NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.
DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP IN THE THIRD AGE:
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF SENIORS' CENTRES

by
Sandra A. Cusack
M.A., Simon Fraser University, 1986

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in the Faculty
of
Education

© Sandra A. Cusack 1993
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
February 1993

All rights reserved. This work may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without permission of the author.
The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-91048-8
APPROVAL

Name: Sandra Ann Cusack
Degree: Doctor of Philosophy
Title of Thesis: Developing Leadership in the Third Age: An Ethnographic Study of Seniors' Centres
Examining Committee: Chair: Kieran Egan

__________________________
Michael Manley-Casimir
Senior Supervisor

__________________________
Marvin F. Wideen
Professor

__________________________
Ellen Gee
Professor

__________________________
Roland Case
Assistant Professor

__________________________
Celia Haig-Brown
Assistant Professor
Internal External Examiner

__________________________
Christopher Bolton
Associate Professor
Gerontology
Academic Support & Student Services
University of Oregon
External Examiner

Date Approved February 24, 1993
PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant to Simon Fraser University the right to lend my thesis, project or extended essay (the title of which is shown below) to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis/Project/Extended Essay

Developing Leadership in the Third Age: An Ethnographic Study of Seniors' Centres

Author: __________________________________________

(signature)

Sandra Ann CUSACK

(name)

Feb. 24/93

(date)
ABSTRACT

This dissertation addresses the question: What influences retired people to assume leadership roles in seniors' centres? Research in third-age leadership is limited, therefore, the literature review includes selected studies in leadership, organizational theory, and motivation theory emphasizing works that focus on needs in later life (McClusky, 1974; Maslow, 1987). The connection between leadership theory and motivation theory is explored and found to be inadequate for understanding emergent leadership, and the case is made for an organizational culture perspective based on the work of Schein (1985) and Ott (1989). A conceptual framework is developed, based on Schein's three levels of culture and the author's professional experience in the context of seniors' centres.

Methodology includes two phases of data collection. The first phase involves participant observation records of two leadership training groups and a survey of senior leaders and professionals, and the second phase is an ethnographic exploration of two seniors' centres, differentiated by leadership training. Fieldwork spanning 12 months in each centre involves analysis of history and policy documents, participant observation records, interviews with key informants, and focussed group discussions. The construction of ethnographic text is described and methodological issues (financial, ethical, relational) and the question of subjectivity are discussed.

The organizational cultures of two seniors' centres are portrayed, highlighting forces on emergent leadership. Interpretation suggests that assumptions about the nature of retirement, the needs of seniors, power, and leadership that act as barriers to emergent leadership are: (1) retirement is a time to engage in enjoyable mental and physical activity, and let someone else do all the work; (2) seniors have needs that ought to be served, but not desires for challenge and personal development; (3) leadership means being in charge, something few are trained to do, involving hard work and problems; and (4) power refers to authority over others, something few seniors need or want, and reserved for the few who want to be in charge and suffer all the problems.

Shifting focus to the micro level, profiles of three senior leaders are presented illustrating motivational and socio-cultural influences on emergent
leadership. Individual motivations identified are the needs for power, recognition, self-actualization, and the need to make a contribution. Education is identified as a primary socio-cultural influence in combination with a timely sequence of experiences and interactions: someone encouraging them to join a centre; experience improved health as a consequence of social and physical activity; someone inviting them to join a group; experiencing renewed confidence as a result of learning new skills; someone inviting them to contribute their skills and talents; someone encouraging and supporting them; someone recognizing their contribution; experiencing new challenges and self-actualization. In conclusion, findings are summarized and discussion focussed on problems with traditional leadership; issues of power, empowerment, and gender; the role of education; and future directions for research in third-age leadership.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to my committee members, Michael Manley-Casimir, Marvin Wideen, Ellen Gee, and Roland Case, who challenged, encouraged, and supported me throughout the course of this dissertation study.

I am also indebted to the Director of [Carnegie Hall] and the Coordinator of [Centennial Centre], exemplary professional leaders who extended privileged access to their seniors' centres, served as key informants, provided ongoing feedback, and shared personal insights from the professional's perspective. I also wish to thank all those members of both cultures who entrusted me with personal experience and insights from the senior's perspective.

Finally, I thank my colleague, Wendy Thompson, for her critical reading of the manuscript, for conducting the interviews, for consistently modelling the skills of an adult educator and demonstrating how third-age education can transform the lives of older adults in often extraordinary ways.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approval</th>
<th>ii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

- Background to the Problem 1
- The Context of the Seniors' Community Centre 5
- The Research Question 6
- Definition of Terms 7
  - Senior 7
  - Retirement 8
  - Third age 8
  - Leadership 9
  - The leader 10
- Significance of the Study 10
- Outline of the Chapters 11

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

- Introduction to Senior Leadership 12
- Overview of the Literature on Leadership 15
- Leadership and Organizational Theory 20
- The Culture of Organizations 22
- Leadership and Motivation 24
  - Leadership Styles and Assumptions about Human Nature 30
  - Limitations to a Human Resources Approach 32
- The Context of Leadership in the Third Age 33
  - The Concept of Shared Servant Leadership 36
  - Theoretical Perspective on Third-age Leadership 38

## CHAPTER THREE: DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR LEADERSHIP IN SENIORS' CENTRES

- Organizations, Leadership, and Culture 40
- Developing a Conceptual Framework 42
- Exploring a Culture of Leadership 43

## CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

- A Tradition of Ethnography 45
- Methods of Ethnography 46
- Validity and Usefulness 47
- Generalizability 48
- Data Collection Procedures 49
  - Phase 1 51
Phase 2
Data Analysis
Constructing Ethnographic Text 55
Interpreting the Culture of Leadership 57
Identifying Influences on the Emergence of Senior Leaders 57
Methodological Issues
Financial 59
Personal History and Relationships 59
Professional Role 60
Ethical Issues 60
Subjectivity and the Question of Validity 61

CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS
THE CULTURE OF CARNEGIE HALL
History of the CH Association 62
Professional Leaders: Directors 64
Senior Leaders: Presidents 65
Activities and Programs 66
Organizational Structure 66
Membership Profile 70
Narrative of the Culture 73
Executive Board Meeting 79
Noon Hour Lunch 87
Chairpersons' Meeting 89
Culture of Leadership: An Interpretation 92
The Nature of Retirement 92
Needs of Seniors 96
Power 99
Leadership 103
Summary 105

CHAPTER SIX: RESULTS
THE CULTURE OF CENTENNIAL CENTRE
History of Centennial Centre 107
Activities and Programs 110
Professional Leadership: The Coordinator 112
Senior Leaders: Presidents 115
Organizational Structure 115
Membership 119
Narrative of the Culture 121
Annual General Meeting 127
Advisory Board Meeting 135
The Lunch Room 139
Culture of Leadership: An Interpretation 141
The Nature of Retirement 141
Needs of Seniors 142
Power 144
Leadership 146
Summary 148
CHAPTER SEVEN: RESULTS
INFLUENCES ON THE EMERGENCE OF SENIOR LEADERS
Three Profiles
Edward's Experience: Once a Leader . . . 150
Clarisse's Experience: It Ain't Over 'Til It's Over 152
Florence's Experience: The Time of Her Life 154
Individual (Motivational) Influences
Edward 155
Clarisse 157
Florence 157
Socio-cultural (Contextual) Influences
Centennial Centre 158
Carnegie Hall 159
Summary 162

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS
Individual Influences: Needs and Desires 165
Socio-cultural Influences 168
Problems with Traditional Leadership 170
A New Mandate for Seniors' Centres: Creating a Culture of Leadership 172
Issues of Power and Gender 174
Power, Empowerment, and the Role of Education 176
Future Directions for Research in Third-age Leadership 178

BIBLIOGRAPHY 180

APPENDICES
Appendix A. Leadership Planning Meetings (Participant Observation Record) 187
Appendix B. Leadership Training Program (Participant Observation Record) 202
Appendix C. Perceptions of Seniors as Leaders (A Survey) 223
Appendix D. Semi-focussed Interview Schedule for Professional Leader-Managers 231
Appendix E Semi-focussed Interview Schedule for Senior Leaders 232
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Three levels of organizational culture 23
Table 2. Three levels of the culture of leadership in a seniors' centre and the corresponding procedures used to gather empirical data 56
Table 3. Characterization of leadership in a seniors' centre with respect to four dimensions of culture 58
Table 4. CH membership by age groupings; 1982, 1985, 1987, 1989 and 1991 71
Table 5. CH membership profile by age and sex; 1991 72
Table 6. Population growth for Olympia and Centreville from 1941 to 1991 108
Table 7. Breakdown of age groupings in Olympia and Centreville for 1986 109
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs 27
Figure 2. A framework for exploring the culture of leadership in seniors' centres 44
Figure 3. Research design showing schematic representation of the two phases of data collection in relations to the results as text 50
Figure 4. Internal and external organizational structure of power in Carnegie Hall 69
Figure 5. Internal and external organizational structure of power in Centennial Centre 117
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Serious questions are being raised about whether society can afford to support and serve its senior citizens for as long as one-third of their adult lifespan. An emerging trend in both private and public sectors, claims Leroy Stone (1991), demographer for Statistics Canada, is re-evaluation of the potential contribution of senior citizens. The implication is that professionals working with seniors need to promote the independence, productivity, and continued contribution of retired persons to the economy and to the quality of community life.

A certain confusion and ambivalence, however, surrounds the nature of this "continued contribution" of older people and how it ought to be promoted and given expression. A case in point is the issue of mandatory retirement which is continually challenged, sometimes removed, and often reinstated. In this introductory chapter, I reiterate some of that ambivalence and identify both primary and secondary research questions. I then make the case for a research focus on seniors' community centres, define key concepts, and provide an outline of the study to follow. A sensitive, probing indepth study of leadership within a specific organizational context is required, I argue in Chapter Two, in order to uncover influential beliefs and assumptions about the legitimate roles and potential contributions of retired people.

Background to the Problem

There is a growing belief that an important untapped national resource may be the experience and knowledge that reside in rapidly increasing numbers of healthier and better-educated retired people (Boyce, 1987; Chetkow-Yanoov, 1986; Moody, 1988; Mowsesian, 1982; Nusberg, 1988). These well-educated, experienced seniors have much to offer our communities (Boyce, 1987; Bull, 1982; The Halifax Seniors' Council et al., 1988; McClusky, 1974; Nusberg, 1988). Jake Epp, Minister of Health and Welfare, at the Ottawa Conference, "Seniors... Leadership is Up to Us", said: "Seniors represent a formidable social resource and society has a right to benefit" (cited in Boyce, 1987, p. 4). The broad question is, How can we make better use of the human resources of retired people?
The occurrence of a post-work or retirement phase of life is a modern phenomenon, and the view of older adults as a valued social resource represents a departure from traditions of research in aging. Three socio-cultural role theories of aging have dominated the literature on activities of later life since the 1960's: disengagement theory, activity theory, and continuity theory. Disengagement theory (associated with the work of Cumming & Henry, 1961) supports the notion of retirement as a process of disengagement from society and increasing preoccupation with self. In opposition to disengagement theory, Havighurst (1963) suggested that the development of new social roles to replace those from which the person has disengaged was important for successful aging, and this theoretical position became known as activity theory. The third position, associated with Neugarten (1977) and Atchley (1972), supports a lifespan perspective on aging and emphasizes the notion of continuity of activities, interactions, and responses.

