into ceasing publication, thus averting competition for advertising space. In December, 1971, the State Division of Housing reported that their investigation of the allegations of the City News found no evidence of wrong-doing.

In November, 1971, the Advisory Council retained the legal services of Louis Nizer to conduct a preliminary investigation on behalf of the community in its battle. Also, from November, 1971 to March, 1972 the Council continued to search for ways to raise or to save operating monies as well as conducting a campaign of cooperator education in order to effect cost reductions.

In February, 1972, 1,000 elderly residents of Co-op City picketed Governor Rockefeller's Manhattan office and 1,000 gathered the next month for a "March on Albany" in

order to seek action on bills favorable to cooperative housing. These included: rent subsidy for the elderly, mortgage interest reduction and the extension of real estate abatement. The March on Albany was sponsored by U.H.F. showing that management and tenants could at least temporarily unite in the interest of common goals.

Late in March, 1972, Attorney Louis Nizer told the Co-op City community at a town-hall meeting that his preliminary study of the proposed rent increases showed a full-scale fight was justified. The Advisory Council voted approval of a \$50,000 retainer for the continuation of Nizer's services and the remaining costs of approximately \$100,000 were raised from \$5 and \$10 contributions made by some 10,000 families at Co-op City.

Without detailing intermediate court and other hearings, in the Fall of 1972, Nizer filed a \$100 million suit in Federal Court on behalf of the cooperators. Named as defendants were: the State, U.H.F., Community Services, Inc. and several officers of U.H.F. The charges were: violation of S.E.C. rulings (1934), misleading advertising on the part of the Riverbay Corporation and the deliberate wasting and profiteering of Riverbay's assets.

Amid the deepening rift between management and the cooperators came an announcement by management that the State had requested that residents file income reports in 1973, based on their 1972 income tax and that those

individuals exceeding the maximum allowable income would have to pay a rent surcharge. The money collected would be equally shared by the State and the Riverbay Corporation. The share received by Co-op City would be utilized to pay the rent subsidy for the elderly.

With one segment of the population partially supporting another financially, it is not unreasonable to expect the occurrence of conflict. That is, as long as the elderly did not infringe on the financial conditions or social activities of other residents their powerful position in the community went relatively unchallenged. However, with the institutionalization of the rent subsidy for the elderly to be paid out of collective surcharge fees, the other segments of the population began to mobilize their resources to erode the position of the elderly. The initial signs of such action were the formation of a coalition to reduce rents composed of the Advisory Council, the Community Life Forum and the Arts Council and the demand from middle-aged adults that management provide facilities to youngsters equivalent to those available to the elderly. The Coalition to Reduce Rents was significant because of the noticeable absence among its member organizations of any senior citizen clubs. Also, the alignment of the Advisory Council with the Coalition was interesting because the previous Council members had rejected such a maneuver to fight the rent increases.

The Coalition was fighting to achieve the following measures: 1) reduction of the interest on Co-op City's mortgage; 2) an increase in the share of surcharge money that could be retained by Co-op City; 3) a change in the ratio formula for the surcharge from the present 6X and 7X formula to 7X and 8X; and, 4) the separation of the rent subsidy for the elderly from the surcharge payments made by younger families. It was this last demand that signified the beginning of overt antagonism between the elderly and other groups within the community.

In November, 1973, the Coalition held a rally attended by 2,000 Co-op City residents and New York City's mayoralty candidates as well as by the President of the Riverbay Corporation. Each speaker pledged his support for all the demands of the Coalition. There was universal agreement that the lack of support for these proposals would encourage more middle income families to leave New York City--already a major threat to urban survival.

In September, 1973, one year after Nizer had filed the complaint, the U.S. District Court ruled that the shares of stock held by the residents of Co-op City do not come under the protection of Federal Securities Laws. The plaintiffs had lost their initial jurisdictional battle. But the war was far from over. These issues have yet to be resolved.

This social drama demonstrates how the various participants to the dispute could hold their differences in abeyance while pursuing the common goals of rent stabilization. And, despite the factionalism between young and old cooperators--engendered by the war itself--the actors avoided, for the time-being, the occurrence of irreparable schism.

These major social dramas of conflict and the mechanisms employed to cope with them indicate the cohesiveness of the Co-op City community. Lesser dramas, such as ongoing disputes between tenants and the telephone company and between tenants and a medical insurance company continue to highlight the "unity in the face of adversity" mood among residents.

CHAPTER V
CHARACTERISTICS AND SELECTED PORTRAITS
OF THE PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

This chapter is devoted both to the description of the personal characteristics of the 200 case sample and to a presentation of portraits of five of its subjects. These sketches will show the respondents in their usual setting and their varying adaptations to later life.

A. Characteristics of the Sample

The distribution of the 200 cases of Co-op City's elderly population resembles that of all its aged residents with respect to such variables as sex, age and income. The sample can be summarized as white, Jewish and lower middle-class people.

The sample is 95 per cent white and 5 per cent black (Table B-1).¹ There is a somewhat higher proportion of females (52%) to males (48%) (Table B-2). One-half of the respondents are between 60-69 years of age. Almost 30 per cent are in the 70-74 age-range, while 22 per cent are 75 years of age or older (Table B-3).

¹Tables mentioned in this chapter are included in Appendix B.

Most of the elderly--57 per cent--were born outside the United States, coming from such Eastern European countries as Russia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Lithuania and Latvia, in that order. Thirty-four per cent are native-born Americans. The remaining 9 per cent were born in such countries as Turkey, Germany, England and the West Indies (Table B-4). Seventy-five per cent of the respondents ethnically identified themselves as being Jewish Americans; 16 per cent indicated that they were "just Americans" (many of these people were also Jewish); and, 5 per cent said they were black Americans. The remainder is equally distributed between Irish, Italian, and Puerto Rican origins (Table B-5).

Eighty-nine per cent of the sample are Jewish; 6 per cent Protestants; 3.5 per cent Catholics; and, 1.5 per cent, "other" or persons claiming no religious affiliation (Table B-6). The vast majority of respondents are confirmed New York City dwellers: nine out of every ten subjects having lived in the city for 40 years or more and only 6 per cent for less than twenty years (Table B-7). Almost half of the respondents maintained the same residence, before moving to Co-op City, for twenty or more years (Table B-8).

The household composition of the respondents shows 57 per cent of them living with a spouse only; one-fifth living alone; almost 8 per cent living with a spouse and

dependent child(ren); 5.5 per cent living with sibling(s); 2 per cent living with an adult child; 1.5 per cent living with a married daughter and her children; and, the remainder living with "other" relatives or friends (Table B-9). The household distribution of these respondents differs from that found in other studies of the elderly (Kutner et al. 1956, Clark and Anderson 1967). This sample contains a higher percentage of married couples than that found in most other studies.

Sixty-seven per cent of the respondents are married and living with their spouse; 27 per cent are widowed; 1 per cent are either separated or divorced; and, 5 per cent have never married (Table B-10). The proportion of married males to females is three to two. Correspondingly, the proportion of widows is nearly five times greater than that of widowers, reflecting the greater longevity of women. Also, a higher percentage of Co-op City's elderly are married than are the older populations of New York City and Bronx County. The average length of marriage for respondents is approximately thirty-nine years and the average length of widowhood is twelve years. Three out of every four respondents, who are married and living with their spouses, indicated that their marriage was either "very happy" or "happy."

The average educational achievement of the respondents is "some high school": 45 per cent had some high school

education and one-third had an eighth grade education or less. A surprisingly high proportion (14 per cent) of the respondents had one or more years of college (Table B-11). Brotman (1967: Census data) indicates that nearly three-quarters of the population aged 65 or over in the United States has never attended high school. Despite a majority of these respondents being foreign-born, they are generally somewhat better educated than other older persons throughout the United States. The native-born respondents have achieved higher levels of education than the foreign-born subjects.

A very problematical area for the elderly is that of employment. Sixty per cent of the respondents reported that they are retired, 20 per cent are still employed, and another 20 per cent, all female, indicated they had never been employed (Table B-12). Seven out of every ten male respondents are retired, but of those still employed, three-quarters are working full-time. Sixty-four per cent of the female respondents had worked for the greater part of their adult lives, but 80 per cent of them are now retired. Those women still employed are mostly working part-time.

The occupations of those respondents who had worked most of their lives indicate that most of them worked in skilled; semi-skilled or clerical occupations (Table B-13). More specifically, most of the respondents are or have

been affiliated with the "pins and needles" industry, in almost all facets of the trade. Many of the female respondents are or were bookkeepers. A comparison of the occupational distributions of retired and working respondents indicates that one out of every ten retired respondents and 17 per cent of the working ones are professionals. None of the working respondents owns a small family business as compared with 11 per cent of the retired subjects, who were small entrepreneurs. This pattern reflects the national trend away from the ownership of small family businesses.

Examination of occupational levels by generation gives an indication of the socio-economic status and mobility of the sample. In broad terms, the respondents' and their fathers' occupational levels are comparable, except that the latter group owned small businesses more frequently. Upward mobility is seen in trends away from skilled or semi-skilled work and ownership of small businesses characteristic of the respondents' generation toward the white collar occupations (e.g., professionals, executives, administrators, etc.) of their children (Table B-14). This pattern is consistent with the higher educational levels attained by the respondents' first and second born children: approximately two-thirds of the respondents' children had "some college" as compared with 14 per cent of the respondents (Table B-15).

The respondents represent a fairly wide range of economic statuses as measured by their reported total annual family income. Information as to the amount of income received by a respondent and his household was not difficult to obtain. Some respondents were reluctant to reveal their income status, but upon being reassured of the confidentiality of the interviews and the value of knowledge as to how the elderly stand financially, their responses were open and informative.

The range of family incomes is from under \$1,000 to over \$16,000 per year. The average income is \$6,800 and the median is \$6,000. Approximately one-third of the respondents have a total annual income of less than \$5,000 per year and one-quarter have incomes exceeding \$8,000 per year (Table B-16). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (1970) has recently indicated that the annual cost of consumption for a retired couple living in an urban area in the United States is \$2,975 for a low budget, \$4,210 for a moderate one and \$6,187 for a high budget. These budgetary figures, compared to the income distribution of the respondents, indicate a degree of financial security, atypical of their counterparts living in most urban areas of the United States.

All respondents were asked to evaluate the adequacy of their present annual income. Forty-five per cent of them indicated that their income was either "not enough" or "just barely enough" to meet basic living costs; while 55 per cent

indicated that their income was "more than sufficient" or "not problematical at all" (Table B-17). Almost two-thirds indicated that their present income is either "about the same" or "worse" than at age fifty. Thirty-five per cent--mainly younger respondents--indicated that their income was better now than it had been at age fifty (Table B-18).

A major variable affecting the lives of the aged is, of course, their health. The overwhelming majority of respondents manage by themselves without outside assistance. Over 80 per cent of them do not suffer physical disabilities which necessitate assistance for shopping, the preparation of meals, dressing, grooming or other routine activities. Respondents were asked to evaluate their present health status. Four of every ten subjects reported that their general health condition was "fair," and 39 per cent said that their health was "excellent" or "good"; while 21 per cent said that their health was "poor" (Table B-19). When asked to compare their health condition to that of other people their own age, more than half (53 per cent) indicated that their health was either "much better" or "better" than their counterparts (Table B-20). The respondents' evaluations of their physical states are generally more positive than those nationally reported for the elderly (Riley and Foner 1968:293).

