SEEKING A PLACE TO BE: NEW YORK CITY YOUTH OF COLOR IN THE LATE 1980'S

By

MICHAEL K. CONN

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

2000

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

9/18/00 — Date

Chair of Examining Committee

9/18/00 — Date

Executive Officer

Prof. Roger Hart

Prof. Martin Ruck

Prof. Michelle Fine

Prof. William Kornblum

Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

SEEKING A PLACE TO BE: NEW YORK CITY YOUTH OF COLOR IN THE LATE 1980'S

by

Michael K. Conn

Adviser: Professor Susan Saegert

This study explored the issue of "the place" (and the places) of early adolescence, for young people mostly of color, living in a particular location within New York City during the late 1980's. This study began as a descriptive inquiry into teens' relationships with the places they encountered daily, with the aim of inductively analyzing and highlighting some of the important aspects and concepts underpinning those relationships. Thirty (30) early adolescents, ages 11 to 15, living in low- and middle-income apartment complexes, were interviewed. This project was intended to help create a foundation for the study of adolescence and the environment.

This project suggested some links between teens' experiences with places and their personal and social development, behavior, and sense of self. Among the key dynamics and issues highlighted were barriers and access to places; teens' sense of personal connection to the neighborhood; the patterning of teens' daily experiences; the sense of teens having places 'for' teens (or not); problems and threats in the environment; teens' views of how places could be changed (or not), and by whom; and valued places and positive aspects of the area.

Key themes running throughout had to do with teens' 'seeking a place to be' and the use of 'transitional spaces.' Issues of gender, class, race, and age also intersected many, if not every, experience that teens had with places, and with the general 'shape' of their daily pattern of place experiences.

Future work would do well to continue exploring the relationship between teens' environmental experiences and personal development, the use of extensive autobiographical and hands-on participatory methods, and connections to social theory.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

So many people, literally scores, have been helpful along the way that it is impossible to thank them all individually. However, I say "thank you all" for your suggestions, tips, encouragement and support along the way. If you do not see your name here, please do not be offended! I hope to see you soon and thank you personally.

The boys and girls involved in this study deserve thanks first. They were so open and straight-forward and I can only hope that this project will "give back" some of their enthusiasm and energy to other teens, in some way, in the future.

I wish to thank Professor Susan Saegert, my chairperson, for her incisive comments, key analytical questions, and pointed suggestions at just the right moments in the development of my project and writing. I especially thank you, Susan, for your patience and for believing that I would (eventually) finish.

Professor Roger Hart has provided guidance and great feedback at several points in this project. I also wish to thank Roger for providing a model of what child-environment research can be, at its best, and for supporting and encouraging my interest in adolescence for quite some time.

To Professors Martin Ruck, Michelle Fine, and William Kornblum: thanks for your terrific questions in the later stages of my work, which helped me to stretch its conceptual level. Professor Dalton Miller-Jones also deserves appreciation for contributions to the early phases of the work, which improved the fieldwork and analyses considerably.

Professor Dries van Wagenberg (University of Eindhoven, the Netherlands) first introduced me to the Environmental Design Research Association and to the existence of the CUNY Environmental Psychology program when we were both on Long Island. He also involved me in his dissertation project on middle-schoolers' classroom participatory design. Without his early influence, I might not have been writing these acknowledgements! Thanks also to Prof.

Christopher Peterson (University of Michigan) for being an intellectual mentor and friend while we were in Virginia.

To Carol Oliver of the Environmental Psychology program I owe a tremendous THANKS! Without your help, Carol, I really don't know if I would have made it through the fieldwork! Jude Kubran also provided much needed emotional support and expert guidance through the terrain of University rules and procedures. Thanks Jude for everything!

The Environmental Psychology program - faculty and students alike - is truly a "community of scholars." It was a great place, time, and 'transitional space' for me. To a few of my fellow grads go special thanks: Nina Gottlieb, my good friend, cheered me on the whole way; Lena Sorenson and Ruth Rae prodded helpfully at just the right times; Selim Iltus shared his insights on graphics and data analysis with enthusiasm (though I was only able to use even a few of his great ideas here!). And as I said before, there were so many others who helped in various ways that I can't even begin to list them all.

Thanks also to Dr. Sylvia Barsion, Laurie Newton, and all my other colleagues in my workplace for your support and kind words, and for being so flexible when I needed time to bring this project to a close.

Tangible, financial support for my research was provided by a National Institute of Mental Health pre-doctoral fellowship, a CUNY Graduate Fellowship, a Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues dissertation grant-in-aid, and an American Psychological Association dissertation award. These sources of support were essential to the initiation of this work and to the interviewing and transcription phases as well.

Sincere thanks go to my extended family - the Conn's,the Lauro's, and the White's - for being supportive, helpful, and understanding. Special thanks to you Dad and Mom (Harry and Rosemary Conn) for starting me off on this path of learning a long time ago.

To my daughters - Caitlin and Keara - I say, "thanks for simply being who you are!" And I loved that great welcome

home you gave me after my dissertation defense. Now let's go outside and play!!

And to Debbie: thanks, Deb, for being there *every single step* along the way with encouragement, patience (*a lot of patience*), support, and sensible suggestions exactly when they were needed. I know the finish of this project is as much yours as mine and there's no way I can thank you enough for all you have given.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Page

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

What difference do particular features of the socio-physical environment make in the daily lives and ongoing development of urban early adolescents? If particular features of the environment do make a difference in teens' lives, how does that happen? What are the dynamics that seem to occur? How do early adolescents perceive and use their environment? What role does the socio-physical environment play in events that have significance for teens' development, and how does that role manifest itself? Although the research literature addressing these questions has grown in recent years, it is still somewhat limited. By directly asking teens about their environmental experiences, and by integrating an analysis of these accounts together with the literature on adolescent development and the environmental psychology of adolescence, I have attempted in my dissertation to address these questions.

Background of the Study

Before going into the theoretical background for this study, I should point out that this was a study of particular early adolescents living in a particular place and time.

As described in more detail later, these were teens of color living in a specific neighborhood in Manhattan (New York City). They were interviewed during the late 1980's when the crack epidemic was at its height in New York, when personal computers were just beginning to emerge in children's lives (but before the advent of the internet), and at a time when sports were not as available for girls as they are today. This was also a time when the distance between the 'haves' and 'have-nots,' economically speaking, was increasing. Within New York, the parks system was experiencing a crisis as staffing and maintenance were in decline (cf. Hart, 1986), and it was before the time of increased street policing instituted by Mayor Guilliani's administration in the 1990's. These points should be kept in mind, because they affect not only the interpretation of the data - and their relevance to other teens living in other places - but also to remind us that our theoretical interpretations should be grounded in the particularities of teens' lives as well. Following the general review of theories of adolescent development, and of relevant research literature, we will turn to the specific findings of this study and their interpretation.

Theoretical Background

Adolescence is generally considered to be a transitional phase linking childhood to adulthood, during which crucial developmental transformations take place on physical, psychological and social levels (Graber, Brooks-Gunn, & Petersen, 1996; Leadbeater & Way, 1996; Lerner et al., 1996; Lipsitz, 1980; Petersen, 1988). Recent conceptualizations of development as a contextualized process have emphasized that personal development is not just rooted in intra-personal or social factors, but also in the larger socio-physical world of settings, places, and personally relevant events that happen in those places (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1988; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Goodnow, 1988; Hart & Conn, 1991). Hart and Conn (1991) have argued in support of a transactional perspective on research, which involves examining how psychological and environmental aspects of "holistic unities" relate to each other and change. This perspective is squarely rooted in the work of environmental psychologists (see Altman & Rogoff, 1987; Saegert & Winkel, 1990, for reviews and theoretical treatments of this perspective). As Altman and Rogoff (1987) have articulated this position, the focus is on events and the fundamental unit of study is a person in the environment involved in events over time.

In keeping with this position, Hart and Conn (1991) argued for a place-based focus on research into children's thinking, feeling, and acting because "place" is the locus of human intentions. In a literal sense, place is the location of events, and events link psychological and environmental aspects together. In a more figurative sense, place is to some degree also a source and manifestation of human intentions and psychological phenomena (cf. Manzo & Wolfe, 1990; Saegert, 1993; Saegert & Winkel, 1990). In general, Hart and Conn (1991) call for investigating the child-environment system holistically, with attention to social forces as well as environmental factors in children's decision-making and action, with special attention to identifying critical transitions of the child-environment system.

The structure of the environmental system has been a particular interest of Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1988). Although Bronfenbrenner's work has been criticized for overlooking the physical environment in favor of the social environment (Stokols, 1982; Stokols & Shumaker, 1981), he has brought attention to the need to view human development as occurring, transactionally, within a nested system of

settings. Bronfenbrenner (1979) has named this approach "the ecology of human development" which he defined as:

> "...the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded." (p. 21)

In elucidating this perspective, Bronfenbrenner (1979) goes on to articulate three major aspects of this definition. First, the developing person is seen as a "dynamic entity" that has the potential to impact and restructure its milieu. Second, the relationship between the person and environment is seen as reciprocal; the environment has an impact on the person as well, and both accommodate to each other. Third, part of the "environment" is the immediate setting; but the environment of the developing person is more than that - it also includes the connections between settings as well as external influences on settings originating from the larger surroundings and from larger social and historical forces. A major portion of Bronfenbrenner's work is devoted to articulating this environmental structure, ranging from the level of the immediate setting (the microsystem) to the larger cultural underpinnings which influence the "blueprints" for settings within a society (the exosystem; see Bronfenbrenner, 1979,

1988, for a full description). Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1988; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) work also calls attention to the need to understand the person's relationships not only with objective features of the environment, but also to consider the subjective experience of the environment as an important factor in human development as well, because the person's phenomenological conception of the environment, as well as objective conditions, affect behavior. In sum, Bronfenbrenner (1988; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) suggests that developmental research use a person-process-context model which includes characteristics of the person and of the context, and also of the process of interaction, mutual accommodation, and change in each.

In an effort to expand on the work of Barker and Wright (1955), Bronfenbrenner (1979), and others, Goodnow (1988) wrote a theoretical review that examined ways of viewing the relationships among children, families, and communities (particularly at the level of community settings) in terms of children's development. Goodnow's (1988) focus is primarily on the social milieu, or social setting, rather than on the physical environment, but the points she makes are applicable to a discussion of the socio-physical environment and to material as well as social aspects of settings. As does

Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1988), Goodnow (1988) argues for taking a more differentiated view of settings and of their potential role in development than is typically done in research:

> "The critical questions to ask about development...have to do with the way each setting is perceived, the extent to which it is found satisfying, and whether settings are seen as linked or as discontinuous, with different people and different rules for each. These perceptions and feelings are said to be influenced by a variety of conditions, one important condition being the way in which we make a transition or are introduced into any new setting." (p. 52)

Goodnow (1988) focuses on three possible processes involved in the mutual influence of children and settings. The first process she calls enhancement or accentuation, which refers to the importance of the setting in providing conditions which enhance or accentuate a pre-existing tendency or characteristic of the person. The second process is transmission, which refers to the ways in which families and settings operate to communicate and impart information, values, and skills to the developing child. The third process is one of access, which includes physical movement from one setting to another, physical participation in settings, and the management of movement, as well as entry or "penetrance" (Barker & Wright, 1955; Wright, 1956) to activities, opportunities, people or information. Goodnow (1988) suggests that the process of access is a very important influence on the course of development, and furthermore, she suggests that

personal action and development are affected by both the objective conditions of access and by the perception of access (or lack of access). According to Goodnow (1988), "...the objective features of access...affect the options available and the chances of recovery or change from a trajectory once established" (p. 70). On the other hand, perceptions of access may direct the person's choice of actions and emotional reactions to settings depending upon how the means of gaining (actual) access to the setting are viewed, whether the arrangements in the setting are viewed as "givens" versus being a changeable, social option, whether the setting is viewed as meaningful and interpretable, and whether the setting is viewed as safe versus dangerous. Goodnow's (1988) work is interesting because it can heighten our theoretical sensitivity to some of the possible functions of settings, and of forms of person-environment relationships, which might influence developmental trajectories of individuals.

From a theoretical perspective, the work of Valsiner (1987) is also very interesting, and his work is useful in articulating the processes by which features of the environment might, in a transactional sense, play a role in the development of adolescents (see Hart & Conn, 1991, for an overview and critique of Valsiner's 1987, theoretical perspective). Among

Valsiner's key points are the ideas that the environment carries culturally specific meanings - that the physical environment is meaningfully organized - and that the process of development results in "personal sense systems" (i.e., understandings of the environment) which are culturally shared yet which also have idiosyncratic aspects growing out of the individual's unique experiences. Valsiner (1987) suggests that "constraints" play a major role in channeling or "canalizing" personal action (and ultimately, as a result, development). Constraints can be physical or behavioral limits placed on children's actions, but they can also refer to the internalization of rules and boundaries for action, as well as other self-directed notions of what is possible in a given setting. In Valsiner's (1987) view, the child's actions are set within a qualitatively complex system of constraints that is dynamic, and both deterministic (i.e., limits exist) and indeterministic (i.e., the interplay of forces may not, in an exact sense, be predictable).

Valsiner (1987) employs three main concepts to describe the system which channels, or "canalizes" children's actions. These concepts derive closely from the work of Lewin (1954) and Vygotsky (1978). The first concept is that children's actions are influenced by the Zone of Free Movement (ZFM),

which refers both to the physical access to objects in the environment and the ways in which the child can interact with them as well as to the internalized, structural framework, derived from experience, for cognitions and emotions that relate to those objects. The Zone of Promoted Action (ZPA) represents adults' (and others') desired directions for the child's actions, and the activities, objects, and areas in the environment used to promote new skills in the child by adults. Finally, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) has to do with aspects of the child's development that have not yet moved from the realm of the possible to the actual, but which could be elicited with the help of others or of circumstances. As Hart and Conn (1991) pointed out, Valsiner's (1987) concepts were developed in the context of research on infants and toddlers, and his theoretical framework could be further developed for other age groups by extending and modifying his concepts. For example, Hart and Conn (1991) suggested that with older children or adolescents a new concept might be useful - that of the Zone of Desired Action - which has to do with adolescents' own self-directed prerogatives for action, intentions and self-regulation (also see Korpela, 1989, 1992). Hart and Conn (1991) also pointed out that Valsiner's (1987) work could benefit by articulating how dynamics in face-to-face microsettings (his primary focus in research on infants)

relate to larger environmental systems (e.g., as attempted by Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1988; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Nonetheless, Valsiner's (1987) ideas may prove useful as sensitizing concepts in adolescent-environment research.

Adolescent Transitions

Before we move on to review the literature on adolescents' relationships with their environments, and to discuss the possible connections between environments and personal development for the teens involved in my study, it will be useful to take a brief overview of current perspectives on adolescence and of the key developmental tasks of adolescence. The general literature on adolescence will inform our discussion, even though it can be faulted for overlooking an environmental perspective, and later we will be able to suggest ways that an environmental perspective could be useful in the study of adolescence.

Adolescence has been described as a transitional period, during which the person moves from the world of the child to the larger, more socially extended world of the adults (Graber, Brooks-Gunn, & Petersen, 1996). On a psychological level, adolescence is a time during which each individual faces particular kinds of developmental "tasks" which are

somewhat different (though also connected with) those faced by younger children or by adults (Havinghurst, 1972; Lipsitz, 1980). Among the key developmental issues and tasks of adolescence are the construction and formation of identity in its various forms including personal, gender, racial/ethnic, and economic identities (Erikson, 1968; Leadbeater & Way, 1996; Lipsitz, 1980); cognitive development, especially with a move toward being able to handle abstractions and hypothetical possibilities (Cole & Cole, 1989; Lipsitz, 1980); the continuing formation and elaboration of social and emotional relationships, especially with age-peers (Youniss, 1980; Youniss & Smollar, 1985); the preparation for assuming adult social roles (e.g., of citizenship, employment; Hart, 1997; Havinghurst, 1972; Lipsitz, 1980); biological maturation and sexuality (Cole & Cole, 1989); and the continuing development of moral and value perspectives (Gilligan, 1982; Graber, Brooks-Gunn, & Petersen, 1996; Lerner & Galambos, 1998; Lerner et al., 1996).

Adolescence and the Environment

Though often fascinating, the literature on the developmental tasks of adolescence overlooks the potential role of the physical environment, and of the social environment located within and conditioned by aspects of the physical environment,

in human development. Indeed, pointing out this shortcoming, and devising theoretical statements to remedy this lack, has been the focus of some of the writers discussed earlier (e.g., Altman & Rogoff, 1987; Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1988; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Hart & Conn, 1991; Saegert & Winkel, 1990). Teasing out the developmental significance of real-world, everyday environmental transactions may be difficult because it is quite possible that multiple issues may be operating at one time. In addition, unless we examine these phenomena over time it will be difficult to delineate change processes. Nonetheless, we can speculate on ways in which each developmental issue might be exhibited in environmental transactions. My purpose here, once again, is to identify some potentially useful concepts for future research.

Places, as Proshansky and his colleagues have argued (Proshansky & Fabian, 1987; Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983; cf. Korpela, 1989, 1992), may play an important role in the construction and confirmation of self-identity. Information from environmental experiences may provide the basis for a teen's sense of "who she is," or "who she could be." Teens' explorations of environments might be directed by the developmental goals of identity formation; settings

encountered may provide teens with new experiences and may open opportunities to reflect on their self-identity; on the other hand, some environmental experiences, such as being subjected to persistent danger, may lead to withdrawal and identity foreclosure (Garbarino et al., 1992). Emerging identity issues may also be reflected in spatial issues, such as territoriality, and privacy needs, both within and outside the home (Chawla, 1991; van Vliet--, 1983, 1985).

The relationship of environmental factors to social and peer interaction among teens is perhaps one of the best developed literatures (for details see Cotterell, 1991; Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Francis, 1979; Ladd, 1978; Lynch, 1977; Owens, 1988, 1994, 1997; Noack & Silbereisen, 1988; Schiavo, 1988; Skelton & Valentine, 1998; Wohwill, 1985). Most of these studies are descriptive; they do not explicitly address developmental processes. Nonetheless, as Noack and Silbereisen (1988) have suggested, it does appear that teens are often goal-directed, in a developmental sense, in using settings to advance their social development. Noack and Silbereisen (1988) have shown that teens seek out places which are perceived as providing the opportunity for socializing with age peers, and that teens use places as "tools" in socializing. Owens (1988, 1994) has made a similar point

about the places that teens value outside the home in suburban settings, and has found that natural settings and developed parks were valued for gathering to the extent that they were useful for socializing and relaxing, particularly if they were places not controlled by adults (for similar points also see Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Lynch, 1977; Noack & Silbereisen, 1988; Schiavo, 1988). It will be interesting to see in my study how teens view different places in connection with social opportunities, and to learn how places support or undermine socializing. It will also be interesting to see how teens learn about the larger social world through their environmental experiences. Furthermore, the role of social relationships - with age-peers and others - in affecting the kinds of places teens come in contact with, and the kinds of transactions they experience in these places, will be interesting to explore.

Other developmental issues will likely intersect with the issue of social interaction in places: The development of gender roles may affect teens' own views of the kinds of places they value, the kinds of transactions they have in places, the ways in which others react to and attempt to direct teens' actions in places, and the more general definition of places as "gendered" (e.g., basketball courts

may be viewed as "boy" places not for use by "girls"; see Skelton & Valentine, 1998). Cognitive development during adolescence, especially the capacity for abstraction and entertaining "what ifs" (Cole & Cole, 1989), may play a role in conjunction with social forces in creating what Hart and Conn (1991) have called the "Zone of Desired Action," that is, teens' envisioning possibilities and desired alternatives to situations-as-given. Cognitive development may play a role in the kinds of choices that teens make about environments, the ways in which they see changes as possible (or not possible), and the ways in which they see themselves as relating to a larger world beyond their direct, immediate experience (Baldassari, Lehman, & Wolfe, 1987; Iltus & Hart, 1994; Hart, 1997)

A focus on the developmental tasks of adolescence is not meant to imply that the age of adolescence, in itself, is to be viewed only as a way-station between childhood and adulthood (although there is a danger of taking this point of view). As Konopka (1973) has put it "...adolescents are growing, developing persons in a particular age group - not pre-adults, pre-parents, or pre-workers, but human beings participating in the activities of the world around them" (p. 298). Adolescence is an important time of life in itself, as well as

a time of development toward adulthood (Konopka, 1973; Lerner et al., 1996). Even though Konopka (1973) makes this point, however, adolescence commonly is still viewed as a transitional phase. It will be interesting to see in this study how this issue might manifest itself in the views of teenagers. Do teens view themselves as leaving childhood and heading toward adulthood, and, if so, how might that affect their choices in environments, the value they place on different places, and their perceptions of settings? How might adolescents' roles in setting be defined by themselves and by others? How might the availability of settings to teens be affected by their being socially defined as "teenagers?" The separation out of adolescence as an important phase of life, distinct from others, has been defined by social and historical trends during this century (see Kett, 1977; Elder, 1980, 1998). It will be interesting to see whether, and how, this separation translates into environmental experiences.

The extent to which the developmental transitions of adolescence are influenced by, and in turn influence, adolescents' environmental experiences is still very much an open question (cf. Conn, 1988, 1998). I suspect that the "environment" of adolescence will differ in some important

ways from that of either childhood or adulthood, and that adolescents will encounter situations that they must learn to understand, and transact with, in the process of developing towards adulthood. The "environment" of adolescence is composed of physical aspects of places, and of social interactions and interchanges manifested in those places. The "environment" of adolescence is likely to be different from that of either childhood or adulthood to the extent that teens perceive and act in it differently (for the actions of teens constitute part of the environment), and to the extent that specific aspects of teens' development results in teens and others defining teens' roles in the setting differently from that of other age groups. One aspect of this study is to examine this idea empirically.

When we think of adolescent development, we tend to think of personal and social development. Though important, this emphasis overlooks an important dimension: personal-environmental development (cf. Altman & Rogoff, 1987; Saegert & Winkel, 1990). Developing relationships with (and within) environments during adolescence may be one of the important tasks - or developmental "bridges" - between childhood and adulthood (cf. Hoyt, 1991; Korpela, 1989, 1992).

Research Purpose

Because our knowledge based on the questions raised above is limited, I have decided to emphasize the inductive generation of concepts and speculation on dynamics in teens' relationships with their surroundings rather than using a deductive, hypothesis testing approach to research. Because we may misconstrue the significance of particular features and qualities of the environment have for adolescents, I decided to ask teens directly about these matters (cf. Van Vliet--, 1981, on "pediocentric" research) and to use these semi-structured, open-ended interviews as the center of my analyses. In this study I have made a concerted effort to keep teens' accounts at the core of the process of generating themes and categories, in keeping with a "grounded" research approach (cf. Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Spradley, 1979; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990;). It is also important to keep their accounts at the core because, as Aitken (1998) has pointed out, youth are often seen as the "other" in planning and research by adults; so it is important to have them represent their own point of view.

In this study, I examine the personal significance of place-based experiences for early adolescents (ages 11-15) living in a particular setting in New York City. I chose the setting of

the study (to be described in more detail later) because even though teens lived in roughly the "same" place there was a great range of variety in their surroundings, and I believed that this range would yield many different categories of analysis through the study. I also believed that a study conducted in this place would yield useful policy implications for this place, and for other, similar places, because it shares many features with other urban settings.

The primary purpose of my study, therefore, is to develop grounded concepts, and a preliminary framework, which will be helpful in understanding and articulating adolescents' transactions with their environments. Furthermore, in this study I will attempt to draw on theoretical concepts regarding adolescent development to interpret, and speculate on, the potential developmental significance of those transactions. My more general purpose is to foster in the discussion of adolescence a transactional, environmental perspective.

In conducting my analyses I will focus on questions such as these: What is it that 'kids' living here are trying to do in and through their environments? What are their goals and experiences with respect to their surroundings? What purposes do places serve, to what purposes do teens try to put places,

and what purposes for teens go unserved by these places? How is it for kids to live in this housing, neighborhood, and city? Are all of these kids trying to do the same things in and through environments, or are there identifiable differences among teens in the way they relate to their surroundings? Can teens be "described" by the environments through which they move, and by their personal styles of transacting with, valuing, and perceiving environments? How and why do environments matter to teens - and what possible impact could all of this have for them developmentally?

CHAPTER TWO

METHODS

Participants and Location of Research

A total of thirty (30) early adolescents, ages 11 through 15, were interviewed for this study between November 1987 and the end of June 1988. Fourteen (14) of the participants were female and sixteen (16) were male. If racial/ethnic categories such as those used by the U.S. Census Bureau were employed to describe these teens, almost all of them would be categorized as either Black or Hispanic, and two or three might have been described as of American Indian or Asian/Pacific Islander descent. One teen would have been described as White. However, the responses to the open-ended question on this topic were more varied than the categories used by the Census Bureau, and several teens said they had more than one racial/ethnic identity. In addition, some teens identified with very specific ethnicities rather than with general categories (e.g., "part Tiano Indian"), or with very broad groups ("I'm an American"), or gave descriptions in terms of geographic locations from which their extended families originated (e.g., "my family's from the south" or "St. Thomas"). The teens interviewed were very diverse in

terms of race and ethnicity when seen from their point of view.

Twenty (20) of the participants resided in a low-incoming housing site, and ten (10) resided in a middle-income site nearby. Both housing sites were owned and managed by the same non-profit housing corporation, based in New York City. The number of girls and boys interviewed in each site was evenly split (10 girls, 10 boys in the low-income site; 4 girls, 6 boys in the middle-income site). The number of teens interviewed in the middle-income housing site reflects the fact that there were many fewer teens living in the middle-income than in the low-income site.

The low-income housing complex had two buildings - one fourteen stories, and one 33 stories - and was situated on the corner of an avenue and side street. Across the side street, situated along the avenue going north, was the middle-income complex, which had nine (9) buildings ranging from 23 to 32 stories. Just to the north of the middle-income site, three blocks from the low-income complex, was a Boys and Girls' Club facility (as we shall see in the results section, this site was important for many teens). Just north of the low-income complex, across the side street, and adjacent to the middle-

income complex on the east side, was a New York City park with some shrubs and trees, walkways and benches, a limited area with play equipment, and a basketball court. Behind the low-income buildings, as part of the property, was an open outdoor space which also had limited play equipment, some seating, a basketball court area, and an expanse of concrete with planters (referred to by the teens as 'the back'). At the base of the residential buildings, on street level along the avenue, were a few stores and commercial establishments (see Figure 1).