Streib and Schneider (1971) reject disengagement theory because of its pessimistic view of late life potential and they reject activity theory as having a middle-class, middle-aged bias (i.e., work role substitutes are essential). They suggest an adaptation of continuity theory that recognizes both the need for optimal activity and the need to remain engaged in life, while taking into consideration that new social roles for older people must reflect the normal losses and limitations of later life. Social roles and activities must not be seen as "busy work" but should be satisfying in social psychological terms and they must be recognized as valid pursuits that are prestigious or socially useful by other members of society, old and young. (p. 181)

The involvement in what Streib and Schneider (1971, p. 1983) have termed "citizenship-service" roles brings a new kind of usefulness and valued contribution to society in later life.

The Third Age or retirement stage of life is increasingly accepted as neither a period of disengagement nor a time for "keeping busy", but a period of personal growth and active engagement in challenging and worthwhile enterprises. Many have suggested that one of the needs of retired persons is to make a meaningful contribution to society (Angres, 1989; Chambre, 1984; The Halifax Seniors Council et al., 1988; McClusky, 1974; Morris & Bass, 1986; Streib & Schneider, 1971). Seniors are involved in a variety of both formal and
informal volunteer roles in their families (e.g., caring for ailing spouses and supporting adult children), in their church groups, and in the community. It seems we need their contribution and they need to make it. What, then, is the problem?

Despite the belief that retired people want and need to make a meaningful contribution to society, there is a shortage of people willing to share the leadership in their groups, organizations, and community centres (Cusack, 1991b; The Halifax Seniors Council et al., 1988). Indeed, a needs assessment of a selected sample drawn from over 1650 seniors' groups and organizations throughout the province of British Columbia, identified the most common leadership problem as getting both new and old members involved and willing to share the workload (Cusack, Thompson, & Manley-Casimir, 1991).

Morris and Bass (1966, p. 17) claim there are many opportunities for retired professionals to serve their communities, but we know little about the desires and expectations of the larger population of educationally less-advantaged people who have spent much of their working lives as clerks, technicians, labourers, homemakers, etc. This growing group of increasingly healthy and better-educated retirees with a diversity of experience and lifeskills has great potential for social contribution, and we would do well to understand their needs and expectations if we wish to promote their continued contribution to community life.

What are the needs and expectations of the majority of able retired persons that affect their willingness to take on leadership roles in their groups and organizations? For many, retirement may be a first time that considerable choice is available (e.g., following the death of a spouse or release from a demanding job). Free from the daily demands of family or career responsibilities and the need to earn a living, many older adults may expect to relax, play a little golf or bingo, travel, have some fun, and enjoy themselves. What factors might influence the choice to commit time to volunteer work in the community and to take on leadership roles after many years of family and/or work-related responsibilities?

The members of the senior advisory group to a leadership training project said they were motivated by things like a challenge, an enthusiastic speaker, or a chance to show what they know (Thompson & Cusack, 1990, p. 135). Some were internally motivated and some were influenced by others. One approach to understanding motivation is to distinguish between internal
and external influences. Perhaps the most widely known and relevant work in understanding internal forces is that of Abraham Maslow, who outlines a hierarchy of needs that drive human behaviour. According to Maslow (1968), there are five hierarchically-organized levels of basic need: (1) physical needs (e.g., food, shelter); (2) the need for safety & security; (3) the social need for a sense of belonging, acceptance, affection; (4) the ego need for self-esteem, self-confidence, respect, and recognition; and ultimately (5) the need for self-actualization, challenge, and fulfilment. Laslett's (1987) characterization of the third age suggests that retirement may well be the age of self-actualization, challenge, and fulfilment. If basic needs have been met for a significant portion of retired people, we might expect them to be motivated to take on leadership roles to satisfy their need for challenge, self-actualization, and fulfilment, as well as perhaps to gain or maintain a level of confidence, respect, and recognition. (While it is important to recognize that there are many older people, most of them women, for whom economic and physical security are not a given, these people will not be represented. The focus is on those whose basic physical needs have been met who have the freedom to participate in self-fulfilling activities in their retirement.) Maslow's notion of self-actualization and personal growth seems particularly appropriate to the retirement phase of life; indeed, Maslow (1987) specifically defines self-actualization as a process of later life (though he is never clear how old one has to be). He fails, however, to mention some of the needs commonly expressed by people of all ages, such as the need to relax and to have fun, and he also places less emphasis on altruistic motives (i.e., the desire to be of service to others) typically expressed by volunteers. On the other hand, McClusky (1974) claims that people in retirement are motivated by a strong need to maintain a sense of power and personal control over their lives and that they choose activities and educational programs that help them to maintain the same level of power they experienced in their earlier years. Given the many reasons why retired people might want to commit themselves to productive roles why, then, do professional leaders (e.g., paid staff who are the directors and coordinators of seniors' groups and organizations) express so much difficulty in getting seniors more involved? My experience, based on more than a decade of working with seniors, is that many factors within an organization (e.g., people, personalities, circumstances, relationships, opportunities) affect whether or not seniors commit themselves to
programs and activities. Of fundamental importance are the organizations' recognition of the abilities of seniors and genuine willingness to use these talents. Seniors, on the other hand, must be confident in their abilities, willing to share experience and knowledge, and willing to take on responsible roles.

The opportunity to participate in a leadership training program may help seniors develop confidence in their ability to contribute, but what about the attitudes of those professional leaders with whom they work? Negative attitudes toward old age and stereotypical perceptions of older people as frail, dependent, and rigid persist in spite of growing evidence to the contrary. These common views have an insidious affect on senior participation. In many cases, seniors say they want to feel "used", however, they often experience a certain tokenism with regard to their participation in decision-making groups and processes. To what extent do organizations fully recognize and make use of the experience and abilities of older people?

Many agencies and organizations incorporate volunteer positions and programs for the elderly that are designed to capitalize on the skills and resources developed over a lifetime. Visiting programs for frail elderly draw on the sensitivity and knowledge of retirees who serve both as visitors and as trainers of high school students involved in a visiting program. Mentoring programs use older adults in tutoring youth with learning disabilities, drawing on their patience, compassion, and knowledge of children. Of particular importance to an aging community is development of seniors' community centres offering recreational and social support services: these centres typically rely on senior volunteers for both program maintenance and leadership functions.

The Context of the Seniors' Community Centre

Seniors' centres are the focus for leisure activities for many older adults in retirement. In one city of 40,000 in western Canada, the director of the seniors' centre estimates (based on the 1986 Census) that approximately 15% of the 20% of the population in the community who are retired are active members of the centre (Barkwill, personal communication, February 1991). Seniors serve as peer counsellors, members of the executive board, volunteers in hot lunch programs, receptionists, hosts, and chairpersons of activity groups (e.g., bowling, woodworking, dancing, hiking). This centre, like many of its kind
throughout North America, relies heavily on the willingness of seniors to take on leadership responsibilities.

Krout (1986), from his studies of seniors' centres in the United States, believes the seniors' community centre is an ideal location within which to develop community outreach and support services, such as peer counselling programs and widows' support groups. Seniors' centres offer a wide range of opportunities for participation and leadership within an organizational structure that has a work orientation, yet is nonthreatening, supportive of involvement, and confers peer status (Payne, 1977, p. 360). Participants are generally retired, healthy, and active, and many are looking for new interests and opportunities for personal development. Based on studies of retired professionals in Israel, Chetkow-Yanoov (1986) regards seniors' centres as a reservoir of talent.

The prospect can be further enhanced if we invest in leadership-training programs as part of preparations for the creative use of leisure-time during the post-work years. The pool of potential time, energy, skills, and experience—appropriately distributed throughout voluntary and public community settings—might well be the focus of our efforts in the coming years. (p. 73)

For all of the above reasons, the seniors' community centre would seem to be the ideal organization within which to explore the phenomenon of senior leadership. Furthermore, because much of my professional experience is in developing, teaching, and evaluating service-related and educational programs in seniors' centres, it is the context I have chosen to study.

The Research Question

The study addresses a question frequently asked by senior volunteer leaders and professionals in seniors' centres, What influences retired people to take on leadership roles? Three questions follow from the broader question: First, What are the needs and expectations of people in retirement that affect their decisions to take on leadership roles? More specifically, do people in retirement want to be challenged and to develop their potentials, as Maslow suggests, or are these goals only important to an elite or self-selecting group? Are older people motivated by a need for status and recognition? What about
the need, emphasized by McClusky, to maintain a sense of power and control? What, in fact, are the reasons that people affiliate with seniors' centres?

Secondly, What external factors (e.g., roles and responsibilities, influence of professional staff persons, structure of the organization) might influence decisions to take on leadership? Are the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders perceived to be too demanding and time-consuming? To what extent is the leadership style of professionals a factor in influencing seniors' decisions to get involved? What legitimate influence do senior leaders have within the organizational structure? To what extent is their power illusory? Does the organization's mandate include the development of individual potential and leadership in its membership?

Thirdly, What is the role of a leadership-training program? While a leadership-training program is only one component in a comprehensive program of developing leadership potential, this is the important question for educators. As an educational gerontologist, I believe that education/training has a vital role to play in the emergence of seniors as leaders and my study explores that role within the complex of both individual and organizational influences.

Definition of Terms

Senior. This term is generally associated with a specific age, but that age varies in different contexts. For example, financial institutions in Canada may accord senior status at 50, 55, or 60 years of age (Cusack, 1989). The official retirement age is 65 and this is generally considered to be the age at which one becomes a senior. The focus for this thesis is on leadership in a seniors' community centre and, therefore, "senior", is used to refer to anyone 50 years or older because this is the age at which one becomes eligible for membership. While the age range of members may be anywhere from 50 to 100 years old, people rarely join before the age of 55. The age range of participants in many training programs is typically 55 to 75, with an average of about 67 years of age. [Many of the observations and experiences throughout this study are common to people of all ages: the attribution of experiences to seniors merely reflects the fact that this was the population studied and is not intended to imply that the experiences of seniors differ significantly from other adult populations].
**Retirement.** The concept of "retirement" as a post-work phase is a modern phenomenon that deserves attention (Carp, 1972). While the subject has been an area of particular interest to social gerontologists, the term is seldom clearly defined. Not one in a session of six scholarly papers on "Work, Retirement, and Social Security" at the 18th Meeting of the Canadian Association on Gerontology offered a working definition of retirement. There seems to be the implicit assumption that retirement is that period of life following paid employment, a period which usually begins between age 60 to 65. Yet, as Meade and Walker (1989) point out, this tends to exclude the experience of many women. It is not surprising, therefore, that few older women in a study by McClain (1989) perceived themselves as retired.