Although these respondents are remarkably healthy, 40 per cent of them consult a physician at least once a

month. This figure is higher than that found by Shanas (1962) in her nationwide sample of the elderly and by Lowenthal and Berkman (1967) in their study of San Francisco's elderly population. The reasons most often given for visiting a physician was for the treatment of mild chronic, or slowly debilitating diseases, or for "general aches and pains." The large number of physician contacts is probably facilitated by the availability of doctors, clinics and hospitals to Co-op City residents, medicare insurance which makes going to the doctor less "extravagant," as well as the cultural predilection among Jews of the respondents' generation to visit doctors.

Since almost 60 per cent of the respondents are retired, I was particularly interested in their leisure-time activities, other than religious ones. Interestingly, the respondents divided leisure-time activities into two types--those conducted privately and those carried out in a social milieu. The former are considered "hobbies," which include watching T.V., reading, walking, knitting, homemaking, model building, etc. The latter activities include visiting, going to the race track, attending a diversity of club activities, card playing, etc. (Table B-21). Many respondents also considered "just sitting and watching" as an interesting past-time.

By and large, respondent's apartments were very neat, furnished in either the "modern" style of the forties

and fifties and/or in "traditional" Grand Rapids style with, perhaps an occasional genuine antique or heirloom piece of furniture. Wall-to-wall carpeting is the norm, with occasional "accent" rugs over these. Walls are mostly decorated with "artistic" reproductions and photographs of family members are abundant, as are religious objects such as menorahs, mezuzahs or plastic "shalom" plaques. At least one T.V. set is the most ubiquitous object in all apartments, with furniture often oriented toward the set.

Pop art, flashy design or ultra-modern touches are rarely seen. Also, despite claims made for much time spent "reading," books are conspicuously absent from most of the homes: newspapers, magazines and, perhaps, self-help or self-improvement pamphlets would appear to make up the staples of the "reading" diet. Also, most of such reading is done by the men who, traditionally, keep up with current affairs, while women peruse popular magazines or highly popular novels--usually with a Jewish and/or women's slant.

Conservatism is also reflected in the division of labor between the sexes: women are largely responsible for domestic tasks while men work or attend club functions. Of course, the women socialize too, but only after their traditional role obligations have been met and, usually within the narrower confines that homemaking impose such as supermarkets, laundry-rooms or apartments. Even club activities tend to be de facto sex-segregated both in terms

of content and timing. Women's liberation is far from being a cause among the elderly of Co-op City who, generally, live by the lyric from "Fiddler on the Roof":

Who must know the way to make a proper home, a quiet home, a Kosher home? Who must raise a family and run the home so Poppa's free to read the Holy Books? The Momma. The Momma. Tradition!

B. Selected Portraits of Five Elderly Residents of Co-op City

This section will present five portraits of aged residents within Co-op City. They illustrate, generally, the advantages and limitations of the socio-environmental setting of Co-op City, the degree of fulfillment of various social activities, and the idiosyncratic responses of individuals to later life.

Weiss's (1969) theory of the functional specificity of relationships offers a framework within which to look into the social and personal worlds of these subjects. He identifies six functions within social relationships which must be present if a sense of well-being is to be maintained. These include:

1. Intimacy--close emotional relationships which allow for the free expression of private feelings and thoughts;
2. Social integration--relationships which are based on common concerns and interests;
3. Opportunity for nurturance--relationships in which an individual has the responsibility for the support of another person;

4. Reassurance of worth--relationships based on mutual respect and the acknowledgment of the individual's competence;
5. Assistance--relationships based on mutual aid and reciprocity of goods or services;
6. Guidance--relationships which provide direction to an individual's life (Weiss 1969:38-40).

According to Weiss, each of these functional aspects of relationships has its corresponding deficit. Such liabilities are succinctly summarized by Bourg, a co-researcher of Weiss.

The absence of intimacy . . . would bring loneliness; that of social integration, boredom; that of the opportunity for nurturance, a sense of emptiness; that of reassurance of worth, a sense of worthlessness; that of assistance, the experience of vulnerability or unprotectedness (Bourg 1970:9).

Both Weiss and Bourg fail to cite a deficit for guidance, which I suggest to be aimlessness.

With these principles in mind, let us look closely at our five subjects, each of whom was observed and interviewed privately and in depth.

The Joiner

Mrs. Cohen is a charming and attractive 62 year old housewife, whose marriage of 40 years has been punctuated by crises. She came to the United States at the age of 18, where she was able to obtain some college education. Her four married children, all college graduates, live far away from New York City, which prevents her from seeing them more than once or twice a year. She stated "I would

like to see them more often but it is just too expensive." Mr. Cohen has worked for some 40 years as a cutter in the garment industry. His major avocation in life has been investing money in the stockmarket. Over the years, he has managed to lose literally a small fortune. Mrs. Cohen has had to maintain a separate and secret savings account in order to have money on hand to pay for household and emergency expenses. If she didn't have this account, Mr. Cohen would have "invested every penny." Also, Mr. Cohen is an avid member of a huge variety of organizations. During his middle-adult years, he would attend meetings almost every night of the week. By default, Mrs. Cohen had the responsibility for raising their children. As adults each of them established a separate domicile, and Mrs. Cohen was home alone a great deal while Mr. Cohen worked or attended meetings.

Upon moving into Co-op City and at the urging of a friend, Mrs. Cohen joined the Co-op City Consumer Union and eventually became its recording secretary. Since she derived so much pleasure from participation in the Union, she joined a number of other associations. "These organizations are very important to me. I meet a lot of interesting people and I don't have to stay home and watch T.V. or read and just wait for my husband. I am active and doing important things." Now that her health is failing, it is remarkable that Mrs. Cohen continues to

maintain an active life. Mrs. Cohen also had made four or five new friends with whom she occasionally socializes by holding rotating card-parties each month. "I feel happier now that people rely upon me and that my life has some meaning and purpose."

Mrs. Cohen shows every intention of continuing her active participation in organizations. She only wishes that her children lived closer to her and that she could see them more often.

The Widower

This 70 year old widower came to the United States from Latvia at the age of 20. Mr. Berg went to work as an operator in the garment industry, which he continued until the age of 65. He would have continued working but his health precluded the rigors of subway travel and the demands of the job.

His 50 year marriage came to an abrupt end, one year after moving into 'Co-op City when his wife died. The past year of bereavement has been the worst period of Mr. Berg's life. "All I do is cry for my lost wife. I don't bother with nobody. I go to the club and waste away the hours doing nothing."

His wife's death was quickly followed by the collapse of his relationship with his children and friends. Since Mr. Berg worked long hours, it was his wife who made almost

all of the social arrangements for the family. Also, she performed most of the usual household chores as well as tending to Mr. Berg's personal needs. Her death has prompted Mr. Berg to state: "I'm all alone and all I do is eat sandwiches for lunch and dinner. That's all!" His disheveled appearance and messy apartment are outward testimony of his lack of experience socializing or coping with domestic chores and of his deep depression, which probably have become a vicious cycle.

The relationship with his children has been severely strained by his emotional and financial difficulties. "My children and grandchildren used to come to the house every Friday night. It was wonderful. Now, I rarely see them. All they do is send me some money and call me up to see if I'm still alive." Mr. Berg's financial difficulties stem largely from the high costs of his wife's illness and funeral and have resulted in the lapse of his medical insurance policy for non-payment. "I am so poor that I don't even go to the synagogue any more because that costs too much money."

Although, Mr. Berg lacks close friends, several co-club members who are aware of his despondency, check up on him when he fails to appear at the club for two consecutive days. They try to provide some social and moral support until Mr. Berg can regain his equilibrium. But with the decline of his social universe and prior emotional strength,

his thoughts have been directed to suicide. "My life is not worth two cents. If it were not for my children and grandchildren I would kill myself."

The Local Artist

This man, at age 72, is a retired accountant, who lives with his wife of 50 years. They were among the last Jewish families to move from their previous deteriorating neighborhood in the Bronx. Mr. Wexler had served on a variety of community action committees attempting to preserve the integrity of the old neighborhood, but their efforts had failed. His emigration to Co-op City was made with great sadness. "It was like part of my life had just wasted away and died." However, both his graduate school education and his total income of \$11,000 per year are higher than those of most residents of Co-op City.

Mr. Wexler devotes each day to creative and purposeful activities. Among them are fulfilling the duties of the presidency of the Co-op City Culture Club, active participation in the Co-op City Finance Club and lecturing to various local groups. The Culture Club is an organization created by Mr. Wexler in order to bring together indigenous artists, musicians and writers for mutual support and the exchange of ideas. Mr. Wexler sees himself as a "talented painter" and many of his oils have been displayed at Co-op City. As an active member of the Finance Club, he is

especially concerned with the fiscal aspects of Co-op City. His articles about investing money appear regularly in the local newspapers. But, he says, "I . . . consider painting the most important aspect of my life. People will remember me more for my paintings than my articles on investment advice."

His charismatic personality, civic-mindedness and aristocratic air have made him a famous local character. He is constantly surrounded by "admirers" seeking his guidance and advice about a wide variety of matters as well as just being honored to be in his presence. All through the interview, Mr. Wexler mulled over every question, carefully choosing his words. Such seriousness was further demonstrated by his dichotomy between "plain senior citizens" and "active senior citizens." The former category being composed of those elderly persons who concern themselves "only with trivial and monotonous things and do not prepare themselves for the inevitable retrogression of later life." The active and artistic elderly are constantly "renewing themselves each day and thus find life exciting." Mr. Wexler's self-confidence extends to the point of supposedly treating himself successfully for a heart ailment.

His very active public life and devotion to painting are counterbalanced by a lack of affective and/or diffuse social relationships. He rarely sees his only son, a

college professor, living outside New York City, because of his intense dislike for his daughter-in-law. He and his wife maintain separate social networks. She interacts only peripherally with any of his "admirers" and he does not "interfere" in his wife's relationship with her widowed sister, who has always lived next door to the Wexlers. They are constantly in each other's company. His only sibling is a sister whom he has not seen in twenty years and has no desire to see now. He says that his admirers are only acquaintances and not friends. His major concern is that they should remember him favorably after his death. He expresses periodic feelings of loneliness, but asked me not to pursue the reasons behind such emotions.

The Matriarch

This 90 year old widow has lived with her oldest married daughter for the past ten years. Her general health is good, except for her failing vision. She is able to make her way about the apartment by herself, but an escort is required for trips outdoors. She leaves the apartment only for shul (synagogue), to visit a doctor, to attend family circle meetings or other important family occasions.

Mrs. Schwartz came to the United States from Russia at the age of 19. She had little education, perhaps only through elementary school. In 1910, she married and after raising three daughters, her husband died. For the past

30 years of widowhood, she has lived with one or another of her three daughters, for prolonged periods of time. Her efforts to remain a functioning member of her present household are symbolized by the cloth tucked in her apron which she periodically uses to dust pieces of furniture as she passes them.

Familialism is her style of life. Upon being widowed and moving into her daughter's home, she cared for her grandchildren and performed a variety of household chores, while her daughter worked. Her relationship with each of her daughters has remained to this day one of reciprocal respect, devotion and affection. As her eyesight began to fail and her grandchildren became adults, her activities lessened.