The apartment complexes were situated in the lower midtown Manhattan area, on the eastern side, near the Murray Hill and Kipps Bay neighborhoods, north of the Lower East side, and within walking distance of the East River along Second Avenue. Major hospital complexes were on the next avenue to the east. In general, the area was one of very diverse, mixed residential and commercial use, with many high-rise buildings, but also older, lower structures. A variety of commercial areas, public parks, schools, residential complexes and neighborhoods, and links to mass transit were within walking distance of the site. The surrounding area had a mix of low-, middle-, and upper-income residences. It was also typical of the area's commercial characteristics to have a great deal of

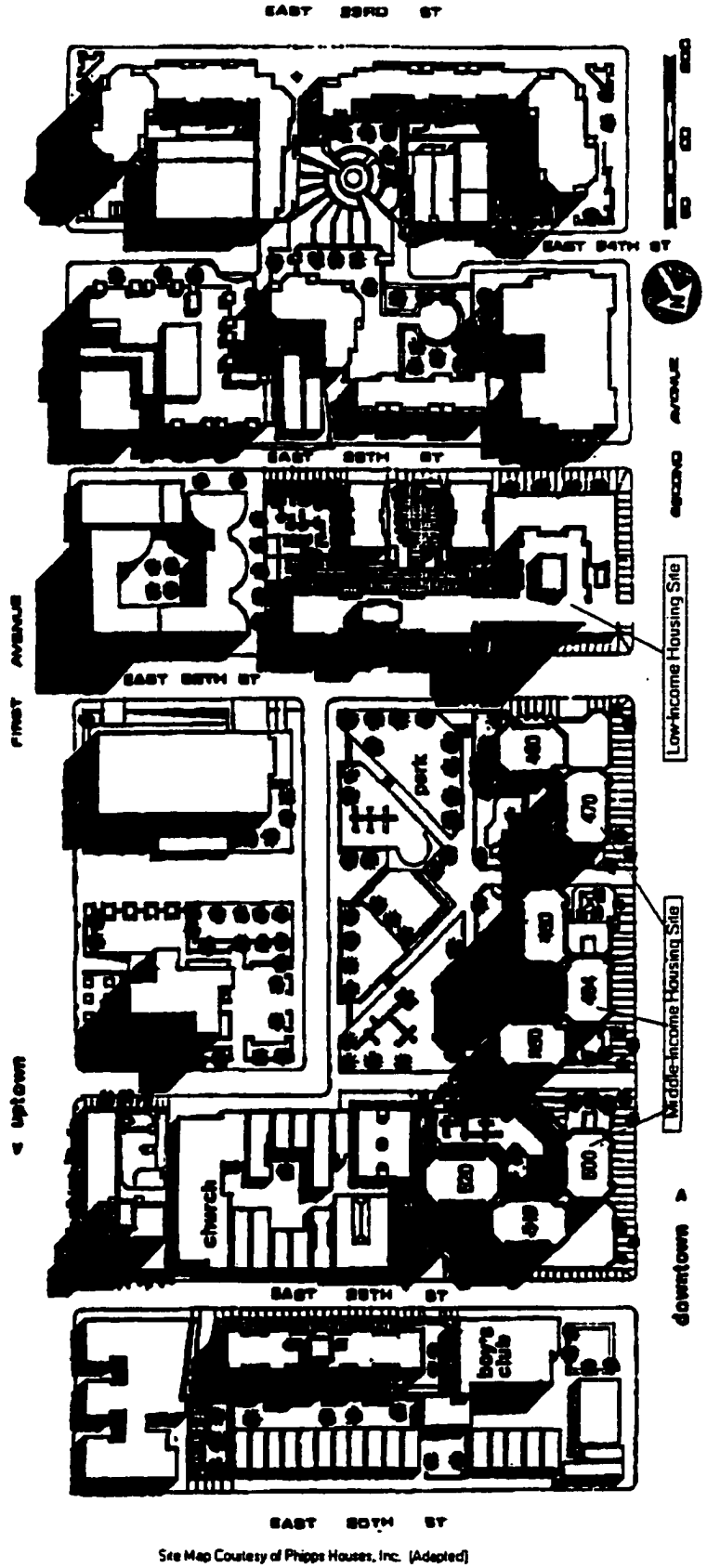


Figure 1: Site Plan Showing Housing and Surrounding Area Involved in the Study

Site Map Courtesy of Phipps Houses, Inc. (Adapted)

foot traffic, and road traffic, from people who did not live in the area and who were passing through. In this sense, coupled with the high rise apartment structures the teens lived in, at the street level there was not a strong sense of residential neighborhood even though apartments were clearly visible.

Procedures and Analyses

It took several months for me to gain access to the site. At the time I was to begin fieldwork for this study, the community centers within both housing locations were not staffed, because the community development department of the non-profit housing corporation was in a transitional phase. However, with the assistance of Lynda Simmons, then President of the housing corporation, and Prof. Susan Saegert, my dissertation chairperson, arrangements were finally made with the community development department for housing staff members to unlock the community center on the ground floor of the low-income housing site so that I could use it as a place for conducting interviews, and as a base for recruiting participants for the study. After the study was underway, the community centers in both locations were staffed and programs for teens, younger children, and other residents began to be

offered and we were able to make arrangements with community center staff members for access in both locations.

The teens involved in the study were recruited after school hours on weekdays in various public and semi-public areas around the housing complex (such as outside the community center and inside the lobby areas). At first this proved to be quite difficult. I had to become a "familiar face" around the community center before being trusted by the kids. Some of the early participants said that others wanted to hear about the study before becoming involved. For reasons that will become clear in the results section, it was very reasonable for teens to 'check me out.' I heard from some of the teens involved in the early interviews, for example, that rumors had been circulating among residents that I might be an undercover police officer. This suspicion was also reasonable, as undercover police did sometimes make arrests in the park across the street and occasionally in the building. As an unfamiliar, casually dressed, six foot tall, white Scotch-Irish/American male with a beard in his thirties, who was loitering around the neighborhood, I certainly could have been mistaken for a police officer. With the help of the teens I came to know, these rumors were reversed. Although I was somewhat familiar with the area through earlier studies in

which I was involved (Conn, 1986; Conn & Saegert, 1985), I did spend quite a bit of time visiting sites in the neighborhood, informally observing what was happening, and becoming familiar with people who lived and worked in the area. In particular, I visited and toured sites like the local Boys & Girls Club, parks, and commercial areas to better understand what the teens were telling me.

Shortly after fieldwork began, I was joined by an undergraduate student who helped as a research assistant (Carol Oliver, now of the CUNY Environmental Psychology program). Carol's presence was helpful, because as a young adult, bilingual, Latina she could help connect with some of the teens and parents in a way that I could not (e.g., explaining the study to parents who understood only Spanish well). Although no one said it explicitly, I believe her presence as a female also eased the minds of some teens and parents who may have had concerns about me, as a male, interviewing kids alone (although I had done so before Carol joined me). I also found it very helpful to work with Carol, as we would discuss the interviews and issues in the neighborhood between sessions. Carol had been raised and lived in New York City (Brooklyn), and though I had been born in New York City (Queens), and had visited relatives often in

the New York City area over the years, my own residential experience since age 5 was mostly within suburban areas of the New York metropolitan area (Suffolk County on Long Island, Port Chester in Westchester County during the fieldwork phase of the study, with a brief stint in a rural area of Virginia before that; now in Brewster in Putnam County). Carol's insights as a Latina female who had grown up in the city were very helpful to me in our discussions, and in relating to teens.

Carol and I solicited participation for the study by approaching kids who appeared to be of the age we were trying to interview, and engaging them in conversation with the help of a flyer that gave a brief description of the study. After time went by and Carol and I became familiar to many of the people who lived there, we asked people if they knew of teens who would be interested in participating, and we asked teens we knew, or teens who had participated in this study, if they knew of others who might be interested in being involved. This process of discussion did seem to be helpful in getting ourselves "known" in the community, as we did hear that people were talking about who we were and what we were doing there. Almost all of the teens we interviewed, however, became involved through our approaching them directly, and not

through referrals by their friends and acquaintances. Nonetheless, later participants in the study mentioned that they had "heard" of the study.

We obtained written, informed consent from a parent or guardian of each teen before beginning the first interview. Consent forms were available in both English and Spanish, and they were reviewed and approved prior to the study by the Human Subjects Committee at the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York. Obtaining written consent complicated the recruiting process considerably, and hampered our efforts to interview teens in this setting, but it was necessary to inform the parents/guardians before involving teens.

Each teen was interviewed in a quiet section of the community center within their housing complex, usually in a separate room, or in the larger part of the center if no other activities were occurring. Twenty-eight (28) of the thirty (30) kids were interviewed twice (scheduling difficulties prevented the other two from returning despite repeated efforts). The interviews were conducted at a table that was large enough to display a street map of the area with a clear acetate overlay on which teens could draw, using fine-tipped,

colored, permanent markers. The street map was used as a prompt in certain questions, and aided both teens and myself during the interview as a prop to 'locate' places we were discussing. All of the interviews were recorded using a Sony Professional Stereo Walkman tape recorder; transcripts were made of the interviews for analysis. (Damage to the microphone part way through the study prevented two of the interviews from being transcribed, although I could listen to parts of these interviews, and I had field notes from these two, as general background. The reported results that follow are based on the twenty eight interviews that could be transcribed.)

We usually began the interview meeting with some small talk and then with an overview of the purpose of the study and of the kinds of questions we would ask. Each teen had returned the written consent form from her/his parent/guardian before we began. After introductions and the overview, we explicitly obtained verbal consent from each teen regarding her/his participation in the interview and tape recording of each session. We made it very clear that at any time we would stop the interview, or turn off the tape recorder, if she or he felt uncomfortable, wanted to ask questions about the study, or wanted to discontinue the interview and leave. We

encouraged teens to ask any questions they had, as well, and many did. We also made it clear that we would give her/him five dollars at the end of each interview session, as a token of our appreciation, whether or not he/she wanted to continue (two boys, not included among the thirty interviews, did discontinue the interview early, saying it was "boring").

The questions asked during the first interview, and the set of standard questions developed for the second interview, are shown in Appendix A. These questions were developed from our previous work in this neighborhood and from a reading of the adolescent-environment literature. The kinds of questions asked, and the process of interviewing used was very much influenced by a reading of ethnographic interviewing techniques (esp. see Spradley, 1979), and by writings on grounded-theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In addition to the questions in Appendix A, many probes and other questions were asked as the interviews progressed, as interesting issues surfaced, and as clarifications and elaborations were necessary (cf. Spradley, 1979). After the first interview for each teen, I reviewed the interview tape to develop questions for the second interview session. It became clear after the first two or three interviews that the standard set of questions for the

second interview shown in Appendix A should be asked, as they were important issues not included in the original set of questions. In addition, questions specific to each teen, depending upon what they had said during the first interview, were developed for the second session. As I reviewed these tapes, I also began keeping notes and memos of possible categorizations and analytic themes.

When the interviews for all teens were complete, the interviews were transcribed. I began by reading through all the transcripts to re-familiarize myself with the specifics of each interview, and noted some possible analytic categories and themes. Then I went back and began a line-by-line, word-by-word analysis of possible categories contained in the first two interviews I analyzed. This process is similar to the one suggested in Strauss and Corbin (1990). From these preliminary analyses, I generated lists of possible categories and their dimensions, and notes on their possible relationships to other categories and themes. As analyses progressed, I winnowed and shortened these lists against other teens' interviews; for each teen I had a set of notes with categories and their possible connections noted; these were also linked to the location of information within transcripts. By the analysis of the tenth set of interviews or so, the

categories had become consistent and I was not finding much in the way of new categories, although the dimensions and aspects of existing categories and their connections were filling out. The categories had to hold across accounts and "fit" with what teens were saying. Later in the analyses, I went back and applied the more consistent set of categories to the interviews coded and analyzed earlier.

After outlining major issues for the results section, I used 4 x 6 inch index cards to note for each teen information germane to specific categorizations, so that they could be sorted and cross-compared (this was a mechanical prop for my own mental process, and provided me with a way to check my notions and to record locations of possible quotes in the interviews). Reviewing the notes, and re-reading transcripts also provided me with another opportunity to check that my conclusions were grounded in teens' accounts.

Although some categories were linked closely with specific interview questions, many cut across questions; I picked up information related to a category or theme wherever it surfaced in the interview. Thus, this process was not one of a straight-forward, question-by-question content analysis (cf. Krippendorf, 1980), and would not lend itself easily to an

inter-coder reliability check. The check on the results of this coding and analysis would lie, first, in the plausibility of the results to knowledgeable readers, and, secondly, in whether similar results would be found in similar studies conducted by others. Ultimately, the check of all categories and analytic themes within this study was against the text of the interview transcripts, although my memories of experiences during the fieldwork, of the specific places and teens involved, and of my own personal experiences certainly had a role in my understanding and interpretation of the information.

The order in which I have presented the information in the results section below was meant to first provide a general understanding of the context of teens' experiences, and then to move into more specific analyses and interpretation of their personal modes of perceiving, and engaging with, their environment. In selecting quotes, I made an effort to choose those which best represented the point being made, as well as providing 'good' illustrations. It is always tempting to present those quotes which are most interesting in themselves, which are striking, moving, entertaining, shocking, or colorful; and though I have certainly done so occasionally, I also checked to make sure that each quote selected did in fact

relate to a more general point, rooted in an analysis across teens' accounts. The quotes are presented verbatim, with my elaborations for clarification within brackets [like this] and with annotations to the location of the quotes within the transcripts. Ellipses were used when I eliminated certain passages because they were redundant, or to indicate a skip to another section of the interview where the same issue was addressed. Not all quotes, therefore, were spoken continuously as they read; there may have been breaks in between. This was necessary because the interviews were semi-structured, many probes were used, and the interchange at times did move across several different topics.

Prelude to the Findings

In the sections that follow, I describe, analyze, and interpret (cf. Wolcott, 1994) some key aspects of teens' transactions with their surroundings, and of teens' perceptions of their environments. Any one aspect becomes part of a larger whole for these teens. After turning attention to each of the specific issues, I will discuss how they related to each other.

There are some general issues which cut across the experiences of most teens in the area studied. In one sense, these teens

all live in the "same" place because the physical environment around them is in common. However, teens actions in, and perceptions of, this larger "objective" environment differ considerably. In effect, the different actions and perceptions of teens, and the forces shaping those actions and perceptions, result in a diversity of environmental experiences within what, at first glance, might seem to be the "same" place. By examining these actions and perceptions, and by analyzing some of the forces which shape them, I was able to distinguish between different types of "place patterns" or modes of relating to the environment among these kids. Furthermore, specific place-based issues and processes were identified which have potential developmental significance for these teens and which relate to the different kinds of "place patterns."

What is most challenging in interpreting teens' transactions with environments is that multiple levels of purposes, processes, and structures can be operating simultaneously. In addition, interpreting the time-frame for the effect of the transaction (i.e., its present and future impact) can be difficult. And the interpretation of any transaction also depends upon the extent to which teens can perceive and describe it.

CHAPTER THREE

FINDINGS: THE SENSE OF NEIGHBORHOOD

> [I have] a very strong feeling about it [there being a "neighborhood" here] because a neighborhood is everything around you, that's how I feel. You know, friends, people, buildings, parks, and problems. You see, I get problems every day. I have many friends. There are buildings - many people. And, I think this is a great neighborhood. It has a community center which many kids could come to, and it has a Club not far from here that if kids can't come to the community center they could go to the Club. It has a park [where] kids could play. It has a back yard [where] kids could play - also where teenagers could hang out or play also. And, they have many schools around here. That's a very important part of your neighborhood. And you have stores - you could go to supermarkets. Even arcades where teenagers - or even adults - could hand around too. That's what I believe [is] a neighborhood. [Frank, age 14, FV 33-34]

The Meaning of the Neighborhood

Teens' sense of whether they live in a neighborhood seems most to relate to their need to belong socially, to feel that they are around friends and familiar people, and to see familiar surroundings. For those teens that feel they do live in a "neighborhood," it defines a socially supportive, familiar context from which they can operate (22 of 28 coded; in this section, questions about the definition and sense of neighborhood are combined in their presentation because of the overlap in teens' responses, see Appendix A). The neighborhood becomes a vital ground or field for associating

and interacting with age-peers; the neighborhood facilitates the extension of teens' activities from the home to the larger physical and social world, and in so doing becomes a very important transitional space. The most important dimension of this context is the presence and easy availability of friends living nearby, but seeing other familiar people is comforting to teens as well. Physical landmarks and cues are important in describing the area considered the neighborhood, as is the proximity of facilities, but they are not usually the exclusive focus. When teens describe their neighborhood, the social context and place are linked to each other. For example, Ronnie (age 15), felt he lived in a neighborhood because of:

> "A lot of nice people [people in general and teenagers] and a lot of nice friends. There's some stuff to do, like they're there all of the time. You have games in the back, and stuff. [In describing his neighborhood, Ronnie then went on to mention specific features of facilities interlaced with mentions of having friends around.] [RK 1-32/33]

The way that Ronnie could tell he was coming into, or going from, his neighborhood was related to seeing familiar people and places, to the proximity of places in his usual home range, and to a "feeling" that he got:

> I guess when you see people that you know from the block. You see a lot of them and like a lot of good stores. So you can, like, just feel it. You're back in your neighborhood when you go back, or back to your friend's house or something. When you leave it you can

> tell it because you just feel like you're in the neighborhood [before you leave]. Just like a feeling...Because, you know, mostly everything that's around here and everything...Like you can just jog back to, you know, the club, or something. You know, you're, like, back home...Like when you see familiar buildings. When you're coming back and you see your school and you see a store that you go to a lot, or you see, like, people that work in your building and you know that you're back home and not in a different area where you see different things...You feel relieved that you're not that far away..." [RK, 1-34/35, 2-13]

An exception to teens' sense of neighborhood being focused in the social context, grounded in place, seems to be when a teen was particularly sheltered, or a loner, and instead feels there was a "neighborhood" primarily due to the proximity of facilities, stores, buildings, and so on [the characterization of these teens as 'sheltered' is derived from information about their daily patterns of place experiences, as explained in a later section]. One boy, Louis (age 11), briefly mentioned "people" (not friends) in his answer as to why he felt there was a "neighborhood," but most of his description involved physical aspects of his surroundings and the proximity of different facilities:

> "Well, there's a lot of people, a lot of buildings, there's a lot of hospitals, a lot of dressing stores, a lot of delis. And, like, the hospital's right there, the deli's right there, the Boy's Club is two blocks away from here, and the community center is right here, where we are now, and, um...the park is near. Almost everything is near - but I never go to that park - sometimes I come to this one [an area in back of the apartment building].

Returning to his neighborhood from a car trip to visit relatives, Louis knows he's back because of physical aspects of the area that he can see:

> "...when we take the highway it [the road sign] will say 'New York/Manhattan,' then when I get around the streets [near his building] I'll notice all kinds of stores and streets and houses and buildings. That's how. 'Cause it's not such a hard thing to tell where you live, like when you're visiting somebody - coming back it's not so hard to tell.

Another boy, Terrence (age 12) mentioned his home, apartment building, and other places he usually goes to, such as his school, as defining his neighborhood (although he almost always travelled in the company of his brother). Similarly, one girl, Brenda (age 13), said she had a "strong" feeling of there being a neighborhood because of:

> "The many things that we have around here. Like the pharmacy - we have everything so close. Everything, you know, we just come downstairs and the grocery is there, right there. The church is across the street...My school is very close. There's restaurants right there. Everything is so close...I think it's a good neighborhood. It has everything you need. The buildings are so close. We have a hospital right across over there...[BA 1-21/22]

Even though Brenda focused on the proximity of facilities in explaining why she thought there was a neighborhood, when asked how she could tell if she was coming into or leaving the neighborhood, her description focused on people:

> "The people, because I see, like, when I come from school [to home after school], I see everybody's face.

> People that I know. The stores around here - I guess mostly the people. I see the same faces." [BA 1-23]

Unlike so many other teens' descriptions, though, Brenda's mention of "the people" seemed very general, and did not relate to specific friends or others she would mention by name.

The sense of "neighborhood" is always anchored in the location of the teens' residence, but the size and shape of the area considered the "neighborhood" varies dramatically. The area that each teen calls her or his "neighborhood" is usually reflective of the range of his or her daily activities, and the places in which those activities are concentrated, as well as the location of friends' residences. For some, this area can be as small as the building in which they live, and the adjoining enclosed space beside it; that and friends who live in the building can make it feel like a neighborhood:

> "The building…the park [attached to the building]…the kids [who live in the building] [Irving, age 13, IW 1-30]

For others, the description of the "neighborhood" was much more elastic, extending nearly thirty blocks North-to-South, and several avenues East-to-West:

> "I know a lot of friends around here. I know friends that live around 12th street. Some of them that live on 42nd street, that go to my school…So, you know, like, all my friends are around. So, I consider this my

> neighborhood. All my neighbors are around"...[He describes the boundaries of his neighborhood as at 14th and 42nd streets, and at 1st and 8th Avenues, and he mentions numerous friends, and some relatives living in various locations within these boundaries.]
>
> "I feel like I'm passing into my neighborhood when I see stores that I recognize, people who I know walking around. Like around [here] is where my neighborhood is, like past around 5th street, Houston Street, down there, I don't like it down there. 'Cause, like, that's like way out of my neighborhood." [Victor, age 11, VB 1-41/43]

The areas defined as the "neighborhood" by most teens were contiguous, but there were some exceptions. One boy, for example, defined a local area around his apartment building as his neighborhood, but then went on to include other locations that he considered to be part of his neighborhood because he, his sister, and other teens he knew went to schools in those locations:

> "Little parts [beyond the boundaries of his contiguous neighborhood] are part of the neighborhood, but they're not fully connected. Like 23rd street, or some of the schools, or even my school [a high school several avenues across town] - I think it is a little connected to my neighborhood..." [Frank, age 14, FV 37]

For many of the teens who felt they lived in a "neighborhood," one of the important purposes this perception seemed to serve was to give them an "inside feeling," a sense of "peacefulness," a positive "good feeling" that they were

somehow sheltered, embraced, or "at home" - a sense of comfort and ease.

> "[It feels like a neighborhood] Because of the amount of people I know. Like, I walk down the street, I say 'Hi, Hi,' I get whiplash...[When I return to the neighborhood]...it feels [like] 'Here I am.'" [Jennifer, age 15, 1-23, 1-25]
>
> "I feel relaxed..." [Paul, age 12, PD 1-30]
>
> "It feels great to be home." [Millie, age 11, 2-4]
>
> "...I see so many buildings around here and I know a lot of people, but when I'm coming into my neighborhood I can tell, I don't know, I just get this strange feeling, like, O.K., I'm around my block now, I can be free. Like, I'm far away from school. Like, I go to school - school's like in California compared to me. I'm far away from school and nothing can happen that's from school, and everything...I just, I like this neighborhood. It's cool. It's nice and quiet and everything... I could have fun around here, 'cause it could be fun. It's nice and quiet and fun. It's not really dull, it's fun. It's a nice little neighborhood... [Crystal, age 11, 1-24]

Very often, this feeling seemed to be related to themes of safety - of feeling safe in a larger world that was sometimes threatening. The feeling of safety was very strongly related to being around other, familiar people who somehow knew them and cared for them, especially friends who would "stick up" or "stand by" them if trouble should arise:

> "Well, I have a lot of friends since I moved here, you know, because I have another cousin in [the adjoining building] and he knows a lot of big guys and they tell me things that they say: 'If anyone ever bothers you just tell us.' Like that. And then, you know, it would be like a war or something like that [if anyone bothered

> him]... Like the people stick up for each other. You know, if there's a fight around here they're always on each other's side... Most of them [people around here] they stay together..." [Mike, age 14, MF 1-41, 1-50]

This sense of feeling protected, to some degree, within the neighborhood, tended to be related to an opposite feeling of not being as safe in places beyond the neighborhood boundaries (however they were defined):

> "...It's like a certain point that I'm leaving the neighborhood. And, like, I get scared like I'm unprotected - my friends are not around me..." [Frank, age 14, FV 36]

> "Nothing really happens around this neighborhood...not a lot, there's no fights...A lot of fights be happening like over there on 29th street [toward the edge of his neighborhood]." [Paul, age 12, PD 1-28]

> "It's not like a place with graffiti or other places...I feel safe here. That's what I like, because it's like a village and everything. There's not a real lot of danger here. Like where if you go someplace [downtown, on the Lower East Side] [there are] street gangs and stuff...It's dangerous if you were there with a bike or something they would take it or something like that..." [Terrence, age 12, TM 1-15]

Even though many teens did describe places and incidents within and immediately around their neighborhood that were troubling to them, there was a definite tendency for them to view places and areas outside their neighborhood as potentially more dangerous or threatening, a topic to which we will turn in another section.

Although the issues of threat and safety were salient for both boys and girls, boys were the only ones to explicitly mention the protection of teenage friends as contributing to the sense of neighborhood. In the later section on problems and threats perceived and encountered by teens in the environment, we will see clear differences related to gender.

Some teens did not feel that there was a sense of "neighborhood" around their residence (6 of 28). For most of these teens (5 of 6), themes of threats from violence, crime, drugs, 'bums,' 'drunks,' 'fights,' and 'junkies,' pervaded their descriptions of why their local area was not a neighborhood. These teens seemed particularly attuned to the possibility of harm coming to them, or to others they know, which in turn made for a sense of disconnection from feeling attached to the local area. What other teens saw as potential threats outside their local neighborhood, these teens saw as present at their doorstep, as if the dangers of the city that other teens identified were drawn in closer. At first, I thought this feeling might be associated with teens who were withdrawn and kept to themselves inside their residences, but this turned out not to be true. Most of these teens were boys who actually moved about the outdoor areas as much as others - their perceptions, and perhaps direct experiences, of

dangerous circumstances in the local area were greater than for other teens:

> "...the hoodlums always come over here. A while ago there was a big fight down here. That was a couple of years ago. And, just people coming over here trying to vandalize everything, stinking everything up. Um..the drunks, and all of that [make it seem not like a neighborhood]..." [Carlo, age 14, CB 1-6]

> "I don't consider it a neighborhood because the park across the street is a lot of junkies and all of that, drug addicts. Because you know I've seen them dealing in the park and, you know, a lot of fights start over there and, you know, I don't hardly go to the park across the street because it's no good. It's all trashy, rats running all over the place. I don't consider that a neighborhood." [Raj, age 15, RN 1-39]

Issues of threat and safety were germane to most teens. As we shall discuss later, perceptions of threat and safety linked to places, and the mechanisms for dealing with these issues, were related to a number of factors and were directly relevant to teens' developing sense of self.