As McDonald and Wanner note in their definitive overview of retirement research in Canada (1990), there is no agreed upon definition of retirement—the concept may refer to a social institution, an event, a social role, a process, a phase or a stage of the lifecycle. The term is used throughout this study to refer to either the event or the process, recognizing that the event may be release from one's primary life occupation or the death of a spouse signifying release from family responsibilities, with the latter being more commonly the experience of women. The stage of life that follows the event is defined as the "third age" and it is the retirement stage or "third age" of life which is explored throughout this study.

**Third Age.** With increasing variability of the age of retirement and different experiences of men and women, the terms "senior" and "retirement" are becoming less useful in considering trends and activities during later life. Describing individuals as being in the third age represents an alternative to the terms "elderly" and "senior" and a movement toward more respectful and adventurous labels. The concept of "the third age" is, therefore, used to frame the broad context within which leadership in retirement is considered.

The term has both a collective and an individual definition provided by British sociologist, Peter Laslett (1987). A society in the Third Age is defined demographically as one in which 10% or more of the population is over 65 and 50% of the adults over 25 can expect to live to at least 70 years of age. According to Laslett's criteria, Britain entered the Third Age in the 1950's and there are now more than 16 countries that share this status. Canada entered the Third Age in the early 1980's (National Advisory Council, 1988).
At the individual level, the third age can be conceived as the third of four stages in a life course (not marked by years). Laslett (1987) identifies four developmental stages:

1. a stage of dependence, education, socialization
2. a stage of individualization and responsibility
3. a stage of personal achievement and fulfilment
4. a final stage of dependence and decrepitude.

While adults may experience a sense of personal achievement and fulfilment throughout their working lives (i.e., to some extent combining the second and third phase), it is the third stage that Laslett suggests is most characteristic of retirement.

Leadership in the third age has both macro and micro dimensions. The focus of this thesis will be on the micro aspect (i.e., leadership in the third stage of an individual lifespan) with the underlying assumption that the notion of the third age as a stage of self-actualization and enrichment occurs in societies defined as Third Age. The third age typically occurs, though not of necessity, following retirement from the workforce for men. With the increasing flexibility of the retirement age and options for work and leisure, it might conceivably be a temporary stage between employment and it may also concur with part-time employment or a semi-retired status. For those women who have been homemakers, it may come following release from family responsibilities (e.g., following widowhood or the death of elderly parents). For both men and women, then, it is that period in later life of active participation in self-chosen activities prior to the onset of dependency (should it occur).

Leadership. Stogdill (1974) goes so far as to say there are as many definitions of leadership as there are people who have attempted to define it. Understanding what leadership is and how it functions in the seniors' community is the focus for my dissertation. The conceptual framework proposed incorporates a definition of leadership as a quality of an organization as suggested by Ogawa and Bossert (1989). Influence flows throughout an organization and is not unidirectional: to understand organizational leadership, we consider the patterns of influence throughout the organizational structure and the interactions among professional staff and senior leaders.

Organizational leadership has been traditionally defined by theorists such as Yukl (1988, p. 5) and Kotter (1990, p. 6) to include responsibility for defining group goals, motivating people to pursue such goals, and influencing
group culture. In Chapter Two, I offer an organizational culture perspective, represented in the work of Ott (1989) and Schein (1985), to understand leadership within a cultural context. My investigation shows how a traditional approach to organizational leadership in the context of seniors' centres may serve as a barrier to the emergence of seniors as leaders, and I propose a more inclusive concept of leadership as active involvement and contribution of one's skills and talents to a community.

The leader is the person holding an office or role of formally recognized authority who assumes primary responsibility for the processes identified by Yukl (1988) and Kotter (1990) above. If we consider that influence flows throughout an organization, then we must also consider influences and initiatives of others in a group or organization who are not formally designated leaders. My particular focus of interest, however, is the "emergent senior leader"—the senior member who assumes a formal role of recognized authority. And because individual leadership is broadly conceived, everyone is viewed as a "potential" leader.

Significance of the Study

Since Peterson (1978) first defined the field of Educational Gerontology as a legitimate field of inquiry, education for older adults has grown haphazardly, suffering from the lack of an integrative theory of lifelong education and from the general view that education in retirement is a luxury for the few, whereas education of younger people constitutes resource development and provides future benefits to society (Cusack, 1991a). This thesis challenges that dominant view by documenting the potential of retired people, through lifelong education, to remain productively engaged and to contribute substantively to community life.

How do we make greater use of the resources inherent in the population of retired people? One obvious solution to an educator is to offer them an opportunity to improve their skills and awareness of their abilities and leadership potential through a leadership-training program. We know that leadership training has a significant impact on emergent leadership, but it is not clear what other factors influence retirees to assume leadership roles? (Cusack, 1991b; Cusack & Thompson, 1992). Leadership is a complex phenomenon that can only be fully understood within a given context; by identifying who is leading who and why. This study explores a specific context,
the seniors' community recreation centre, one that depends upon senior leadership for maintenance of its services and one in which senior leaders emerge. Its purpose is to clarify the issues, to better understand the nature of senior leadership and, in particular, to explore the factors and conditions, in addition to education/training, that facilitate the emergence of seniors as leaders. This information will be of special interest to growing numbers of professionals and volunteers of all ages who work with seniors' groups and organizations, and most particularly those working in leisure and recreational services.

Leadership in the third age is worthy of serious attention in view of the rapidly aging population and the need for able, retired persons to remain actively involved and contributing to community life through voluntary services. There are many issues and few definitive conclusions. This study contributes to our understanding of how to mobilize resources inherent in the retired population. Its value to social policy lies in the legitimation of retirement education as not just a luxury afforded an elite group, but as a worthwhile enterprise with far-reaching benefits to society.

Outline of the Chapters

Chapter Two presents a review of the literature on leadership, both how it has been researched and the general findings, with an overview of literature specific to motivation and research relevant to leadership in retirement. The case is made for an organizational culture perspective and the chapter concludes with a summary of the theoretical perspective. Chapter Three outlines the development of a conceptual framework for exploring leadership in seniors' centres. Chapter four sets the study within a tradition of ethnography and describes the collection and interpretation of empirical evidence drawn from participant observation records, survey questionnaires, informal observations, interviews and focussed group discussions. A brief discussion pertains to the construction of ethnographic text. In Chapters Five and Six, ethnographies are presented of the organizational cultures of two seniors' centres that highlight forces on emergent senior leadership. In Chapter Seven, the unit of analysis changes from the macro focus on culture to a micro focus on the individual. I then present brief life-histories of three senior leaders, weaving together empirical data and theoretical insights to illustrate the various factors that influence retired people to assume leadership roles. In the
concluding chapter, I address questions raised in Chapter One, and discuss problems with traditional leadership, issues of power and empowerment, and the role of third-age education.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The question to be explored is, What influences retired people to take on leadership roles in their groups and organizations. A preliminary search revealed little information about leadership in retirement: many issues were raised, but little insight gleaned into the nature of third-age leadership. Consequently, I selected reviews and studies in the broader field of leadership to understand the evolution of leadership as a field of inquiry. An understanding of what is distinctive about seniors as leaders must begin with some understanding of a general body of knowledge and of various traditions within which leadership has been investigated. Because internal motivation is presumed to influence emergent leadership, an overview of psychological studies on motivation was undertaken. McClusky (1974) and Maslow (1987) have written extensively about needs common to later life which, I believe, have implications for leadership in retirement. An overview of motivation theory is provided in order to establish a connection between leadership theory and motivation theory. I explore this connection within a dominant approach to organizational leadership—the human resources perspective—which, I argue is inadequate to a full understanding of the forces on emergent leadership.

In setting the context of leadership in the third age, I review four studies from the field of educational gerontology which specifically address the subject of developing seniors as leaders. The chapter concludes with a theoretical perspective on leadership in the third age derived from a summary of the literature.

Introduction to Senior Leadership

While history is replete with leaders in all walks of life who were very old, the idea of consciously developing seniors as leaders (e.g., offering training and/or implementing strategies to help seniors become more effective leaders or leaders for the first time) is a new one. Senior leadership was an emergent theme at the 17th Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting of the Canadian Association on Gerontology in Halifax in October 1988. A preconference workshop on "Seniors as Leaders" concluded with the critical need for
research and development on this topic. Three questions were targeted at this conference:

1. Can leadership skills from earlier life (i.e., skills developed in business, education, recreation, etc.) be transferred to retirement?
2. Can people learn to become leaders for the first time in retirement?
3. How can leadership skills of senior volunteers be put to greater use in serving the needs of their groups and organizations?

These three issues drive inquiry in senior leadership—they are key aspects of the broad question of how to make better use of the resources of older people. An underlying assumption is that one way of making better use of the resources of seniors is to engage them as leaders in retirement groups and organizations.

A comprehensive search of the literature on leadership revealed a wide range of information on leadership in general but little specific to the third age. The federal government of Canada has played a key role in the development of senior leadership notably through its New Horizons and Seniors' Independence Programs (Cusack & Thompson, 1989). While a number of leadership projects have been supported, few have been formally documented. With the exception of the "Seniors as Leaders" preconference presentation, the Ottawa conference, "Seniors . . . leadership is up to us", miscellaneous resource materials, and brief informal evaluation reports, there was little about senior leadership or how to develop it.

A computer search of the library databases of the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University for articles and monographs relating specifically to leadership for older adults resulted in only 10 references. A personal search of two leading journals in the field of education and gerontology in the collection at Simon Fraser University failed to uncover additional resources. From The Gerontologist (1978-91, excluding a special issue in 1985), only one article explicitly concerned senior leadership, and this article had already been identified by the computer search. From Educational Gerontology (1983-1991) only one article was identified by the term "leadership", although there were eight articles dealing with development of older adults as teachers or educational leaders (e.g., educational brokerage as a way of using elders as educators, teaching older adults how to teach, training health peers, peer counseling, engaging emeritus professors). Of the more than 250 books listed under the topic of leadership in the Simon Fraser University library collection, not one focussed on seniors as leaders.
Four articles, in particular, relate to leadership in retirement organizations. Given the limited research specific to the context of retirement, a review of the literature from various perspectives (e.g., education, business, military, philosophy, psychology) was conducted to develop an understanding of the ways in which leadership has been conceptualized and researched, as well as to uncover any conclusions that might be applicable to third-age leadership.