Her cherished position as the matriarch of the family as well as her religiosity have been the answers to her loneliness, boredom and fears. Each month, the family gathers (children, grandchildren, siblings, nephews, nieces, and cousins) for a meeting, at which Mrs. Schwartz occupies the seat of honor which symbolizes the unity of the group. She fears that upon her death, the family will no longer assemble on a regular basis. She is annoyed at the failure of any family member to attend the get-together without a legitimate excuse. Her major functions are to provide moral leadership and the maintenance of family pride and loyalty. Religion is very important to Mrs. Schwartz

and she attends shul at Co-op City at least once a week. She told me that she neither fears nor looks forward to death.

Mrs. Schwartz is now totally dependent upon her children for everything. The process of aging for her has been one of gradual withdrawal from social activities, while sustaining intimate, familial social supports. She has grown old with honor and affection. I am convinced that her position as family matriarch and religious person have kept her biological system functioning so well for so long.

The Hobbyist

This healthy 66 year old man is a retired truck driver. He is happily married and lives with his wife of 40 years, who works as a part-time sales clerk in a department store. Mr. Volterra was born in Italy, as was his wife, and came to the United States at the age of 20. He had some High School education, but upon arriving in this country went to work almost immediately. Wishing to be self-employed, he eventually became a private trucker. His present total family income of \$9,000 per year is higher than that of most other respondents.

In his youth, Mr. Volterra had won numerous track races and as an adult began to pursue the hobby of making model airplanes, which he has continued to the present. His excellence in both of these activities is seen in the

numerous medals and awards which adorn his neat apartment. Each day, Mr. Volterra with an artistic eye and surgeon's hands is to be found planning and constructing his latest model plane. His active membership in several model airplane building clubs provides a source of relief from the intense concentration required for the actual modelling. His new creations are entered in contests sponsored by these clubs. The winners of local competitions are eligible to enter their planes in statewide, national and international contests. Over the years, he has won medals on all levels of competition. Although disliking retirement, Mr. Volterra stated that "my hobby keeps me pretty busy and I am not bored." For diversion: "I go down to the club to reminisce about the old days, the last contest, and to teach newcomers the art of model building."

One of the things I like about Co-op City is my apartment, "because it overlooks the Hutchinson River and I can watch the airplane traffic to and from La Guardia Airport and fly my planes on Co-op City's ball fields."

Mr. Volterra is a bit of a loner, desiring privacy and independence. He feels most comfortable settled at the immaculate work bench wedged against his bedroom window.

Besides his wife, Mr. Volterra has three children, no siblings and lacks other "important" relatives. His oldest child, a fireman, lives in the New York metropolitan area,

but they rarely see each other. His two daughters, an unmarried teacher and a housewife, both live considerable distances from New York City and Mr. Volterra sees them about once a year. Although telephone conversations with them are more frequent, it is his wife who ususally does most of the talking. He feels emotionally close to his children, but he does not desire to see them any more frequently than he does.

Like several other respondents, Mr. Volterra has successfully carried his adult experiences into his later life. He has utilized the environmental setting of Co-op City as a means of establishing an orderly, active and, at times, exciting life. His way of coping with retirement is to devote his energies to his hobby rather than to become involved in many voluntary organizations.

These five brief biographies show how such factors as environmental setting, potential for social interaction, and the personal resources of the respondents provide for a variety of adaptations to later life. Each of these individuals has utilized a combination of these variables in diverse ways to meet the challenges of aging. One of the purposes of this study is to discover the impact of Co-op City on the social functioning of the elderly.

The socio-environmental setting of Co-op City offered certain advantages and constraints to each of these

respondents. Mrs. Cohen, upon the departure of her children from home and the lack of opportunity for nurturance, joined a variety of local organizations in order to regain some of her lost self-esteem. Unfortunately, Mr. Berg's sudden bereavement has left him with little access to or skill with intimate relationships. His remaining nexus of social interactions with his children, friends, and co-club members does not provide an adequate substitute for the intimate functions previously performed by his wife, although visits by his co-club members is functional in a strict physical sense, and saves him from total isolation. Mr. Wexler, upon retirement was able to pursue his interests in finance and painting through the use of local newspapers and the organizational structure of Co-op City. Such activities have allowed him to maintain his sense of worthfulness. Despite Mrs. Schwartz's limited mobility, she has been able to maintain intimate relationships with her family which allow for the performance of a variety of functions. By slowly disengaging from social activities, and yet keeping the supply and demand of social relationships in balance, Mrs. Schwartz has aged with ease and dignity. Mr. Volterra, upon retirement has been able to retain some of his independence by pursuing his hobby and displaying his competence by teaching his craft to others.

In different ways, Mrs. Cohen, Mr. Berg and Mr. Wexler suffer from a lack of diffuse and intimate social contacts. It is evident that participation in organizational

activities and friendships do not adequately substitute for the functions ordinarily provided by family ties, marriage or parenthood. Probably the reverse relationship also applies.

This section has shown a variety of adaptations to later life. We have seen how a few individuals have used the socio-environmental setting of Co-op City, social interactions and experiential background to cope with the process of aging. The following chapter will statistically explore the effects of growing old on the maintenance of social and personal functioning.

CHAPTER VI

THE SOCIAL AND PERSONAL WORLDS
OF THE ELDERLYA. The Social World of the Elderly

This section is devoted to an assessment of the social world of the elderly of Co-op City. From observations of their behavior and through the administration of interview schedules, I encapsulated data gathered through utilization of two measures of their degree of social involvement. These measures are: Clark and Anderson's "Social-Status Index" (1967:134) and my own Index of Sociability. The former index was used as an objective measure of the social positions occupied by the elderly respondents and the latter as an indication of the frequency of their interactions. Particular attention was paid to the question of whether or not growing old is actually accompanied by a contraction in the frequency of informal social interactions. Although some of the findings lead to almost truistic explanations with biological, ecological and demographic bases, it is the variety of responses within these foundations which require interpretation and analysis.

Several background variables (e.g., sex, age, socio-economic status, education, health, etc.) were examined as to their association with the indices used in the hope of determining whether or not Co-op City provides a setting in which its elderly population may cushion ". . . the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to."

1. Theoretical Considerations

The previously mentioned theoretical views of aging have been largely predicated upon role theory as developed by Parsons (1951) and Merton (1957). These approaches involved making invidious comparisons between the social roles of the elderly with those of middle-aged adults. From this viewpoint, the activity theorists claim that the "successful adjustment" of individuals to later life is based upon the maintenance of middle-aged roles and, if lost, their replacement by substitute roles of equivalent value. In opposition, the disengagementists posit that the process of withdrawal from social activity for the elderly is a functional prerequisite for the maintenance of personal and societal equilibrium. Both of these pessimistic theories highlight the "roleless role" (Burgess 1960:20) of the aged in urban-industrialized societies. In response to both these theories, Rosow (1967) in his hybrid continuity theory postulates that personal predispositions are maintained, or intensified, through life.

Disruptions in the performance of roles calls for innovation and adaptation, derived from a combination of influences (e.g., personal, social, environmental, etc.) which take a multitude of forms.

My approach to the study of aging is an exploration of actual social relationships permitting delineation of the extent of the social world of the elderly. Many scholars feel that the roles of the aged in modern societies are not clearly defined or circumscribed, which makes it all the more cogent to examine their actual social relationships.

Many anthropological views of behavior have stemmed from two different theoretical perspectives. Boissevain (1968:545) has labelled these two schools of thought: the "corporationist" and the "interactionist" perspectives. He claims that the corporationist's position, espoused by many social anthropologists, is best summarized by Mair in the following quotation:

The word group . . . does not mean, as it does in everyday speech, any collection of people. It means a corporate body with a permanent existence; a collection of people recruited on recognized principles, with common interests and rules (norms) fixing rights and duties of the members in relation to one another and to these interests. The common interests can be called property interests, if property is very broadly defined. (In Boissevain 1968:545-46).

The interactionist's perspective rests upon the assumption that there exists a constant amount of sociability which can

be distributed in a diversity of ways. For example, individuals may engage in intensive, face-to-face contacts with a few people and have less contacts with many or vice versa. Actual mapping of such contacts aids in the discovery of the realities of organization.

Since 1950, several studies have examined kinship and friendship ties in urban communities. These empirically-oriented investigations arose mainly in response to the assertions that social relationships in urban places may be characterized as being ". . . impersonal, superficial, transitory and segmental" (Wirth 1938:12), while believing that the isolated nuclear family is the ideal structural-functional unit for meeting the demands of an urban-industrialized environment (Linton 1959, Parsons 1943).

Many studies undertaken in response to these assumptions were conducted in a variety of urban locales by members of diverse disciplines. Some studies have questioned Wirth's characterization of social relationships in urban places (Axelrod 1956; Bell and Boat 1957; Greer and Kube 1959; Jacobson 1973; Reiss 1959; Tomeh 1964; Whyte 1943). Such studies of participation in primary relationships, which are face-to-face, affectively charged and based on particularistic norms, demonstrate that such relationships are the rule rather than the exception. These studies further show that strong kinship and friendship bonds do exist in urban places--precisely where they

were assumed to be so weak. The breakdown of ties with kin, neighbors and friends, alleged by Wirth, is grossly exaggerated.

Regarding the so-called isolated nuclear family, most of the authors agree with Sussman and Burchinal that ". . . the emphasis on the atomistic character of urban families has contributed to incorrect assumptions concerning interactions within the kinship matrix" (1962:234-5). Most studies demonstrate that a modified extended family is prevalent in urban-industrialized societies (Despres 1958; Firth, et al. 1970; Gans 1962; Greenfield 1961; Lewis 1952; Litwak 1959-60, 1960, 1961; Whyte 1943; Young and Willmott 1957). Such studies indicate that urban nuclear families are interlaced with other similar and related units in a variety of reciprocal transactions. Some of these relationships have been identified as "sibling solidarity" (Cumming and Schneider 1961), "family circles and cousin clubs" (Mitchell 1961) and mutual aid between parent and child nuclear families (Sussman 1953). Although the modified extended family may be typical of urban kinship relationships, it is not comparable to traditional extended families found in non-urbanized societies, which are corporate, productive and consumptive units.

2. The Social Statuses Occupied by the Elderly

Clark and Anderson's Social-Status Index provides a measure of the potential level of social functioning of the elderly, ascertained by enumerating the number of the following eight statuses occupied by each respondent: spouse, parent, grandparent, sibling, friend, employee, organization member and religious affiliate. The first four statuses are ascribed and the last four are achieved. The number of statuses occupied is not to be taken as a measure of the degree of sociability of a respondent. It is possible for an individual to occupy a large number of statuses and to be socially inactive or vice versa.

In fact, some of these status categories may be vacuous in that a grandparent may have no real contact with his grandchildren and an organization member may not actually attend meetings. The categories, thus, are useful as indicators of the range of possible affiliation, but do not provide operational definitions of such affiliations.

For purposes of rating each respondent on this index, I used the following guidelines. A person was counted as occupying all the ascribed statuses, if he reported having a living spouse, child, grandchild, and sibling. A person occupied the status of friend if he indicated having at least one non-relative in whom he regularly confides. A

person was considered to be employed if he earned a pay check one month prior to the interview. An organization member was defined as a person belonging to a voluntary organization, excluding either a labor union (obligatory) or a religious institution. A religious person or religious affiliate was considered to be anyone who so identified himself.