One girl was an exception: She felt there was no "neighborhood" near her middle-income building because there were not many teens living there for her to hang-out with; she did feel that there was a "neighborhood" around the nearby low-income housing because that was where the teens were "hanging around." Once again, the theme of neighborhood as a social context applied, even though not to her specific

residential building. Nonetheless, she valued the building in which she lived for other reasons related to its appearances and its status as a "nice" building, which was personally meaningful for her [VB].

As we have seen, for many of these teens the "neighborhood," however construed, was perceived as supportive. Some teens, however, felt that they lived in a location which was not a "neighborhood." The question of whether each teen feels she or he lives in a neighborhood is an important one that reveals a great deal about their orientation to their surroundings, and about the development of their personal relationships with places. Teens' points of view on the "neighborhood" are extensions of other issues, which we will now turn to address.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS: THE PATTERNING OF URBAN EARLY ADOLESCENTS' PLACE EXPERIENCES

In this section I will step back and attempt to grasp, as a larger whole, teens' modes of engaging with their environment. Earlier studies attempted to do this primarily on a descriptive level (Conn, 1986; Conn & Saegert, 1985). In this study, I have attempted to push the analysis and interpretation of these early adolescents' pattern of place experiences to include not only a descriptive level of their daily actions-in-environment, but to also include information on the meaning of places to them in characterizing that larger whole. In addition, though it will be difficult to do neatly, I will also make an effort to look at how teens' relationships with adults and age-peers - particularly with parents/guardians and with friends, but also others - are related to their actions and valuing of places. I will examine, as far as is possible, how teens' experiences with places beyond their daily routine provide them with an opportunity to reflect on, compare and contrast, and generate meaning about their day-to-day surroundings.

Each teen was asked a series of questions about the places, events, and people they encountered during a 'typical day' (see Appendix A; this is what Spradley, 1979, refers to as a 'grand tour' question), as well as follow-up questions about the place that is most important (and least important) and the place liked the best (and disliked most) of those described on a 'typical day.' Teens were also asked about the place they would miss most on a 'typical day' if it was 'gone' (hypothetically). Numerous probes, both planned and unplanned, were asked in this semi-structured section during both the first and second interview sessions.

As school was in session when these interviews were conducted, all but one of the teens described a school weekday as their 'typical day' (one spoke about a recent weekend day, and then also described his weekday routine). To say that these descriptions were varied would be a serious understatement. The fact that these teens attended thirteen (13) different elementary, intermediate, junior high, and high schools in very different locations was a major factor alone in their accounts (2 attended high school out of Manhattan; most attended public schools but 2 attended different parochial schools in Manhattan). Sixteen of the teens, however, did attend the nearest junior high and elementary schools within

walking distance of their home. Even among the teens who went to school close to home, there was still a great deal of variety in where they went, what they did, and with whom, at other times.

I began the analysis by looking at what teens said about places that were important to them and which were liked best (as well as unimportant and disliked). I also included the question about which place would be 'missed most if gone' in this part of the analysis. I characterized which places were apparently most and least valued in this way, and then examined the descriptions of the 'typical day' for their 'fit' with these characterizations. In this way, I was able to join teens' accounts of which places they valued with a descriptive profile of their pattern of action-in-environments. On a more speculative level, I then examined each teens' accounts for social relationships and experiences of other places which seemed to be connected with their daily place experiences and with their outlook on places.

Typical Patterns of Place Experience

There were three basic types of place patterns, consistent with what we have found in prior work (Conn, 1986; Conn & Saegert, 1985), but with some subtle differences within each

of the types. Teens' valuing of place and pattern of place experience can be characterized as being focused on (1) home and/or school (with activities after school very much focused inside the home; 6 girls, 2 boys), (2) connected with home but also extending into other places, usually nearby, outside the home (4 girls, 7 boys), or (3) concentrated on places outside the home, usually more extensively in both time and geography than other teens' (3 girls, 6 boys). I will go into each of these in more detail in the case illustrations below, but it should be noted that there were differences within the second and third kinds of 'patterns': Some of the teens who were connected with home but also extended to other places still reported being involved with their parents/guardians in a way that affected their place experiences, while others did not. For those whose focus seemed to be almost entirely outside the home, a few engaged with very specific, valued places for specific purposes, while others did not seem to value any place in particular. And these teens seemed to be relatively uninvolved with their parents/guardians compared to other teens. Later on, we will discuss these subtle differences and their ramifications and also look at when how they were characterized differently for girls and boys.

Among those teens whose patterning of place experience seemed rooted in home, all were more heavily involved with parents/guardians than other teens, although the extent to which this occurred, and the ways in which it occurred differed among individual teens and also by gender and slightly by age.

Girls' Patterns

There were some clear differences in the ways that girls versus boys viewed, and valued, 'home' (i.e., their apartments). Six girls said that 'home' was the place that was either 'most important' to them or would be 'missed the most if gone.' Only one boy mentioned that 'home' was most important to him, and that it would also be 'missed most,' because he had fun with his brothers and relatives there and "...that's where I live" [Jose, 13, JS 1-5]. Another boy clearly had a pattern of daily activity that was very rooted in home and interaction with family, but he did not select 'home' as his most important place.

Several of the girls whose patterns of place experiences were very home-focused spoke of home's importance in terms of issues that seemed to be related to self-identity, personal relationships, and feelings of comfort, and being 'at home':

"[Home is most important] Because that's where I go right after school. And I hate it when I'm locked out because, like, I want to go home. My house, I like to be home. I'm a homebody. I really don't go out. It's nice there. It's cheerful, there's food, there's beds. It's a place where you could get comfortable. [Home is also 'liked the best'] [Jessica, age 12/13, JH 1-26].

"[My apartment would be missed the most] I mean because, like, I would just miss being there, because like my grandmother just moved and I was attached to that house. So it's the same thing for the apartment. It's sort of like a part of me. So that's what I would miss the most...Because I've been there so long, that's the only place I know how to live. [And 'home' is] most important because, I mean, that's where I'm most used to and, I mean, I can like have more time to myself. I can do more things because I'm not that busy going all over the place with my friends. And that's it." [Denise, age 12, DN 1-22, 1-26/27]

"My home [would be missed most because of] comfortableness; knowing I have a home to come [to]." [Brenda, age 13, BA 1-18]

"I'd miss home [the most]. Because it's my favorite place to be. I like to be home." [Nadine, age 11, ND 1-2]

Home, however, was not the only place valued by girls. Several of these girls also valued or liked school, for social as well as educational reasons (although some also said school was 'least important' or 'disliked' due to the hard work, 'mean teachers,' and being 'bothered' by other kids). The other kinds of places that were valued by a few were programmed indoor places nearby (e.g, the Boys' & Girls' Club), a far-off summer camp, and an educational center elsewhere in the city. All of these were places that were

monitored by adults, had structured activities with other kids, and which often required the their parents' assistance for transportation or making it possible to be in the place.

Public, outdoor, open places were not mentioned as positive places by these girls; in fact they were often mentioned as 'least important' or 'disliked' for kinds of reasons mentioned earlier in the section on threats and problems:

> "[I dislike] Usually around here. I get scared walking around here...over there [on the nearby avenue] when I'm walking home from school...you know, the people who take drugs or the bums [scare her]...[on the T.V. news she hears] Like, I don't know, the people of today. There's so much killings." [Brenda, age 13, BA 1-16/17]

> "The least important [place is] the park...the one on 19th street [near her school]...I mean, it's, I don't go there that much anymore. I went there in the beginning of the year...I don't spend a lot of my time there [now] so I don't find it a vital part of my life...[the place disliked most] It would be the corner of 19th. There are these people lurking around that look sort of strange." [Denise, age 12, DN 1-23/25]

At best, public places were mentioned as being unimportant in a neutral way by the girls who seemed rooted in home, or they said they 'didn't know' of unimportant or disliked places:

> "[The least important place is] In front of the [apartment] building, I guess. I don't never stay there, I just wouldn't. A lot of people, they'll sit around but I don't go there. Or after school, I don't stay in front of the school. A lot of people stay there. I wouldn't stay there. It depends on the time." [Jessica, age 12/13, JH 1-28]

Nonetheless, several of these girls did seem to have an active interest in being social with kids their age, but they did so in managed, indoor places, often by the arrangement of their parents (particularly mothers). Their experience of places beyond the home was also highly influenced by their relationships with parents and family (particularly mothers), by activities done with their mothers and family members outside the home, and by engaging with friends and neighbors, with the supervision or at least permission of their parent. Their experience of place was intertwined with social relationships, closely defined and circumscribed geographically.

In general, any girl who mentioned home, or even the residential building as being important or liked, talked of it in terms of either self-identity, personal relationships, or feelings of comfort and liking, and to a lesser degree, of amenities it offered. For example, one girl, whose pattern of daily activity seemed more concentrated outside than the others said:

> "I like when I come home. Be home or be outside [nearby]…[I like it because] I'm not working [as at school]. I don't know, I just like it…All my friends are here, so I like to come home." [Jennifer, age 15, JO 1-14/15]

And others' comments were similar:

> "[The apartment building would be 'missed the most'] ...I don't know, like, if they broke it down, you know, some kids that I know a lot moved somewhere else. You know, and I have to start a new thing." [Maria, age 12, MV 2-9]

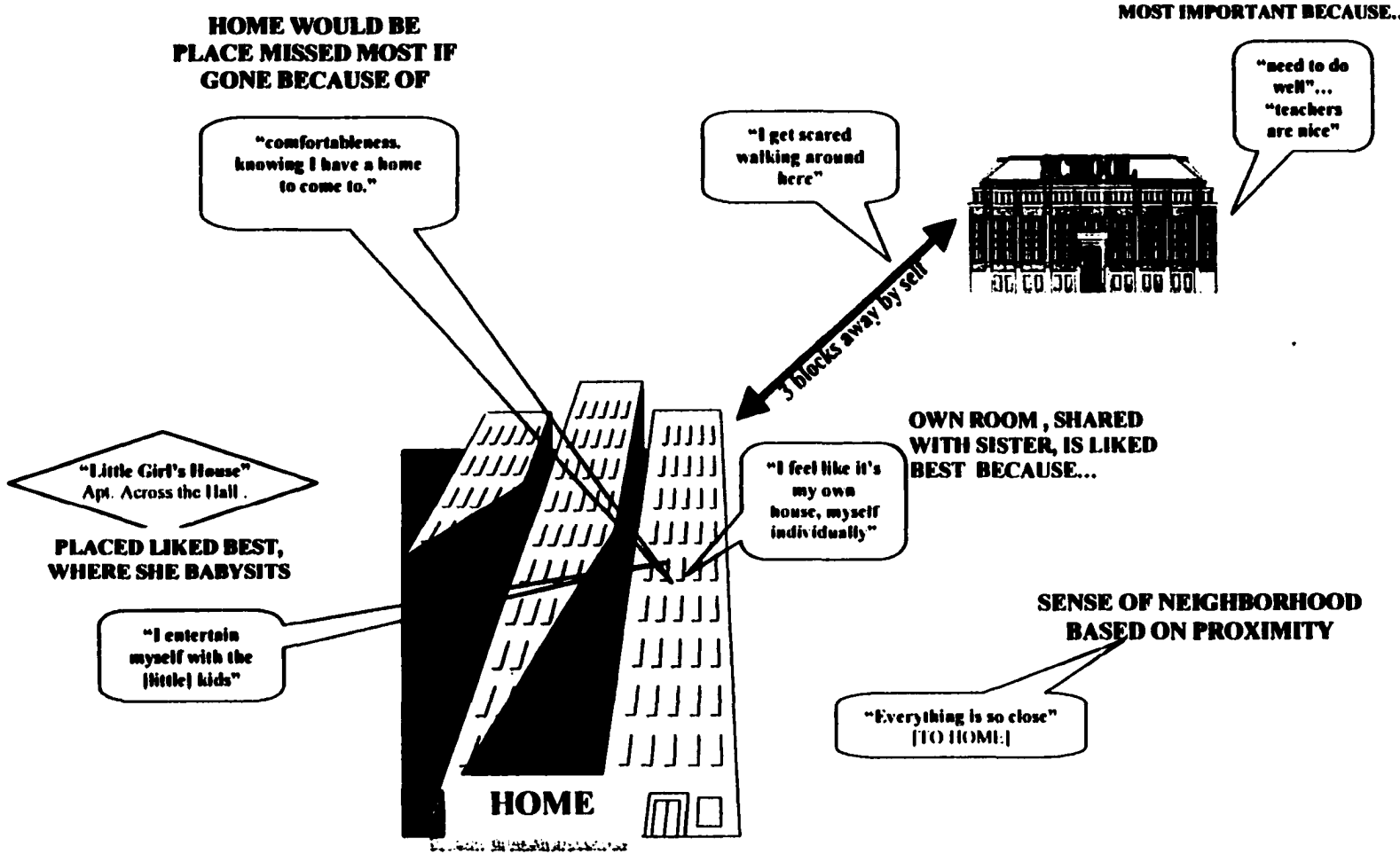
> "[Would miss the apartment building and enclosed outdoor spaces attached]...'cause, like, a lot of people [teens] hang over there - that's it." [Vernidez, age 14, VB 19]

(See Figure 2)

Boys' Patterns

As mentioned earlier, in general boys' pattern of daily activity in places seemed less focused at home. The boys who mentioned home as important, missed the most, or liked the best sometimes focused on their personal relationships with family as a factor, although they seemed more ambivalent than girls:

> "[Home is the most important place] When I'm with my [younger] brother, you know, you're with your family members. Because, you know, I mostly sometimes take out my brother [after school] or, you know, go out with my mother sometimes shopping. You know, help my mother out. You know, on a typical day I mostly go outside by myself. You know, if my mother says 'come with me' then I go, no questions asked...She's the one that gives me my freedom. I mostly stay at home sometimes...To me, I don't like staying in the house because it's boring and dull. You watch your mother cook and everything...I have to babysit [my brother], so then I wait until my mother comes and then I ask her if I could go [out]. I don't like staying in the house that much because I, like, I'm the type of person that likes to go out..." [Raj, age 15, RN 1-27, 2-2].



Brenda, Age 13 – INDOOR/HOME BASED: Typical Day Patterns & Meanings Attached to Places

FIGURE 2

Boys were much more likely than girls to explain liking their home, or feeling it was important, in terms of the basic, concrete functions it serves, duties carried out there, and of the 'shelter' it provides:

> "[Home is most important because] you know, that's where I have to go to eat...there I get my shelter, you know, like that. [And he also has 'fun' there.]" [Mike, age 14, MF 1-29/30]

> "Being at home in the house, in the apartment [is most important]...Because I get to clean up my room and all that stuff...[and because] my mother wants me early in the house. [but an outside place is liked the best]" [Dennis, age 11, 1-31/32]

> "My apartment [would be the place missed most if gone because]...well, I wouldn't be able to sleep there, or do my things there. I'd have to go find a new apartment and that takes a lot of time in New York. And, you know, I would really miss it even though I've moved from place to place a lot of times. But, you know, that's the place where you sleep, you take your shower at, um...you wake up in the morning, and...that's the place I would really miss." [Frank, age 14, FV 28]

Nevertheless, two boys mentioned home as the least important, or most disliked place, which none of the girls did. One boy said that home was "like a trap" because of chores he had to do there, and the other said it was least important of all on his typical day, though not disliked. Clearly, boys and girls perspectives on the meaning of home in their lives are quite

different. This difference also extends in many ways to places outside the home.

Boys' pattern of action in places reflects an orientation toward outside-of-home places, or at least toward being out of the home, with home serving as a base for these activities. This was true for all but two of the boys. In general, boys seemed interested in using places to pursue valued and 'fun' activities in the company of friends; girls seemed more interested in relating to friends and families, and places served as an occasion for this to happen but were not as instrumental in their specifics as they were for boys. This, of course, is a gross over-generalization; many girls were also interested in pursuing valued and 'fun' activities in the company of friends. And for several girls, and a few boys, home also provided a place to engage in activities that were valued or 'fun.' However, it did seem to be true that boys were more focused on specific activities which required specific 'props' provided by outside-of-home places than were girls. For example, it was very clear that many boys pursued and valued sports that required either indoor or outdoor facilities; only one girl mentioned having been involved in sports (i.e., gymnastics) in the past (she wasn't now because the meeting time had been changed to a later slot at the

facility), one wanted a pool in the local park, one mentioned playing 'basketball' (actually nerf ball) in her home, and another had just begun to swim at the Boys and Girls' Club pool (see Figure 3).

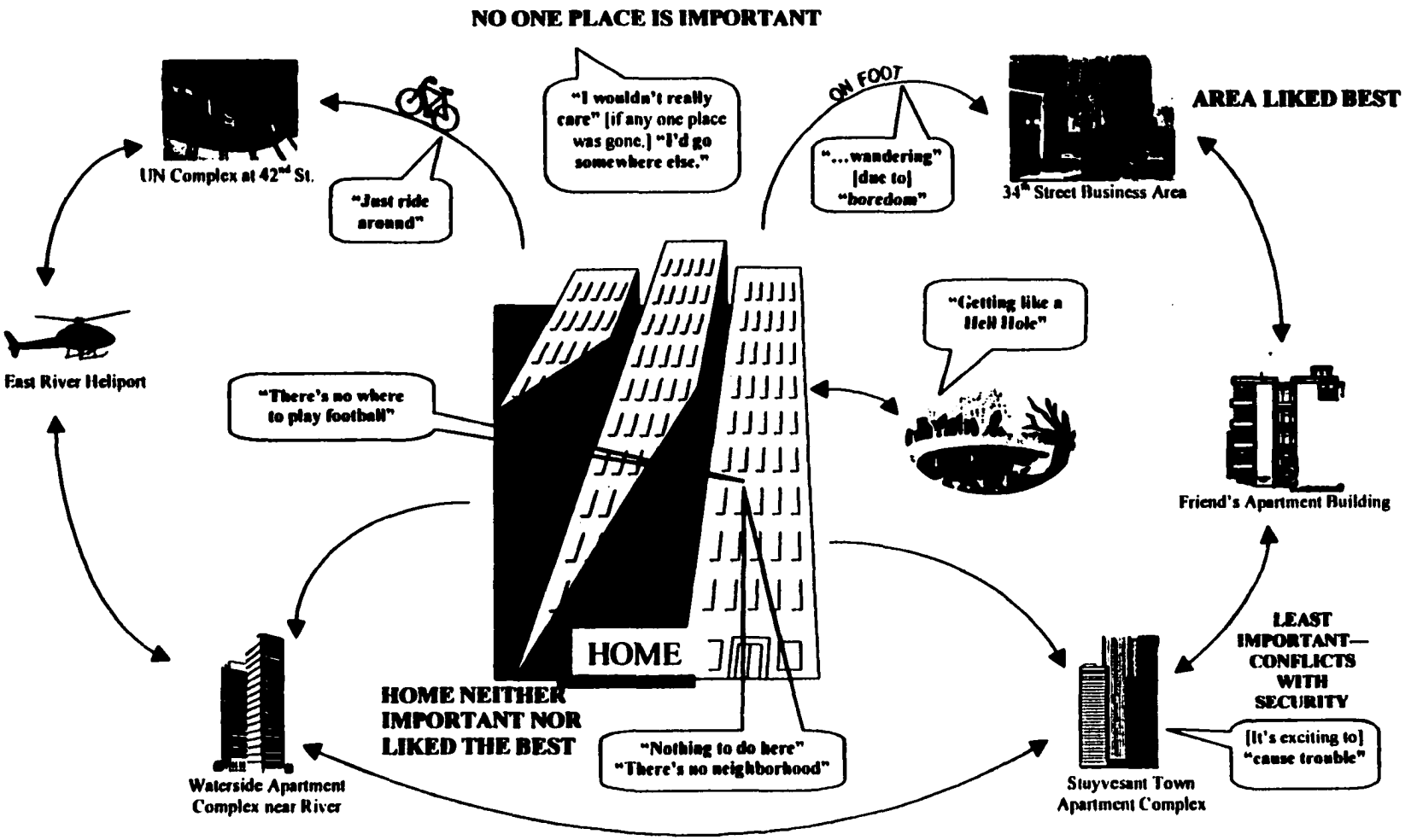
Girls and Boys: Differences in Emphasis

Among those teens whose patterns were connected with home but extended to other places outside the home, we see this difference between girls and boys in the emphasis given to socializing and relationships with others versus to specific activities connected with places, co-acting with friends or other people:

> "My school [is the most important place] because there's more friends [there], and I see everybody, 'cause a lot of people live in other places [than around her housing complex]...[An area near the next street corner, where there is a deli is liked best because] I just hang out there mostly [with other teens]. I can't go really far. I sometimes will go to school - in the yard - later or on weekends [to hang out]." [Vernidez, age 14, VB 16]

> "[The local Boys' and Girls' Club is the most important place]...Because outside, you know, the weather is changing and stuff like that. So, you know, inside I could play with others. There's a lot of kids there that I could play with, not like outside. And it's safe in there too." [Maria, age 12, MV 2-9]

> "[School is the most important place because you have to learn to 'be smart' for high school and it's liked the best because]...you get to play and do work...[it would be missed the most because of] My friends, I wouldn't get to see my friends any more." [Jessica B., age 11, JB 1-36/43]



Carlo, Age 14 – OUTDOOR BASED: Typical Day Patterns & Meanings Attached to Places

FIGURE 3

For boys, the emphasis was somewhat different:

> "[School is the most important place because] You learn...I'll be a better man, get a good job. Go to college. I am going to college, no doubt about that. [The 'Boys' Club is liked the best, and the place that would be missed the most if gone because] You know, I can play a lot...Well, all of my basketball, all of the Boys' Club, I mean, because, you know, I play [basketball] there a lot. I go there a lot. Know a lot of people there a lot...This is important stuff, but not important places, you know. It's [the Boys' Club] not an important place [in itself], but it's, like, important stuff in there. Like the ping pong game...Like, in the Boys' Club my [ping pong] meets and all of that stuff." [Paul, age 12, PD 1-21/22, 2-14/15]

> "[School is most important because I 'have to go' - compelled by rules, but the Boys' Club is liked the best, and would be missed the most if gone due to]...Downstairs in the game room. The soccer table and downstairs because I'm, I like to read a lot. And helping other people, it's kind of fun...It's lots of books everywhere [downstairs], it's kind of like a Boys' Club library...most of the time, sometimes I do [help other kids with their reading]." [Terrence, age 12, TM 1-11]

> "[Home is most important due to 'duties' and mother 'wanting him there, but]...I just like being outside [the best] in the 'yard' playing...the one by my school. And from there I go out for lunch. I go out to John Jay Park [near the school], I go to a lot of places...They have swings [in John Jay Park], they have this bar, like, you get on it and then you swing back and forth...I go with my friends, and we, like, play tag...[And the community center in the apartment building would be missed the most because of] the games and all of that stuff, and, it's just that we go on trips. And we make plans to make when it gets hot weather. Next week, she's [the community center staff member] going to take us to play games, I mean, like, baseball, bowling." [Dennis, age 11, DV 1-31/33, 1-38]

Three girls' activities were concentrated in places outside the home (usually outdoor places), with less apparent connection to home. For these girls, home was not mentioned as being most important, liked the best, or 'missed most' of the 'typical day' places. This was true for six boys as well (one of these boys did say 'home' would be 'missed the most,' but not in a way that suggested he was attached to his home). The difference was not just in numbers, however, but also in the ways in which they did (and did not) value and interact with their surroundings.

It seemed that places were almost viewed by these three girls as functionally equivalent as long as the girls could socialize with others, 'relax,' or 'play games' with their friends. For example, one girl who did spend time in places outside the home said no one place was really disliked, of the ones she goes to on a 'typical day,' and that she likes all of them 'pretty much.' She described 'playing games' (i.e., Chinese handball, tag, etc.) and 'sitting around' with her friends in a few different outdoor locations, but to her no one place would be 'missed the most if gone' because she felt she could still find a place to be with her friends and 'play games' [Donna, age 12, 13-16, 44]. The other two girls

emphasized socializing with others, or finding a place to relax, in describing which places were valued. One of these girls at first said that no one place was most important, but then she said she likes to be near her apartment building or in the area around it because that is where her friends are, and that is where she has opportunities to hang out and talk with them. The place she would 'miss the most' is an apartment complex [Waterside] with open spaces and overlooks on the East River, because:

> "The nice people [there], because that's, like, my place when I get angry and I take out my frustrations. You know, you get that place where you like to go. [She used to have a view of the river from her apartment window, but it was blocked by a new residential building, which she resented.] [Now I go there]...to relax. Just once in a while. I'm a happy person." [Jennifer, age 15, JO 1-18, 2-6/7]

And another girl described a 'special place' in a park in Brooklyn, near where she used to live:

> "At the park where I use to go, that was a special place between me and my friend...We go there, we be having fun and stuff like that, a little party on a bunch of rocks and stuff." [Nicole, age 15, NW 1-53]

For her, school was the 'most important' place because of needing to get 'a good education,' but it was also very clearly a place for socializing, seeing friends, and having 'fun.'

For these girls, places outside the home primarily are social and emotional places, and are only secondarily valued for specific activities.