Overview of the Literature on Leadership

Leadership has fascinated philosophers and social scientists since Plato (and probably long before). It is a part of everyday personal and professional experience throughout life that affects individuals in various ways.

The term connotes images of powerful dynamic persons who command victorious armies, direct corporate empires from atop gleaming skyscrapers or shape the course of nations. Much of our description of history is the story of military, political, religious and social leaders. The exploits of brave and clever leaders are the essence of many legends and myths. The widespread fascination with leadership may be because it is such a mysterious process as well as one that touches everyone's lives. (Yuki, 1988, p. 1)

Not to be overwhelmed by the scope of the subject, I focussed on selected summaries and reviews of social science research (Hunt & Larson, 1977; McCall & Lombardo, 1977; and Stogdill, 1974) and, because I was interested in leadership within the context of retirement organizations, I then focussed more specifically on treatments of organizational leadership. Ogawa and Bossert (1989) and Yuki (1988) were selected because they presented relatively current and comprehensive reviews of the field of organizational leadership; Ott (1989) and Schein (1985) provided insights into leadership from an organizational culture perspective.

What is leadership? Stogdill's (1974) summary of the research on leadership from 1949 to 1970 offers the following rough classification of definitions according to their particular focus on leadership: (1) leadership as group process; (2) the personality of the leader; (3) the art of inducing compliance; (4) the exercise of influence; (5) leadership as an act or behaviour; (6) leadership as a form of persuasion; (7) leadership as an instrument of goal
achievement; (8) leadership as an effect of an interaction; (9) leadership as a differentiated role; and (10) the role of leadership in the initiation of structure.

An overview of the field suggests that approaches to understanding leadership have tended to focus on one or any combination of the following aspects: (1) the qualities and traits of an effective leader; (2) the skills associated with being a leader; (3) different styles of leadership; and (4) situation or context variables. One traditional approach to understanding the concept of leadership well-represented in the literature has been to identify the qualities and skills of an effective leader. Stogdill's (1974) summary included an analysis of 163 trait studies from which he derived the following description of a successful leader:

The leader is characterized by a strong desire for responsibility and task completion, vigour and persistence in pursuit of goals, venturesomeness and originality in problem-solving, drive to exercise initiative in social situations, self-confidence and sense of personal identity, willingness to accept consequences of decision and action, readiness to absorb interpersonal stress, willingness to tolerate frustration and delay, ability to influence other person's behaviour and capacity to structure social interaction systems to the purpose at hand. (p. 175)

Despite his thorough analysis of research on leadership and an elaborate definition, Stogdill concludes that

[Four decades of research on leadership have produced a bewildering mass of findings. ... The endless accumulation of empirical data has not produced an integrated understanding of leadership. (p. vii)]

Not only might we expect to find some consensus among researchers given the importance and the level of interest in the topic, a common understanding of leadership could provide a basis from which to begin an inquiry into a new and relatively unexplored area of leadership.

In 1976, an academic conference convened at the University of Illinois to provide interdisciplinary perspectives on the state-of-the-art in leadership research and on the evolution of leadership as a field of inquiry. The proceedings, Leadership: The Cutting Edge (Hunt & Larson, 1977), were intended to "examine theoretical and empirical directions in leadership believed to be at the cutting edge" (p. vi). While the title is provocative, one is left with a
sense that if empirical research is at the cutting edge, the cutting edge is not the place to be if one is seeking a better understanding of effective leadership or how to develop it. The first chapter of the proceedings begins: "In common with most other topic areas within the social sciences, the state-of-the-art in the field of leadership is not encouraging" (Schriesheim & Kerr, 1977, p. 9).

Hunt and Larson (1977) highlight three theories of leadership that have stimulated the greatest interest: Weber's (1947) concept of "charismatic" leadership, Fiedler's (1971) contingency theory of leadership, and House's (1973) path-goal theory. The charismatic leader is described as having three dominant characteristics: a high degree of self-confidence, a need for dominance (i.e., power or influence), and a strong moral conviction in what he or she is doing. Charismatic theory has suffered from an absence of empirical research, a problem that House (1977) hoped to remedy by challenging researchers to expand their studies of the leader to include situational variables and effects on followers. Charismatic leadership, as redefined by House (1977), focusses on the qualities of the leader while recognizing the importance of the situation and the effects on followers.

Contingency theory (Fiedler, 1971) holds that leaders are motivated primarily by satisfactions derived from two sources, interpersonal relationships and task-goal completion. This theory is intended to predict the effect of the leader given variability along two dimensions, motivations of the leader (i.e., either social or achievement) and favorableness of the task. The theory is based on a construct which claims to be a measure of the extent to which the leader is relationship-motivated or task-motivated. The construct is the measure of "least-preferred-coworker" (LPC) and it is a calculation of the regard in which the leader holds his least preferred co-worker. Clearly, without going any further, there are serious problems with the LPC construct as representing the strength of leader-member relationships that render the theory problematic.

Houses' (1973) path-goal theory focusses on the influence of the leader and rests on two propositions: (1) the leaders' function is supplemental (which I take to mean, depends on other things like the nature of the task, quality of interpersonal relationships, the structure of the organization) and (2) the motivational impact or influence of the leader depends on the situation. Within any situation, the theory goes, there are two categories of variables to consider: (1) the characteristics of group members and (2) aspects of the environment, such as the nature of the task, the formal organizational structure,
and the primary work groups of the subordinates. The assessment of contextual variables is then used to predict the influence of specific leader behaviours on the achievement of group goals. This makes sense but doesn't seem useful, given a conceivably infinite number of contextual variables within each category (i.e., while the theory is sound, the methodology is problematic).

Schriesheim & Kerr's critique (1977) describes the extent to which contingency and path-goal theories are flawed and inadequate. From a summary of over 100 scales, many derived from these two theories, few have been used more than once and 97% reported few validity measures. The authors conclude:

we seem to test only one or two "dominant" theories... that suffer from problems of theoretical inadequacy. As things stand now, current attempts at measuring and testing hypotheses about leadership phenomena are largely futile. Until new or improved theories of leadership are developed, we shall not be able to integrate whatever findings we obtain. Also, without adequate theory, we shall be unable to construct new, reliable, and valid measures of leadership. Without new measures, we cannot place much faith in any findings we obtain. Thus, with several thousand empirical studies already completed in the field of leadership, perhaps the time has come to place less emphasis on empirical investigation and more on the development of theory to guide research. (p. 45)

Melcher (1977) concludes that over 70 years of study have produced little either to increase our understanding or ability to predict different effects of different leadership approaches or how to promote more effective leadership. He claims there is little of value to aid either theoretical or practical understanding.

A year following the conference at the University of Illinois another group of distinguished social scientists came together in New York to consolidate existing knowledge of leadership. The title of the publication from that conference, Leadership, Where Else Do We Go? (McCall & Lombardo, 1978), reflects the sense of futility among empirical researchers. The delegates concluded that they really did not know anything for certain, and maybe all they had succeeded in doing was making a fascinating subject dull and boring. They decided, however, that they had learned a lot about what to avoid and how to proceed. They felt they may have thrown the baby out with the bathwater in reducing leadership to its common terms, and emphasized the
need to get at a deeper meaning of the term "leadership" and to explore the motivation of leaders. In particular, the question "How leaders share themselves and through their sharing breathe power and purpose into others" was suggested as an intriguing area for research (McCall & Lombardo, 1978, p. 101). How leaders motivate and inspire others is emphasized, rather than what motivates people to become leaders.

While there is considerable scepticism and disenchantment with empirical research in the social sciences reflected in the reviews cited here, it is important to note that work referenced to this point has been more about leaders than about leadership. Recently, there has been a resurgence of interest in the subject of leadership, but with a greater appreciation for context. In his critical review of research and theory, Yukl (1988) claims evidence of some progress in our understanding of leadership. He said, for example, we know:

1. There are many different valid definitions of leadership.
2. There are a vast number of qualities and traits that can be identified with an effective leader.
3. Leadership, its definition, and the essential qualities and skills are specific to each situation and context.

While these conclusions are not very definitive, they serve to emphasize the extent to which leadership is contextual, and that particular qualities and skills are associated with effective leadership within a given context.

Definitions of leadership have, as a common denominator, the assumption that it is a group phenomenon involving interaction between two or more people. Furthermore, most definitions reflect an underlying assumption that it involves influence exerted by the leader over others. All definitions have in common differences in the specifics of who exerts the influence, why (for what purpose), and how (in what manner). Within a given context the leader, by virtue of the authority of a formal or designated role, functions to influence commitment to and achievement of group goals.

Rather than reduce it to its common elements, leadership ought to be studied with an appreciation for its complexity and a greater tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty. To understand leadership we must understand the complexities of the systems in which it operates. This is achieved by focussing on different kinds of leadership in different kinds of situations—not reducing leadership to its elements. For this contextual approach, we turn to
organizational theory, a body of knowledge concerned with describing and explicating the structure and function of organizations.

Leadership and Organizational Theory
Leadership theory (theories about the qualities, skills, and styles of leaders) and organizational theory (theories concerned with the structure and function of organizations) have generally developed independently of one another. In their critical analyses of leadership research, both Tannenbaum (1961) and Melcher (1977) point to the failure of leadership research to take organizational variables into consideration. Organizational variables (e.g., task complexity, delegation, reward systems) affect both group and leadership behaviour; it is Melcher's view that leadership studies are not going to be of any practical value until they include organizational variables. "Leaders do not function in isolation... they must deal with followers within a physical, social, and cultural setting" (Tannenbaum, 1961, p. 23). Some of the key variables to be considered are the dynamics of leader-follower interactions and leader-organization interactions.

Recognizing that the scholarly focus on specific aspects (e.g., the qualities, skills, or motivation of the leader) within the context of an organization has provided few insightful conclusions, Ogawa and Bossert (1989), organizational theorists with an orientation to educational administration, view leadership as a quality of an organization, providing a perspective that gives scope to the complexity and ambiguity of the subject.

[W]e offer a view of organizational leadership that does not treat it as the province of a few people in certain parts of organizations. Rather, we treat it as a quality of organizations... a systemic characteristic. To find it, we submit, one must not look in one place or another but must step back and map leadership through organizations. (p. 1)

In summarizing the literature on both leaders and leadership, Ogawa and Bossert (1989) conclude that four basic assumptions have framed much scholarly research:

1. Leadership functions to influence overall organizational performance by affecting members beliefs and behaviours.
2. Leadership is related to organizational roles or offices, typically to the highest roles and offices.
(3) Leaders are individuals who possess certain attributes, act in certain ways, or both.