Following these eligibility criteria, the percentages of the respondents occupying each of the eight statuses are listed in Table VI-1. The average number of all social statuses occupied is 5.4

Table VI-1

Percentage of Respondents Occupying Each
of the Eight Social Statuses

<u>Ascribed Status</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Achieved Status</u>	<u>%</u>
Spouse	67	Friend	79
Parent	82	Employed Person	21
Grandparent	71	Organization Member	82
Sibling	84	Religious Affiliate	59
Mean	3.1	Mean	2.6

Following Clark and Anderson's procedures, I cross-tabulated the percentage distributions of the respondents occupying five or more social statuses by background variables and examined the percentage distribution of the occupancy of each social status. Such a quantitative analysis provides an indication of the potential levels of social functioning of the elderly respondents. Also,

the distribution of such statuses (See Table VI-2) gives clues to interpreting some observed social interactions. Finally, an investigation of the component parts of the Social-Status Index by selected variables allows a determination of which statuses are being gained, maintained or lost in later life.

Table VI-2

Percentage Distribution of Respondents
Occupying Five or More Social Statuses
and Two or More Ascribed and Achieved
Statuses by Selected Background Variables

	Five or More Social Statuses %	Two or More Ascribed Statuses %	Two or More Achieved Statuses %
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
1. Sex			
Male	83	80	52
Female	66	65	44
2. Age			
60-64	80	72	60
65-69	75	72	48
70-74	79	70	44
75+	69	74	43
3. Nativity			
Native-born	78	69	50
Foreign-born	78	73	47
4. Occupational Prestige			
Low	74	73	47
High	74	72	49
5. Health			
Good	82	77	54
Poor	65	65	41
6. Education			
0-8 Grades	76	73	46
9-12 Grades	72	72	50
Some College	74	67	48

3. The Social-Status Index and Sex

In the sample, males occupy a greater number of social statuses, both ascribed and achieved. The males occupy a mean of 5.7 statuses compared to 5.0 for women. Also, they occupy 3.3 ascribed and 2.5 achieved statuses compared with the average for women of 2.5 and 2.3 respectively. Furthermore, the average number of statuses occupied by men is greater for each age category of the respondents (i.e., 60-64, 65-69, 70-74 and 75-plus). An examination of items on the index by sex reveals that males are more apt to be married, a parent, an employee and organization members, while females are more likely than men to have a friend and consider themselves to be religious.

Table VI-3

Occupancy of Social Statuses by Sex

<u>Social Status</u>	<u>Sex</u>	
	<u>Male</u> <u>%</u>	<u>Female</u> <u>%</u>
Spouse	91	58
Parent	89	77
Grandparent	70	68
Sibling	70	68
Friend	74	83
Employed Person	28	13
Organization Member	91	73
Religious Affiliate	54	63

The finding that men are more likely to be married and employed is quite expectable. However, the fact that men and women are socially involved in different ways is related to certain observed behaviors. The proportion of organization members is greater among the male respondents, while the female respondents are more likely to have at least one friend in whom they confide.

This pattern is reflected by the fact that all of the senior citizens clubs at Co-op City are predominantly populated and controlled by men. Most of these men are retired and come to the club "to find something to do with their time." Upon retirement most of the male respondents did not continue relationships with their co-workers: it would seem that once out of the labor force, it is difficult for them to maintain such relationships. Filling the friendship void, the retired men spend a greater amount of time with their wives, who, in turn, connect their husbands more closely than before with relatives and/or with their personal friends. However, the men seem to find such relationships awkward and tend to seek out organizational activities instead.

Retirement deprives most men of an important social status, which, with newly found leisure-time, increases their propensity for becoming involved in local organizations. Such groups provide them with opportunities to perform new task-oriented roles, to find refuge from the

world of women's work and sociability, and to engage in diversionary activities. The functions of these groups are by no means mutually exclusive, but overlapping.

For some of the men, the formal structure of the clubs provides for the performance of such familiar work-like roles as the array of bureaucratic officers (e.g., President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Trustee, Committee member, etc.), leaders of informal classes and discussion groups, and lower-level management duties. These activities are structured and also elicit positive evaluations by other residents, politicians, management personnel and co-club members. Also, local politicians and members of management are in regular contact with the leaders of these groups so that their combined efforts bring about new programs and benefits for the elderly. This positive feedback increases the self-esteem of the leaders and raises the spirits of the members.

Attitudes toward retirement did not vary greatly among the respondents. Sixty-three per cent of the male respondents felt that adjustment to retirement was "fairly easy" or "very easy" and 73 per cent felt that retirement was good. Many men indicated that the various organizations for the elderly at Co-op City made the adjustment to retirement easier because they were able to socialize with their peers in a convenient and safe place. Most felt they had worked long enough and deserved leisure and relaxation.

Many of the male respondents, who are members of the senior citizens clubs, indicated that they go to the club in order to engage in both expressive (e.g., painting, crafts, discussion groups) and play activities (e.g., cards, shuffle board, checkers).

I go to the club in order to enjoy myself. I don't want the responsibilities of leadership. I want to be able to come and go as I please. At the club, I play cards or attend a lecture.

Actually, most of the men play cards at the club and only occasionally attend a lecture or informal discussion group. Almost all card games are sex-segregated. The prevailing norm is for men to play pinochle and poker and for women to play canasta and gin. Card games provide a mechanism for men, who find sociability-for-sociability's-sake difficult, to learn new social roles. Also, the males' card games involve greater degrees of risk-taking, quicker decisions and certainly higher stakes. In sum, sex-segregation as well as the games themselves reflect the job world.

In contrast to the organized activities of men, women are more likely to have a close friend and the length of such a friendship compared to those maintained by men is longer. Over three-quarters of the female respondents compared to one-half of the men reported that their closest friend also lived in Co-op City. Approximately two-thirds of the female respondents have less friends

now and an equal percentage see their friends less often now than they did at age fifty. Forty per cent of the men have less friends now and 50 per cent see them less often than they did at age fifty. Two-thirds of the women compared to only 50 per cent of the men expressed a desire to see their friends more often. Females are more likely to have a close friend and want to see their friends more often than are men.

Several factors may account for these patterns. It was suspected that the greater likelihood for a woman to have a close friend was related to her marital status. However, both married women and widows are equally apt to have a close friend. Another possible factor is that most female respondents have a greater opportunity to cultivate friendships than men. The Kinder, Kuche und Kirche ethos is typical and reflects a cultural norm within our society for women to have greater responsibility for making and maintaining kinship and friendship ties. Many of the female respondents reported mingling with their friends during the performance of housework chores (e.g., laundering, shopping, coffee klatsching, etc.) In many instances, such companionship helps to relieve the loneliness and monotony of home chores, while not seriously interfering with their completion.

[Women] have mediated between their husbands and their kindred, between their children and the school, between their family and the neighborhood, whereas men have been used to conferring status on the family through their occupations, and not primarily through their ability to relate (Cumming and Henry 1961:159).

Another reason for the greater incidence of women having at least one good friend is that 30 per cent more men reported having been bereaved of a close friend during the past two years. The reasons cited for lack of friendship continuity among men were retirement, mobility and death. It was typical for a man to be friendly with the husbands of their wives' friends. It appears that companionship relationships are more suitable to the needs of women, while group activities are more congenial with the desires of men. Or, conversely, social skills have long been familiar to the women, while the men are relative newcomers to sociability. At any rate, Co-op City offers options to both joiners and those preferring dyadic or small-group activities.

4. The Social-Status Index and Age

Respondents under 70 years of age occupy an average of 5.6 social statuses and those 70 and over occupy 5.2 statuses. Eighty per cent of the younger elderly (i.e., 60-64) compared to only 60 per cent of the oldest elderly (i.e., 75-plus) occupy five or more statuses. In order to ascertain which particular social statuses are lost by the oldest elderly, Table VI-4 shows the percentage

of respondents occupying each of the social statuses by age.

Table VI-4
Occupancy of Social Statuses by Age

<u>Social Status</u>	<u>60-64</u>	<u>65-69</u>	<u>70-74</u>	<u>75+</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Spouse	74	70	61	62
Parent	86	86	76	89
Grandparent	51	70	74	79
Sibling	91	86	83	72
Friend	89	80	79	70
Employed Person	54	19	14	5
Organization Member	76	88	83	81
Religious Affiliate	51	52	67	65

As age increases, respondents are more likely to be grandparents and less apt to be married, a sibling, a friend or employed. Those 70 years of age and over are more religious than the younger elderly. Also, those 70 and over are more likely to be organization members than the youngest elderly.

It is not unreasonable to assume that the younger elderly, who are likelier to be employed, are able to derive sufficient social involvement from their work situation and therefore do not participate in voluntary organizations at the same rate as the older elderly. Projecting, many of the younger elderly indicated that they had no intention of ever joining a senior citizens club at Co-op City because "those people are too old for

me and they are different from us younger people." Even those aged 75-plus are more apt to belong to an organization than those respondents between the ages 60-64. This pattern indicates that the organizations at Co-op City serve a diversity of functions which assist in adaptation to retirement.

5. The Social-Status Index and Nativity

The American-born and foreign-born respondents occupy almost the same average number of statuses, 5.4 and 5.2 respectively. When examined by the percentage of those respondents occupying five or more statuses, the outcome is nearly identical (See Table VI-2). The percentage distribution of the respondents occupying each social status indicates that the foreign-born elderly are more likely to be grandparents and less apt to be siblings and employees. This is due to the greater age of the foreign-born elderly. Also, the foreign-born elderly are more likely to be religious persons and organizations members.

The greater degree of religiosity of the older elderly is not a function of their advanced years, but a persistence of the mores of the culture in which they were socialized. That is, 70 per cent of the older elderly are East-European-born Jews and 70 per cent of the younger elderly are American-born Jews. According to Zborowski and Herzog (1952), the countries of origin of the East

European Jews contained the Shtetl culture which emphasized religious orthodoxy and the maintenance of tradition. Since the East-European Jews are older than their American-born co-residents, it is not surprising to learn that they are also more religious. Such cultural persistence is also manifest in their greater knowledge of Hebrew and fluency in Yiddish. Also, 60 per cent of the foreign-born Jews compared to only 25 per cent of the native-born Jews maintain a Kosher home. Their greater participation in voluntary associations is consistent with their previous shtetl life, and aids in the identification with Jewish cultural and religious values.

6. The Social-Status Index and Socio-economic Level

The socio-economic status of each respondent was ascertained by utilizing the United States 1960 Census scores for categories of occupations. These scores are a multiple-item measure based on average levels of education and family income for males. The range of scores is from 1-99. If a female respondent was never employed, she was assigned her husband's score. The average score for all respondents was 56, while the first and second born children of the respondents both averaged 85 or a 29 point rise in social status!

No relationship was found between the average number of statuses occupied and socioeconomic status. The more affluent group of respondents occupied 5.3 statuses, while the poorer respondents occupied 5.4. Such similarities were again found among the respondents occupying five or more statuses.

An examination of the percentage distribution of each status occupied by the respondents shows that 74 per cent of the more affluent respondents are married, compared to 60 per cent of the poorer group. This is explained by the fact that the more affluent respondents are younger and and less apt to be widowed.

7. The Social-Status Index and Health

Among the respondents, health is linked to the occupancy of social statuses. Of those in good health, 82 per cent occupy five or more statuses, compared with 65 per cent of the physically impaired. The same pattern is reflected for both ascribed and achieved statuses.

An examination of Table VI-5 indicates that a greater percentage of healthy respondents occupy seven of the eight social statuses listed.