Among boys whose patterns seemed focused on places outside the home, there were two different emphases. One was to value, and spend time in, specific places which afforded specific activities, usually sports. The second was to say that 'no one place' was most important, or would be missed the most if gone, and to roam to different places in a fairly large area looking for 'something to do' and 'fun' or 'excitement.' In both of these patterns, boys spent time going to places and interacting with friends, but socializing in itself did not seem to be their goal even though being with friends was important for 'fun' and for protection (as mentioned in an earlier section). Boys who valued specific places conveyed many details about what made these places important:

> "[The most important place, and the place missed the most if gone would be] The Boys' Club and 25th Street [city park]. 'Cause that's the only two places where you really have fun. You know, you really do somethin'. And the other places, like, the back of the building [open area behind apartment complex], it's not really exciting 'cause it's all messed up [basketball courts are in disrepair] over there. You know, it's like nobody really wants to play [ball] over there 'cause it's, like, crappy. Um, my house is boring - I mean, nobody likes to stay home. Um, 23rd street, all you do

is just look at records, um, look at equipment [stereos, etc.] and that's it. Fourteenth street is usually the same thing. Basketball, I don't know, it's a game - it's fun. Usually you play - you don't get tired of it. So that's the only two places where you really have fun." [Rueben, age 15, RT 22]

"[An indoor ice rink across town would be missed most because] I like ice skating and hockey. I have to practice all the time. That's what makes it so important. [The 'park,' the small open space attached to his apartment building, is most important because] You could play [roller] hockey in there...I like it when I go play hockey...[he likes hockey because] You ice skate all around, you can always see everything, they've got a puck, and they're always throwing it and shooting and stuff...[and] you can fight in there [hockey], and it's like I can't watch any other sport [they are boring]...But I can watch hockey all the time." [Tony, age 11, TL 1-33/34, 1-40]

"[The "Boys' Club" is liked the best, and would be missed the most because it is] The nearest and they have the best basketball court. That's the best one in the area...the basketball court, like, the game room, and the meetings we used to have. Because they were kind of fun. We used to have fun there...I like the people that work there. Because most of the people they got are good people." [Ronnie, age 15, RK 1-23, 1-27]

The two boys whose patterns were concentrated outside the home, and who said 'no one place' was most important to them, made very different kinds of comments from the others, showing a relative lack of attachment to any one place:

"I don't really have an important place to go...[we go] around 34th street [a shopping area] - that's about it. And we usually hang around by Waterside [a housing complex with overlooks on the East River near FDR Drive], near the heliport, there's a little park there...um, it's like, [you] go riding around [on bikes]. In the winter I used to go over there all the time, [to] ice skate and all that. 'Cause there's really

> nothing to do here...I wouldn't really care [if any place disappeared or was 'gone']. I'd go somewhere else." [Carlo, age 14, CB 1-4]
>
> "None of them [places during a 'typical day']. None of them are really important...Home [would be missed the most if gone]...Well, [because] we'd have no place to stay. We'd just be out in the street." [Victor, age 11, VB 1-31, 1-35]

These girls and boys were much less likely than the others to talk about interacting a great deal with their parent(s) or other adults in the household, although some did talk about doing things together in connection with household chores, or going to places around the city and out of town from time to time with their parent. They talked about their parent providing general rules about what they should or should not do outside (e.g., saying 'be careful,' or 'don't come home too late), but specific instructions or limitations seemed to be fewer than for many of the other teens.

In general, girls seemed to have fewer places they could go, or wanted to go, in the neighborhood and housing complexes as currently structured than did boys. Many forces worked to limit their range of activity, in a geographic sense, and in the sense of engaging with existing places. These included the regulation of girls' movement by parents; the sheer lack of places available that girls perceived as desirable; the

management and design of many outdoor places, and to some extent of indoor facilities, which tended to favor athletic activities and the occupation and domination of the athletic facilities by boys and adult males; perceived ambient threats in public and semi-public places; and their own interests and personal orientations. Social interests could be met near home with friends, while interests centered on activities (e.g., playing hockey at the 'Sky Rink' on the West Side; playing baseball on a regulation-size field; bicycle riding) often required that the teen go somewhere further from home, usually in the company of friends, to engage those interests in places that supported them (cf. Van Vliet--, 1983, on teens' travel behavior). Boys were more likely to do that than girls. When examined as a pattern, the experience of, in, with, and through places in this area was distinctly different along lines of gender.

The Extension of Place Experiences

> "[Travelling around the city with friends] feels good, because you're exploring...I saw things that I never knew New York had. I was, like, 'Wow, I didn't know you were here'...I thought it [Staten Island] was a lot of houses, but it was like Manhattan. Buildings, people going everywhere shopping...In Brooklyn, I thought it was all, you know, we had this picture of Brooklyn, it was all dark and gloomy and all of these drug dealers. And it ain't like that. There's a lot of stores, people walking all happy...I've been living here, like, half my

> life and I [had] never been to the Empire State Building. So when I went, I liked it. I was, like, 'oooh.' I was like a little kid looking in that museum and going up to the tower. And I never went there before...You feel like you're on top of the world in a cloud looking down..." [Jennifer, age 15, JO 2-25/27].

The formation of teens' outlooks on their environments can be influenced by places they experience beyond their daily routines, either elsewhere in New York City or beyond (cf. Maldonado-Lugo, 1996, on 'environmental extension'). The process of one's environmental experience being extended is almost always social for these early adolescents. The 'extension' of teens' environmental experience is often affected by places they go with their family and also with friends. Although some parents and other adults do have an influence on teens' range of action during 'typical' days, it is even more true that they influence the 'extension' of teens' environmental experiences. Parents, other extended family members, and other adults who organize outings and trips thus serve as 'social bridges' in teens' place experiences. Friends sometimes play the same role in accompanying teens to places within New York City that are new to them, and in suggesting new places to which they may go.

Almost all of the teens interviewed described at least an occassional extension beyond their typical place experiences.

With the exception of two boys who described trips they took alone within the city on their bicycles, these 'extensions' were always in the company of others. Boys seemed slightly more likely than girls to travel around the city with friends, but girls did this too. People acted as 'social bridges' to other places for these teens by providing tangible resources or by facilitating a connection that made it possible for teens to be in places (e.g., when a parent paid for dinner in a restaurant, or arranged for a stay at summer camp). Others also accompanied the teen for fun and companionship, provided a sense of protection from potential threats while moving in the larger world, and supplied a knowledge of places and of the means for getting to them was instrumental in making the experience possible.

Five teens, all girls among the younger ones interviewed, seemed to rarely, or never, experience any 'extension' of their typical place patterns. These girls were all among those whose daily place patterns were very much focused indoors, as described in the earlier section, and only two of them reported taking an occassional school trip or family visit out of the local area. None of these five girls talked about going places with other teens beyond the local neighborhood.

From most teens' accounts, we can see that 'environmental extension' can lead to several different consequences. It can support and extend current interests by connecting the teen with resources not available locally; it can open up new personal experiences which may have important developmental impacts; it may lead the teen to consider the comparison and contrast between their usual places experiences and others; and it may introduce a new point of view which may shape the teens' values involving places and associated social life. On a negative level, environmental extension may also lead to what some teens would call 'trouble,' either by exposing teens to an increased risk of violence or to 'bad influences.' At times, these different consequences can occur from the same experience. The process of environmental extension may therefore represent one of the notable transitions between the environmental experiences of childhood and adulthood (cf. Chawla, 1991, Hart, 1979; Hart & Conn, 1991; Saegert & Winkel, 1990; Wapner, 1981).

Formal and informal sports competitions, shopping trips with family and friends, 'sightseeing' and exploring around the city, and other similar activities supported and extended current interests of teens. For example, one boy (eleven

years old), who was participating in the swimming program at the local Boys and Girls' Club, described how the coach of the program would occassionally organize a meet against another facility's team. The group of kids and the coach from his 'club' would walk the twenty blocks together to the other facility to compete. The upcoming competition gave the 'team' a focus for their practice sessions and supported his active interest in athletics.

Some experiences can lead to subtle changes, which may result in developmental changes. For instance, one girl had a daily pattern of places that was concentrated on home and structured activities in indoor places such as music lessons in another apartment complex, Girl Scout meetings, and visits with friends within their apartments. Her experience of places on a typical day was highly regulated by her mother, and by her focus on school and structured activities. In fact, she said that she usually 'does everything with her mother' (a single parent; they live in the low-income complex). This girl related a story of how she had attended a sleep-away, summer music camp for the first time, and of how it presented her with an opportunity to experience a sense of 'freedom.' It was interesting that she had this experience in a place that was supervised, made possible by her mother's arrangement:

> "It's a music camp. We have our schedule that's already designed for us, so, but it's in a college [in another state nearby] but they use it as a camp during the summer. And, we like, it's, like, you have some days to yourself because when you fill out the form your parents have to tell whether you have privileges [related to age]...And, like, the setting, is like in a woody area and I like the place...[The first time I went] was this summer that past, so I'm going to go back there this year...You could stay there from one week to six weeks, so I stayed for two weeks...
>
> Well, I like, I had fun just going to camp and all—the sleep away camp in general. It's a sense of being free because when I'm at home I have, like, my mother is telling me what to do but there it's more, like, you're more sort of on you own, but you're still supervised. [In addition] being at that camp it was mostly private houses over there. And this is an apartment, so, there's a major difference." [Denise, age 12, DN 1-44, 2-14/15]

The extension of place experience can also provide new opportunities for reflecting on one's relationship with the place in which one currently lives, as experienced by Jessica. Jessica's daily pattern of places was focused inside her apartment (as a self-professed 'homebody') in the low-income complex, where she lived with her mother and stepfather, when she was not in school. However, she had gone on occasional weekend and summertime forays to other places within New York City, with her mother, with friends after getting her mother's permission, or with her school vocal group to perform. These forays formed the basis for comparing her neighborhood and apartment complex to others, and for judgements she made about

her daily experiences in the city. Trips she made beyond the city with her family shaped her view, clearly still forming, of where she might want to live in the future, and of herself in relation to an urban setting:

> "I would like to have a pool and a friendly environment, where I know everybody... When I went to Florida, everybody was so nice. You're in the elevator [there] and you don't know anybody and they were like 'Hi, how are you? Good morning. Good afternoon...' They're really nice and concerned. But here, I really don't like it, but I'd like it to be like that... I'm tired of the city. I really don't like the city. I don't like the traffic, the noise. It's like a lot of pressure... Somebody is always getting killed [in the city]. Like all you hear is bad news. I can't even watch the news [on T.V.] anymore. All you hear is bad news, so it's better, when you're living in a more calmer environment were the people are more relaxed." [JH, age 12-13, 1-64/66]

She went on to describe how she might live in the suburbs of New York City, where she had visited relatives:

> "Anyway, then again, I might want to live in New York. I'm not really sure of that...Well, I'd probably live in Long Island, with a nice house, a nice pool, backyard, my car, my own car. Let me see, I might live in the city. Let me see, I really wouldn't want to live in the city. I would live in Long Island, drive to the city to work...[JH 1-65]

But then, during the second interview, she explained how a recent experience during a visit to a relative's house on Long Island was leading her to change her mind and to reassess the city's value to her:

> "Yeah, I changed my mind. Because, like, I've been to so many other places - It's not like New York [city]. Because this is the center of attraction, it's where everything goes on and I like to be home. I mean, in

> New York City, it's my home, because I can have a lot of friends, and I know my way around. It's noisy, but I've gotten used to it...It is [pressured]...Sometimes it's scary [in New York City], because all you hear is fire [sirens] and everything. And even though in other places you hear it too, but it's scary because it's more common here [and traffic makes it difficult to cross streets]...[But in other places outside the city] the isolation, it's not so nice...The only thing you could do is go out into your backyard, you know my family [relatives on Long Island] has a pool, so, and people are constantly going to visit over there..."
>
> [But Long Island is isolated] It's quiet like on New Year's, this is an example on New Year's, I ran outside [at the relatives'] saying 'Happy New Year.' And I listened, and it was silence. Nobody in the houses. You can't even hear anybody making any noise. It was only my [relatives] house that was making noise. Like I said 'Happy New Year'..And I walked outside just to run around and, you know, play with the snow and nobody was making any noises. I was, like, 'What is this?' I heard one fire cracker, I was, like, 'WOW...THIS IS LONG ISLAND' Here [in the city] a lot of people, you can hear it, when you look out—if you look out the apartment you can hear a lot of people screaming 'Happy New Year' and opening champagne bottles and stuff. In Long Island, it's really boring...[And] you can't get anywhere without a car...If cars are out [of order], you're stuck, you know..." [JH, 2-3/4]

Travels to other places can also influence one's reflections on what is valued in one's life, and on the more general kind of environment in which one wants to live. Ronnie, now 15, describes how his memories visiting the place where his aunt lived, in Pennsylvania, when he was 8 or 9, contrasts with his current neighborhood:

> "They have a stream over there, it's close by where my aunt lived...It's more laid back than here. You'd, like,

be able to ease [relax] more [than] over here. [In the part of the city where he now lives] it's, like, a business type, more professional. You can't really kick your feet up and relax. You can have an easy time, [but] it wouldn't be the same as over there...[In Pennsylvania you have to drive to a major store, and then drive home] but over here it's, like, they have so much stuff and like so many businesses here. It's so busy you can't really get a chance [for others] to be personal with you..." [RK 1-50/51]

And then he goes on to describe how this difference affects his life, and the lives of others, as teenagers:

"...Here, like, instead of having a name it's like a title, like, they call you by your name but they don't treat you like you're a friend or anything. Kids around - your friends - do [treat you well], people like that do. [But] like, everywhere else you go, like, to the store or something like that, they don't treat you the same [they treat you like a 'title']...But, like, a place like Pennsylvania it's more close, like you know everyone, so, and everyone knows you, so, they're closer. So you don't have to put up any fake fronts. You get to be yourself...[When people 'treat you like a title'] they're not talking to you, they talk at you. They're, like, they don't say stuff to you, they just tell you stuff...[And an example is at school in the city] if you can't hang around their school in the morning, they'll tell you to leave, go home, or go wherever. 'Just don't stay around here.' They don't talk to you, they don't say 'Alright, can you please leave,' or, 'You shouldn't be here at this time,' or whatever..." [RK 2-19/21]

Ronnie envisions that teenagers would be treated differently in Pennsylvania than they are where he now lives:

"[In that place in Pennsylvania] They'd let you, like, stay and talk and then go somewhere, or just go home first, or just go to the movies or whatever is in town, like a circus or any special thing that came. They just let you, like, stay there...Here [in New York city] since

there's so many teenagers in the Manhattan City, they think you can just find [a place to be] or go somewhere [else], and you'll be able to have the right to stay there...But there [in Pennsylvania] it's, like, you're free. Like, not trapped to do what they say to do..." [RK 2-21/22]

Aside from how teens are treated, Ronnie also sees the two areas as having different kinds of places, access to places, and opportunities, which are connected with how teens are treated by others:

> "[There are more places for teens in Pennsylvania because] it's, like, parks and rivers, and you can just hang out on the beaches. I think there's one. I don't know. There's, like, a lot of different houses, and you can just hang out. They have a nice pleasant [place]. Over here, it's, like, nothing like that...[in New York City] It's, like, you can't just find a park around here and just relax on the grass or anything. It's too dirty. It's, like, too many people. Like you can't just take a snooze and find everything where you left it. But over there, it's, like, you can leave, like, your stuff anywhere and sleep or whatever, over there. I mean, over here, you can't do that because either someone might rob it or, like, try to pick a fight or something...People that you don't even know, strangers, would come over and start, start trying to order you or something like that..." [Ronnie, age 15, RK 2-22/24]

The issues that Ronnie raises clearly recapitulate those he and many other teens raised throughout the interviews, and they reflect the struggle that teens go through in trying to find their 'place' in the larger world.

Occassionally the extension of environmental experience leads a teen to the conclusion that there are places they should not be. One eleven year old boy, for example, described an incident in which his Uncle took him to a bar in uptown Manhattan. This boy described how he felt uncomfortable there, and felt that teens might 'learn things to fast' (e.g., about drinking alcohol) if brought to those places. More generally, many teens described incidents in which they encountered 'problems,' often involving the threat of violence, which will be addressed in more detail in a later section.

Teens use their experience of other places to form their view of how they relate with their current environment, and to imagine and envision alternative characteristics of environments which they feel are important. Coming in contact with places beyond their 'typical,' daily experience is facilitated and prompted by other people, often parents and other adults. Through a process of 'social bridging,' teens' environmental experiences are changed, and at times even transformed. For some teens, these experiences cause them to reflect on their identification with 'the city' and with places that are important to them. The 'extension' of their environment provides them with new information, and

circumstances different from their typical day-to-day experience, which they react to on emotional and cognitive levels, to form opinions and judgements about their relationship with places and other people (cf. Wapner, 1981, on environmental transitions; also see Hart & Conn, 1991). In some cases, going to new places, 'extending' the pattern, also presents teens with new personal experiences which relate to changes they are going through in their lives developmentally.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS: PROBLEMS AND THREATS

Almost every teen interviewed was aware of, and could identify, "problems" or "threats" in their environment. Their experience with these "problems," however, varied considerably. There were also some striking differences between girls and boys in how they described perceived and actual problems. However, with only a few exceptions, both males and females often identified males as the source of threats and very rarely mention females as contributing to these "problems." Violent threats are generally an expression of male physical dominance, or are reflections of the perception that males, particularly older teens and adults not known to oneself, can be harmful. For the most part, these threats are perceived as being in outdoor, public places, although some teens report incidents that have occurred within their residential buildings.

There also seems to be a connection to the way in which teens view their surroundings and the daily pattern of their place experiences; not surprisingly, the direct personal experience of "problems" in housing, neighborhood, and the city more generally does seem to be more pronounced for those teens

whose pattern of activity is more extensive. Coming into contact with the larger environment affords both opportunities and problems for teens.

The Restricted Environment of Girls

For some of the girls, problems in the environment are "everywhere." Places outside their home are generally seen as holding danger. For these girls, public places are feared and are avoided as much as possible. Their daily routines center on home, family, and moving about to familiar places with friends or family. Most of these girls did not report having had personal experiences with problems directly. It may be they did not convey these to me, or it may be that their routines were so sheltered that they did not come into direct contact with incidents.

One girl, who said she had not run into any problems personally, was fearful of the "killings" that could happen, as she had heard so many times on television. She said "I get scared walking around here" (in the area around her residence), and that when she walks home from school, usually alone, she "...sees all the bums that New York is made of" (BA, 1-16, 1-13). In addition, she felt that:

> "...there's not enough security because they're always breaking the door [to the apartment building]. The glass on the door is broken and that's dangerous to other people. And the park [across the street] is a mess. The park is not used by children but by drug addicts. That's why they close the door to the front [the gate to the park]...and the street [between the apartment building and the park should be] changed again to one way [to prevent accidents]" (BA 1-22).

This girl's daily routine was very focussed around school and home, and in personal conversation her mother conveyed her concerns for her daughter's safety to me.

Another girl, who also had not personally experienced problems, but whose daily routine was focussed on staying close to home told me that

> "...Mommy says that drugs are everywhere. You can't hide from them. Because drugs are mean and they're everywhere. [She says] that you have to keep away from them. They'll mess you up...[she says] to stay away from certain places that you feel uncomfortable around...like sometimes around some places like in that park [near the apartment building] I get scared because there's a lot of people running around, bums and everything. And sometimes in the buildings. They're in the buildings and I'm scared" (AL 2-13, 2-14).

For her, the park also represents a specific threat to children and females:

> "...there's bums in there, drugs in there, drug fiends in there. Child molesters in there. Bad people are in there and I'm not supposed to go in there. There's rapers [rapists] in there. My mom just tells me not to

> go in there. I see... people cursing [in there and] they treat their women mean" (AL 1-42).

Yet another girl, who reported she had not personally experienced any problems echoed these sentiments about drugs in the park and "old men hanging around [homeless men from a nearby shelter]." She also conveyed a story told to her by a girl who lives in the apartment next door to hers:

> "...I know this girl and her brother; they been telling me that her mother, that they slept over in the park, and her mother takes drugs. And one day I saw her mother—she had a black eye, she was all black and blue on her face" [supposedly from violence in the park] (MV 1-28).

In general, girls who perceived the park as having an ambience of drug dealing, "botherings," "killings," and the potential for unpredictable violence avoided what they viewed as unregulated public settings and focussed instead on home, and being with friends and family in homes, school, community centers, and in some cases, church settings. One girl who was particularly negative about the park and other surrounding areas said her family:

> "...doesn't mess around with it [drugs]... because they know what could happen to them. They'll lose their friends, that's what drugs do, they make them lose their friends and you lose your relationships. If there's a girl taking drugs, she can lose her husband. Things happen like that. If she's pregnant she might lose her baby. Because drugs are real bad, that's devil's stuff. So my family will stay away" (ND, 1-16).

For her, the threat of drugs in public places, particularly in her former neighborhood further downtown, is so overwhelming that she wishes "God [would] make a tornado and he could take out all the bad people and he could take out the bad things that are in the whole wide world and he could make it a paradise," or that she could become a "good vampire" and "bite all the bad people" (ND 1-16). Though not as extreme in their comments, a few of these girls advocated sweeping changes to the park and to the level of security in the buildings. Running throughout their comments was a desire to be able to move about freely in public places, and in their housing, without feeling a pervasive sense of threat and the need for vigilance against harm or harassment.

A few of the girls had either personally experienced, or had heard about, assaults or harassment perpetrated by males against females. At times, the harassment took the form of comments from teenage boys or men in public places which made the girl feel uncomfortable. One girl, who was eleven years old, told of problems "When boys bother me" in an area she visits outside her immediate neighborhood. "They bug me too much...When I'm playing with them in the street they always

bother me, they always ask me a personal question. I can't say the question...I'd rather not talk about it" (ND, 1-15). Another girl, who was fourteen, said that men "say things all the time on the streets" and in the park [to her], and that the building's male security guards "look at you" [VB 57]. She said this happens at least twice each week, and that even though she's "not afraid" she does "get pissed" at the comments. Clearly, they make her uncomfortable; she tries to cope by "ignoring them" and avoiding places where this happens, although the places in which these comments occur are nearly unavoidable if she is to leave her apartment. Ideally, she would like to "kick people out" of the places, but she's unclear on how this could be accomplished.

The experience of feeling uncomfortable is not always limited to outdoor public places, and to being alone among strangers. One girl, who was twelve at the time, had gone to a disco in Florida with her parents because her father was playing in the band there. She was "dressed up" and found the experience very uncomfortable because:

> "... the men, they're, oh God, they're gross. Three men asked me to dance and I said 'no.' I mean, I really want men [males around] but just kids... twelve to eighteen. That's the age" [JH, 2-7]. She also complained that "the women" there were "vicious...the way

> they were looking at me with those evil eyes..Like you don't belong there. I didn't belong there, that's why I felt that way. They were looking at me like they knew I was young, but I didn't look young. I looked like I belonged there...I mean, it would be nice if it were only teenagers..." [JH 2-6, 2-7].

This example of reactions to unwanted approaches of adult males, and to the apparent judgements of adult females, leads to a sense of the need for "teen places," which we will revisit later.

For many girls, the fear of potential assault is present, even though they say they have not personally experienced "problems" in their environment. Both girls and boys heard warnings from friends, parents, and other adults about places and situations to avoid because of potential "trouble." One girl spoke of warnings by adults to avoid a nearby hotel because of "crack heads" being there, and then her focus turned to dangers within her apartment building:

> "And another thing is like, you know, be careful in the building. You don't want to walk down the stairs at night. And the laundry room [in the basement]—you shouldn't be there by yourself. And they said how a girl got raped before in the elevator...they said it was, like, a couple of years ago. I was, like, 'really?'...I was like, 'mommy, I'm not going down there by myself to wash clothes. You have to go with me.'" [An "old lady" neighbor warned her of the rape.] [NW 2-31]

In fact, one girl spoke of dangers she experienced in the basement and stairwell of her building, and of her responses and resistance to assault:

> "It's kind of dangerous down there [in the basement laundry room]. This man was following us, me and my friend. My friend and I, we had to dry some clothes and this man was following us. So we ran up the stairs and he was screaming and cursing and everything" [JH 1-69]. "And one time I was going down the stairs and, I don't know, it was just this kid. He jumped on top of me. He was, like, really trying to strangle me, I don't know if he was joking around but I punched him in his face and then, you know, he fell on the staircase and he looked at me and he called me a 'B.' And I was, like, well, I know who it was—it was George. And I said 'Why did you do that?' And he said 'I was just kidding.' I don't think that's the way you kid around. You jump someone from the back and try to strangle them—if I had my mace at the time... My mom [when told of the incident] was, like, 'Don't use your mace at any time for anything. You don't have a permit for it.' I said, 'If anyone tries to attack me again like that... [I'll use the mace]' I mean, what are you going to do? You think someone is really trying to kill you or hurt you... you're not going to just stay there [and do nothing in response]. And I took karate so I don't care if I hurt them real bad. I took karate here [in the community center in the building] for about three years. But, I mean, I got so scared just going down the stairs...someone attacks you and then they say they're just joking. That's not funny you know, so I get really upset. Sometimes I get scared to go in this building. There was a murder upstairs..." [JH 2-8].

She also told of how "some people" pull pranks by leaving garbage in front of her door and then ringing the doorbell, or carving graffiti into the door frame outside her apartment which "makes her mad." In response, when someone rings her

doorbell, she opens the door, but brings her mace "just in case." And she tells of how if she knew who pulled the pranks, she would make them "clean it up" because "it's my home." Though struggling with fear, she clearly resists the forces assaulting her sense of safety and control in her place.

Several of the girls said they had not experienced "problems" personally in their environment, although all were generally aware of at least vague threats. Two girls reported witnessing violence initiated by females - a fight between girls at school, and an incident in which a prostitute threw a cup of coffee at another person outside a "feared" hotel—but most of the threats were seen as generic (e.g., "drugs, crooks, bums in the park," "strange looking people lurking around") or involved witnessing incidents of violence among boys or men, some of whom they knew, in school, on the subway, and in public places near home. One girl said that "only boys do it" [start up trouble] and "We [girls] don't do nothing, we just watch them [boys]..."[DA, 18]. According to her, the few girls who "get in trouble" are the ones who "stay with the boys" [DA, 18]. Most of these girls seemed to adopt what one girl called a "live and let live" philosophy [DA 24/25], opting to follow a strategy of avoiding places and situations

perceived as being dangerous, travelling with friends or family when outdoors, and not bothering others in the hope of not being bothered in return.