(4) Leaders operate within organizational cultures and affect how others interpret events—leaders are cultural shapers and interpreters.

Building on these assumptions, they define organizational leadership as

the influences exerted by individuals in high level offices through their traits and their actions on the overall performance of organizations. And, more recently, it has been added that this influence of leaders is wielded in and through organizational cultures. (Ogawa & Bossert, 1989, p. 4)

Organizational theorists have generally failed to recognize the extent to which leadership is both contextual and relational and not just a matter of wielding power from a position of authority (Bolman & Deal, 1991; Ogawa & Bossert, 1989). Leadership is something that flows throughout an organization and is not unidirectional. While the leadership role (e.g., president, director, chairman) typically involves a set of activities or tasks, the essence of leadership is that influence over and above formal structures and mechanical compliance, and leadership traits are those personal resources on which leaders rely. Because leadership is based primarily on personal resources, more than the authority of office, all persons can exert leadership. Administrators, managers, or superintendents can fulfill their responsibilities without exercising qualities of leadership and, conversely, one can, as a member of a group, inspire one's colleagues or compatriots to undertake new challenges and initiatives. For example, the person in the kitchen who serves the coffee sets a tone among his or her co-workers in ways not defined by an official role and influences the climate of the organization.

Social interaction is the building block of leadership:

Leadership ... is a relationship between leaders and their constituents. ... It is a subtle process of mutual influence that fuses thought, feeling and action to produce collective effort in the service of the purposes and values of both leader and the led. (Bolman & Deal, 1991, p. 410)

Fundamental is a view of the organization as a culture of shared meaning and value.
The Culture of Organizations

According to Ogawa and Bossert (1989), organizations are systems of shared meanings and values. Their structures are cultural expressions. The extent to which meanings and values are shared affects organizations' solidarity, which is linked to cohesion and cooperative collective action. (pp. 14;15)

The formal organizational structure is merely one manifestation of the culture—the organizational culture is the essence of leadership.

Since 1980, according to Ott (1989), there has been growing dissatisfaction with structural/functionalist approaches to organizational research. The organizational culture perspective represents a new approach or lens. To understand how leadership functions within an organizational context, we must study the cultures of organizations in much the same way that anthropologists have studied nonwestern societies and peoples. The organization is viewed as a mini-society that mirrors aspects of the broader culture and, claims Ott (1989), the organizational culture shapes leadership. Leadership and organizational culture are two sides of a coin and one aspect cannot be understood without understanding the other (Schein, 1985). Whereas the structure of the organization is visible, its culture is implicit, complex, and often difficult to understand.

Culture refers to aspects such as commonly observed behaviours, group norms that evolve over time, dominant values, and the philosophy that guides formal policy (Schein, 1985). The essence of culture operates at the deeper level and refers to basic assumptions and beliefs shared among members that often operate unconsciously. This deep culture evolves through a history of shared experiences. The organizational structure (i.e., the formal roles and system of relationships among people) provides an indication of how the organization functions. The visible manifestation (level 1), however, must be tested against the expressed views and values (level 2). One must probe beneath articulated goals and values for underlying beliefs and presuppositions (level 3) that are fundamental to the organizational culture in order to fully understand the influences on emergent leadership. Table 1 outlines three levels of organizational culture as depicted by Schein (1985, p. 14).
Table 1. Three Levels of Organizational Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL 1: artifacts</th>
<th>(visible, but often not decipherable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• art</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• visible patterns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL 2: expressed beliefs/values</th>
<th>(some level of awareness)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• testable in physical environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• testable by social consensus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL 3: basic assumptions</th>
<th>(invisible, tacit, preconscious)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• relation to environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• nature of time and space</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• nature of human nature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• nature of activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• nature of relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Schein (1985, p. 14)
My exploration of leadership and organizational theory led me to an appreciation for the influence of culture and to an organizational culture perspective. Given this dynamic interactive approach to leadership and the strength of social forces, I wondered where individual needs and motivations belong. A fundamental principle of volunteer management is that people participate in activities in order to meet their needs. Therefore, it is important to understand the needs and motivations of individuals whom one wishes to influence. I now want to shift the focus to the individual, and to explore the articulation of theories of individual motivation with leadership and organizational theory.

Leadership and Motivation

Exploring why human beings behave as they do has preoccupied social scientists and philosophers in much the same way that leadership has. Three major approaches have dominated the field of psychology since its emergence in the middle of the last century: (1) the experimental approach exemplified by the behaviourists (e.g., Hull, Tolman, McClelland, White, Skinner); (2) the psychoanalytic approach developed by Freud; and (3) the humanistic tradition associated with Maslow, Rogers, etc.

Behavioural psychologists, using empirical methods in the tradition of natural science research, contributed to early understanding of human behaviour. Hull (1943) deduced principles of human behaviour from extensive, highly-controlled laboratory studies of animals, and conceptualized motivation in terms of drive-reduction theory. As Peters (1961) suggests, the use of the term "drives" was a way of translating the concept of "need" into mechanistic terms, representing a marriage between mechanical and purposive explanations for behaviour—the suggestion is that a predisposing biological condition activates goal-directed behaviour. A physical state of tension in the body compels behaviour designed to restore a sense of equilibrium or homeostasis. In this tradition, McClelland's (1955) concept of achievement motivation and White's (1958) notion of competence motivation generated considerable interest among empirical researchers for many years.

A second direction in the scientific study of motivation is represented by Freud, who developed psychoanalytic theories to explain motivations and processes that could not be observed. For those drives that could not be
explained by the drive-reduction theorists, Freud posited the notion of the unconscious (i.e., unconscious desires and wish-fulfilment).

Both behavioural and psychoanalytic approaches tend to view human behaviour narrowly, as determined either by biological drives and impulses or by impulses which are unconscious and/or pathological. While the empirical work of the behaviourists is exemplary in its precision, and psychoanalysis has contributed to the humane treatment of psychopathological disturbances, both approaches are limited in their views of human motivation.

In contrast to these two dominant traditions, the humanistic view, represented by Maslow, is more comprehensive and optimistic. Maslow felt that human potential had always been underestimated within social science, and so he explored the complexity of human beings without the restrictions of a mechanical model. His theory builds on the notion of basic needs posited by the drive-reduction theorists and extends the concept of physiological needs to include "higher order" needs, incorporating desires and intentions that distinguish human beings from animals. The distinction between humans and animals is largely one of will and intentionality; therefore, the individual must often be characterized as striving toward a goal rather than invariably compelled or pushed to relieve a tension.

Unlike drive-reduction theorists, Maslow conceptualized needs as representing the "essence of human lives" and therefore not capable of being put to the test in a laboratory. Maslow's exploration of motivation involved viewing the individual as a total human being in a natural social environment; confirmation of his theoretical interpretations must, therefore, come from the real world. Based on the interpretation of case studies of successful and productive older people whom he termed "self-actualizers", Maslow's theory provides insights and tentative explanations that help people make sense of their lives. Maslow's (1968) approach to motivation, which has been called the "Third Force" by psychologists has particular application to understanding motivation in the third age and, in particular, the factors that might influence retired people to take on leadership roles. Maslow focusses on human purpose and intentionality, seeing human development as a process of self-actualization that is continuous throughout life. One way of actualizing or realizing one's full potential may be through expressions of leadership.
Maslow's theory states that human beings are motivated by a hierarchy of human needs which they strive to satisfy. This hierarchy describes five categories beginning with the most basic needs:

1. Physical needs are the needs of the body for food, water, shelter and clothing. Humans, like most other animals, have a strong drive toward self-preservation. Satisfaction of these needs is essential to survival.

2. Security needs are of two types: physical and economic. Physical security means being in a safe place; economic security involves having a reasonable economic level and not having to worry about loss of economic resources due to old age, accident, etc.

3. Social need refers to the need to feel a sense of belonging, of being an integral and important part of a group or culture to which one belongs.

4. Ego/recognition needs include such things as status, recognition, prestige, respect, and self-esteem.

5. Self-actualization is the highest need and it refers to the feeling of making progress toward reaching one's full potential, achieving both what one wants and is best suited to do.

This system is hierarchical because needs at lower levels must be satisfied first (e.g., physical needs before ego needs). If needs in one area are not met, it is difficult to move up. For example, if physical safety is threatened, it is very hard to feel good about oneself or to develop one's full potential—concerns for safety simply take precedence. Figure 1 represents Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as depicted by Thompson and Cusack (1990, p. 129).

While Maslow's hierarchy is quite familiar, it is perhaps not so well-known that he reserved his concept of self-actualization for maturity and later life.

I have removed one source of confusion by confining the concept [of self-actualization] very definitely to older people. By the criteria I used, self-actualization does not occur in young people. (Maslow, 1987, p. xxvi)

(The term "self-actualization" suffers from the lack of a precise definition, being used variously to mean engagement in personally enriching activities, giving meaning to one's life, creative expression). Maslow goes on to explain that before people are motivated by the need to self-actualize, they must first
Figure 1: MASLOW’S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS
develop an identity and a personal value system and become autonomous. They must experience a love relationship, endure tragedy and failure, and attain sufficient knowledge to open the possibility of wisdom. It is through life experience that the individual becomes a mature, fully-functioning human being.

Cox (1987), in her afterword to the third edition of Maslow's treatise on motivation, discusses the practical application of his theory to organizational leadership and, more specifically to human resource theory which has focussed on maximizing the fit between individual needs and organizational goals. Human resource theorists support the view that successful leadership emphasizes the needs of people rather than the goals of the organization, and is directed toward satisfying people's need for personal meaning and self-development (Bolman & Deal, 1991).

The concept of the third age, according to Laslett's (1987) definition, would seem to be one in which people in retirement can and often do develop their full human potentials. For many, that may involve assuming leadership roles in retirement organizations. The question central to this study is, what kind of social environment makes that possible? Maslow (1987) said growth toward self-actualization is made possible by a hierarchy of favourable preconditions (i.e., physical, interpersonal, and cultural conditions) that permit individuals to become sufficiently confident to take charge of their own future and become what Maslow called "the fully human person." And, according to Maslow's theory, some of the preconditions that foster such high levels of personal development are underlying assumptions within the organization:

1. Assume in all people the impulse to achieve and do a good job.
2. Assume people need to feel needed, useful, successful and respected (ego need).
3. Assume people are trusting and can be trusted.
4. Assume the need for connectedness (belonging need).
5. Open communication is a prerequisite.