Table VI-5
Occupancy of Social Statuses by Health

<u>Social Status</u>	<u>Good Health</u>	<u>Poor Health</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Spouse	75	57
Parent	86	77
Grandparent	70	88
Sibling	85	73
Friend	84	72
Employed Person	30	9
Organization member	86	76
Religious Affiliate	59	60

As Table VI-6 shows, at all ages, the physically impaired occupy fewer social statuses than do healthy respondents. Thus the potential for social involvement, at any age is reduced by ill health--even at Co-op City.

Table VI-6
Average Number of Social Statuses Occupied
by Age and Health

<u>Age</u>	<u>Health Status</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>Good Health</u>	<u>Poor Health</u>	
60-64	5.7	5.2	5.6
65-69	5.7	5.0	5.5
70-74	5.6	4.9	5.3
75+	5.4	5.0	5.2

8. The Social-Status Index and Education

Among members of the sample, education is not linked to the number of social statuses occupied. Since the better educated respondents are younger, they are more

Table VI-5
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<u>Social Status</u>	<u>Good Health</u>	<u>Poor Health</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Spouse	75	57
Parent	86	77
Grandparent	70	88
Sibling	85	73
Friend	84	72
Employed Person	30	9
Organization member	86	76
Religious Affiliate	59	60

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	<u>Good Health</u>	<u>Poor Health</u>	
60-64	5.7	5.2	5.6
65-69	5.7	5.0	5.5
70-74	5.6	4.9	5.3
75+	5.4	5.0	5.2

8. The Social-Status Index and Education

Among members of the sample, education is not linked to the number of social statuses occupied. Since the better educated respondents are younger, they are more

likely to be married, parents, employed and a friend, but less likely to be grandparents.

When the levels of education are examined by age, socioeconomic status and nativity, significant but not surprising differences are found. The level of education achieved decreases with advancing age and increases with socioeconomic status and the younger, American-born respondents are better educated than the older, foreign-born.

In sum, the findings indicate that: 1) males occupy a greater number of social statuses than females and this holds true for all age categories; 2) the number of statuses occupied decreases with advancing age. The youngest elderly (60-64), having the highest score on the Social-Status Index, followed by the two intermediate age groups (i.e., 65-69, 70-74) whose scores are lower but identical to each other, and the oldest elderly occupy the fewest social statuses; 3) physical disability reduces the number of social statuses occupied; and, 4) adaptations to widowhood, retirement or other role reductions are directly related to cultural experiences and environmental opportunities.

B. Index of Sociability

Whereas, the Social-Status Index provides a measure of the potential for sociability, my Index of Sociability

was designed to provide a measure of the actual interactions of the respondents in informal social relationships. The index is a composite of the number of face-to-face contacts, if any, per month that a respondent has with each of his children and siblings, and the most frequently seen grandchild, cousin and friend. The quantification of the frequency of such interactions shows the extent of informal sociability, but not the degree of involvement with specific persons. Similar sociability scores can be achieved in a diversity of ways. That is, one respondent may see several of these people infrequently and another may see one or two people often and still achieve identical sociability scores. For example, Mrs. Bernstein, a 72 year old widow, is living alone at Co-op City. She spends most of her days taking care of her apartment and watching T.V. Twice a week she goes shopping with her daughter, who also lives at Co-op City in another apartment. She visits with her two closest friends (not at Co-op City) about twice a month. "We would see each other more often, but travelling is too difficult." Each Friday, Mrs. Bernstein has her married daughter's family over for dinner, including her youngest grandson. She sees her two brothers and a sister rarely, because they all live in Florida.

Having a similar sociability score (16), Mr. Spiegel, a 68 year old retired milliner, lives with his wife in a

three room apartment. They have no children and he only sees his siblings at important family occasions, such as weddings, bar-mitzvahs, or funerals. "I am close to my brothers and sisters and would do anything for them, but we lead separate lives and have different interests. We should see each other more often, but we don't."

Mr. Spiegel goes to the race track with a cousin, who also lives at Co-op City, about once a week. About three times a week, Mr. Spiegel and a close friend of 35 years walk over to the club together in order to play cards or just sit around and talk with other club members. Only with a formal invitation for dinner or for a card party, does Mr. Spiegel's friend ever come to his home. It seems that his apartment is the province of his wife and her friends and not to be invaded by uninvited men.

The Index of Sociability was constructed in order to explore the following questions empirically:

- 1) What relationships exist between such variables as age, sex, marital status, work status and health and sociability?
- 2) Does sociability decline with advancing age?
- 3) If so, what effect does Co-op City have on social involvements of the respondents?

Table VI-7 shows the average levels of sociability by selected personal variables. The average level of sociability for the entire sample was 29 contacts per

month, within a range from zero to 109 contacts.

Table VI-7
Average Sociability Scores by Selected
Background Variables

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Average Sociability</u>
1. Age	
60-64	38.3
65-69	28.3
70-74	28.2
75+	22.4
2. Sex	
Male	25.7
Female	32.6
3. Marital Status	
Married	26.2
Widowed	35.2
4. Work Status	
Working	30.8
Retired	27.6
Never worked	33.2
5. Health	
Well	30.0
Impaired	26.0
6. Socioeconomic Status	
Low	30.6
High	27.0

Of the variables tested to find out whether or not there was any significant difference among their sociability mean scores, only age, sex and marital status showed significance at the .05 level or better.

1. Sociability and Age

In the sample, age is associated with the frequency of sociability. The youngest respondents have the most social involvement, those between 65 to 74 are less sociable and the oldest group are the most isolated. Since sociability declines with age, it is important to discover whether or not this trend is a function of age per se, or whether such factors as health, work status and socio-economic status effect the trend toward social withdrawal.

Since there is a natural relationship between advancing age and health, its influence on the level of sociability was examined.

Table VI-8

Average Sociability Scores by Age and Physical Health

<u>Age</u>	<u>Good Health</u>	<u>Poor Health</u>	<u>Total</u>
60-64	41.8	29.9	38.3
65-69	29.4	28.0	28.3
70-74	28.3	28.0	28.2
75+	22.4	22.4	22.4

Table VI-8 indicates that the health condition of respondents by age does not make for greater social withdrawal than does age alone. Only for the youngest elderly in ill-health is there an appreciable drop in sociability and the healthier elderly maintain the highest level of sociability. After age 65, the physical condition of the

respondents does not appear to influence their social involvement. This is due to the fact that more unhealthy than healthy respondents live with relatives, (e.g., a child, sibling, etc.) which raises their sociability scores. In opposition to Clark and Anderson's findings, regarding their community sample, my data indicate that age, not physical impairment, accounts for reduced levels of sociability.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that age combined with either the work status (i.e., retired or employed persons) of respondents or socio-economic status does not appreciably effect their sociability. That is, regardless of either variable, their levels of sociability are reflective of the scores for their respective age groups.

2. Sociability and Sex

In the sample, despite occupying fewer social statuses, female respondents maintain higher levels of sociability than men (See Table VI-7). When the data are examined by age, the younger female elderlys' (60-64) sociability scores are almost equivalent to their male counterparts, while the older women (70-plus) have more extensive social interactions than men.

Table VI-9
Average Sociability Scores
by Age and Sex

<u>Age</u>	<u>Sex</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	
60-69	33	31	31.8
70+	19.4	32.2	25.7

The high score of sociability for the younger male elderly is reflective of their greater likelihood to be part of a household with dependent children. However, the 13 point difference between the sociability scores of females and males 70 years of age and over seems to revolve about the consequences of retirement for men and widowhood for women.

On one hand, employed men between the ages 60-69 maintain higher levels of sociability than do their retired counterparts. These scores are indicative of the opportunity for employed persons to socialize with co-workers more frequently than the younger, retired elderly with their friends. One young retired respondent said:

I just don't feel there is any place for me at Co-op City. I'm too young to join a senior citizen's club or other organizations for old people. There are very few men at Co-op City that retired at my age. It makes it difficult to find friends. Thus, I am going to find a part-time job to occupy my time.

On the other hand, employed men 70 years of age and over, have lower sociability scores than retired men of the

same age group: Such a reversal of scores of the younger male elderly is predominantly due to the fact that older retired men have more available time and energy for socializing with relatives and friends. Also, Co-op City has a large number of retired men in this age group making it easier for them to find each other and form friendships. The older employed men are usually working at part-time jobs which do not provide age peers for socializing. Thus, the older retired men at Co-op City have lost a significant social status, but have gained opportunities for socializing, whereas the older working man has kept the important status of employee, at the expense of reducing his general level of sociability.

Widowhood involves a different set of social dynamics than retirement. The major problem facing a widow(er) is re-integration into the surrounding social system without the benefit of the functions previously provided by a spouse. Once the initial period of bereavement was over, most of the female respondents were able to adjust their social networks and very few of them could be defined as unduly depressed or despondent.

It appears that women are able to adapt to widowhood more easily than men to retirement. Such adjustment for women is facilitated by several different factors. First, the social status of widow itself in our society is viewed with a greater degree of pity and prestige than the role

of retired person. Second, the rite de passage of widowhood involves a formal mourning period, allowing for public acknowledgment of the loss of the status of wife. During the period of deep mourning, the funeral not only insures that the deceased has been properly buried, but that his social existence will be positively remembered. The eulogy and the widow's reminiscences with kin and friends about her departed husband show him in the most favorable light. But, during this time of grief-work, the widow's relationships with her family and friends are already being restructured. The type of assistance provided by these persons during the bereavement period certainly sets the stage for future social involvements (Lopata 1973).

In contemporary American society there is no comparable ritual for retirement to allow men a period of emotional or social reintegration. Men are cut off from their major lifelong activity, often without the emotional support of relatives or friends. Ironically, retirement is sometimes celebrated as a joyous occasion, whatever its real meaning may be for the retiree. Upon widowhood, women can usually pursue their role as mother-homemaker, which involves maintaining familiar, routine, spatial-temporal-functional activities. Whereas, men must seek substitute activities for work, which usually are belittled by the larger society. Women, who are experienced in the art of socializing more readily become involved with other widows

than retired men can with others of similar status.

Almost 75 per cent of the widows are members of a senior citizens club at Co-op City. These organizations serve as foci of interaction for widows, so that they may develop new friendships or even, if desired, seek a new spouse.

At all ages, widows maintain higher degrees of sociability than married respondents, and for both groups sociability declines with advancing age. On the one hand, it appears that adaptation to widowhood involves the maintenance of extensive social interactions to compensate for the loss of a spouse. On the other hand, marriage partners have each other for social interaction and therefore, to a lesser extent need to alter their degree of sociability. Many married women have indicated that upon the retirement of their husbands the role of wife-homemaker became both more time-consuming and rewarding. This view was commonly expressed because wives became companions to their husbands by their mutual participation in a variety of activities.

Since his retirement, my husband and I have become closer. We do a lot of things together and go more places together. We go shopping, to the theater, visiting or on short trips. It's like when we were just married and didn't have any children. We could go anywhere we wanted at any time. Now, we are doing that once again.

Although relatively few widowers were interviewed, it is apparent that the problems facing such men are very

different from either those of newly-retired men or widowed women. Few, if any, mechanisms exist to lessen their tendencies toward social withdrawal, helplessness and depression. However, given the large number of widows in Co-op City and social sanction of late-life marriages, these men are, statistically, apt to re-marry shortly after an acceptable mourning period is over.