At other points in the interviews, many of these girls expressed a desire to be able to socialize in various places, to be around boys and other girls, and to have "teen places" and "parties" where they could have "fun" without needing to fear problems. What is striking about their comments regarding problems encountered in public and quasi-public places is the difficulty they have in simply finding a "place to be," particularly in respect to relationships with males, and in being among males who are not known to them.

The Different Problems of Boys

Some of the boys reported they had not experienced any "problems" in their environment, but virtually all of them were aware of the possibility of danger. To some extent, that danger was seen as ambient (e.g., "crazies," "bums in the park"), but it was very striking how many of the boys could relate stories of specific incidents involving male-on-male incidents: fighting, bullying, sexual abuse in a video arcade, battles against the 'hotel kids', mugging and stealing, and other forms of violence and threat.

More than half the boys interviewed told stories of incidents they had experienced personally, or that happened to other male teens they knew. For males, the potential for encounters with violence while moving through the city was an integral aspect of their place pattern. Because some of the boys travelled more widely than the girls around the city when in groups, and particularly when alone, they mentioned examples of being attacked, threatened, or harassed by other males on subways or in public places:

> "Well, you know, at night, it's kind of wild [on the subway]. You know, you see all these guys, you know, hoodlums on the train... Well, one time [when on the train at 11 p.m.], a guy he tried to mug me. He, like, takes me on the train and luckily there was a cop on the subway. So then I ran over to him [the cop] and I said 'You know the man over there, you know, he's following me.' So he [the cop] said 'Alright.' So then the cop went over to him. He arrested him, so, you know, he [the cop] said 'Don't worry about it. Just go home.'...That's why my mom says 'If you're gonna stay any later than 10 p.m. [visiting], then I'm going to make you stay over [at relatives' home]. You're not going to travel." [Mike, age 14, MF 1-30/31]

Another boy told of more than one incident on subways:

> "I was approached on the train by this drug dealer. He asked me if I wanted to buy a drug. I think it was crack or something, and I said 'no' because why you gonna die of something that's not worth it [he then goes on to relate at length the consequences that taking drugs would lead to]...He [the drug dealer] just left me

> alone because I go tough with him...So then I saw a cop down the train, a transit cop. So I said 'leave me alone or I'll call the cop.' So, you know, he just left me alone...And then something else happened on the train [another time]. I had an argument with this guy. He was picking on me for no reason, so, you know, this man stopped it. And he [the one picking on him] walked his way and I walked my way." [Raj, age 15, RN 1-33/34].

At other times, fights and other conflicts on subways and buses, in public places that were crowded, and even in elevators within the residential buildings, were seen as breaking out as a result of too little space leading to 'pushing and shoving' [e.g., FV 90-96]. Although not having quite the same quality as violent or criminal threats, these incidents were still seen as 'problems' in the environment. It is also significant that most of the incidents reported about problems experienced on mass transit occurred when these boys were travelling alone, out of necessity, either between home and school, or when visiting relatives'. As we will discuss below, travelling in groups is one of the strategies for protection that teens employ.

Boys never spoke of a female instigating an incident, and one boy, when speaking of boys stealing from other boys outside his apartment building commented that it's "not the girls who steal" [TL, 1-29/30]. "Girls, they usually don't have that

many fights. They'll scream at each other. They don't fight [physically]. They'll scream at each other..." [Tony, age 11, TL 2-9]. The characteristic of threat in housing and public places, therefore, was asymmetrical: females are potential victims, but rarely perpetrators, while males can be both perpetrators and victims. One boy described an incident that happened in the entryway to his building, and how he felt about it:

> "[It happened to] my two friends named Frankie and Linda. Them two were engaged. They were coming in the building one day. The security guard was right there. These six black guys started jumping on them [this boy is Puerto Rican]. They made him, like, [get] a bloodbag right here [points under his eye]. They broke his lip. And on Linda - the girl- they busted her lip, almost broke her leg. The cops came. And they came to my aunt's house [apartment]. And they [Frankie and Linda] almost got killed. Plus the little boy—there was a little boy with them, they didn't know, they spit on him, and he didn't do nothing. 'Cause they spit on him first and Frankie said 'what are you doing that for?' and all that. And they started fighting...it was their [the six guys'] fault 'cause they spitted on the boy and the boy didn't do nothing. And the boy was waiting for the elevator and he holded the door of the elevator so when they could have a clear chance of getting off of the fight they could get in the elevator quickly. So the boy did a smart thing 'cause he started holding the elevator 'til it was through." [Louis, LM 31-32] "[I feel]... happy and sad at the same time. Happy for the bad guys to be in jail [apprehended by the police], and sad for the people who got hurt—especially if I knew them, which I do know Frankie and Linda" [LM 34].

Some boys followed a strategy, similar to the girls', of avoiding people, places, and situations which seemed as though they might be threatening:

> "Well, I guess some kids just don't wanna fight. They just stay away from people who are, like, bullies. Things like that. And people who have fights are people who are, like, bullies, and things like that. They like to fight and everything." [Victor, VB 1-37].

One boy said that whether or not anything happened was a result of having a "good" versus "bad attitude:"

> "...So I act good to them [other people] so they act good to me, you know. If you act bad to them, they're going to act, sometimes they're going to act bad to you. So it depends on what kind of attitude you have." [JS/ 1-6] This boy also mentioned relying upon friends for advice on places to go and not go: "I know a kid that knows all about that stuff [places with and without trouble]. He's been there, you know. You know, he knows where to go and where not to go.... he's not the smartest person in the world, but he knows the neighborhood" [JS/ 1-6].

And another teen commented on the importance of gleaning information about people connected with specific places, before getting involved with them:

"...I was talking about the drug dealers. That they [his friends] shouldn't be friends with. Because they could get you in trouble. If he [the drug dealer] wants to be friends with you then you don't know what he's been doing in the park or anything. It's like good to ask around. To, like, have a friend who knows most of the area. Ask them what that guy was like. If they think he's a good person or bad..." [RK/ 2-11].

In these stories, boys seem to be relating the likelihood of avoiding problems in the environment to one's own behavior, to the 'character' of one's self and others', and to the possession and sharing of information among friends. It may also be that imputing the likelihood of avoiding problems to something about oneself, or one's own actions, may provide these teens with a sense of control - whatever the facts of the matter may be.

A few also wanted to see more "security" in the local area, and around their housing, as a way of suppressing the possibility of "trouble." Incidents inside the buildings were much less frequently reported by teens living in the middle-income apartments; those in the lower-income apartments were more vocal about the need for better security although it was an issue for almost all of the teens. One boy - the one who told the story of Frankie and Linda—even advocated the arming of security guards. Even though many teens expressed a desire for more security, as we will see later their relationship to "security" can be ambivalent because it also tends to restrict their own freedom of movement. "Security" is a power that can potentially protect them, but can also impede their coming and going. As we shall see later, too, "security" can be the source of hassles and unfair accusations against teens.

Some of the boys advocated a strategy of moving about in groups, for "protection," to avoid the possibility of being "picked on."

> "[When going uptown] I go with a bunch of people. At least around ten people; no, not ten, probably with around seven people...we don't let nothing happen to each other." [Howard, age 13, HM 1-12]

> "If I'm by myself, yeah, I'd avoid [specific places outside the neighborhood]. But when I'm with friends at least I got, you know, if somebody bothers me at least I got some back-up." [Victor, age 11, VB 2-35/36]

Somewhat paradoxically, the strategy of travelling in groups with their friends at times led to the provocation of incidents:

> "So it was, like, me, Gilbert and my other friend went down there [to a ball field around Ave. D] to play baseball, right. So then Avenue D people came. It [the problem] was all because me and my friend. I was like this and I said 'Yo, anybody is messing me up, I'll mess a nigger up. I'll mess a person up'...One of the guys, they had a game, one of the guys threw an apple and my friend Miguel - he had to be so stupid - and threw the apple back...he said 'You suckers.' They [Ave. D people] ran up... I left my clothes, I left my Addidas. I left everything and I was running...I ran to the garage man. The garage man stopped it, called security..." [PD 2-23/24].

Some boys related stories that clearly show how responding to threat with threat, and at times violence, becomes part of "proving yourself" as a male:

> "I used to be afraid [of bullies] but now I beat everybody up [who attempts to bully him]. They're afraid of me...[they are going to beat each other up] to prove themselves. Because if you don't beat anybody up and let people push you around then they call you 'a little person.' Here's this 'little person.' Nobody likes you." [Tony, age 11, TL 2-9]

Another boy related stories of fights that broke out between groups, spurred by competition and conflicts over the use of places, like basketball courts, or by insults hurled. Once again, the theme of being 'big' against those who try to be 'big and bad' came up:

> "[You fight to] try to make yourself look like 'the better man'...if you fight and then you win and shit your friends be like 'I knew you could fight. Boy, don't fuck with him.' You know, so you make yourself look all big, and you know, like the leader. That's what they're really looking for...so it's like they [friends] encourage you more and they put you into it." [Rueben, age 15, RT 31-32]

Males' response to threat therefore, at times, became part of the climate of threat for others and for themselves. Yet, for others, fighting back is an option that is seen as necessary at times but undesirable:

> "...I don't like trouble. But, like, if I have to fight, because, you know, if you don't fight then they [the ones who threaten you] be like bothering you. And, you know, they're gonna keep on bothering you and bothering you so, you know, you got to stand up so there's not that many [threats again]." [RN, 2-39]

In general, the boys I spoke with were struggling with issues of how to handle threats they perceived in their environment. A number of strategies for avoiding or directly dealing with problems in places were employed, some of which seemed to be connected with boys' sense of masculinity, prowess, and identity. In choosing a non-violent versus violent strategy of response, boys also in part create the environment experienced by others. The willingness to be violent when 'needed' seemed to give boys a sense of control - that they could 'take care' of themselves and their friends when moving about in the larger environment. However, the possibility of violence was a source of anxiety, even fear to most of these boys, often leading to a sense that their surroundings could be unpredictable and could not be trusted to be safe. Throughout these accounts was a pervasive sense of ambivalence regarding how to address problems in the environment. Boys who told the most negative stories about experiencing problems directly also seemed most likely to be the ones who felt there was a lack of "neighborhood" where they lived. Cause and effect is hard to determine here, but it may be that experiencing problems locally and personally disrupts a sense of having neighborhood. In the discussion section, we will

revisit the issue of threat and safety in the development of "self" and a sense of security, and of how they relate to gender (Franck & Paxson, 1989 ; Garbarino et al., 1992).

CHAPTER SIX

FINDINGS: BARRIERS TO ACCESS IN PLACES

Earlier we discussed problems or threats in the environment, many of which had the effect of limiting teens' access to place because they avoided places, people, or situations which seemed threatening. Virtually all of the teens knew of potential threats, and several had experienced them directly.

In addition to these kinds of threats, however, many teens spoke of other kinds of barriers in their environment. These barriers were social or physical forces that teens mentioned as preventing them from having access to places and activities, while not necessarily being "threatening" in the same way as were the incidents discussed earlier. Nonetheless, they were problematic.

Several points are interesting about teens' comments about, and perceptions of, these barriers. The kinds of barriers mentioned - or whether barriers were mentioned at all - generally reflected each teens' overall daily pattern of engaging with places, a point which we will return to in more detail in a later section. Almost all of the twelve teens (of

28 coded) who did not mention encountering barriers to places had patterns of engaging with places that were focussed primarily on home and very local indoor places, with small geographic ranges of activity. In fact, seven of these twelve teens wanted more barriers - usually in the form of increased security and physical structures to exclude 'outsiders' - so they would feel more 'protected.' The teens who did experience or perceive barriers to places were those whose patterns were generally more focussed on places outside the home. It stands to reason that experiencing barriers grows out of having the opportunity, through moving about the larger environment, to encounter them.

Gender differences were also striking in teens' reports of barriers to places. Of the twelve teens who reported *no* barriers to place, nine were female. Of the sixteen teens who said they experienced or perceived barriers, four were female. Boys were most likely to talk about encountering more barriers overall, especially in connection with racial issues in particular places. This does not mean that race was not an issue for girls more broadly in their lives, only that specific events in places identified as being the result of racial issues were reported mostly by boys. It also does not

mean that there were no "barriers" for girls in the environment; on the contrary, as mentioned earlier, it seems more to reflect the way in which girls' and boys' place experiences were patterned (and hence the opportunity to experience "barriers" which could be reported). In fact, girls' mentioning barriers less frequently, when combined with an analysis of their place patterns later, calls into question whether there are places 'for' girls in the larger environment, as well as underscoring the well-known dynamics which tend to limit girls' range of motion and environmental experience (refs. Blakely, 1994; Hart, 1979; Krenichyn, 1996; Saegert & Hart, 1978).

Another interesting point is that for some of the "barriers" perceived, some teens expressed seemingly contradictory opinions. For example, some teens made comments about wanting more security guards around their residential areas while also complaining that security was impeding their access to places and freedom of movement. As we shall discuss in more detail below, these apparent contradictions can be resolved when looking more closely at the personal consequences these changes would have for the teen. To some extent, these apparent contradictions also reflect teens' working out issues in their lives that are in conflict.

Among teens who mentioned barriers to their access to places, two major categories emerged. The first had to do with what I will call 'gatekeepers.' Gatekeepers were usually security guards (or police) in and around residential buildings who limited access to buildings, grounds, and surrounding facilities (e.g., playgrounds, open spaces). To a lesser extent, teachers at school and other adults in the community were mentioned as gatekeepers too. The second major kind of barrier to place had to do with proprietors or workers at commercial establishments - in stores, shops, and restaurants - limiting teens' access, making them feel uncomfortable and unwanted, or ejecting them from the place. Teens often spoke of how these incidents involved racial/ethnic discrimination, and to a lesser degree, discrimination around economic and age issues. Other kinds of barriers described by fewer teens had to do with: a sheer lack of a kind of place, activity or resource; physical barriers; competition over places and activities in relation to the number of people attempting to participate in a particular place; and issues of class exclusion and the perception of wealth.

Of the twelve teens who did not perceive barriers in their environment, five of them, all girls, also did not speak of wanting to have any new kinds of barriers for others either, such as an increase in security. The general sense of these girls' comments was that their daily pattern of place experiences, focussed primarily on home, school, and a few other places, did not block them from doing what they wanted to do (or knew of). Most of these girls seemed to spend a lot of time in their homes as discussed earlier in the section on the patterning of place experience. One of these girls did spend some time in outdoor places, but for her places seemed to be functionally equivalent as long as they provided opportunities for her to gather with friends:

> "Kids around here just hang around with friends, go anyplace. Anyplace they go is, like, for them, I guess...everybody has fun. No matter what the places are, we still go places like we used to." [Donna, age 12, DA 34/36]

She also spoke of how she and friends would hang around in an open space at the back of the residential building, at a park a couple of blocks away, or "I don't know, other places" [DA, 48]. She spoke of how they would 'walk around,' 'talk,' 'sit around,' and 'have fun.' For these girls barriers are not perceived perhaps because they have concluded that the larger environment is not 'for' them

Of the twelve teens who did not perceive barriers for themselves in their environment, seven did want more barriers in place for others'. All of these teens (four were girls, three boys), mentioned the desire for increased security, by guards and by physical barriers, in and around their residential buildings for the sake of protection from the kinds of threats discussed in the earlier section. All but one of these teens lived in the low-income housing complex, which by teens' reports, and by my observation, was not as tightly controlled by security as was the middle-income complex across the street. (As we shall discuss below, the experience of security as a barrier to teens' own movement and access to places occurs more frequently, and is more problematic, when teens attempt to enter middle-income residential settings.)

Building Security

Having security guards nearby was viewed as being important for dealing quickly with threats:

> "Because if anything happens it would take, like, you know, they [security] would come and call the police and stuff like that. But if anything happens and security wasn't there, it would take more time. Like if it was a fight, you know, a real fight, you know, the security could handle it and they would call the police..." [Maria, age 12, MV 2-12]

One boy, as mentioned earlier, wanted the security guards be armed, because he thought they would be more powerful that way in dealing with threatening situations [LM]. And another boy, when complaining about his building, underscored the idea that having security guards available helps resolve problem situations: "...when you need one [a security guard], like, let's say there's something happening in the hall [within the building], and you think it's going to hurt somebody, you know, and you want to get a security guard—they're not around. They're around when you don't need them..And, you know, they be changing the security guards over and over again. Like, you know, one quits, one comes, one quits...you know, the security guards, there should be more security guards..." [Raj, age 15, RN 1-46/47].

Teens spoke of wanting security guards at the entrance to their building to act as gatekeepers:

> "I would want...[to] have the guards there twenty-four hours [a day]. You can't come in without an announcement. Like, you have to live here, they need your last name when you come in...Have a guard there all the time...They have guards [in the building now] but they're not there all of the time...I also think that they [security guards] should prevent, tell the people not to stay here..and I would make sure those people across the street [in the park] don't hang around. You know,

> you're not allowed to hang in the street. And I would want the people that don't live [in the residential buildings locally]...in the park, it's a private park [across the street; actually, it's a New York City park]." [Jessica, age 12/13, JH 1-69/70]

Another girl spoke of wanting the main door to the building repaired, so that it would lock after someone came in. She also spoke more generally of wanting more security, of having the building 'cleaned up' so that it would be 'nicer,' and of comparisons between her building and others she knew of elsewhere in Manhattan that were 'nice.' She viewed these other places, including the middle-income complex across the street as 'nicer' and more secure:

> "...I like Midtown Plaza [a middle-income complex] because it's always, like, clean and they always have security guards on duty and they make sure nothing is going wrong or anything. And also, there's [the middle-income buildings]... across the street, it's sort of like Midtown Plaza. I like that also..." [Denise, age 12, DN 1-41]

Issues of safety and security at times become bound up in class-related issues as teens in the lower-income complex compare the features of their building with others, and as they reflect on their own experiences and feelings in place.

Desires for increased security may also be associated with desires for privatization of space. For example, one girl,

when speaking of changes she would want to see to her housing and neighborhood made lengthy comments about wanting to create an area with gates in which her family and friends would live, which she would consider "our private property," and which others could enter only if they knew someone living inside [Crystal, age 11/12, CJ 1-25]. Her vision was that around all of Manhattan "...there'd be just gates and gates and gates...yeah, around the city if they [the residents inside] want it" [CJ 1-25]. One boy, who lived in the middle-income building, described how if any kids attempted to climb the fence into the building's enclosed outdoor spaces in order to "beat us up," he and his friends could "...just tell them [the security guards] and they'll chase them out" [Dennis, age 11, DV 2-16]. He also valued the surveillance cameras in the ceiling of the entryway, and in the elevators:

> "Because if somebody tried to enter, all they [security in the central office] gotta do is talk into the camera [which has a PA system] and they tell them to 'get out' and all of that stuff. And they could watch if they're in the elevator, if somebody tried to fight all they gotta do is talk to the elevator and they'll say 'calm down' and all that stuff" [DV, 1-55].

Although some teens wanted more 'gatekeepers,' more of them (eight boys and three girls) experienced 'security' and other gatekeepers as barriers to places. Almost all the complaints were about security guards not allowing access to buildings,

or to facilities near the building, or limiting teens' behavior in some way. Every single one of these complaints - made by teens who lived in both low- and middle-income housing - happened around a middle-income housing complex, either at the study's site or elsewhere.

> "We went to a particular area [Stuyvesant Town] where there was a park and the guy [security guard] came inside and he was saying 'You can't stay here.' And we said, 'Why?' And he said 'It's private property.' So we had to leave. They have so much about private property. That's why you don't see people outside, because it's private property. So we can't go there...It's only for people who live there...In your neighborhood you can't go to another park [beyond your building] because it's private property...You can't go there either [the middle-income complex across the street]. It's private property too. Every place around here is private property, you can't go there. Only people that live there or their guests...Too much places have private property." [Jose, age 13, JS 2-7/8]

Some of the teens who lived in the middle-income complex complained about the ways in which 'security' affected them:

> "These guards always think they could push you around and all that. Why should they push us around? We're the ones who pay them. They shouldn't be doing all this stuff, like, 'Oh yeah, you can't be here. Get out of here.' Just, like, sometimes you're sitting in the building [benches are in the lobby] the guards will sometimes come by and say 'Uh, you can't sit here' and all that. That's real dumb. Right in the lobby, like, 'can you please leave?' And, like, um, they won't let us sit outside, like sit on the pots [large planters] for a couple of minutes. Like, outside there's a couple of pots in front of the building. The other people can sit there; other people who don't live here. They [guards] don't say anything [to them], but, if we do it,

> they'll be like 'You can't sit there, you gotta leave.' [Carlo, age 14, CB 1-7]

A girl who lives within the middle-income complex told of a kind of incident that happened 'three, maybe four times' which limited the ability of her friends and herself to be in place:

> "...sometimes when we're playing downstairs [in the building's enclosed outdoor space], sometimes the old people they complain that we're making too much noise, and we're really not making too much noise. And the security guards keep on telling us not to ride our bicycles [there], because we don't really have nothin' to do downstairs. But we, um, sometimes people complain about us when we're really not doing nothing, except playing... he [the guard] said 'One more [time]' and he was gonna make us leave...[and then he said] o.k., it's time to leave, time to go upstairs, go upstairs, no playing downstairs, go upstairs..." [Millie, age 11, MC 1-7/8]

Teens visiting the middle-income complex find movement difficult, as they are challenged and subjected to surveillance:

> "...one time me and my friend Roger went to deliver something to [the complex]. Like, we went inside the building and we went to the door, and the security guard [said], like, 'Where are you going?' And we said 'We were going to deliver something.' And we said 'Are you going to let me in?' And he said, 'No, get out.' And we said, 'We're going to deliver something.' Then, um, like, the head security guard came and, um, told him [the other guard] 'Leave them alone. They're going to deliver something.' So, we delivered it, and - the problem I hate about [the complex] is, you know, it's kinda rich and they have a lot of things like red carpets, cameras, and all that..." [He then goes on to tell of a time when he and his friends were confronted

and scolded by a guard after they had been viewed on the elevator's surveillance camera.] [Frank, age 14, FV 83/84]

A girl spoke of the process of exclusion from place, and how at times teens were judged without being asked who they are:

> "One time they [guards at Stuyvesant Town] rushed us out...They said 'Get out.' And I said, 'Oh, no.'...They said 'You don't live here. What are you doing here?'...They didn't even ask if we lived there. They just said, 'You don't live here, get out.'...It's always at Stuyvesant [that this happens], because Stuyvesant there's really nice, it has a nice basketball court. But if you don't live there they rush you out...They don't want nobody there. I don't know why." [Jennifer, age 15, JO 1-21, 2-37]

One reaction teens can have to their exclusion from places by security guards is to attempt to provoke them in return. When prevented from being where they want to be, doing what they want to do, especially if it results in their 'being bored' or 'getting mad' they can 'cause trouble' [CB]. Once told to leave a place, one teen and his friends:

> "...were kind of messing around. We were acting bad because, you know, he wouldn't let us [stay]. And then the guard started chasing us, because, you know, all of our friends were kind of mad. Because they [the security guards] kicked us out. So we had to run for our lives. They didn't get us...[My friends] were all, like, I can't say it, you know. They were using their middle fingers and using foul language to the cop [security guard]...they have them, like, in buggies [three wheeled scooters] and they use a policeman [to assist] and they were chasing us with the buggies. We ran. They didn't get us, thank God. Well, we didn't really mean to start trouble but it was, like, I didn't like how they did it [how they told us to leave]. They did

> it really bad. They could've just said, 'just leave.' [Instead] They all got a little rowdy, so that's it. That's one place I can't, you know, I can go there, but they'll kick me out. But I would probably avoid [the place now]." [Jose, age 13, JS 2-7/8]

Even when not provoking security guards in response to a command, teens still react and question the rules for the use - or non-use - of space. One girl, who lived in the middle-income complex, described an incident that happened there:

> "Yesterday - Jose - he was on a skateboard over there [in the complex's enclosed outdoor space, often referred to as a 'park' by the kids]. And then he [security guard] tells us, like, you know, we can't skateboard. And so I got really mad, you know, 'cause what's the 'park' for? Anyway, nobody was out there. And they was just riding skateboards...I just really got pissed. But I don't care, you know, the next time I see Jose we're going right back to the park and if he [the security guard] got something to say, you know, because that's really stupid...so, I'm not going to listen to him...they didn't give a reason [for having to leave]...Jose, he doesn't get mad at anything. He listened to them, you know, so he just took his skateboard and left. Then, you know, well, I got mad. Well, I'm not going to listen—'cause that's really stupid. You can't even do anything in your own building. What's the 'park' for if you can't use it?" [Vernidez, age 14, VB 55/56]

The resistance this girl displayed to what she viewed as an illegitimate effort to limit the use of place may have been learned from her mother:

> "When I was in front [of the building, near the Avenue] - it was a while ago - it wasn't a real long time ago - we were waiting for somebody, like, my father. 'Cause we were going somewhere, he went to get the car...We were

> sitting on the things [ledges and 'kiddie' play structures] and they [security guard] told us not to sit on them. But, it was my mother, so she didn't move. And so...nothing [happened]. My mother, she wouldn't move, because that's not right, you know. So, that was another time it happened." [VB, 57]

Whether teens respond to the security guards or not, for many 'gatekeeping' is a diminishing process that certainly limits their access to places, their ability to engage with certain places and with what the places have to offer. It also teaches them that they are not welcome, that they are unwanted in places, no matter why they happen to be there or who they are (or perhaps because of who they are). It effectively cuts down the number and kinds of places in which teens may be. Many teens have also gotten the message that being able to be somewhere [at least in this part of New York City] depends upon issues related to age, class, and race - as we shall see in the next section. Whole tracts of the larger environment are cordoned off as 'not for you.'

Four of the boys who experienced 'security' as a barrier to place had a mixed view: they saw it as both positive and negative; as presenting a barrier at times, while at other times being important for protection. All of these boys lived in the middle-income complex, in which direct incidents with

security guards were more prominent for teens. In their comments we see a struggle between the desire for protection from the threats they perceived as pressing in from the outside world - bullies, fights, drug related incidents, rip-offs, etc.—and their own freedom to move about and occupy and use places. One boy also related his complaints to getting 'no respect' from the security guards, to the guards' 'not believing' him when he said he lived there (which he did), and to being ejected from places within the complex. At the same time, he wanted tighter security mechanisms, similar to ones he had seen in another complex, for greater surveillance to keep the 'drug dealers' and 'street people' out [VB]. Teens never spoke of having a successful negotiation with security guards, although this boy and a few others did mention that a new security firm had come in, toward the end of my fieldwork, and was doing 'a better job' while hassling the teens less frequently.