Maslow's theory has much to recommend it to understanding leadership in the third age. First, it is a normative theory: it is value-explicit and supports an optimistic view of human motivation. What is even more appealing to educational gerontologists (and many people approaching retirement) is that it promotes a view of old age as a time for continued personal development. The view that many individuals are continually striving toward the development of
their full potential is consistent with Dewey's notion of education as growth and with a conception of learning as continuous throughout life (Cross-Durrant, 1984). While this seems neither definitive nor surprising, one must consider that retirement has simply not been commonly perceived as a period of continued personal development for the majority of people.

Like Maslow, American educator Howard McClusky emphasizes the development of human potential as a lifelong process. Both Maslow and McClusky define a need as a condition marked by the lack of something, the existence of which motivates the individual to act so as to achieve a desirable goal. McClusky (1974) identifies five needs common to later life: coping, expressive, contributive, influence, and transcendence. The coping needs are most directly related to loss of power experienced as a result of loss of income, employment, energy, and physical health—in which case, financial, health, and counselling education may be remedial. Expressive needs are variously met through recreational pursuits such as involvement in healthy physical activity, dancing, music, and art.

The contributive need, reflecting the need to feel useful and to contribute to the community, is the one that McClusky claims deserves greater recognition, because this is the need, he suggests, we ought to exploit in making better use of the resources of retired people. The influence need also has particular relevance to leadership. Because of diminishing income, resilience and self-confidence, power in the social realm is problematic. Older people occupy fewer social positions of real power and, therefore, have greater need to become agents of social change.

Older people have a vital need for [opportunities] that will enable them to exert influence in protecting and improving their own situation, and in contributing to the well-being of the larger society . . . the result of such programs would be the development of new influence roles and a social climate more favourable for the development of self-respect. Such a program would also shift the emphasis . . . from 'doing for' older people to helping them 'do for themselves'. (McClusky, 1974, p. 336)

The final need is for transcendence which McClusky defines as the need to engage in activity beyond personal interest, characterized by selflessness and generosity. McClusky identifies a need in the later years to transcend the ego and the limitations of the physical body and to develop the secure knowledge
that one has achieved some importance beyond this life by contributing to family, to culture, and to friendship. This is, again, consistent with Maslow's concept of self-actualization as continuous personal development and represents a variation of the need to make a contribution to society.

McClusky's views are consistent with Maslow with particular emphasis on contributive and influence needs. As an advocate of education in later life, McClusky (1974, p. 325) claims it is these critical needs and the undeveloped potential of older persons that make education in later life so important. Both McClusky's and Maslow's theories are based on an optimistic view of human beings as striving to develop their full potentials and to contribute to the community to the end of their lives—a view that is becoming increasingly defensible given the growing visibility of exemplary seniors in Third Age societies.

What, then, is the relationship between humanistic views of motivation and leadership theory? Human resources theory provides the link (Bolman & Deal, 1984). It suggests that people may be influenced to become involved, take on responsibilities, and assume leadership roles in community groups and organizations by affording them opportunities to address their needs, whatever they may be (e.g., for personal development, power and/or influence), while contributing to group and/or organizational goals. According to Bolman & Deal (1984, p. 65), assumptions underlying the human resources perspective are:

1. Organizations exist to serve people.
2. Humans do not exist to serve organizations' needs.
3. Organizations and their members need each other.
4. Poor matches between the individual and the organization are detrimental to both.
5. Good matches benefit both.

Fundamental to the human resources approach is the role of the organization in meeting the needs of individuals. Consequently, leadership should recognize and address fundamental needs as a way of developing individual potentials. It is important to consider the extent to which approaches to leadership both reflect and derive from fundamental assumptions about people, their needs, and their potentials.

Leadership Styles and Assumptions about Human Nature. McGregor's (1960) concept of "theory X and theory Y" illustrates how leadership styles or
approaches based on presuppositions about human nature set up expectations that influence individual and group behaviour. Theory X reflects the traditional view of authoritarian leadership, and the rationale for direction and control goes as follows: The average human being has an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it, and so must be coerced to work. Furthermore, the average human prefers to be directed and to avoid responsibility, has little ambition and wants to be secure above all. This unsatisfied need for security is met by an authoritarian style of leadership.

If, however, we believe many individuals have satisfied lower level needs and have an emerging need for achievement and personal development, then we must offer them opportunities to satisfy those needs if we are to facilitate their involvement and full use of their talents. People deprived of the opportunity to satisfy personally important needs typically react by rejecting responsibility, resisting change, and following an authoritarian leader (McGregor, 1960). Members of an organization will continue to follow a controlling leader and will refuse to become more involved and take on responsibilities unless they perceive it as an opportunity to satisfy their unmet personal needs.

Theory Y is based on a more optimistic view of human nature and represents an integration of individual and organizational goals. Some underlying assumptions (McGregor, 1960, pp. 47; 48) are:

1. Work may be a source of satisfaction.
2. Under proper conditions humans learn and seek responsibility.
3. External control is not the means to achieve organizational objectives. People will exercise self-direction in service of objectives toward which they are committed.
4. Commitment to the achievement of organizational goals comes from the opportunity it presents to satisfy higher needs.
5. The capacity to exercise a relatively high degree of imagination and creativity to solve organizational problems is widely distributed in the population.
6. Under many conditions the potential of average human beings is only partially utilized.

The central principle of theory Y is that members can typically achieve their own goals best by directing their efforts toward the success of the organization. Conversely, organizations will achieve their goals best if
significant adjustments are made to the needs and goals of the members. The task is, therefore, to create the best conditions so members feel they can meet their own needs best by directing their efforts toward the success of the enterprise.

The primary goal, according to human resources theory, is to develop individual potentials. Therefore, to create an environment where effective leadership emerges, the formal leader creates conditions for personal growth and opportunities for members to meet their needs by taking on more responsible, leadership roles. This aspect of leadership, promoting the development of individual potential, is what Kotter (1990) claims, distinguishes leaders from managers. Management controls people by pushing them in the right direction, leadership motivates them by satisfying basic human needs such as achievement, recognition, and personal control over their lives. Kotter refers to the kind of organizational leadership that facilitates emergent leadership as a culture of leadership. While the focus on developing leadership potential makes sense, there are serious limitations to a human resources approach to understanding and creating a culture of leadership in a retirement organization. The limitations go beyond the language of economic efficiency and organizational effectiveness that fails to account for the diversity and humanity of the older people viewed as resources.

Limitations of a Human Resources Approach. According to Ott (1989), approaches to organizational effectiveness reflect dominant forces in society. He claims the human resources approach, which originated in the 1960's, is naive and underestimates both the strength of underlying assumptions and social forces within the organization and the impact of external societal forces on people and organizations. In addition, the human resources approach, emphasizing as it does the centrality of addressing individual needs for personal development, requires that individuals recognize and articulate their needs and believe that the organization will address them. It assumes that the director or manager of the organization believes in the untapped potential of every individual. It also requires that individuals believe in themselves and have a keen interest in developing their skills and abilities.

These basic assumptions are part of the deepest level of organizational culture which, according to Ott, serve to promote internal cohesion and to help the organization to adapt to external societal forces. Typically, they are
unquestioned within the organizational culture and they develop over time through a shared history. This line of argument, which was discussed earlier in this chapter, again supports the organizational culture perspective as a way of understanding the dynamics of leadership within organizations.

The Context of Leadership in the Third Age

Four articles directly address the potential of third-age leadership and suggest how it might be developed: two papers address leadership among the aged in Israel (Chetkow-Yanoov, 1986, 1990) and two describe leadership-training programs in Canada (Cusack, 1991b; Cusack & Thompson, 1992). Chetkow-Yanoov (1986) begins one of his papers on leadership with a quote from Margaret Mead, who said (on her 74th birthday), "I may well die, but I have no plans to retire". Chetkow-Yanoov was prompted to spend many years researching senior leadership by extraordinary colleagues and acquaintances who continued well into retirement to remain actively engaged in leadership roles: he was curious about what enabled such people to continue to be active and "avoid the status of irrelevant old folks" (p. 51). In an attempt to distinguish third-age individuals who function as leaders from others who do not, he analyzed data from a total of 706 questionnaires out of a total of 1952 mailed to retired professionals representing the creative, helping, and service professions. He concludes that a pool of talented third-age leaders does exist who are willing to devote themselves to issues of aging and their profession. While Chetkow-Yanoov's response rate is high (36%), these responses are unlikely to be representative of the population, but rather of a subset of self-selecting, active, healthy survivors. Furthermore, we cannot presume they represent the much larger and more diverse population of nonprofessionals who are the focus of this study.

In the later paper, Chetkow-Yanoov (1990) differentiates four kinds of leaders in each of the professions: (1) individually active persons or role models (2) social leaders (3) organizational leaders and (4) community leaders, with many people fitting into more than one of the categories. Those fitting into more than one category he termed "high leadership" types and these people were characterized as optimistic, healthy, and prepared for retirement. Eighty percent remained active within their professions as well as with other retired persons and they claimed to suffer little role loss in retirement. Chetkow-Yanoov concludes that many professional people have no desire to
disengage from society and we would do well to invest in leadership-training courses both as a part of pre-retirement programming and for third-age students in colleges and universities. Furthermore, he adds, that the continuing competence of older leaders serves to challenge many societal stereotypes and assumptions upon which social policy and services to the aged are based.

Chetkow-Yanoov's conclusions about third-age leadership in Israeli society support a widely-held view in North America that retired professionals tend to remain active and involved following retirement. However, while many professionals may be eager to stay involved, they do not appear willing to assume leadership roles in seniors' groups and organizations. To the contrary, my research (Cusack, 1991b; Cusack, Manley-Casimir, & Thompson, 1992; Cusack & Thompson, 1992; Cusack, Thompson, & Manley-Casimir, 1992), identifies a shortage of retirees willing to assume leadership roles in seniors' organizations (i.e., one of the four categories of leadership in Chetkow-Yanoov's typology). Indeed, the emergence of seniors as leaders for the first time in retirement and a realization of the potential contribution of that vast and diverse population of nonprofessionals would serve as an even greater challenge to societal stereotypes.

Chetkow-Yanoov makes the case for leadership training, one visible aspect of organizational culture, as a way of influencing people to take on leadership roles in retirement. The Participation with Confidence project (Cusack, 1991b) provides direct evidence that a leadership-training program may influence people to take on leadership roles, perhaps for the first time in retirement. Set within the context of one seniors' community recreation centre in a suburban community in British Columbia, the objective was to increase member participation in leadership roles. A 20-week training program was designed to meet the specific needs and interests of the membership: workshop topics, which were chosen by the board, included assertiveness, time-management, communication, confidence-building, and tips on healthy aging. Results from questionnaires to program participants and centre staff provide corroboration for the benefits of the program. Comparison of an activity indicator before and after the program confirmed that participants were, indeed, taking on more leadership roles.