A summary of these findings indicate that: 1) the levels of sociability tend to decline from the younger to the older age categories. Such variables as physical health, work status and socio-economic status of the respondents do not appreciably alter the direction or the extent of sociability by age; 2) women maintain higher levels of sociability than men. Male and female respondents between the ages of 60-69 are equally socially involved, but older women maintain higher levels of sociability than younger women or than do men of their own age.

C. The Personal World of the Elderly

In order to know how the elderly feel about themselves and their world this chapter explores their attitudes from their vantage point. The focus is on their cognitive attitudes, rather than on personality dynamics, in an attempt to learn the extent of life-satisfaction of the older residents of Co-op City. This assessment is based

on my construction of a multidimensional "Index of Well-Being." I have designed this index, composed of thirteen items, to give some indication of the degree of a respondent's feelings about personal happiness, contentedness, levels of activity, attitudes toward aging, optimism and attitudes about the world today--specifically as to its orderliness or anomie.

Many attempts have been made in the field of gerontology to define and sometimes to operationalize such overlapping concepts as morale, well-being and alienation. Most notably, Cavan, et al. (1949), Cumming and Henry (1961), Havighurst (1953), Kutner, et al. (1956), Lawton (1972) and Tobin and Neugarten (1961) have attempted to define morale in its various aspects in an effort to link it with other selected variables. This chapter will not attempt to review this literature. It will report on an attempt to utilize a measure composed of a set of inter-related attitudes, which I believe add up to a valid measure of feelings of personal well-being (See Appendix C).

Since such feelings are not amenable to universal definitions and should be subjectively derived, it is useful to consider some of their commonly-shared dimensions, which are summarized by Lawton (1972:148):

1. Well-being implies a sense of present and past satisfaction. It involves feelings of achievement,

usefulness and/or personal adequacy.

2. Well-being requires mastery over one's socio-environmental setting. Thus, a person who perceives having achieved a balance between the supply and demand for sociability with others based upon shared beliefs and interests enjoys well-being.

3. Well-being, for the elderly, also involves being able to synthesize the positive and negative aspects of aging and still maintain a joie de vivre, or, at least, a raison d'être.

Feelings of well-being among the sample, or their lack, were investigated in the light of personal attributes (e.g., age, sex, marital status, etc.), which permitted the classification of respondents, the further exploration of formerly-discussed aspects of aging and the setting.

Before considering the scores of the Index of Well-Being, it is interesting that while three-quarters of the respondents indicated satisfaction or happiness with their personal lives, their views of the world were negative. Such pessimism was expressed through their opinions that the world's future looked bleak, that finding and making new friends was exceedingly difficult and that there are few rules to live by today. Most respondents viewed their lives as successful but reported that their dealings with the outside world were growing increasingly difficult. Such attitudes are not just expressions of the difficulties

of aging, but about the general environment which is perceived as unfriendly, dangerous and not congenial. However, three-quarters of the respondents viewed their immediate environment at Co-op City as "extremely good" or "very good." An autobiographical comment by a 70 year old man reflects this attitude.

. . . My family left Russia when I was 16 years old. We came to the United States trying to escape the pogroms. We thought the streets here were paved with gold. Upon arriving, I worked and continued to work in the sweatshops of the garment industry for forty years. We lived on the lower East Side in a tenement building, which was icy cold in winter and terrific heat in summer. As I got adjusted and began to earn a little money, we moved to the Bronx and lived just off the Concourse. The neighborhood was very nice. All my relatives and many friends moved there and we had shuls and stores. For over thirty years it was nice. Then, it began to change. Some people died, some moved away, schwartzers [blacks] moved in and mugging, vandalism, crime was terrific. We couldn't go out at night, we couldn't go out in the day. We lived in the house. The stores closed up and we had to walk seven or eight blocks to find a kosher butcher. It was hard. We decided to move away and put in an application for Co-op City. Here I have all the conveniences--shopping, clubs, beautiful view from my apartment--but most of all I can go out of the house without fear.

The possible range of scores on the 13 item Index of Well-Being ranged from a low of 13 to a high of 39, but the actual scores ranged from 15 to 37. The average score was 28.3. Table VI-10 shows the influences of selected variables on the average scores for personal well-being.

Table VI-10

Average Well-Being Scores by Selected
Background Variables

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Average Well-Being Score</u>
1. Age	
60-64	30.6
65-69	28.0
70-74	27.7
75+	27.7
2. Sex	
Male	29.2
Female	27.0
3. Marital Status	
Married	29.4
Widowed	25.6
4. Work Status	
Retired	27.8
Working	30.2
5. Health	
Well	29.8
Ill	26.4
6. Socio-economic Status	
Low	27.3
High	29.2

Of all the variables listed in Table VI-10 the differences between the means of each variable are significant at the .05 level or better. This analysis of variance shows that the differences between categories are greater than the variability within them indicating that the relationship is positive.

1. Well-being and Age

Those respondents between the ages of 60-64 have the highest average scores of well-being (30.6), while those aged 65-69 years of age average 28.0 and the 70-74 and 75-plus group have means of 27.7. Thus, feelings of well-being decline through the seventh decade of life only to decrease slightly and level off in the eighth decade and beyond.

Since health is related to advancing age, it is important to ascertain its influence on feelings of well-being. Table VI-11 indicates that physical impairment lowers the sense of personal well-being. Those in ill-health express lower mean levels of well-being than healthy respondents for all five-year age groupings from 60 to 75-plus. These findings indicate that it is not just discrepancies in age which account for the differences in feelings of well-being, but that the physical condition of respondents, at all ages, serves to effect levels of contentedness.

Table VI-11

Mean Levels of Well-being by Age and Health

<u>Age</u>	<u>Good Health</u>	<u>Poor Health</u>	<u>Total</u>
60-64	31.2	29.0	30.6
65-69	29.8	26.2	28.0
70-74	29.0	25.7	27.7
75+	30.0	25.3	27.7

Among the elderly, health is viewed as a limited good which is zealously guarded by those who possess it and envied by those who lack it. Interestingly, many interviews revealed that the maintenance of good health is a source of pride and leads to prestige among the elderly. It is also functional in Co-op City where, apart from the obvious distress illness entails, it leads to dependence on others: or a loss of independence and the potential for activity--both highly valued at Co-op City. For example, Mr. Rosenberg stated:

At my age, money is no longer that important. What separates the elderly from each other is their health. Some have this precious jewel, others do not. I do everything to safeguard my health because now once it's flawed it's gone forever.

In a similar vein, many respondents linked good health to moral circumspection. That is, good health among the elderly was often attributed to "clean living" and "living right." Other respondents linked good health to the maintenance of independence. Mrs. Rosen, a 72 year old widow; indicated:

I never want to be a burden to my children because such a situation would be too disruptive. You know the old saying: one mother can care for five children, but five children can't care for one mother. I would rather enter a home for the aged, than live with any of my children.

Among the major fears of respondents in good health is that they might become ill and suffer for prolonged periods of time. For example, Mr. Smith, a healthy 70

year old respondent said:

I can't stand the thought that I might be seriously ill someday. I just hope that the suffering is short and that if I have to die it's over with quickly.

In contrast to the statements of healthy respondents, most of the physically impaired viewed their situation as an "unfortunate happenstance" to be stoically endured.

As Mrs. Wiener put it:

I've been ill for the past year, but I try to keep my spirit up by doing as many things as possible. I just try not to let it get me down.

Others indicated that the onset of ill-health had produced a lessening of their social involvements and demoralization. Mrs. Blum indicated:

Since I've contracted this disease, people treat me as if I'm the disease itself. But I'm a human being, who happens to have an illness. But my so-called friends don't understand, so they have deserted me. I'm all alone and useless.

2. Well-being and Sex

Sex was found to be related to feelings of well-being in that male respondents have higher scores than females. An examination of the mean levels of well-being by age and sex indicates that the younger elderly (i.e., 60-69 years of age) of both sexes maintain almost equivalent levels of well-being, while the older female respondents (i.e., 70-plus) have lower scores than their male counterparts.

Table VI-12

Mean Levels of Well-being by Age and Sex

<u>Age</u>	<u>Sex</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	
60-64	30.7	30.5	30.6
65-69	28.6	27.5	28.0
70-74	29.6	26.9	27.7
75+	28.1	26.1	27.7

It was suspected that the lower levels of satisfaction among the older female elderly was related to their greater likelihood to be widows. Among the bereaved 70 years of age and over, seven out of eight were females. Table VI-13 indicates that of all age groups, widows maintain lower levels of happiness than married persons.

Table VI-13

Mean Levels of Well-being by Marital Status

<u>Age</u>	<u>Marital Status</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>Widowed</u>	<u>Married</u>	
60-64	26.1	31.4	30.6
65-69	23.9	29.3	28.0
70-74	25.0	29.0	27.7
75+	27.0	27.9	27.7

The widows between the ages 60-64 and 65-69 years of age have the lowest scores of well-being of any category of respondents. The pronounced demoralization of this particular age segment of widows is basically a response to the relatively short period of time which has elapsed since their husbands' demise as well as to the culmination

of the anxiety of caring for their terminally ill spouses and to their worries about the future. It is also possible that younger widows feel deprived vis à vis the anticipated benefits and pleasures attributed to retirement years which they had expected to share with their husbands.

In the eighth decade of life, there is an upward trend in the well-being scores of widows, but they are never equivalent to those of married persons of any age. The more positive feelings of older widows is due to greater length of widowhood as well as to their participation in the widow peer group at Co-op City. The social involvements of widows was discussed in a previous section. But even with extensive social contacts and the formation of friendships, the élan of widows is lessened. It appears that companionship relationships cannot substitute for the intimacy of marriage. As one widow put it:

Oh, I have lots of friends that keep me occupied. I see my children often. But being alone and lonely is devastating. I don't have anyone to share my private feelings and thoughts with or to be responsible for and to take care of.

Thus, the relationship between the sex of respondents and feelings of well-being is mainly due to the effects of the intervening variable of marital status.

3. Well-being and Work Status

Among the sample, working respondents maintain higher scores of well-being than retired subjects. Such a finding

holds true for all the five year age subdivisions.

Table VI-14

Mean Levels of Well-being by Age and
Work Status

<u>Age</u>	<u>Work Status</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>Retired</u>	<u>Working</u>	
60-64	29.0	31.7	30.6
65-69	27.8	28.8	28.0
70-74	27.6	30.3	27.7
75+	27.6	28.0	27.7

However, the scores of the retired respondents are not significantly different from those of the total sample, except for the age group 60-64. The lower levels of personal gratification of this age group is probably due to their unresolved ambivalences about retirement. That is, many of these respondents felt that they deserved the leisure-time available to them through retirement, but disliked the loss of the attributes of the role of worker. As one 62 year old retired respondent put it:

I enjoy being retired because I have the time to do many things which work always prevented me from doing. But being employed makes you feel useful and needed. It brings respect from others. I still am not completely convinced that I should have retired when I did.

The overall high levels of satisfaction maintained by retired persons in comparison to the entire sample is truly indicative of the enriched opportunities provided by Co-op City which can ameliorate the effects of retirement.

It is clear that a safe environment and the easy accessibility of facilities for socializing and securing old-age benefits as well as educational programs teaching new skills, all serve to provide opportunities to enhance the levels of well-being of the elderly. One retired respondent summed it up for others by saying:

Thank God for Co-op City. I would not know what to do with myself if not for the clubs and activities at the center. It is a blessing for the elderly.

4. Well-being and Socio-economic Status

As expected, those respondents in the higher socio-economic category compared with those in the lower one maintain higher mean levels of satisfaction. This finding holds for all age levels.