One boy extended his comparison of the two complexes - which he called the 'open society building' (low-income building) and the 'private property building' (middle income building) - beyond the issue of security alone. (This comparison was especially interesting as these two complexes were built and managed by the same non-profit housing corporation.) In his

view, the 'open society building' afforded more freedom to come and go, to visit his friends, and to find casual and organized activities of interest to teens. On the other hand, he saw the residents as vulnerable because 'anyone can come in,' and he perceived the buildings as less well maintained. Where he lived - in the 'private property building' across the street from the 'open society building' - there were layers of security for protection, and better maintenance of the facilities, but great difficulties for teens to gather, come and go, or find something to do [Terrence, age 12, TM 1-17/21, 2-13/14]. In brief he summed up the dynamics to which other teens were reacting and which were most salient for them personally.

Racial and Economic Exclusion in Commercial Establishments

As was mentioned earlier, the second major category of barriers to places for teens had to do with proprietors or workers in commercial establishments - in shops, stores, and restaurants - blocking teens' access, making them feel uncomfortable or unwanted in the place, or ejecting them from the place. Ten teens, nine of whom were male, talked about these kinds of incidents, which they had either experienced personally or had witnessed. Teens often perceived these exclusionary incidents as involving issues of racial,

economic, and to a lesser extent, age discrimination. In addition to these factors, it is also clear that it is males who are perceived by others as threatening. The behavior of people in commercial establishments, toward male teens, was rooted in a prejudgment that teens would either steal, damage goods while not buying anything, or somehow 'cause trouble':

> "Like, some of the stores around here, they, like, watch you, because if you're Spanish or Black. Whatever. If someone, like, did something [to] them, then they think the next kid would do the same thing. They like think that every kid is that way. I don't really like to go in there [a clothing store a few blocks away]...Say, like, you're coming in there. Say, like, you have a job. You didn't get paid yet and you're going to come and see before you, you're going to just come in the store to see what you like and what you didn't like...So you just take this and this and go and then try it on, if you like it you take it. They [store workers] watch you all over the store. They follow you. Because we were, like, over here in this part of the store and the guy would be looking at us and if you go over there, they'll just start and then he changes directions to look at us. Like, if a white guy came in there he could walk with as much freedom as [he] wants...[And in the 'chinese food store' they will harass you while making selections and] they'll tell you to leave the store and everything." [Ronnie, 15, "Jamaican", 1-44/45, 2-32/33].

Another boy described incidents where the blend of racial/ethnic, economic, and age discrimination was clear:

> "...you be looking at a magazine, you want to look at it [in the store]...and he'll say 'Get out of here.' They say that to the kids. I mean, it's bad what they do. Even if you're looking at it and they'll say 'get out of here.' That happened to me one time...if an adult was looking through the magazine they wouldn't say that. They would think, you know, that they would buy it. But

a kid they would think that you're just looking at it and put it back on the shelf. You know stores - I hate that... I remember it happened to my friend, he went to the Bagel store. He bought a bagel and then he was going to sit down to eat them and the guy said 'No, you can't sit here, because I have some guests that are going to sit here,' and he kicked him out. And they bought something from the store, and he was going to sit there, and he [storekeeper] said 'you can't sit here you gotta leave!' They do that a lot. I see that too when I go to the pizza shop, like, with my friends they say you have to leave and then when adults are there they let them stay..Almost all of them think we're [teenagers are] bad. A lot of stores are like that...[he mentions stores run by Koreans and Indians in particular - he's 'Spanish'-and then he goes on to say] ...You know, there is a lot of racism. So sometimes they just, they don't like your color or where you're from..." [Jose, age 13, JS 2-6/7, 2-10].

Even when deliberately shopping, with money in hand, teens may still be rejected:

"[It happens at the 'Chinese store', and at another shop]...people look at you...in this store I went in for a present. Everybody was looking at me and the manager was white. So, I was just looking around. I didn't see no black people [which he is], so that means he thinks I was, like, stealing everything. I walked right past and he just looked at me. I just went by and he still looked at me crazy so I had to walk out...You know, it always happens if you go and, like, get a store with fancy stuff. They look at you everywhere. And sometimes I get mad and I tell them to 'mind your own business. I came to buy things.' And then I have to show them my money and they'll still say I steal. Like I went up here [to a local shop], now I was going to buy a card. He [shopkeeper] said 'No money - goodbye.' I showed him my money - he told me 'goodbye' again." [Howard, age 13, 2-14/15]

As was true for incidents with security guards, some of these boys would react angrily against the store owners by banging on the window or door of the store once ejected, and swearing or cursing while leaving the store. One boy, however, described a process by which he and his friends were able to negotiate a niche for themselves, and form a gathering place at a pizza parlor, after initially being rejected by the owner. His story, while demonstrating a case that is opposite of the experience of most, also underscores the difficulties teens have in finding a way to be welcomed, or at least not rejected, in commercial establishments:

> "...it happened to me, like, the first time when all my friends came in [to the pizza parlor]. You know, the manager said 'Get out.' 'Cause it was so many of us making noise...Then, like, we came in little by little [another time]. Said, 'Hey man, what's up?' We met each other there, but, you know, we had really planned it to meet there. And they [friends] were acting, like, 'Oh, what a surprise!'...When we got there, you know, we ordered pizzas and then we came day by day and he [the manager] got to know us...You know, we buy a lot of pizza there everyday. And, you know, like, we always have private seats back there, 'cause there's, like, seven of us. And we're all the way in the back...we do that almost every single day. So, you know, he knows us real good. You know, since we're real good customers, sometimes he gives a free pizza away now and then." [Victor, age 11, Puerto Rican/Irish, VB 2-14/15]

In this case, a place from which he and his friends were rejected eventually became a gathering place. But to make it so, they had to regroup, strategize, and even resort to some

subterfuge to keep from being ejected. Once they demonstrated themselves as 'good customers,' the pizza shop owner permitted them to stay and they were able to claim some semblance of a niche.

Throughout these stories is an implication that teens are initially labelled as potential 'problems' by store owners. As young, mostly male, people of color they are not expected to be 'good customers,' and they are held under suspicion. It seems the worst is expected of these teens in many commercial establishments, and as a result they are unfairly subjected to barriers that other customers may not face.

Race was not mentioned in teens' stories of encounters with security guards, but that may be because most of the guards were of similar racial/ethnic backgrounds as the teens. The kinds of conflicts they had with security guards were seen as linked more closely with age, class, and perceptions of whether teens belonged in the place or not, though race may have been a submerged issue within these dynamics. Comments about race being a barrier did not emerge in connection with places other than commercial establishments, but one girls' comment may provide a clue as to why:

> "[She doesn't encounter incidents of racism much locally]…because here [there are] mostly Black and Hispanic, not a lot of 'Americans.' You know what I mean. But, like, everybody [around here] judges you for your personality not because of their color or race." [Jennifer, age 15, "Hispanic", JO 1-20]

It is also possible that teens tended to relate the kinds of incidents of which they were most aware, and which were most dramatic and salient in their daily experience.

As mentioned earlier, there were other kinds of barriers to 'being in places' that teens perceived, though they were mentioned much less frequently. Some teens felt that places, activities, or resources were lacking in the local area (4 boys, 1 girl), or that there were physical barriers that blocked them from being in a particular place (2 boys, 1 girl). For two boys, competition over places was mentioned as a barrier when local sports facilities, or commercial areas, had too many people trying to use them at once. And two boys also felt they had been excluded from places because of class issues connected with those particular places. The overriding theme in all these cases was that teens wanted to be in a particular place, or a kind of place, and they could not because of some form of block to their entering or occupying that place.

In general, it was clear from their stories that teens have less power than the forces pressing upon them, and are at a disadvantage in trying to find or establish a niche for themselves in the local area. For many teens, strategies for affecting changes in the local area are unclear, as we shall address later.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FINDINGS: PLACES FOR EARLY ADOLESCENTS

Teens responded to a series of questions which were designed to get at whether there were places for teens ('places for people around your age around here') in the local area. These questions were designed to get at the issue of whether teens felt that places in the local area were available for, and served the purposes of, teens. Conversely, these questions were also intended to reveal whether teens felt a sense of 'placelessness' in the local area.

Just over half of the teens (15 of 28, or 54%) thought there were places for teens in the local area, while 13 (46%) did not. It is striking that teens would be so evenly split on this issue. Nearly half the teens thought places for teens were lacking in the area, which partially underscores the 'no place to be' phenomenon which Francis (1979) and Ladd (1978) identified some time ago. As we shall discuss below, however, the kinds of places that those teens thought would be for teens, if they did exist, were similar to those identified by others as existing. The characteristics of places they wanted were similar to what other teens had mentioned as being in the local area. The differences among teens who thought places

for teens existed, versus not, was not so much in terms of the qualities desired in places, but in their view of whether such places actually existed for teens.

It was puzzling that gender did not seem to make a difference in how teens answered these questions. Boys were slightly more likely to mention wanting 'sports' facilities than girls, and girls were somewhat more likely to mention 'socializing' with peers as important for teen places, but the distinction was not dramatic. As was true for the 'neighborhood' questions, it seems that very general questions (about teens in general, or about places in general) elicited fewer differences than questions which related more closely to each teens' specific, particular experiences and actions in places. In addition, it may have been helpful to have asked specific questions about places 'for' girls versus boys to prompt this kind of distinction.

Teens who had identified 'barriers' to their entry or use of places (see earlier section) were somewhat more likely to say that there were places for teens in the local area than those who reported no 'barriers' ('yes' or 'kind of' to 'places for teens'; 10 teens or 63% versus 5 teens or 42%). This seems contradictory. After all, shouldn't teens who perceive

barriers in their environment also say there are no places for teens, or at least fewer places? As mentioned earlier, however, it seems that teens who mention barriers are those who are more active in the larger environment, and who are therefore more likely to encounter barriers. They are also more likely to know of more places through direct experience, and are somewhat more likely to say there are places for teens in the local area.

The nine teens (4 girls, 5 boys) who said there were places for teens 'around here' mentioned the Boy's Club (the Madison Square Boys & Girls Club, a site-based youth-serving organization's multi-purpose facility nearby), various public parks in the area, (although not the one adjacent to their housing, which had been identified as problematic by many teens), open spaces around schools, outdoor spaces adjacent to and behind the housing complex, the local library, and programs in the building's community center. The general characteristics that made these places 'for teens,' in their opinion, were that these were accessible, nearby places where teens could engage in enjoyable activities with age-peers, and where teens felt welcome, comfortable and secure. They were places in which teens could 'be' without interference. The physical design of these places was important to the extent

that it provided an accessible location, and to the extent that teens could engage with each other and with valued activities, supported by the features of the place. For several teens having a place in which they could 'socialize' with other teens was especially important.

> "Well, many teenagers hang around everywhere, but, mostly, I hang around...in the 'backyard' [open space behind the apartment complex]—that's where I see most of my friends. That's where they mostly hang around to play sports, or we talk about school, girls, and all that...[it's a place for teens because] it's not far from these homes. Like, you just go around the corner, or just walk a little bit and go up. And, you know, you mostly see everyone there...we just go in the 'backyard' and we do whatever we want there that is not against the law or violates [the rules of the housing complex]." [Frank, age 14, FV 51]

As one girl also said "[the 'Boys Club' is a place for teens:

> "[Because] a lot of people [her age] go there and it's a nice place to be, because, there's a lot of things to offer. There's a lot of things to do there." [Jessica, age 12/13, JH 1-55]

Another girl said the area near the low-income housing complex, and a park a few blocks away were 'places for teens':

> "...because you can play basketball and tennis [in the park]...Over here [at the housing complex], there's a lot of things you can do, like, basketball too. And here, it's just like, they just like sitting here. 'Cause they [teens] all live there and they go around here, speak to somebody, then go back around...it doesn't matter, you know, what place it is as long as everybody is there." [Vernidez, age 14, VB, 42/66]

For some teens, the 'places for teens' were also defined by the absence of negatives. They were places where one could avoid 'trouble' on the streets or conflicts with adults:

> "Yeah, you know, they [teens] have the Boys' Club, that's the main place in this area. You have the gym [there], that's all, you go there to play ball. It's better to go there than to hang out on the streets. You know, do what they were doing. Keep them off the streets, out of trouble." [Mike, age 14, MF 1-70]

> As another boy also said: "...I like that it [the neighborhood] has places where kids could go...not like in most places where there are only streets to go and play there where they hang out, and police officers have to tell them, like, 'you can't play here' and 'you might break a window.' But, you know, most people are lucky [here]; we have a back yard to play at, Boys' Club, park, you know, a lot of places to go..." [Frank, age 14, FV 38].

Most of the teens who thought there were places for teens in the local area also thought, not too surprisingly, that there should be more places for teens, or that some of the existing places should be augmented or modified to better serve their needs (only 2 teens said there was no need for more places). Usually, these comments represented amplifications of the kinds of places they already knew of, and had available:

> "Mostly like the same thing [in back of the apartment building], but bigger. They [should] get more stuff in it...like a real park." [Paul, age 12, PD 1-40]

> "There should be more places instead of going to the same place all of the time. It's a little boring sometimes...[there should be more places] so you don't get bored going to the same place the next day." [Ronnie, age 15, RK 1-46]

> "They should have more 'little places' around here for teenagers. [Places to go to in the evening]...something like this [community center in the building]. Have pool [tables], ping pong, T.V., you know, music, like that. Nothing big. Or have, play cards and stuff like that. You know, just play around." [Mike, age 14, MF 1-71].

A few suggestions were more sweeping, suggesting new kinds of places or transformations of existing places:

> "[There should be] A disco for teenagers. Anybody over 13, 13 and up. Not adults. Really, adults shouldn't be there. That would be nice because that would be a place where everybody [teenagers] would go. Really, no alcohol served, [no] loud music. Or, they should have a diner, a real nice diner. Not that one [diner on the corner] because that one is boring, where a lot of teenagers go. I like it, but it's not for teenagers. Where teenagers go, and there's a lot of music there and things like that...They should have something like that." [Jessica, age 12/13, JH 1-58].

Occasionally comments referring to the age-grading, or age-integration, of places came up in this discussion, as we see in the quote above. Even among teens who thought there were places for teens, the issue of separation by ages was an ambivalent one. Jessica's comments above can be understood in light of problems she experienced in an adult disco (see earlier section on 'problems'). Some teens wanted a

separation from adults, but the value of contact with adults under some circumstances was also recognized by a few. As we shall see later on, the patterning of teens' place experience was in many cases influenced by adults in their families. However, even adults not in their families can be influential to teens in certain places in a positive way:

> "I like the people that work there [at the Boys' Club]. Because most of the people they got are good people. They, like, help you and everything...Like, they hold contests and stuff like teams where you can join and participate. Rather than some clubs, they'll just let you do anything. I'd want the club, like, they have someone to help you to see what you need help on and then help you out...Say, like, you have a bad jump shot. They would instead of just, like, practicing on your own, they'd have someone teach you the way to shoot and how much concentration and force to shoot the ball, or lay-ups or whatever...they [also] train us to show us some skills for a job. Like [for] this summer or future jobs...We go out and do things that would, like, help the community better...[they] show us some skills and give us some working experience [to help get jobs in the future]" [Ronnie, age 15, RK 2-7/8].

Another boy made the case for intergenerational community programs in which teens would help 'little kids,' as teens had been helped by adults, as part of the 'cycle of life' (these comments were made before Elton John penned the song):

> "You know, teens could help little kids too [through programs in local places], like, to get a sense, to get involved with the area too. You know, when they grow up they become teenagers themselves, they could get involved in the area too and show the other little kids how they could get involved...so they could show the other little kids [so] they get it right...they [little kids]

> should not be afraid of turning to a teenager, or probably not be afraid of puberty or something like that. You know, like, not to be afraid of becoming a teenager and becoming an adult. Like, teenagers worry about becoming adults and kids worry about becoming teenagers. So, that's like a cycle there...So, like, you know, when the cycle begins, like, when adults turn old and the teenagers turn into adults, and the kids turn [into] teenagers, like, you can help each other, you know, like a cycle and all that." [Frank, age 14, FV 101-103]

Comments such as these, either describing or suggesting positive contact across generations in places were rare, however. They were either not mentioned, or came forward in complaints about conflicts or fears in places. One of the key dynamics among teens in this area seemed to be the lack of opportunity they had to connect with other generations. In part, this may have been due to an effort on the part of some adolescents to separate from others, but many teens would have welcomed more connection with people in places in a positive way.

Six other teens felt that there were places for teens, but they were tentative. The kinds of places, and the qualities of places, they saw as being for teens were similar to those mentioned above. However, their answers to the questions took on a "yes, but..." quality. They saw the number of places available to teens, or the access to places, or

characteristics of facilities as being limited. Issues of age-grading and age-integration again surfaced. A few teens wanted places to be supervised by adults, primarily for safety reasons, and two mentioned limiting occupancy of places to teens to avoid interference from 'little kids' or to change features of parks that were originally designed for 'little kids' (e.g., play equipment) so that they would be more suitable for teens. Three of these teens mentioned that finding places for teens could be problematic because most are dominated by adults: "You know, teenagers are, like, in the middle, you know, [between] young kids and, you know, the adults. The teenagers sometimes are left out of some things [places]." [Jose, age 13, JS 1-14]

This point was underscored by another boy who outlined the reasons why there are some, but not many, places for teens in the area:

> "The Boys' Club, for one, that's where teenagers go...the arcades, well, the movie theaters, and that's kind of it...Everyplace, everywhere you go there's a place for an adult but not that many for kids [teenagers]. You'd have to go to a specific place to get a place for a teenager...like I pointed out the arcade and they Boys' Club, there's a place where you could walk in and like be comfortable. But, like, if you go to Sloans [a local grocery store] or somewhere when you walk in it's not like a place where you could be comfortable because you might be mistaken for stealing. It's a place where you just buy things and it's not like you stay there and

> talk to your friends and stuff. It's not really that many places like that." [Terrence, age 12, TM 1-21]

Finding a comfortable place, a place in which they have a role, a place and people with whom they can engage, a place of belonging, seems to be one of the central struggles for teens living in this area.

Thirteen of the teens (6 females, 7 males) interviewed felt there were no places for teens in the local area. The qualities they thought of as being associated with places for teens were similar to the ones mentioned earlier. Generally, these teens were vague, and at times negative, in their answers. In many cases, they did not give details to expand on their answers, and in many cases this seemed to reflect a true lack of detailed knowledge of, or experience with, the surrounding area. Most of these teens (9 teens) seemed to have patterns of place experience which were very focused on their home, and immediate surroundings. Several of these teens did make comments about age-grading, from the perspective of wanting places that would be separate from the 'little kids.' And a few of these teens expressed concerns about 'bad people' threatening teens in places, and of needing to 'get teens out of the streets.' The others (4 boys) did

venture into the larger area, but seemed not to connect with particular places as being important to themselves, and they were also more likely than others to be among those who made comments about perceiving threats of violence as being in the local area (see 'problems' section above). Positive examples of age-integration with adults in the community were almost never mentioned by these thirteen teens; one boy said he had helped an older woman cross the street one time, and he had gone shopping for an older man who lived in his building, but that generally he does not offer to help older people around here:

> "…unless they need help. 'Cause, you know, like, kids walking by [say] 'You need help?' They [older persons] think you'll mug 'em or something like that…like, they give you looks and stuff…you know, [like] 'Get away from me, I don't know you' or 'Do you live in the building?'" [Carlo, age 14, CB 2-5].

Clearly, connecting with places, and with people in places, is not always easy for these teens. Many of them feel there are 'no' places for teens, or limited options. Others do feel there are places available to them, and they can outline the characteristics which make those places 'for' teenagers, which are in line with the characteristics other teens imagine would be in places for teens. Even though most teens feel the area is a 'good one' in which to grow up, they struggle with

finding ways to engage effectively with their surroundings. Generally, teens perceive the structure of the local area as being set up for adults, and to a lesser extent for 'little kids,' with teens occupying an uncertain middle ground. Opportunities to engage in a meaningful way with adults other than those in their households seem scarce, an issue which will become clearer in the section on 'environmental changes' below.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FINDINGS: TEENAGERS' IDEAS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Teens were asked questions about changes that they would want to see, if anything were possible, to their neighborhood and housing complex. They were also asked how these changes might occur, and who might make them possible. In addition, I asked them whether they thought teens now had "a say" or an "influence" on their local environment, and we explored teens' opinions of how this might (or might not) be possible in the future. Because the answers to questions about the neighborhood and housing complexes overlapped a great deal, I will treat them together. This overlap is not surprising, as most teens tend to view their housing and the local area as 'connected,' as we learned in the 'neighborhood' section earlier.

Reclaiming Park Space

The major focus of teens' suggestions for change in the area had to do with wanting to 'reclaim' the local New York City park (the Bellevue South Park, known to most of the teens as the 26th street park). This park was a place that most teens avoided, although they could remember a time, in prior years, when they and their families and friends did go there. Drug

dealing had become more prevalent in the park, and homeless men from a newly opened shelter nearby had begun to use it. Residents of the local area also avoided the park, and many teens, at other points in the interview, mentioned that their parents/guardians instructed them to avoid the place for their safety. This park was situated across the street from the low-income housing and adjacent to the middle-income complex. In the past, it had provided a foot-path for children and teens from the low-income complex to get to the Boys & Girls Club three blocks away, but the gate across the street from the housing complex had been closed off, and they now approached the facility by way of sidewalks along an Avenue. For some teens, their fears regarding their safety, and their reactions to the park as 'dirty' and unkempt, embodied a larger concern that the process of change could engulf the larger area beyond the park, including their housing, and then no place would be 'safe' or 'good' anymore.

> "[It's scary in] the park...where the drug addicts are. None of the kids around this neighborhood don't go there no more. Because it's dangerous...Their parents are afraid. Even if the parents don't care they [kids] still don't go there no more. [The kids used to go there] a lot, me too. My grandmother and my mother, we used to sit there. I used to play with my friends over there...[Then my grandmother said] 'No, that park is dangerous now.' And then we went to another park [a few blocks away...[I would never go in their now because of] the drug addicts, the drinkers, the way, um, they fight,

the way they, you know—once they had a fight in there. They probably have guns. They probably have knives, any kind of weapons. They can beat you up...I wouldn't, nobody wouldn't go over there no more..me and my friends, we wouldn't dare go in there..." [Millie, age 11, MC 2-4]

"...Like, two years ago you [would] see people [who live in the buildings] sitting around on the benches, but then all of the bums come and, like, all of the junkies and everything, they come take the park over. There's no reason for that..." [Mike, age 14, MF 1-49/50]

"Back there [in the park] it's getting worser..there's nothing to do. You see rats back there. It's getting like a hell-hole...If we don't change it, everything is just gonna get badder, worse. Everything's gonna start going down. Once, when we first moved here, it was nice. Kids stayed out late - little kids stayed out late, and parents don't have to watch them..Now, if this place keeps going as it is, it will just keep getting worse." [Carlo, age 14, CB 1-3, 1-8]

Of the twenty-eight teens, twenty-one mentioned some aspect of 'cleaning-up' the park and surrounding areas to eliminate 'drugs,' 'bums,' 'crooks,''addicts,' 'homeless, 'crazies,' 'weirdos,' 'rats,' or 'garbage' which all tended to be thought of as linked, not carefully distinguished, as they represented general threats to these teens. For some of these teens, the changes would involve a 'sweeping out' or 'cleaning up' process, as if purging the area would eliminate the problems they perceived as threatening.

"In the park across the street, for one, clean the place up a lot and maybe you should have a maze or a park, I

> mean, like, an amusement park there…Because nobody goes there except for people who are doing the wrong things. [It's] Not really a place to be at." [Terrence, age 12, TM 1-17]

Most teens seemed to have no idea about the larger dynamics underlying the emergence of the problems they were perceiving; they simply saw the presence of these as threatening, and to be avoided or removed (cf. Sennett, 1970, on 'purification' of urban places). Most teens had not personally experienced a direct problem with anyone in the park, perhaps because they avoided it so much because of their fears, though some told of incidents they knew of (as mentioned in the 'problems' section earlier). A few teens, although wanting to 'clean up' the area, also spoke of the need for the homeless to have shelter or at least a place to be:

> "Throw the bums out across the street [in the park]…I feel sorry for them, though. Like, keep them there if that's the only place they could go." (Jennifer, age 15, JO 1-27]

> "[I'd have the homeless people in the park] go into a home. A good, good home." [Victor, age 11, VB 1-47]

> "I'd like them to take the homeless people [in the park] and give them one of those buildings that are burnt down, like on 2nd Avenue in the early 30's [a few blocks away]. They have those buildings and they're not doing anything with them. Fix them up a little and put the homeless people in there. I'd like that. For the people in the park [the drug dealers and addicts], I wish that they'd just be sweeped out and everything." [Denise, age 12, DN 1-38]

Beyond wanting to 'clean-up' the park and surrounding areas, which primarily seemed to be a reaction to fear and a sense of repulsion from place, some teens wanted to see changes made to these places that would better serve their interests. They wanted to have the parks and other local facilities changed to create 'play' areas that were more appropriate to teens (versus being only for 'little kids'), made into gathering spots, and either upgraded or created as sports facilities.

Sports Facilities

Boys were much more likely to comment on wanting sports facilities (6 boys, 1 girl), which mostly reflected those boys' daily interest in participating in sports and using parks in the local area for that purpose. In descriptions of their 'typical day,' which was covered in more detail earlier in the section on 'place patterns,' girls did not mention engaging with the sports facilities in the local area to the extent that boys did. Outdoor sports facilities, such as basketball courts, were in fact dominated by the presence of males, and girls did not express an interest in being involved with sports. Girls tended to describe themselves as in a 'watching' role, or socializing with others, when near outdoor sports places such as basketball courts. Both girls and boys did talk, however, about wanting 'play' equipment, such as

larger swings, which involved physical activity. [The study data were collected some time ago, so it is possible that girls may have become more involved in sports activities locally, in line with the rising, nationwide trend towards girls' participation (Zimmerman & Reavill, 1998). However, the situation involving the availability of sports facilities and programs for urban teens continues to be difficult.]