The evaluation of a leadership training program supported by the Seniors' Independence Program at Simon Fraser University provides further
evidence of the benefits of leadership training (Cusack & Thompson, 1992). Unlike the Participation with Confidence program, this project involved extensive research and development culminating in a program model consisting of ten workshops reflecting key elements of senior leadership. The program was designed for a wide range of seniors' groups, organizations, and community centres. Retirees from various seniors' groups and centres in the greater Vancouver area participated in the demonstration project. The majority of the participants (i.e., excepting six) held formal leadership roles—many were members of the board of executives in their respective community centres.

Despite the positive results from these two pilot projects, what remained unanswered is the extent to which the organizational contexts to which participants returned would either support or thwart their enthusiasm for greater involvement. Do others with whom they affiliate believe in and support the development of senior leadership potential? What evidence is there that taking on leadership roles in community centres offers retired people an opportunity to satisfy needs for recognition, achievement, personal development, influence, power?

One of the most provocative questions raised in the demonstration project was what motivates people to get involved—provocative because it generated lively discussion and debate among the senior leaders who participated in the planning sessions. When people were asked what motivated them to take on leadership roles, many said they wanted to make a contribution and didn't need rewards or recognition. When asked to explain, they said recognition and status were not as important as when they were younger. Only one remained adamant that her motives were purely altruistic—she insisted that she did not need any form of recognition for volunteer work. Curiously, six months later, she inquired whether her name and contribution would be acknowledged in the training manual that was being developed (Thompson & Cusack, 1991). Perhaps the kind of recognition people seek is different in retirement. Or perhaps it just differs among individuals. To what extent and in what way do seniors' centres accord the desired status and recognition to its senior leaders?

The question of legitimate power and influence extended to seniors was another issue discussed in the training program. A member of the board from one centre observed that staff from his centre met regularly with the Parks Board, the governing body for seniors' recreation centres. He felt this showed
that paid professionals had more power and influence and that seniors' were excluded from certain kinds of decision-making processes. He suggested the formal role of a senior leader may be a form of tokenism, extended in a patronizing fashion.

The issue of power was also highlighted by Klein (1970) in his work with seniors' centres in the United States:

[O]lder people [generally] feel a lack of respect when they are told what to do, feel a lack of adequacy when they are not asked, feel put down when things are done for them rather than with them. . . . [P]eople are no longer willing to participate in programs where they do not have rights and are not accepted as equal with people who like to think of themselves as the directors, administrators, policymakers, and leaders. (Klein, 1970, p. 1)

The relationship between professionals and seniors seems to be critical. One participant in the training program expressed the feeling that many staff members "treat us like children". As evidence she pointed out that when people at her centre sign up for bus trips they are asked to register as "seniors" or "adults" and this suggested to her that seniors were not accorded full adult status. When staff were asked to respond to these remarks, they said the label was necessary because "adults" had to pay full fare and "seniors" paid a cheaper fare. While one can see the logic, the sensitivity to being treated as children reflects underlying issues and attitudes that cannot be lightly dismissed and warrant further exploration. The relationship and interactions between leader/managers and seniors and, in particular, the leadership style of professionals will be important to consider.

A consideration for the needs of retired people to share in decision-making processes and to be treated as equals with leader/managers and staff suggests that a style of shared, democratic, participation (Klein, 1970; Peck, 1987) and the concept of servant leadership (Eble, 1979; Greenleaf, 1977; Heider, 1988) may be particularly appropriate to the context of retirement. This approach to leadership in retirement organizations is foundational to the training model and the manual, Flying High (Thompson & Cusack, 1991).

The Concept of Shared Servant Leadership. A principle of the human resources perspective fundamental to leadership in voluntary organizations is the notion that people participate in group activities in order to have their needs
met and, therefore, a key role of the leader is to serve the needs of individuals in the group. If we include the needs of each individual for growth and development of skills and talents, to be recognized, and to experience a measure of power and control, then it becomes particularly important to share the responsibilities for leadership among the membership.

The concept of servant leadership is not new, dating back to the writings of the philosopher, Lao Tsu, (originally addressed to the political ruler of China in the 5th century B.C). These writings have recently been reinterpreted by Heider (1988) with what he calls, "adaptations for a new age". Some prescriptions are:

The wise leader does not impose a personal agenda or value system on the group . . . , the leader follows the groups' lead and is open to whatever emerges. (p. 97)

The wise leader is not collecting a string of successes. The leader is helping others to find their own successes. Sharing success with others is very successful. (p. 61)

Group members need the leader for guidance and facilitation. The leader needs people to work with, people to serve. If both do not recognize the mutual need to [support] and respect one another, each misses the point. (p. 53)

Robert Greenleaf (1977) based his conceptualization of servant leadership on a lifetime of personal experience in various leadership roles. He claims there are two kinds of leaders: the "leader-first" and the "servant-first" leader. [nb. This is consistent with Fiedler's (1971) contingency theory which characterized leaders as either task or relationship focussed]. Simply put, the leader-first type is the authoritarian leader whose focus is getting the task done, whereas the servant leader is

sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need [for] power or to acquire material possessions. The difference manifests itself in the care taken to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test and difficult to administer is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? (Greenleaf, 1977, p.13).
Servant leadership is based on a view of the primary role of the leader as serving the needs of others and reflects an optimistic view of the potential of each individual to become a leader and, in turn, serve the needs of others. To the contrary, many have painted a bleak picture of retirement as a time of reduced expectation and lack of a functional role. Jarvis (1989) defines retirement as an "incomplete ritual" that symbolizes the end of a productive working life, but with no sense of transition to another stage, leaving many without a sense of meaning or purpose:

Feeling retired from society, unneeded and unproductive, they cast about for some comfortable way to spend their money and time in the twenty years they have left. (Erikson et al., 1986, p. 24)

Martin's (1990) study of the social environment of three seniors' community centres suggests that many professionals in managerial roles hold deep-seated negative attitudes toward older people as dependent and less able to make decisions or contribute to community life, attitudes that act as a self-fulfilling prophecies. The common view that people have less to contribute as they age becomes the framework within which they operate. It will be important to consider to what extent the organizational culture reflects a view of retirement as a time for continuous growth and personal development and whether it reflects a belief in the abilities of retired people and their potential contribution to leadership.

Theoretical Perspective on Third-age Leadership. There are a number of preliminary working hypotheses suggested by this review of leadership in the context of retirement organizations. The third age or retirement stage of life may be a period of growth and development of personal potential for many (health and finances permitting). Many older people, no less than adults of any age, want and need to feel useful and to make a contribution to society. Retirement characteristically involves the loss of a fulfilling functional role in society—the task is to create a new, satisfying social role. For many, that may involve assuming leadership roles, perhaps for the first time in their lives.

The relationship between seniors and professionals who work with and serve them is a key to the development of individual potential, the creation of new social roles, and the emergence of seniors as leaders and full partners in decision-making processes. Relationships between seniors and professionals
that are equal, respectful, and mutually supportive and a style of shared, servant leadership are most consistent with a human resources approach to organizational effectiveness. Attitudes prevalent in society, reflected in the culture of seniors' groups, about the abilities of older people and their potential contribution to community life are among the strongest forces influencing seniors to become more involved and assume leadership roles in the community centres to which they belong.

The purpose of this study is to understand the felt needs of retired people that motivate them to assume leadership roles and to explore other influences within the organizational culture of seniors' centres that facilitate the emergence of leadership. An organizational culture perspective is essential to uncover the deeper assumptions and beliefs held in common, yet often unspoken, that are the strongest forces influencing leader and member behaviour. Particular attention will be given to the need for social influence or power and the way in which power is shared throughout the organizational structure. Of particular interest will be assumptions about retirement and the role and abilities of retired persons and the extent to which the deep culture of the organization supports the emergence of third-age leadership.

Given the limited research in the area of third-age leadership, the study is exploratory. Since its purpose is to illuminate organizational culture, the tradition of inquiry is ethnographic. The following chapter integrates theoretical notions about organizations and culture drawn from other contexts with preliminary working hypotheses about senior leadership in the context of seniors' centres into a coherent conceptual framework to guide the exploration.
CHAPTER THREE: DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR EXPLORING LEADERSHIP IN SENIORS CENTRES

An empirical study of a complex organization such as a seniors’ centre requires a conceptual framework to guide the exploration. As Tyler (1960) says:

Systematic and orderly investigations of the “great buzzing confusion” of life require conceptualizations, that is, views of what to look for, how to look for them, and what kinds of structures, processes and relationships are involved. (p. 7)

The purpose of this chapter is to build a framework that will focus and guide the study. To this end, I begin with a perspective on organizations, leadership, and culture derived from the literature review. A conceptual framework is then outlined and explicated.

Organizations, Leadership, and Culture

Organizations are dynamic, interactive systems of people with a common purpose operating within a formal structure of roles and responsibilities. Organizations vary in many ways: e.g., size, structure, history, philosophy, physical environment, and formal roles of responsibility. Organizational leadership refers to a process of influence which flows throughout an organization; and it depends upon organizational variables as noted above, as well as the personal resources, skills, expectations, attitudes, and beliefs of leaders and members. While the structure of the organization is one visible manifestation of leadership, systems of shared meaning and value add another dimension to the understanding of organizational leadership.

Leadership is the pattern of influence that flows throughout organizations. Those in formal leadership roles (e.g., managers or directors) possess certain attributes and act in certain ways, but because influence flows throughout an organization and is not unidirectional, all persons can exert influence. Organizational culture has a strong influence on the behaviour of members. Leadership is both created by culture and creates organizational culture—i.e., their relationship is one of reciprocal influence. We cannot understand leadership without understanding culture.
According to the organizational culture perspective, culture exists in organizations as it does in society—it is socially constructed, evolves over time, and is largely implicit. Culture exists on three levels: (1) visible manifestations (physical environment, rules, policy); (2) shared values, philosophy, views (easily expressed); and (3) underlying beliefs and assumptions. The deeper level of assumptions, which often are not expressed, is the essence of culture which may provide group energy for action or functions as a control mechanism (Ott, 1989). Culture lies between people and is shared by them, and therefore members of a culture understand, though never fully, others within that culture (Stenhouse, 1967, p. 13). To understand culture, we focus on inter-subjective negotiation of the meaning of observable behaviours. The exploration of a given organizational culture involves illumination of the three levels of culture.

Shared beliefs and assumptions that are taken for granted exert a powerful influence over behaviour. If, for example, seniors perceive that their leadership skills and abilities are not valued, they will be reluctant to assume leadership roles even when their help is actively solicited. If the common view is that retirement is a time to relax and to be served by professionals, seniors will not be willing to get involved and assume responsibilities—and they probably will not enrol in a leadership training course. If, to the contrary, a genuine belief in the skills and abilities of older people pervades the organization, seniors may be more willing to contribute knowledge and to assume some of the workload.