Table VI-15

Mean Levels of Well-being by Age and Socio-economic Status

<u>Age</u>	<u>Socioeconomic Status</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u>	
60-64	28.2	31.9	30.6
65-69	27.6	28.3	28.0
70-74	26.7	28.6	27.7
75+	26.0	28.6	27.7

The youngest affluent elderly maintain the highest levels of personal well-being of any category of the aged. For those others in the high socio-economic category, levels of contentedness tend to remain the same regardless of age.

This indicates that lack of financial difficulties with advancing age serves to enhance well-being.

For the poorer respondents, levels of well-being decline from the youngest to the oldest age categories. The average annual income of the affluent respondents is \$7,100 and for the poorer group is \$5,200. Sixty per cent of the poorer respondents compared to 30 per cent of the affluent ones evaluated their present income as inadequate to meet their daily needs. Also, 50 per cent of the poorer respondents compared to 30 per cent of the more affluent group evaluated their present income as "worse" than their income was at age fifty due to the shrinking dollar. In other words, the data indicate that if a respondent is poor and old, he feels poorer than do the poor and young.

Even in poverty, the levels of well-being of the elderly are related to the nature of Co-op City itself. Cooperators spearheaded legislation resulting in the rent subsidy bill which protects the poorer elderly against rent increases which in many instances would have placed insurmountable financial burdens upon them. With such protection, they can at least be assured of maintaining their apartments and, therefore, as cooperators can participate in many facets of community life.

In summary, the findings about feelings of well-being indicate that: 1) decline of well-being by age is

associated with the physical health of the respondents; 2) lower scores of happiness for female respondents is related to their greater likelihood to be widows; 3) retirement serves to lower levels of personal contentedness; and, 4) poorer respondents tend to be demoralized by their financial difficulties.

Such threats to the levels of well-being of the elderly are diminished by the socio-environmental setting of Co-op City. The provision of ready-made peer-groups for widows and retired persons and the community's concern for protecting its poorer elderly residents serve as buffers against further personal demoralization.

Discussion of the extents of sociability and levels of personal well-being of the elderly leads to reconsideration of the disengagement theory. Since this research is a cross-sectional study of one group of the elderly, it can only make inferences as to the effect of age per se on amounts of sociability and well-being. The comparison of people of different ages presumes that such observations produce the same results as observing them through successive years. Such an assumption is questionable because older respondents have usually been socialized in different cultural milieus than younger ones and their reactions to age specific problems are likely to be different. This was shown by the comparison of the adaptations of older, East-European Jews with those of younger, American-born

Jews in Co-op City.

These limitations notwithstanding and although my Index of Sociability is quite different from that generated by Cumming and Henry (1961) in the development of their theory, my data indicate that the amount of sociability of respondents does decline from the younger to the older age categories. However, age in combination with other variables differentially influences the magnitude of sociability. For example, older women (70-plus) maintain higher levels of sociability than do younger female respondents. Also, widowed respondents of the two older age categories maintain a level of social involvement almost equivalent to all respondents in the youngest age groups. Employed respondents 70 years of age and over have lower sociability scores than all other respondents of similar age.

Although the Index of Well-Being utilized in this study is substantially different from the morale scale of Cumming and Henry (1961), I found, also, in contrast to their results, that expressions of well-being are not related to the extent of disengagement by age. Although the levels of sociability of widows and working respondents decline with advancing age, their scores for well-being do not follow a similar pattern. For example, widows, 75-plus maintain the lowest level of sociability and the highest level of well-being of all widows. Again, the

levels of sociability of working respondents declines from the youngest to the oldest age categories, but those employed elderly between the ages 70-74 maintain higher levels of well-being than those aged 65-69. Such inconsistencies with Cumming and Henry's assumptions about aging raise the question as to whether disengagement from social activity with advancing age enhances senses of well-being.

Synthesizing gerontological models with anthropological interests leads to the conclusion that the setting within which behavior occurs influences the levels of social functioning and of personal well-being. For most respondents, the question is not whether to engage or to disengage, but how best to meet the many challenges of later life. Whether or not some hidden reality shapes these dimensions is beyond the scope of this study. The disengagement theory does not help to explain the variety of adaptations of the elderly to age related problems. Co-op City's elderly population has, for the most part, utilized their setting to avoid social isolation, to maintain independence and self-esteem. These goals are by no means unique to old people of American society, but are just harder for most of them to achieve. It is only by discovering the kinds of settings which best provide for both optimum sociability and maximum well-being for various kinds of elderly persons that their

age specific problems may be ameliorated.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

This study was undertaken with two major questions in focus, the answers to which reveal some general patterns about modern residential developments within American cities and the social and personal worlds of the elderly living within such complexes.

We have explored a working example of such a setting. The sponsoring agency constructs a physical module for attracting a resident population meeting its eligibility requirements. After these complexes are built, usually with a need for socializing future occupants as to expected codes of behavior, the residents still have options to embrace, ignore or reject such principles. After the population is in occupancy, they sort themselves into various categories and groups of affiliation, established along definable criteria, which tend to facilitate social interaction and unity within the heterogeneous whole. The integration of such groups forms the fabric of community life. Such groups do not arise capriciously or at random, but are based upon the cultural repertoire, life situation and expectations of

the residents. These bondings also lead to the establishment of an identity for the entire development.

Specifically, an examination of Co-op City's elderly population explored the ways in which these people utilized their environmental setting to cope with some age related problems. Evidence was also shown about their motivations for moving, their satisfaction with their new residential setting and their anxious predictions about Co-op City.

Recalling the original hope of defining Co-op City as a specific community-type within the universally applicable parameters of Arensberg's community model, this study has achieved its main goal. Furthermore, Co-op City has been shown operationally to be a defensive community. The population under study was generally seeking a new residential locale within which to escape the stresses or urban decay and violence as well as to transplant their traditional institutions and activities. Such revitalization should not be viewed as regressive behavior in which people are merely trying to evoke nostalgia for a "glorious" past, but as an attempt to perpetuate or revive an old order under changed social conditions. There was also a high degree of positive anticipation about an uncharted, frontier life.

People's lives have indeed been somewhat changed by moving to Co-op City, but their basic values, political ideologies and aspirations for themselves and their

children remain unchanged. The desired changes were considered prior to relocating and the new setting has provided opportunities for their achievement. The safety of the community, reinforced by the extensive use of its facilities, the protection provided by a formal security force and ad hoc tenant patrols, encourage residents to become joiners, to attend synagogue or church regularly and to socialize informally and frequently. These opportunities serve to provide an enriched community life.

Most of the residents of Co-op City were overjoyed by their new apartments and took pleasure in the facilities provided for socializing with compatible neighbors. They shuddered a sigh of relief upon reflecting back to the conditions to which their previous neighborhoods had deteriorated. In true pioneer spirit they established a new community within which to lead a safer and more satisfying life. However, they do not look at their world through rose-colored glasses, but constantly scrutinize their environment for signs of danger or deterioration.

Not all segments of Co-op City's population have reacted similarly to their new environment. Conflicts between classes, generations and ethnic groups are considerable as well as those between cooperators and management. It is precisely such conflicts and their resolution

which indicate the degree of allegiance of the Co-op City population to shared norms and goals. The ability of the population to compete peacefully for power and control over the allocation of resources is another indicator of its viability as a community. More than this, their innovativeness in coping with conflicts has moved them a step ahead of most other urban neighborhoods. Their parochialism or xenophobia is an outgrowth of their sense of "belonging" and serves to ward off outside influences which might threaten their way of life.

Certainly Co-op City is not Utopia: its residents face many problems. These include: poor public transportation, little or no benefits gained from interaction with the larger Bronx community, skyrocketing prices, and too much management control.

Furthermore, Co-op City is not a place for the very infirm elderly, who generally feel even more isolated than they were in their previous neighborhoods, perhaps because of all the activity around them, in which they can no longer participate. Obviously, as Co-op City's sizable elderly population continues to age, programs will have to be devised to meet the needs of this growing constituency. Plans are already underway to develop a cooperative home care service for the house-bound elderly. In short, the cooperators and management have

established a structure within which some of their problems can be solved, but other challenges to the maintenance of a stable, integrated community are potent and omnipresent.

For example, Co-op City's older sister project, Rochdale Village, a New York City housing complex for 24,000 people in Queens borough, also developed by U.H.F., a decade ago, provides possible clues to Co-op City's future promise and problems. Rochdale Village, like Co-op City, originally attracted an overwhelmingly white, Jewish population (Freiberg 1974:34). However, its present cooperators are only 40-45 per cent white. For the last few years, the apartment turnover rate has been rising dramatically, with whites leaving the complex and being replaced largely by blacks or other minority families. Regardless of the racial composition of the population, it is exceedingly difficult to detect or rally a sense of community within such residential instability. Transiency does not permit neighbors to become allies, to share common interests or to participate in public affairs with a sense of unity. Instead, people retreat more and more to private activities conducted within their own apartments. Such isolationism makes the streets increasingly unguarded and unsafe, thus engendering real and psychological fear--and the process of invasion and retreat starts once more.

During the past year, only five years after its completion and occupancy, Co-op City's apartment turnover rate has almost doubled. Families moving out of Co-op City offer three reasons for relocating: death or severe illness, buying a new home or moving out of New York City (Personal Communication: Management). Recent applicants for apartments are predominantly white and elderly and there is a dwindling number of younger families with children applying. Management and cooperators are diligently engaged in formulating plans to stop this trend in emigration and to attract younger families to Co-op City. However, it is becoming clear that a lack of generational succession is leading toward a dramatic shift in the composition of Co-op City's population. Its present inability to attract young families of any ethnic group will probably result in a relaxation of financial eligibility requirements and thus accept a greater number of poorer, non-Jewish, non-white families. I believe recruitment will still be possible within a changing economy, with proper planning and the perpetuation of an image of Co-op City as a desirable residence.

Yet, the endemic problem of many urban communities throughout the United States is their inability to deal with cross-cultural diversity. Housing developments are sometimes depicted as retrenchments or mere holding actions against the advance of alien minority groups.

The inevitable conflict between such groups seems to produce only tentative reforms and leads to further hostility. However, Co-op City appears to have established a set of shared experiences and beliefs based upon actions and interactions promoting a real acceptance of pluralism. It is a community which has demonstrated that young and old, black and white, men and women, can cooperate to achieve common goals.

Co-op City was very positively evaluated by the elderly. They were eager migrants, who were delighted to move in and who, after settling down, became active in meeting its challenges. They not only derived satisfaction from their clean, new apartments and the convenient facilities for shopping and socializing, but also such amenities promoted high levels of social involvement and a sense of well-being among them. Many of the aged reported participating in community activities for the first time in their lives rather than just interacting with their families or watching the passing parade. The emphasis was clearly on involvement.

Co-op City provides a setting for its older population to take the initiative in devising a host of organizations to meet their age related problems. The modus vivendi is one of personal independence and the maximizing of opportunities for group participation and endeavor. The

balance between these two themes is critical for the elderly--and any environment which promotes such equilibrium must be positively evaluated. It is only through the proper utilization of the reservoir of skills and knowledge of Co-op City's elderly and old people everywhere, that future generations can be assured of enrichment.

Whatever Co-op City's imperfections may be, it is a relatively agreeable place to live. It demonstrates that decent, safe housing in an urban setting can be provided for many people at a reasonable cost. I conclude that such housing schemes should be more widely available and that, within them, they must develop policies, programs and facilities which optimize both personal freedom and cultural pluralism--neither at the cost of the other.