A few of the boys' comments about wanting more sports facilities called for rather sweeping changes which would transform the park into a very different kind of place:

> "...make, like, a big dome, something like that, like a big tennis court, a little basketball court with, like, a spot with games. Or a little hang out spot there...a place for, like, tables, and you can buy some snacks. Something where you could watch T.V., and play games or talk." [Ronnie, age 15, RK 1-37/38]

> "I'd make the ice rink and I'd make the parks to be one hockey park. One, if they like basketball, and another just for the people who lived there. And one for, like, soccer and everything else... And then the third one would be a big playground or else they'd split it...Move everything [now there] out of there so we can have it all clear." [Tony, age 11, TL 1-51/52]

If these kinds of changes were carried out, they might tend not to serve girls, at least as the environment was structured and girls' interests seemed to be served (or not served) in the local area at the time of this study. Although these boys did not mention excluding girls from these sports facilities,

they did not mention including them either. In current sports activities, boys were involved only with other boys. In all likelihood, other interventions would be necessary to insure that girls and boys were both served well by those places. In addition, these changes might accentuate age-segregation, and barriers to non-residents of the housing complexes in which teens lived, creating a set of circumstances that were a mirror image of those teens complained about (see earlier section on 'barriers to access' and teen places). Age-segregation may not always be a bad option to compensate for the lack of teen-specific places, but the issues are complicated and would call for a cross-generational discussion of the kinds of place that need to be created or supported.

Repair and Maintenance

The other kinds of comments about changes, mentioned by fewer teens, centered on 'fixing up' things that were broken in buildings (mentioned by those in the low-income buildings), enhancing 'security' in the buildings and local area (discussed in an earlier section), making the apartment buildings more like 'rich houses' or 'more sophisticated' (mentioned by those in the middle-income building), improving elevator service in the low-income buildings, and having more 'programs' for youth in residential buildings. There were no

clear difference between boys and girls on these questions. One boy, in striking contrast to the others, said no changes were necessary to the building or neighborhood because everything was "perfectly perfect." [FV 40/48] This boy had a particularly active approach to seeking opportunities in the immediate area near his home, and in the city at large with friends, which may have led to his finding many satisfying places, social encounters, and activities. (One boy also did not have an opinion about changes.) In addition to making specific kinds of comments about aspects of their environment, eight teens also said that either their housing complex, or the neighborhood, or even 'the whole city' could be completely changed around, reflecting the sense that they were not attached to whole segments of their surroundings. These teens seemed to be indicating that they did not care for maintaining their surroundings as they were, and would be open to far-reaching changes.

Who is Responsible? Youth Participation in Community Change

When asked how changes in the neighborhood and buildings might be made, and by whom, it was clear that most teens viewed the change process as one in which they and other teens were not involved. The kinds of 'change agents' mentioned were viewed as distant authorities, creating changes without the

involvement of teens, and in many cases, without any of the local residents being involved. Only one girl mentioned the idea that teens could be directly involved by circulating and submitting a 'petition' (she had a friend in Florida who had told her of such an effort), and this was in the context of complaining how adults unilaterally had made changes to the environment:

> "...All the grown-ups, they always say, like, 'O.K., no matter what the kids say, we're going to condemn that park and put up a high-rise. No matter what kids want, we're going to condemn that building that they like to hang out in and put up other things.' Well, sometimes that happens to grown-ups to, but, mostly kids. They usually condemn parks. Right over here they condemned the parking lot [next to her apartment building] that we used to play baseball in to put up that dorm building [for nurses at the nearby hospital]. It was like a playing field in the parking lot, but, you see, they tore it down...see, if that thing was still there, more people would have fun around this block, but they had to put up that dumb dorm...Well, maybe one day if they try to condemn something, we can put up a petition...Because if we get enough votes or something we can bring it to the higher-ups and show them this can't be condemned because, you see, all these people don't want it to be, and they will be very disappointed if it is, and you don't want to have that many people disappointed in your city. [She then goes on to describe an actual event involving her cousin petitioning for a park in Florida.]" [Crystal, 11/12, CJ 1-28]

Only two boys spontaneously mentioned the idea that adult residents of the building could be involved in some form of collective action.

> "They [building residents] need a lot of new stuff, but they could do it if they all work together and

> cooperate...well, I think they could report to the Board of Health about the building, you know, about the elevators being broken every week, like that. Get the, get a new security company instead of [company name], I think it is. Like, rent the one like [new company name], like they have at the Plaza [nearby middle-income complex], like that. You know, they'd do a better job..." [Mike, age 14, MF 1-51

Comments such as these, on the possibility of teens' direct involvement in changes, or on the possibility of cooperative action among local residents were rare. It was much more common for teens to see change as a process driven by a distant power, making very real changes with consequences for them without their input or involvement.

Nine teens could not describe who would effect changes in the neighborhood or buildings, or they were extremely vague about this (e.g., saying "maybe The President" could make changes but not knowing who the President was, and then saying "I'm not sure"). Six of those nine teens were girls. This may reflect a reticence on the part of these girls, due to feeling a lack of 'voice' on these issues, or it may reflect a reluctance to guess when they really did not know who would or could make changes. It also may be that girls had less knowledge of the community because for some their actions were more limited than boys' in the neighborhood, and they had had

fewer opportunities to learn who might be involved in local settings.

Of the nineteen teens who made comments about possible 'change agents' in the neighborhood and building complexes, twelve were boys and seven were girls. Their conceptions of who might effect changes varied widely, although, as mentioned earlier, they did reflect a general sense that 'change agents' were distant authorities:

> "The park across the street used to be a real good park, but then all those drug addicts started going in there. So, I would want, like, all the cops to take all of them out and make it a really nice park again so we can all go back in...[the cops should] put 'em somewhere. Put 'em in a rehabilitation center and all that. Jail if they do a really bad thing." [Crystal, 11/12, CJ 1-25]

> "I don't know, the mayor probably [could order changes]. I don't know, somebody to convince all the people to clean up the city...[for housing for the homeless] Some people open it up and then it's, like, 'charity money'...[for the local park] there's this, I don't know, but I see green trucks going here and 35th street, and they have, you know, green trucks, and it says [parks department seal] on them. You know, [they have] shovels and sweepers and everything. So, I guess, they're the ones who would make the changes." [Victor, age 11, VB 2-21/25]

At times, these distant authorities and influences were envisioned as a personage:

> [Regarding changes around the apartment complex] "I heard of them [person who owns/manages the building] but I never saw them. It would be nice if he took care, if he, like, lived in the building and took care of it so

> that more people got to know each other, so it was more, like, a 'open thing' [versus 'private property']...in my building it's not like you know everybody...I'm talking about the person who bought the building or whoever [he] is unless he's not alive anymore. I don't know if he's alive or not. But if he was alive and he had like an apartment in anyone of these [buildings] just to make sure that things would be o.k. Because like these buildings could belong to him and he could be in Florida or Europe or something...If he lived here then it would be more open because then people would know him as a person..." [Terrence, age 12, TM 2-15].

It was rare for any of these teens to know any possible 'change agent' by name (one girl did know the name of the building manager); teens did not seem to know of means by which they, or adult residents, could effectively reach 'change agents.' Teens clearly felt alienated from the process of change in their local area, while also having many ideas and concerns, and, certainly, a great stake in changes that were happening or could happen. A few were hopeful that adults and authorities could make changes for the better, but they were generally unsure of how or when this would happen. The information that teens had about changes in this neighborhood was based upon their direct experience and observation (or lack of it) and upon information filtered to them through peers, family, neighbors and friends.

Teens generally agreed that they did not have a 'say' or influence on what happened in their environment, but they also

agreed that teens should be able to have more of a 'say.' Girls and boys, and teens living in the low- and middle-income complexes, made similar kinds of comments on these points. Several teens suggested that teens' direct experience with the local environment was an asset, and represented a point of view that should be called upon in the change process. These feelings were usually bound up in a sense of frustration that adults 'don't listen' to what teens have to say:

> "You know, they say 'Teenagers shouldn't be heard, they should be seen.' You know, they think we don't know anything. They say 'You don't know anything because you're not grown-up yet. You still think you know everything.' We might not know everything, but we know a lot of things about the block 'cause, you know, the parents are never usually around - they're working or they're taking care of the kids. We're the ones who are outside. We're the ones who have to deal with it [the local area]. So, they probably can't really speak to the grown-ups [about the local area] 'cause they don't know anything about it. But we're out there everyday - we're out there all the time." [Rueben, age 15, RT 59]

After describing the potential life-long impact of negative changes in the neighborhood on teens, and arguing that teens should be involved in having a say because they are "the ones who are gonna have to live with it" [the changes], another boy said:

> "I would say that people should listen to the teenagers. They have good thoughts. You know, a kid ain't no different [from an adult]. I mean, they are different from an adult but I'm saying they got, they should have the same legal rights as an older person. They should

> have the right to say. You know, they have to speak what they feel." [Mike, age 14, MF 1-73]

In his comments, one boy expanded on the view that teens' involvement might benefit their personal development, as well as affecting practical changes in the area:

> "I think [teens should have a say in changes] because they have thoughts also. They [teens] should have a right to say, even maybe little kids should have a right to say, and I think teenagers should have plenty to say because that would give them a sense of responsibility and a sense of character too...let's say, to adults, and it would show great influence on kids not to be afraid of older people telling them what to do, or not. You know, teenagers have a right to say 'Oh, this should be staying open a little while because mostly teenagers hang around there at times so it should be open.' And I think they have the right to say something. [I don't know how this could happen] I might get some few ideas like having a council, or something, for teenagers, or a club, like, bringing up petitions and all that...Many people have different ideas what to do..." [Frank, age 14, FV 60-61]

Despite the arguments for teens having a say, many were pessimistic about the possibility that adults would 'listen' to teenagers. A few teens also expressed reservations about whether teens could 'handle' being involved, because they might 'be wild,' are 'too young,' 'might not care,' and because some teens do 'mess things up' and adults, therefore, view all of them with suspicion. Some teens advocated teen involvement with adult supervision. Others suggested that

teens could have an influence through parents and other adults they knew who, in turn, would communicate suggestions to the building management, 'the mayor,' and others. Except for one girl, who remembered conveying suggestions about the newly opened community center in the building to the managers through her mother, none of the teens could recall a time when their involvement in change in the local area was solicited or welcomed, so most of the comments these teens made were hypothetical and not grounded in actual experience participating in decision-making about the community. This, in itself, makes a major statement about teens' role, or lack of it, in effecting changes in this community. It also raises questions about the longer term impact the lack of a role might have on teens' sense of citizenship and participation in community in the future, and as adults (cf. Baldassari, Lehman, & Wolfe, 1987; Hart, 1992, 1997; Katz, 1998).

CHAPTER NINE

DISCUSSION

Throughout their accounts, the teens in this study talked of trying to pursue valued activities in places, of searching for places to support what they wanted to do, and of trying to connect with others. In the broadest sense, they were "seeking a place to be." In the relatively complex, heterogenous urban neighborhood in which they lived, they did find some ways to accomplish these goals. However, they also confronted forces which shaped and constrained their opportunities to achieve their purposes. In teens' descriptions of their encounters with places on a daily basis, issues related to age, gender, racial, and economic exclusion (versus inclusion) surfaced time and again. Teens also had to deal with the tension between reaching out to connect with places, activities, and people versus withdrawing from or battling with threats in their environment, whether actually experienced, or perceived as possible. Teens' ways of dealing with these tensions in this particular location were an ongoing construction of their own experiences and attitudes, as well as being influenced by others around them including age-peers, family members, other adults in the community, and other sources of information such as the media. All of these

were also set within the larger pre-existing structures of the environment (cf. Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).

In their transactions with environments - whether in the home, near the housing complex, in public spaces, schools, or recreational facilities, in the city at large, or in other places outside the city - teens were trying to work out ways of engaging with their surroundings. At times, teens could find ways of engaging with places in a satisfying way, and they expressed the value of those encounters and places to them. Many times, however, environmental and social processes thwarted teens' engagement either in an active or passive way, with problematic consequences.

What is it that teens were trying to do within environments? How were they engaging with places, and within places? There were several things that teens were trying to do relevant to their own personal development: build skills and competencies, belong socially/be with other people, develop intimacy, enjoy themselves - find fun and entertainment, develop independence, experience and regulate their own emotions, learn about possibilities (in the present and for the future), and develop a sense of self.

There were also other things that teens were trying to do in their environmental transactions that seemed to be focused more on coping with negative circumstances (yet which may have had developmental effects as well): staying safe/ avoiding or somehow dealing with dangers/threats to personal safety in the environment, coping with or eliminating boredom, escaping or somehow dealing with negative stimulation/stress, and reducing the sense of being overwhelmed. Although these kinds of transactions seemed to be focused in the present moment, they may also have had developmental consequences which extended over time (cf. Garbarino et al., 1992).

Contradictions and 'Seeking a Place to Be'

In this neighborhood, teens had "some places to be," and they were "seeking a place to be," but they often experienced frustrations and thwartings in finding ways to "be in places." These teens lived in an environment over which they have very little influence on the level of planning and management (cf. Owens, 1997), and which some seemed to have concluded was not 'for' them. Francis (1979) and Ladd (1978) have outlined the problems urban teens experience in having "no place to be" and of existing in an environment which denies "legitimate adventure," which seems to partially apply to the teens I

interviewed as well. The local area, and the city at large, were not completely devoid of places of interest and use to teens, but their relationships with places were complicated by many different dynamics and sets of competing interests.

What at first seemed to me to be contradictions in teens' accounts I later came to understand as an expression of this ongoing struggle that teens were having with "being in" places that were not ususally designed or intended 'for' them, yet which they were trying somehow to make their own. The process of trying to make places their own may also reflect their developing a sense of self - one of the key developmental tasks of adolescence - connected with the geography and topography of their lives (Proshansky & Fabian, 1987; Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983; Fine et al. 1997, 1998). The contradictions and shifts in teens' accounts I believe reflected the ongoing process of their own personal development and change as adolescents, as well as their evolving sense of relationship with places and other people. The teens in this study were actively involved in the process of developing understandings, meanings, and strategies in their relationships with their surroundings. This process was often 'motivated,' in the psychological sense, and filled with energy and emotion.

The 'Transitional Space' of Early Adolescence

Winnicott's (1971; Davis & Wallbridge, 1990) notion of 'potential space' is related to the contradictions, and motivated search for 'places to be,' that were so apparent in teens' accounts of the relationships with their surroundings. (Winnicott's (1971) ideas were mainly developed in the context of early childhood but they are relevant, by extension, to adolescents as well.) According to Winnicott (1971), the child is engaged in a continuous process of 'creative play' that is neither completely a result of inner psychic reality, nor of external 'objective' conditions. 'Play' is a process of creative interchange between self and reality in an intermediate (almost metaphorical) 'space.' Among younger children, this is the process by which the infant becomes aware of the distinction between 'me' and 'not me' (i.e., that which exists apart from the direct control of the self). This process depends upon the 'cultural field,' in the sense that play is somewhat dependent upon customs, practices, and material artifacts as 'givens.' It is also dependent upon the child's sense of trust, or confidence in the environment, as dependable and responsive to the childs' actions. If the environment is not 'dependable' in this sense, Winnicott

(1971) stated that their would be a loss of 'play area,' in that the child's development would not be able to progress, and would be limited. In the long run, a severe lack of trust would lead to the child not being able to interact with, and contribute to, the culture. In Winnicott's (1971) scheme, the process of play is in fact charged with emotion and highly motivated. In addition, the "potential space" - the working area of interchange between each individual and his/her environment - is highly variable and individualized depending upon experiences and the sense of trust that is built up.

By analogy, we can see some of these same processes at work in the accounts of teens involved in this study. Ostensibly, they all lived in the 'same' environment, because the location of their residences and the physical environment around them is in common. However, their actions in, perceptions of, and feelings about this larger 'objective' environment differ considerably. Their transactions with their surroundings can be seen as a form of 'play' in the sense that Winnicott (1971) meant it. For example, the perceived neighborhood is one kind of 'transitional space' (here I am using Aitken's, 1998, term which he adapted from Winnicott's, 1971, 'potential space'

because I think it captures the dynamic nature of the transaction more closely). The 'perceived neighborhood' was used by teens to shape and form their relationship with their inner and outer worlds, as well as their daily actions. The 'neighborhood,' as defined by each teen, took on characteristics of space, social relationships, emotional tone, and support (or the lack of these qualities for those who feel there was 'no neighborhood'). This sense of neighborhood also was related to each teens' range of motion, of action, day-to-day.

We can also see the work of the 'transitional space' in teens' discussions of the meaning of home and their sense of where they might like to live in the future. For example, the girl who apparently contradicted herself in her statements of where she might want to live in the future - in New York City versus in the suburbs - appears to have been going through a process of using her experience of the material and social world over time to define elements of herself in relation to that world. Another example of the work of the 'transitional space' can be seen in the description given by one boy of his efforts with his friends to make a place for themselves in a local pizza parlor. As you may recall, he and his friends were initially ejected by

the store's owner, but they later devised a strategy to 'accidentally' meet there and they gradually became accepted as 'good customers.' It was through this play of strategy and learning that they changed their relationship with their surroundings, their understanding of how settings 'work,' and quite likely their views of themselves as capable of affecting the circumstances of their lives. Teens' views of their surroundings, therefore, can take on heightened importance if they are used in this process of meaning-making, self-definition, and attempts at reciprocal influence on their surroundings. Places and their features can become, in a sense, 'transitional objects' used in teens' processes of making meaning and developing emotionally.

Developmental Implications of the Environment and 'Transitional Space'

What are some of the ways in which teens can develop through this process, in a positive sense? How can their relationships with places contribute to their personal development in the longer run? Teens accounts, cutting across the various topic areas, suggest that they can develop in the following ways through this transitional process of 'play' specific to early adolescence: by forming

an enlarged sense of the world, of their surrounding environment, of greater 'horizons' discovered; by shifting from dependence on adults to provide the sum total conditions of experience, to a more active stance toward seeking and structuring one's own experiences (while still holding the possibility for positive interchange with, and support from, adults); by developing a greater range and depth of skills and strategies for knowing about and dealing with circumstances in the larger world; by constructing a sense of self as becoming a part of, and connected with, an extended, complex, community of people and places; and by evolving a sense of self as differentiated from, or identified with, apsects of the larger socio-physical realm.

What is at stake if opportunities do not exist for positive development in these directions? As we saw in some accounts, some teens can become alienated from their surroundings and other people, saying they 'don't care' about any place, living in a world that might just as well be completely interchangeable, and feeling as though they don't live in a supportive community or neighborhood. It is also possible that these teens may not have, or may not perceive, opportunities then to develop skills for living in the larger community as well.

The notion of 'transitional space' can also be conceptually expanded upon by the work of Vygotsky (1978) and Valsiner (1987). Vygotsky's notion of development suggests that the child learns through a process of interplay with the social structure, provided by or facilitated by adults and social forces. Vygotsky's formulations (1978; and Valsiner's related model, 1987), described in detail in the introduction, place the developing child within a social context that is engineered to provide the next steps of challenges for learning and growth, as the child reaches the stage of readiness to do so. This relationship is ongoing and progressive, with greater skill and differentiation resulting with successful development. The question these theoretical statements raise for the experience of teens in places in the current study is: did their environment provide the opportunity and challenges necessary for each child to grow and develop? Were teens presented with possiblities that would assist their progressive development? To some extent, the places 'for' teens and the people who were involved in their lives did provide these conditions. However, many of the limits placed upon them, such as the recurring barriers to places and resources, and the experience or perception of threatening events, set down

a set of negative conditions that could have led to the "loss of play" (cf. Winnicott, 1971). Following from Bronfenbrenner's work (1988; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998), we should also point out that part of teens' development involves their expanding knowledge of, and skill in dealing with, the system of settings within which they live.

The examination of teens' experiences from this point of view, and the involvement of teens in participatory efforts to address issues of change in their communities, is a vital policy as well as conceptual issue for future work (cf. Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Gaster, 1991, 1992; Goodnow, 1988; Hart, 1986, 1997; Lewin, 1954; Saegert & Winkel, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978; Valsiner, 1987). It would be especially important to document further how the variety of changing conditions in cities impede or contribute to adolescents' development, as well as looking at which contribute most strongly to their development, especially as the general trend appears to be toward a loss of 'place' for youth in urban areas (cf. Gaster, 1992; Katz, 1998; Hart, 1986). Although teens in the present study mentioned some positive conditions in their environment, the overall tone suggested that the ability of places to support their development, in

the ways mentioned above, was tenuous and difficult to negotiate on a daily basis.

The Role of Adults in Teens' Environmental Experiences

We often think of adolescence as a time of young people turning away from the influence of adults. However, one of the most striking subtexts of the present study was how adults played roles - both positive and negative, and often subtle - in teens' experiences of places. This is important because it relates to the conceptual points mentioned earlier about the structuring of teens' experiences, and their progressive development. Adults influenced teens experience of places by 'channeling' actions within, and knowledge of, the environment (cf. Valsiner, 1987; Vygotsky, 1978). This process was not always intentional, but it certainly exerted an influence.

As we saw in the findings, adult family members provided some of the teens with a supportive context in the home, which gave them the assurance to venture into the larger neighborhood. Some also set rules for safety and limits on movement. 'Familiar faces,' adults in the community that teens knew, gave them some of them a sense that they lived in a neighborhood in which people watched out for each other. In program settings, and in school, adults also served as

teachers and mentors, helping teens to develop skills, confidence, and a sense of direction toward adult life. Family members and other adults were also extremely important in facilitating the 'extension' of teens' place experiences, by taking them to new places in the city and beyond, providing new opportunites (e.g., such as summer music camp), and helping teens to understand how those places worked. These 'extension' experiences often provided teens with opportunities to reflect on their current situations, and were instrumental in the development of 'transitional spaces' as discussed earlier (cf. Aitken, 1998; Winnicott, 1971; Davis & Wallbridge, 1990).

Not all interchanges with adults were positive, however, and many were problematic for teens. As we saw in the findings, barriers to access were a major issue, and these barriers were often controlled or constructed by adults who had no particular interest in these teens' lives. Hassles on the streets (for girls), and the threat of violence (for both girls and boys), were an issue often involving adult males. And the fact that most teens were not involved in community change decisions, and did not know who controlled those changes, or how to influence them, was an issue of social distance between these teens and the adults involved. In

part, this distance may have been due to the sheer density and complexity of the local area. The relatively high residential density of the local area provided the teens with opportunities for a great deal of contact with age peers (cf. Van Vliet --, 1985). However, as Sampson, Morenoff, and Earls (1999) have found, high density areas are characterized by a breakdown in supportive contacts among adults in the community and children, suggesting that special efforts would need to be made in a community such as the one in this study to build these connections more deliberately (also see Littell & Wynn, 1989).

Taylor-Griffin's (1998) work, which retrospectively examined the role that adolescents' community settings played in the "success process" of financially successful Black men, highlights some of the ways in which adults in communities can be supportive of youth development. When looking back, many of these men could identify specific people and places within their communities that had provided crucial supports, guidance, and growth experiences during their development to which some of their adult successes could be attributed. Settings such as non-school sports groups, community-based youth center activities, and neighborhood playgrounds provided support for comfort, belonging, participation, skill

development, and achievenment. Taylor-Griffin (1998) points out that these supports were especially crucial in the face of pervasive racism in the larger culture - in many cases these supports allowed these boys (now men) to transcend racism and see themselves as capable of achieving.

Helpful adults provided important "social capital" to these boys as they grew to achieving adults (in the present study a few similar examples were presented). Taylor-Griffin's (1998) study, taken in conjunction with others, and contrasted with some of the problems in the environment mentioned by teens, suggest that we should further examine the influence of adults in teens' 'transitional spaces' (Aitken, 1998) if we are to truly understand what makes a positive difference in their lives. Recent work by several authors suggests that is possible to construct productive, positive relationships among youth and adults in community programs and settings, which are characterized by high levels of youth direction (vs. being directed solely by adults), a wide range of activities and choices, and active involvement by youth in pro-social projects (Hart, 1992, 1997; Hart et al., 1997; Heath, 1994; Heath & McLaughlin, 1991; Kaplan, 1994; McLaughlin, 2000; McLaughlin, Irby, & Langman, 1994; Skantze, 1995; Ward, 1995). In these instances, teens become active co-participants in

constructing their 'transitional spaces,' in ways that connect them with their community. In the present study, some youth did talk about these kinds of experiences, however, this was one of the ways in which many teens' experiences were tenuous and perhaps even vulnerable.

Conclusion and Directions for Future Work

This study began as a general, descriptive inquiry into teens' relationships with the places they encounter daily, with the aim of highlighting some of the important aspects and concepts involved in those relationships. As a cross-sectional, descriptive study, this project suggested some links between teens' experiences with places and their personal development. It also examined whether teens seemed to be 'connected' with their community, and it looked at the conditions which seemed to facilitate or impede this connection.

This study suggested in many ways that teens' daily experiences with places play a role in their developing sense of self in relation to larger world. Encounters and incidents influenced by the dynamics within and across places affected teens' sense of personal 'agency,' future prospects, and identity (vs. foreclosure) for better or worse. Teens also used places as 'tools' for their purposes

in the work of their 'transitional spaces.' Issues of gender, class, race, and age also intersected many, if not every, experience that teens have with places, and with the general "shape" of their daily pattern of place experiences. These issues were highlighted from the point of view of the teens who were interviewed, combined with an analysis and interpretation drawn from comparing different teens' accounts (cf. Spradely, 1979; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Wolcott, 1994). This study explored the issue of "the place" (and the places) of early adolescence in the larger socio-physical environment, for young people mostly of color, living in a particular location within New York City. Although the literature on adolescents' relationships with their socio-physical environment has developed, particularly in the past decade, it is still difficult to compare the scattered studies which vary considerably in terms of the populations involved, the countries in which the work is conducted, and the exact focus of the studies' content (for details see Cotterell, 1991; Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Francis, 1979; Ladd, 1978; Lynch, 1977; Owens, 1988, 1994, 1997; Noack & Silbereisen, 1988; Schiavo, 1988; Skelton & Valentine, 1998). Future work would do well to extend the comparisons and dimensions through 'grounded studies' (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The general themes of the relationship

between teens' environmental experiences and personal development (Skantze, 1995), and of teens' active participation in environmental change (Hart, 1997) seem to be especially promising directions for future work and would provide an organizing axis for projects while also yielding 'practical theory' and knowledge that could be used by teens and their collaborators to improve their surroundings.

We should be cautious, however, in drawing conclusions from cross-sectional studies such as the present one about the changes that could be made within the local environment to improve it suitability for teens' development, though, because a longer-term, truly participatory process might surface other issues which were not raised in the relatively brief interviews conducted for this study. Participating in an ongoing change process would result in a much deeper dialogue and might lead to changes which would go beyond duplicating the characteristics of what already exists (Baldassari, Lehman, & Wolfe, 1987; Breitbart, 1998; Hart, 1986, 1992, 1997; Hart et al., 1996; Iltus & Hart, 1994; Katz, 1998; Leavitt & Saegert, 1990; Saegert, 1993; Shaffer & Anundsen, 1993; Ward, 1995). Some of the teens' insights from the current study certainly suggest that even though they had not yet had the opportunity to participate in local change

projects, they had many insights and could 'theorize' in a complex way about the dynamics they observed in their community (see Hart, 1997).

Eliciting suggestions for change without based upon 'what is' may be much more limited than a more involved participatory process over time; some suggestions may reinforce inequities tied to gender, race, age, economics and other factors. A process which involves all stakeholders in a dialogue of what is desired could lead to different results (cf. Hart, 1997; Saegert, 1987, 1993; Sutton, 1992). Creating change requires dialogue among all parties affected (Hart, 1997; Saegert, 1993), as well as the creation of a 'safe space' to explore, understand, and negotiate differences (Fine et al. 1997, 1998). The findings from the current study are interesting, therefore, as statements of teens' reactions to their environment as given, but are necessarily limited in suggesting changes that would actually be productive to make. More intensive autobiographical and participatory projects in the future would not only highlight the issues of importance in teens' lives but could also lead to actual change in their environments.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

FIRST INTERVIEW SESSION

Introductions/ Preview of Interview & Its Purpose/ Verbal Consent.

A. Background Information

1. Name & Age
2. Grade in school/ school attending
3. What racial/ethnic/cultural group do you feel you're most a part of?
4. Which building do you live in (within apt. complex)?
5. How long have you lived here?
6. Who else lives in your apartment with you (relationship & ages)?
7. Could you describe your apartment to me (like a tour)?
   -number of rooms/ own room?
   -likes
   -dislikes
   -changes you'd like to see (if anything was possible)?
8. When you are in your apartment, what kinds of things do you do there?

9. Do you tend to do things with other people or by yourself in your apartment? (probes: who, what, people not mentioned)

B. Previous Residences

10. Where have you lived before? Names/locations (if applicable)
    -could you describe what that place was like?
    -what was it like to live there?
    -compare living at Phipps with the other place (probes: explicit comparison/contrast)
11. Would you ever want to live in a place(s) like that/those again? (probes: including kinds of places they would, or would not, want to live & why)
12. Do you know why your family moved to Phipps? (probes on details, and on how they know)

C. Typical Day

[Introduce map of area and overlay - informal discussion about it first to familiarize and to see what emerges. Introduce colored pens to use on overlay, and explain using them.]

13. I'd like you to think of a recent "typical" or "usual" day - a regular day for you. Could you tell me the "story" of your day - from the time you woke up until

the time you went to sleep - just like a "story." (If necessary: the reason is to get an idea of what it's like to live around here as a teenager.)

-places you went/ locations, names

-things you did

-kinds of things that happened in each place (events)

-people you were with/other people around (or alone?)

-time spent in each place/times of day

-"flow" of the day, as a story

Remember: I don't know much about what usually happens during your day, so please tell me as much detail as possible to help me understand. When telling me this story, I'd also like you to show me on this map where the places are. Here's a pen for you to use. You may draw of write on the map as much as you like. Show where you went, names of places, etc.

(Jot down place names as notes while they talk.)

You've told me a lot, and it helps me to understand your day. I'd like to ask you a few more questions about each of the places you described:

Prompts: Name of each place, and location on map.

Cover these 4 aspects of each place:

-describe each place a little more for me, so that I can get a 'picture' of it. Things I'd need to know about each place to get a 'picture.' (Context)

-people in each place. Kinds of people, descriptions (People)

-kinds of things that were happening in each place while you were there (Events)

-how do you feel when you are in each place? (Feelings)

14. [Also ask about spaces/times for transitions - e.g., while walking between places]
What kinds of things happen when you're going from place-to-place (context, people, events, feelings)

15. You told me about your typical day... Are most days like this one?
Probes:
-weekend versus weekday
-warm versus cold weather
-other contrasts they mention

16. Of all the places you told me about on your "typical" day, which one is the <u>most important</u> to you? (probe: degree of importance)

-what makes this place the most important?

17. Of all the places you told me about on your "typical" day, which one do you <u>like the best?</u>
-what is it that you like about this place?

18. Which place is the <u>least important</u> to you? (probe: degree of unimportance)
-what makes this place the least important?

19. Which place do you <u>dislike the most?</u>
-what is it that you dislike about this place?

20. Are there other places that are important to you, that you didn't mention? (could be on usual day, or other day/ any place)

21. Imagine: What place would you miss the most on your typical day if it was suddenly closed, or "gone," or "disappeared."
-what would you miss about this place
-reasons for missing this place/ aspects of the place

<u>D. Problems you run into in your environment</u>

22. Do you ever experience "problems" in your environment, either during your "typical" day, or at other times?

23. [If yes to #22] What kinds of problems?
-description of problem(s)/events (describe the situation)
-where and when they happen
-people involved (if applicable)
-how do these problems affect you?
-how do you feel when this problem happens?
-do these problems happen often? (probe on frequency/prevalence)

24. Do you think these problems could be changed? How? (probe for details and for change strategies)

25. If "no problems": Could you describe what problem(s) in your environment would be like, if they did happen? (probe for examples)

E. Ideal Day

26. I'd like you to think about an "ideal" day (or a "great day) - it could be real or made up.

Could you describe your "ideal" day? Show the places on the map (if appropriate) (probe for detailed description):

-context

-people

-events

-feelings

F. Neighborhood

27. Do you feel that you live in a "neighborhood?" Is there a "neighborhood" around here (probes on how strongly they feel about this)

If yes: What kinds of things make it feel like this is "your neighborhood?"

If no: What kinds of things make it feel like this is not "your neighborhood?"

28. How would you describe "your neighborhood" to someone who has never been to it (to give them a good picture or idea - someone around your age who had never been here)?

29. How can you tell when you are coming into or going out of your neighborhood? (probes on cues)

30. Can you tell me what area covers "your neighborhood?" (spatial boundaries; mark on map overlay)

31. What do you like about your neighborhood? (probe reasons)
    -what makes these "good things"

32. What do you dislike about your neighborhood? (probe reasons)
    -what makes these "bad things"

33. Are there any changes you would like to see in the neighborhood, if anything was possible?
    -probes: from what to what
    -reasons
    -knowledge of how these changes could be made, & by whom (sources of influence & means)

34. If a lot of changes were about to be made in the neighborhood by somebody else, what would you want to keep the same? (probe for reasons)

35. Do you think your neighborhood is a "good place" for people your age to grow up in? (probe: what makes it good/bad?)

36. How does your neighborhood compare with other places that you know about? (probe for kinds of places they mention, and reasons for opinions; also ask how they know about those places)

37. Do you ever go to places outside "your neighborhood?"
probes on:
-kinds of places & descriptions/ locations
-kinds of experiences in those places
-how often they go there
-how they came to know about those places
-how do these places compare to "your neighborhood?" (probe details of comparison)

G. Phipps Plaza

38. How would you describe Phipps to someone who has never been to it (someone your own age)? (give a good picture or idea)

39. Likes/Dislikes about Phipps Plaza.

40. Changes you would like to see at Phipps, if anything was possible? Probes:
    -from what to what
    -reasons
    -knowledge of how these changes could be made, & by whom (sources of influence & means)

41. If a lot of changes were about to be made at Phipps by somebody else, what would you want to keep the same? (probe for reasons)

42. Do you feel that Phipps is "part of" the area around it, or "separate from" it? (probe for reasons: "what makes it feel like it's ...?)

H. Teenagers' Places

43. Do you feel there are places around here where teenagers feel like they belong? (places for teenagers)
    -if yes: could you describe each place?
    -what kinds of places are these?

44.What is it about (the names of the places) that makes teenagers feel like they belong in those places? ("what kinds of things make it/them place(s) for teens?")

45.Do you feel that there are places around here where teenagers feel like they don't belong? (places not for teenagers)

-could you describe each place?

-what kinds of places are these?

46. What is that makes teenagers feel like they don't belong in those places?

47. Do you feel there should be more places around here for teenagers?

-what would these places be like (describe them)?

-what would make these places "for teenagers?"

-if different: what would make these places different from the ones around here now?

I. Opportunities for Teenagers to Have A Say

48. Do you feel that people your age (young teenagers) have a say (or influence) about their environment, and about

what happens around here? (probe for description/explanation beyond yes/no)

-do you think teenagers should have more of a say/influence?

-why/why not?

-if yes: how could teens have more of a say (probe for details)

-did you ever hear of examples where teens had a say? (probe for details)

J. Future Residence

49. Do you ever think of where you might like to live when you're older (18, 19, 20 and beyond)?

50. Where would you like to live?

51. Could you describe that place? (give me a "picture" of that place)

-context description

-kinds of people that would live there

-kinds of things that would happen there

-how would you feel while living there?

52. Why would you like to live there?

53. If not at Phipps: How would that place compare to living at Phipps? (probe: explicit comparison/contrast)

K. End of First Interview

54. We've come to the end of the interview. Can you think of any other questions I could have asked to understand what you think about your environment?

55. Mention being in touch again to arrange second interview. Thanks!

SECOND INTERVIEW SESSION

1. Are there any places you avoid?
   -names/ descriptions of
   -what is it about those places you avoid? (aspects)
   -probe for details
   -are these places inside/outside your "neighborhood?"

2. Are there people who talk to you (or tell you) what you should do, or not do, and where you should go, or not go?
   -kinds of people
   -examples and frequency: what do they say & how often?
   -how does it affect you (what happens) when they say this?

3. Do you ever experience problems or conflicts around here that have to do with race (racial/ethnic groups), how much money people have (SES), or other things?
   -ever happen around here?
   -ever feel it might be a problem for anyone?
   -examples of what could happen?
   -ways to change?

4. Follow-up and probes on questions from the first interview. This section constituted the bulk of the second interview and was designed for each participant individually from notes taken while listening to the first interview tape.

5. Other comments and closing remarks. Thank you.

REFERENCES

Aitken, S. C. (1998). Family fantasies and community space. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Altman, I., & Rogoff, B. (1987). World views in psychology: Trait, interactional, organismic, and transactional perspectives. In D. Stokols & I. Altman (Eds.), Handbook of environmental psychology (Vol. 1) (pp. 7-40). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Baldassari, C., Lehman, S., & Wolfe, M. (1987). Imaging and creating alternative environments with children. In C.S. Weinstein & T.G. David (Eds.), Spaces for children: The built environment and child development (pp. 241-268). New York: Plenum.

Barker, R.G., & Wright, H.F. (1995). Midwest and its children. Evanston, IL.: Row, Peterson.

Blakely, K.S. (1994). Parents' conceptions of social dangers to children in the urban environment. Children's Environments, 11(1), 16-25.

Breitbart, M. M. (1998). 'Dana's mystical tunnel': Young people's designs for survival and change in the city. In T. Skelton & G. Valentine (Eds.), Cool places: Geographies of youth cultures (pp. 305-327). London: Routledge.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1988). Interacting systems in human development. Research paradigms: Present and future. In N. Bolger, A. Caspi, G. Downey, & M. Moorehouse (Eds.), Persons in context: Developmental processes (pp. 25-49). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. (1998). The ecology of developmental processes. In W. Damon (Ed. in Chief) & R.M. Lerner (Vol. Ed.), Handbook of child psychology (Vol. 1.) (5th ed.) (pp. 993-1028). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Chawla, L. (1991). Homes for children in a changing society. In E.H. Zube & G.T. Moore (Eds.), Advances in environment, behavior, and design (Vol. 3) (pp. 187-228). New York: Plenum.

Cole, M. & Cole, S.R. (1989). The development of children. New York: Scientific American Books.

Conn, M.K. (1986). The patterning of teenagers' daily experiences: An exploration. Second Required Research Paper. City University of New York, Graduate Center.

Conn, M.K. (1988). Adolescence and the environment: Editor's introduction. Children's Environments Quarterly, 5,(2), 2-3.

Conn, M.K. (1994). Commentary: Teen places in Sunshine, Australia: Then and now. Children's Environments, 11, 325-326.

Conn, M.K. (1998). Adolescents. In W. vanVliet- - (Ed.), The Encyclopedia of housing (pp. 7-8). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Conn, M.K., & Saegert, S. (1985). Teenagers' experiences of the environment at Phipps Plaza South. New York Center for Human Environments.

Cotterell, J.L. (1991). The emergence of adolescent territories in a large urban leisure environment. Journal of Environmental Psychology, 11, 25-41.

Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Larson, R. (1984). Being adolescent: Conflict and growth in the teenage years. New York: Basic Books.

Davis, M., & Wallbridge, D. (1990). Boundary and space: An introduction to the work of D.W. Winnicott. New York, Brunner/Mazel.

Elder, G.H., Jr. (1980). Adolescence in historical perspective. In J. Adelson (Ed.), Handbook of adolescent psychology (pp. 3-46). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Elder, G.H., Jr. (1998). The life and human development. In W. Damon (Ed. in Chief) & R.M. Lerner (Vol. Ed.), Handbook of child psychology (Vol. 1.)(5th ed.) (pp. 939-991). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Erikson, E. (1968). Identity: youth and crisis. New York: W.W. Norton.

Fine, M., Weis, L., & Powell, L.C. (1997). Communities of difference: A critical look at desegregated spaces created for and by youth. Harvard Educational Review, 67, 247-284.

Fine, M., Weis, L., Centrie, C., & Roberts, R. (1998). Educating beyond the borders of schooling (unpublished manuscript). New York: City University of New York Graduate School and University Center.

Francis, M. (1979). No place to be... Childhood City Newsletter, #16, 1-2.

Franck, K., & Paxson, L. (1989). Women and public space: Research, design, and policy issues. In I. Altman & E.H. Zube (Eds.), Public places and spaces (pp. 121-146). New York: Plenum.

Garbarino, J., Dubrow, N., Kostelny, K., & Pardo, C. (1992). Children in danger: Coping with the consequences of community violence. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Gaster, S. (1991). Urban children's access to their neighborhood: Changes over three generations. Environment and Behavior, 23, 60-75.

Gaster, S. (1992). Historical changes in children's access to U.S. cities: A critical review. Children's Environments, 9(2), 23-36.

Gilligan, C. (1982). In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Glaser, B.G. (1978). Theoretical sensitivity. San Francisco, CA: The Sociology Press.

Glaser, B.G., & Strauss, A.L. (1967). The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

Goodnow, J.J. (1988). Children, families and communities: Ways of viewing their relationships to each other. In N. Bolger, A. Caspi, G. Downey, & M. Moorehouse (Eds.), Persons in context: Developmental processes (pp. 50-76). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Graber, J.A., Brooks-Gunn, J., & Petersen, A.C. (1996). Adolescent transitions in context. In J. A. Graber, J. Brooks-Gunn, & A. C. Petersen (Eds.), Transitions through adolescence: Interpersonal domains and context (pp. 369-383). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Hart, R. (1979). Children's experience of place. New York: Irvington.

Hart, R. (1986). The changing city of childhood: Implications for play and learning. The 1986 Catherine Molony Memorial Lecture. New York: The City College Workshop Center.

Hart, R.A. (1992). Children's participation: From tokenism to citizenship. Florence, Italy: UNICEF International Child Development Centre.

Hart, R.A. (1997). Children's participation: The theory and practice of involving young citizens in community development and environmental care. London: Earthscan.

Hart, R.A. & Conn, M.K. (1991). Developmental perspectives on decision making and action in environments. In T. Gärling & G.W. Evans (Eds.), Environment, cognition, and action: An integrated approach (pp. 277-294). New York: Oxford University Press.

Hart, R., Daiute, C., Iltus, S., Kritt, D., Rome, M., Sabo, K. (1997). Developmental theory and children's participation in community organizations. Social Justice, 24(3), 33-63.

Havinghurst, R.J. (1972). Developmental tasks and education (3rd ed.). New York: McKay.

Heath, S.B. (1994). The project of learning from the inner-city youth perspective. New Directions for Child Development, 63, 25-34.

Heath, S.B. & McLaughlin, M.W. (1991). Community organizations as family: endeavors that engage and support adolescents. Phi Delta Kappan, April 1991, 623-627.

Hoyt, K.A. (1991). Physical environment socialization: Development of attitudinal and aesthetic response towards built and natural environments. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Davis.

Iltus, S. & Hart, R. (1994). Participatory planning and design of recreational spaces with children. Architecture & Behaviour, 10, 361-370.

Kaplan, M. (1994). Promoting community education and action through intergenerational programming. Children's Environments, 11(1), 48-60.

Katz, C. (1998). Disintegrating developments: Global economic restructuring and the eroding of ecologies of youth. In T. Skelton & G. Valentine (Eds.), Cool places: Geographies of youth cultures (pp. 130-144). London: Routledge.

Kett, J.F. (1977). Rites of passage: Adolescence in America, 1790 to the present. New York: Basic Books.

Korpela, K.M. (1989). Place-identity as a product of environmental self-regulation. Journal of Environmental Psychology, 9, 241-256.

Korpela, K.M. (1992). Adolescents' favorite places and environmental self-regulation. Journal of Environmental Psychology, 12, 249-258.

Krenichyn, K. (1996). Second year paper proposal: Girls and environments (unpublished manuscript). New York: City University of New York Graduate School and University Center.

Krippendorff, K. (1980). Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Ladd, F.C. (1978). City kids in the absence of legitimate adventure. In R. Kaplan & S. Kaplan (Eds.), Humanscape: Environments for people (pp. 77-81). North Scituate, MA: Duxbury Press.

Leadbeater, B.J.R., & Way, N. (Eds.) (1996). Urban girls: Resisting stereotypes, creating identities. New York: New York University Press.

Leavitt, J. & Saegert, S. (1990). From abandonment to hope: Community-households in Harlem. New York: Columbia University Press.

Lerner, R.M., & Galambos, N.L. (1998). Adolescent development: Challenges and opportunities for research, programs, and policies. Annual Review of Pyschology, 49, 413-446.

Lerner, R.M., Lerner, J.V., von Eye, A., Ostrom, C.W., Nitz, K., Talwar-Soni, R. & Tubman, J.G. (1996). Continuity and discontinuity across the transition of early adolescence: A developmental contextual perspective. In J. A. Graber, J. Brooks-Grunn & A.C. Petersen (Eds.), Transitions through adolescence: Interpersonal domains and context (pp. 3-22). Mahway, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Lewin, K. (1954). Behavior and development as a function of the total situation. In L. Carmichael (Ed.), Manual of child psychology (pp. 918-970). New York: Wiley.

Lipsitz, J. (1980). Growing up forgotten: A review of research and programs concerning early adolescence. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.

Littell, J., & Wynn, J. (1989). The availability and use of community resources for young adolescents in an inner-city and a suburban community. Chicago: Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago.

Lynch, K. (Ed.) (1977). Growing up in cities: Studies of the spatial environment of adolescence in Cracow, Melbourne, Mexico City, Salta, Toluca, and Warszawa. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Maldonado-Lugo, R. (1996). Environmental extension: A concept emerging from the importance of mass transportation in the lives of elderly New Yorkers. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, City University of New York Graduate School and University Center.

Manzo, L.C., & Wolfe, M. (1990). The social production of built forms, environmental settings and person/environment relationships. Paper presented at the 11th Conference of the International Association for the Study of People and Their Surroundings (IAPS). Ankara, Turkey. July 1990.

McLaughlin, M.W. (2000). Community counts: How youth organizations matter for youth development. Washington, D.C.: Public Education Network.

McLaughlin, M., Irby, M., & Langman, J. (1994). Urban sanctuaries: Neighborhood organizations in the lives and futures of inner-city youth. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Noack, P., & Silbereisen, R.K. (1988). Adolescent development and choice of leisure settings. Children's Environments Quarterly, 5(2) 25-33.

Owens, P. E. (1988). Natural landscapes, gathering places, and prospect refuges: Characteristics of outdoor places valued by teens. Children's Environments Quarterly, 5 (2), 17-24.

Owens, P.E. (1994). Teen places in Sunshine, Australia: Then and now. Children's Environments, 11, 292-299.

Owens, P.E. (1997). Adolescence and the cultural landscape: Public policy, design decisions, and popular press reporting. Landscape and Urban Planning, 39, 153-166.

Petersen, A.C. (1988). Adolescent development. Annual Review of Psychology, 39, 583-607.

Proshansky, H.M. & Fabian, A.K. (1987). The development of place identity in the child. In C.S. Weinstein & T.G. David (Eds.), Spaces for children: The built environment and child development (pp. 21-40). New York: Plenum Press.

Proshansky, H.M., Fabian, A.K., & Kaminoff, R. (1983). Place-identity: Physical world socialization of the self. Journal of Environmental Psychology, 3, 57-83.

Saegert, S. (1987). Environmental psychology and social change. In D. Stokols & I. Altman (Eds.), Handbook of environmental psychology (pp. 99-128). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Saegert, S. (1993). Charged contexts: Difference, emotion and power in Environmental Design Research. Architecture & Behaviour, 9, 69-84.

Saegert, S., & Hart, R. (1978). The development of environmental competence in girls and boys. In M.A. Salter (Ed.), Play: Anthropological perspectives (pp. 157-176), West Point, NY: Leisure Press.

Saegert, S.C., & Winkel, G.H. (1990). Environmental psychology. Annual Review of Psychology, 41, 441-477.

Sampson, R.J., Morenoff, J.D., & Earls, F. (1999). Beyond social capital: Structural sources and spatial embeddedness of collective efficacy for children. American Sociological Review. (preprint manuscript)

Schiavo, R.S. (1988). Age differences in assessment and use of a suburban neighborhood among children and adolescents. Children's Environments Quarterly, 5(2), 4-9.

Sennett, R. (1970). The uses of disorder: Personal identity and city life. New York: Knopf.

Shaffer, C.R. & Anundsen, D. (1993). Creating community anywhere: Finding support and connection in a fragmented world. New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Perigee Books.

Skantze, A. (1995). Experiencing and interpreting city architecture. Architecture & Behaviour, 11, 5-10.

Spradley, J.P. (1979). The ethnographic interview. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Stokols, D. (1982). Environmental psychology: A coming of age. In A.G. Kraut (Ed.), The G.Stanley Hall Lecture Series (Vol. 2) (pp. 155-205). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Stokols, D. & Shumaker, S.A. (1981). People in places: A transactional view of settings. In J. Harvey (Ed.), Cognition, social behavior, and the environment (pp. 441-488). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Strauss, A.L. (1987). Qualitative analysis for social scientists. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Sutton, S.E. (1992). Enabling children to map out a more equitable society. Children's Environments, 9(1), 37-48.

Taylor-Griffin, S. (1998). Refuges from racism: Adolescent community settings as an early motivational influence for high achieving Black men: A theoretical perspective. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, City University of New York Graduate School and University Center.

Tognoli, J. (1987). Residential environments. In D. Stokols & I. Altman (Eds.), Handbook of environmental psychology (Vol. 1) (pp. 655-690). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Tudge, J., Gray, J.T., & Hogan, D.M. (1997). Ecological perspectives in human development: A comparison of Gibson and Bronfenbrenner. In J. Tudge, M.J. Shanahan, & J. Valsiner (Eds.), Comparisons in human development: Understanding time and context (pp. 72-105). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Valentine, G., Skelton, T. & Chambers, D. (1998). Cool places: An introduction to youth and youth cultures. In T. Skelton & G. Valentine (Eds.), Cool places: Geographies of youth cultures (pp. 1-32). London: Routledge.

Valsiner, J. (1987). Culture and the development of children's action: A cultural-historical theory of developmental psychology. Chichester: Wiley.

Van Vliet- -, W. (1981). Neighborhood evaluations by city and suburban children. American Planning Association Journal, 47, 458-466.

Van Vliet- -, W. (1983a). Children's travel behavior. Ekistics, 50, 61-65.

Van Vliet- -, W. (1983b). Families in apartment buildings: Sad stories for children. Environment and Behavior, 15, 211-234.

Van Vliet- -, W. (1983c). Exploring the "fourth environment"—An examination of the home range of city and suburban teenagers. Environment and Behavior, 15, 567-588.

Van Vliet- -, W. (1985). The role of housing type, household density, and neighborhood density in peer interaction and social adjustment. In J.F. Wohlwill & W. vanVliet- - (Eds.), Habitats for children: The impacts of density (pp.165-200). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). Mind in society. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wapner, S. (1981). Transactions of persons-in-environments: Some critical transitions. Journal of Environmental Psychology, 1, 223-239.

Ward, J.V. (1995). Cultivating a morality of care in African-American adolescents: A culture-based model of violence prevention. Harvard Educational Review, 65(2), 175-188.

Winnicott, D.W. (1971). Playing and reality. New York: Basic Books.

Wohlwill, J.F. (1985). Martha Muchow and the life-space of the urban child. Human Development, 28, 200-209.

Wolcott, H.F. (1994). Transforming qualitative data: Description, analysis, and interpretation. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Wright, H.F. (1956). Psychological development in Midwest. Child Development, 27, 265-286.

Youniss, J. (1980). Parents and peers in social development: A Sullivan-Piaget perspective. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Youniss, J. & Smollar, J. (1985). Adolescent relations with mothers, fathers, and friends. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Zimmerman, J., & Reavill, G. (1998). Raising our athletic daughters: How sports can build self-esteem and save girls' lives. New York: Doubleday.