APPENDIX A

GENERALIZED SAMPLE AND PROSPECTIVE RESPONDENTS

The following table shows the percentage distribution of the generalized sample of the elderly which would result from a random selection of five hundred applicants for apartments at Co-op City by age, sex and income from 1965-1970.

Table A-1

The Distribution of the Generalized Sample by Age, Sex and Income,
1965-1970

Age	Both Sexes		Low Income		Females		Both Sexes		High Income		Females	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
60-64	43.0	28.9	13.5	21.9	29.5	33.7	53.0	45.1	28.5	48.3	24.5	41.9
65-69	57.5	38.6	22.0	35.8	35.5	40.6	33.0	28.1	17.0	28.8	16.0	27.3
70-74	31.5	21.1	16.5	26.8	15.0	17.1	14.5	12.3	7.0	11.9	7.5	12.9
75+	17.0	11.4	9.5	15.5	7.5	8.6	17.0	14.5	6.5	11.0	10.5	17.9
	149.0		61.5		87.5		117.5		59.0		58.5	

Table A-2 shows the distribution of prospective respondents selected from a random sampling of 500 application forms of Co-op City's present residents by age, sex, and income in 1972.

Table A-2

The Distribution of Prospective Respondents By Age, Sex And Income,
1972

Age	Both Sexes		Low Income				Both Sexes		High Income			
	#	%	Females		Males		#	%	Females		Males	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
60-64	21	12.5	19	17.1	2	3.6	39	27.3	22	32.8	17	22.4
65-69	53	31.5	38	34.2	15	26.3	51	35.7	21	31.4	30	39.5
70-74	50	29.8	35	31.6	15	26.3	32	22.3	12	17.9	20	26.3
75+	<u>44</u>	<u>26.2</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>17.1</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>43.8</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>14.7</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>17.9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>11.8</u>
	168		111		57		143		67		76	

A composite of Table A-1 and Table A-2 (See Table A-3) indicates an approximate equivalence in sex and income ratios, but the age distribution of the prospective respondents is older than that of the generalized sample. The age distribution of prospective respondents compared to the generalized sample shows an increase in the age categories 70-74 and 75-plus of 9 per cent and 8 per cent respectively as well as a decrease of 17 per cent in the age group 60-64. These findings indicate that the population from which the prospective respondents were selected is older than that of the original applicant population.

A comparison of the age distributions by sex reveals a decrease of 20 per cent for males and 14 per cent for females in the age segment 60-64 and a 12 per cent increase for males 75-plus and an 11 per cent increase for females 70-74. These figures reflect the trend of the younger elderly to emigrate from New York City.

The juxtaposition of the distributions of both groups by age, sex and income reveals an increase in the percentage of low income people in the highest age categories and a decrease in the youngest ones. Also, there is an increase in the ratio of males to females in the low income category. The high income category shows a decrease in the percentage of persons 60-64, especially for males, and an increase in the 70-74 age group.

Table A-3

A Comparison of the Generalized Sample and the
Prospective Respondents by Age and Sex and Income

	<u>Generalized Sample</u>		<u>Prospective Respondents</u>	
<u>Sex</u>				
Female	54.8%		57.2%	
Male	45.2%		42.8%	
<u>Income</u>				
Low Income	55.8%		54.0%	
High Income	44.2%		46.0%	
<u>Age</u>				
60-64	36.1%		19.3%	
65-69	34.1%		33.4%	
70-74	17.3%		26.4%	
75+	12.5%		20.9%	
<u>Age by Sex</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
60-64	34.9%	37.0%	14.3%	23.0%
65-69	32.4%	35.3%	33.8%	33.1%
70-74	19.5%	15.4%	26.3%	26.4%
75+	13.2%	12.3%	25.6%	17.5%

The comparison of the prospective respondents with the participants reveals a remarkable degree of similarity in almost all divisions by age, sex and income.

Table A-4

Comparison of the Prospective Respondents
with the Participants by Age, Sex and Income

	<u>Prospective Respondents</u>		<u>Participants</u>	
<u>Sex</u>				
Male	42.8%		48.0%	
Female	57.2%		52.0%	
<u>Income</u>				
Low Income	54.0%		58.0%	
High Income	46.0%		42.0%	
<u>Age</u>				
60-64	19.3%		17.5%	
65-69	33.4%		32.5%	
70-74	26.4%		28.5%	
75+	20.9%		21.5%	
<u>Age by Sex</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
60-64	14.3%	23.0%	15.6%	19.2%
65-69	33.8%	33.1%	29.2%	35.6%
70-74	26.3%	26.4%	26.0%	30.8%
75+	25.6%	17.5%	29.2%	14.4%

APPENDIX B

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PEOPLE INTERVIEWED
IN TABLE FORM

		<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Table B-1	<u>Race</u>		
	White	190	95.0
	Black	10	5.0
Table B-2	<u>Sex</u>		
	Male	96	48.0
	Female	104	52.0
Table B-3	<u>Age</u>		
	60-64 years	35	17.5
	65-69 years	65	32.5
	70-74 years	57	28.5
	75+	43	21.5
Table B-4	<u>Nativity</u>		
	American-born	68	34.0
	Foreign-born	132	66.0
Table B-5	<u>Ethnic Self-Identification</u>		
	Jewish	150	75.0
	Black	10	5.0
	Italian	2	1.0
	Puerto Rican	2	1.0
	Irish	1	.5
	Just-American	32	16.0
	Other	3	1.5

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Table B-6	<u>Religious Preference</u>	
	Jewish	177 88.5
	Protestant	12 6.0
	Catholic	7 3.5
	Other	4 2.0
Table B-7	<u>Years of Residence in New York City</u>	
	0-19 years	4 2.0
	20-29 years	8 4.0
	30-39 years	6 3.0
	40-49 years	23 11.5
	50-59 years	72 36.0
	60+	87 43.5
Table B-8	<u>Length of Stay at Previous Residence</u>	
	0-4 years	20 10.0
	5-9 years	45 22.5
	10-19 years	48 24.0
	20-29 years	23 11.5
	30-39 years	46 23.0
	40-49 years	14 7.0
	50+	4 2.0
Table B-9	<u>Household Composition</u>	
	Living Alone	42 21.0
	Married Couple only	114 57.0
	Living with spouse and dependent children	15 7.5
	Living with sibling(s)	11 5.5
	Living with adult child	4 2.0
	Living with married daughter and grandchild	3 1.5
	Other	11 5.5
Table B-10	<u>Marital Status</u>	
	Married	134 67.0
	Widowed	53 26.5
	Never Married	10 5.0
	Separated or divorced	3 1.5

		<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Table B-11	<u>Educational Level</u>		
	None	7	3.5
	Grades 1-8	75	37.5
	Grades 9-11	54	27.0
	Grade 12	37	18.5
	Some College	21	10.5
	College Graduate or more	6	3.0

		<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Table B-12	<u>Work Status</u>		
	Retired	119	59.5
	Working	41	20.5
	Never Worked	40	20.0

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Ever Worked</u>		<u>Now Retired</u>		<u>Now Working</u>	
	N=160		N=119		N=41	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Professional or Executive	18	11.3	11	9.2	7	17.1
Owners of small businesses	13	8.1	13	10.9	0	0.0
Clerical workers	43	26.9	30	25.2	13	31.7
Skilled and Semi-skilled workers	73	45.6	57	47.9	16	39.0
Unskilled workers	13	8.1	8	6.8	5	12.2

Table B-14

Occupational Level by Generation

Occupation	Respondents' Fathers' Occupation N=200	Respondents' Occupation N=200	Respondents' First Child N=164	Respondents' Second Child N=122
Professional or Executive	7%	5%	38%	31%
Administrators	2%	4%	4%	14%
Owners of small businesses	19%	7%	3%	2%
Clerical workers	14%	21%	21%	24%
Skilled workers	21%	13%	3%	2%
Semi-skilled workers	28%	24%	1%	0%
Unskilled workers	8%	6%	1%	2%
Never worked	0%	20%	24%	21%
Other	1%	0%	5%	4%

Table B-15 Educational Level by Generation

Educational Level	Respondents' Educational Level N=200	Respondents' First Child N=164	Respondents' Second Child N=122
None	3.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Grades 1-8	37.5%	1.3%	0.0%
Grades 9-11	27.0%	1.8%	2.5%
Grade 12	18.5%	31.0%	29.2%
Some College	10.5%	17.1%	20.8%
College Graduate	3.0%	48.8%	47.5%

Table B-16 Total Annual Family Income

	N	%
\$0-2,999	20	10.0
\$3,000-5,999	67	33.5
\$6,000-8,999	80	40.0
\$9,000-11,999	16	8.0
\$12,000 or more	17	8.5

Table B-17 Adequacy of Respondent's Present Income

	N	%
Income not enough	12	6.0
Income barely enough	78	39.0
Income sufficient	78	39.0
Income surplus	32	16.0

Table B-18 Adequacy of Respondent's Present Income Compared with Income at Age 50

	N	%
Better now	71	35.5
About the same	53	26.5
Worse now	76	38.0

Table B-19 Self-evaluation of General Health Condition

	N	%
Excellent	11	5.5
Good	67	33.5
Fair	79	39.5
Poor	43	21.5
Very poor	0	0.0

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Table B-20	<u>Comparison of Respondent's Health Condition to Others of the Same Age</u>	
	13	6.5
Much better	93	46.5
Better	63	31.5
About the same	23	11.5
Worse	8	4.0
Don't know		

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Table B-21	<u>Respondents' Participating "Very Often" or "Often" in Leisure Time Pursuits</u>	
Watching TV and Listening to radio	193	96.5
Reading	188	89.0
Taking walks	134	87.0
Visiting with friends and relatives	140	70.0
Going shopping	130	65.0
Playing cards	80	40.0
Going to Church or Synagogue	60	30.0
Hobbies	50	25.0

APPENDIX C

INDEX OF WELL-BEING

In order to assess the personal world of the elderly I constructed a multidimensional Index of Well-being. The 13 item Index attempts to tap various attitudinal dimensions such as personal happiness, isolation, aging, optimism and world order, to give a numerical indicator of well-being. Such quantification permits statistical comparisons between subgroups of the sample.

Below is a copy of the Index of Well-being.

Index of Well-being

I will read you some statements with which some people agree and others disagree. Please give us your opinion about these items (i.e., whether you agree, disagree or are uncertain about your feelings concerning the following items as they stand).

1. Sometimes I feel all alone in the world.
 A U D
2. I often wonder what the meaning of life really is.
 A U D
3. Sometimes I have the feeling people are using me.
 A U D
4. I get easily upset.
 A U D
5. I am just as happy as when I was younger.
 A U D

6. As I look back on my life, I am fairly well satisfied.
_____ A _____ U _____ D
7. Real friends are as easy to find as ever.
_____ A _____ U _____ D
8. The future looks very dismal.
_____ A _____ U _____ D
9. Everything is relative, and there aren't any definite rules to live by.
_____ A _____ U _____ D
10. A person has to live for today and not worry about tomorrow.
_____ A _____ U _____ D
11. I sometimes feel that life is not worth living.
_____ A _____ U _____ D
12. People had it better in the old days.
_____ A _____ U _____ D
13. As I get older things keep getting worse.
_____ A _____ U _____ D

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