The purpose of this thesis is to identify and illuminate such influences on emergent leadership by exploring the organizational culture in a specific context. Consistent with the notion of emergent senior leadership as referring to either a senior assuming the formal role of leader for the first time or a senior leader either becoming more effective or moving to a higher level of responsibility, the forces on the “senior leader” are, for the purposes of this study, considered similar to those operating on all senior members.

I begin by developing a preliminary framework incorporating concepts of organizations, leadership, and culture derived from the literature review and my professional experience in the context of seniors’ centres. The framework provides a basis from which to explore and define the culture as experienced by its members, yet open to new evidence and alternative views, concepts, definitions, and styles of leadership.
Developing a Conceptual Framework

This study is exploratory—its goal is to generate insights and speculative hypotheses that lend themselves to further investigation. The role of theory with respect to empirical investigation is to provide a rough approximation of what one expects to find. Theory has been defined as a general set of ideas through which we make sense of the world (Eisner, 1979; Kaplan, 1964). Theory derived from the literature review about how leadership functions in retirement organizations, summarized in Chapter Two serves as clues or as sensitizing agents, but not as preconceived ideas that one is testing. In particular, theory should not serve as self-fulfilling prophecy.

Malinowski (1950) makes the critical distinction between preconceived ideas and foreshadowed problems. Training in theory and acquaintance with latest results is not identical with being burdened with "preconceived ideas". Grounding in theory arms the researcher with "foreshadowed problems"—the more theory he or she brings, the more theory can be recrafted to reflect observations and to see observations in relation to theory.

Preconceived ideas are pernicious in any scientific work, but foreshadowed problems are the main endowment of a scientific thinker, and these problems are first revealed to the observer by his theoretical studies. (Malinowski, 1950, p. 9)

A conceptual framework is a construction of analytical understandings and empirical presuppositions. This translation of theory into a network of relationships serves rather like a map: the investigator then begins to explore the context and to gather empirical evidence to corroborate that structure (Eisner, 1979). The results serve as evidence in the confirmation, disconfirmation, extension, and/or reconstruction of theory. [Critical to such an exploratory study is an attitude of openness to the discovery of new insights and possibilities].

This study, using the seniors' centre as the cultural unit of focus, seeks an understanding of leadership and the influences on emergent senior leadership. The conceptual framework is derived from leadership and organizational theory, motivation and human resources theory, theory of organizational culture, and from preliminary studies in the context of seniors' community centres. A summary of leadership and motivation theory suggests a number of internal influences. A summary of leadership and organizational theory helps to identify
three socio-cultural categories of influence: (1) organizational variables; (2) relationship variables (especially those between seniors and professionals); and (3) shared meanings and values. These three categories of influence are represented in Schein’s three levels of culture as depicted in Chapter Two. In order to understand the deeper level of shared assumptions, I begin by exploring the more visible organizational variables and the shared beliefs and values that are more readily expressed in social discourse and observed in the interactions and relationships between people. My conceptual framework for exploring a culture of leadership incorporates Schein’s three levels of culture.

Exploring a Culture of Leadership

The first level of culture refers to the more visible aspects of the organization, including such variables as (a) the history of the organization; (b) features such as policy, programs, special events, ceremonies, and rituals; and (c) the physical environment. The second level refers to goals and beliefs that are readily articulated and are reflected in the interactions and relationships between seniors and professionals—the focus of observations is on social discourse. Variables of interest will be (a) the style of leadership; (b) the dynamics of power (i.e., who is in charge); and (c) the quality of the relationship. The goal is to uncover, through probing, interpretation, and negotiation with participants, the third and deepest level of culture. My preliminary investigations supported in the literature review suggest that emergent senior leadership may be influenced by assumptions about (1) the nature of retirement; (2) the needs and abilities of retired people; (3) power; and (4) leadership. Figure 2 outlines a conceptual framework for exploring the culture of leadership in retirement organizations.

Considering leadership as an organizational quality does not preclude a focus on one specific area. While the unit of analysis is the organization, the focus of interest is on the individual—the emergent senior leader—and that person is considered within a complex of influences. The methodology is outlined in the next chapter, beginning with an elaboration of the tradition of ethnography, research methods, and issues of validity, usefulness, and generalizability. I then describe the research design, and the way in which empirical evidence will be gathered, analyzed, and interpreted in the process of addressing the research questions.
Figure 2. A framework for exploring the culture of leadership in seniors centres
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

The purposes of this chapter are (a) to set the study within the tradition of ethnographic inquiry; (b) to explicate the conceptual framework, outlining methods and procedures; and (c) to describe the way in which data are analyzed in order to provide a description of how leadership functions in a seniors' centre illuminating influences on the emergence of senior leaders. The chapter concludes with an account of how results and findings are reconstructed in the form of ethnographic text.

A Tradition of Ethnography

Illuminating a retirement culture is similar to the process an anthropologist might use to study a foreign culture. While it may be less arduous to achieve understanding of any culture given a common language and beliefs shared among the researcher and informants, the culture of retirement may be foreign to those of another age who, without sharing the experience, bring their own values, perspectives, and presuppositions. In its true sense, ethnography requires total immersion in a single culture for an extended period of time. While this exploration is not conventional ethnography, it draws on approaches developed by ethnographers and is, therefore, considered to be within a tradition of ethnography. The focus on culture and probing to uncover the pattern of relationships and deeper layers of meaning is what characterizes this study as ethnographic.

Ethnography involves cultural description which, when applied to organizations, seeks to illuminate the fundamental meaning and value of organizational life. This requires that empirical researchers reverse the priority placed on building generalizations and pay attention to particular cases. Wilcox (1982) describes ethnography as,

a descriptive endeavour in which the researcher attempts accurately to describe and interpret the nature of social discourse among a group of people . . . what is to be described is seen as including both meaning and behaviour. One must be in a position both to observe behaviour in its natural setting and to elicit from the people the structures of meaning which inform and texture behaviour. (p. 458)
The intensive study of a single social system is a well-established ethnographic procedure. In particular, the case study represents a useful approach for an exploratory investigation designed to illuminate a particular organizational context. It depends on systematic collection and interpretation of empirical evidence. Its purpose is to uncover patterns and processes that operate within a given context; serving more to explain than predict (Kenny & Grotelueschen, 1984).

To qualify as ethnographic, however, a study must be more than rich description. It must probe beneath the layers of social discourse to establish the meaning of visible behaviours, patterns, and artifacts. In other words, its purpose is to understand the organizational culture. Doing ethnography involves socially constructing meaning ascribed by participants to organizational life. This is achieved by carefully observing and recording social discourse, and using particular procedures to uncover meaning and shared beliefs and assumptions. The focus is on inter-subjective understanding and negotiation.

Methods of Ethnography

Methods of ethnography include document analysis, participant observations, and semi-structured interviews. One method that gives a study the quality of an ethnography is the "iterative" interview. In an ethnographic study, interviews are considered joint cooperative enterprises wherein the integrity of the participants' experiences (i.e. "emic" views) is carefully maintained. To uncover cultural assumptions, Schein (1985) recommends the "iterative interview"—a series of encounters between the investigator and various key informants who are members of the culture. He outlines the following steps for uncovering the deeper layers of meaning that define organizational culture:

1. enter and focus on surprises (record unexplained behaviours);
2. systematically observe and check;
3. identify key informants;
4. discuss puzzles or hunches;
5. jointly explore to find explanation;
6. formulate hypotheses;
7. check the fit of hypotheses with theory;
8. push to level of assumption;
(9) refine the conceptual framework (or model);
(10) write a formal description (checking fit between theory and emic view).

Clarifying the layers of meaning in a given culture is a joint effort between the researcher and members of that culture: "The nature of this work can be likened to trying to bring to the surface something that is hidden but not concealed deliberately" (Schein, 1985, p. 113).

How does one draw valid conclusions given such a dynamic and interactive methodology? A contradiction or tension exists between the investigator's need for objectivity and the essential subjectivity and intersubjectivity of culture. While objectivity can never be fully achieved, it is a goal to which one must strive. Canons or ways of lending authority and credibility are necessary so that others may judge the validity and usefulness of procedures throughout the research process (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Validity and Usefulness

With most traditions of inquiry, validity depends on correspondence, coherence, and pragmatism (Kaplan, 1974). Correspondence relates to the fit between the description and the facts. Since values have a significant impact on what is observed in any research setting, self-awareness of the researcher's values is critical and wherever possible and appropriate, they ought to be articulated. This is essential in ethnographic studies where values and presuppositions influence subjective and intersubjective interpretations throughout the investigation.

Correspondence with the facts in an empirical study rests on a form of verification and/or replicability. While always difficult, verification is particularly problematic with respect to ethnographic studies because of the uniqueness of each individual case and the evolutionary aspect of events, conversations, and relationships. To increase the likelihood that an ethnographic study corresponds with the facts, the researcher checks to see that the structure of events described converges with participants' understandings. This requires the selection of key informants who have a degree of understanding about the focus of the inquiry and the ability to articulate views and concepts. It also necessitates continuous checks on meaning between researcher and informants by direct probing questions in the iterative interviews. Focussed group discussions clarify confusions and contradictions. Finally, participants'
reviewing of the manuscript is useful to insure that the text is an authentic representation of the culture as it is experienced by participants.

Coherence refers to the way in which the parts reflect the whole—the simplicity as well as the elegance with which fact/theory and part/whole are integrated and presented. Geertz (1973) emphasizes the need to check the fit of the description of social discourse (i.e., the systems of relations between parties engaged in a communicative activity) with theoretical explanations. In other words, the researcher must check to see that the ethnographic text relates to and sheds light on problematic issues identified at the outset. Connections must be maintained between theory, conceptual framework, and the results as text. For example, if the theoretical perspective suggests that assumptions about the power and influence of seniors affect emergent senior leadership, then power/influence must be incorporated into the conceptual framework, solicited through empirical data collection procedures, and addressed in the presentation of the results.

Does the study help the reader make sense of how leadership works in seniors' centres? In the final analysis, the reader must judge to what extent the findings are useful, and therefore the knowledge produced must be presented in a common idiom so as to be easily understood by all those whom the researcher is attempting to enlighten. Creating a common language is central to ethnographic inquiry, reflected in both method and goal. Furthermore, when theory is drawn from diverse perspectives and research paradigms, care must be taken to maintain clarity and consistency in the use of key concepts in order that the findings can inform scholars from diverse perspectives as well as professionals working in the field. One must consider not just whether the study serves to inform and enlighten scholars, but to what extent it provides insights that inform practical deliberations in other cases and contexts. In other words, how and to what extent is the study generalizable?

Generalizability

Ethnographic studies not only inform the particular in ways that more quantitative empirical studies cannot, the patterns of behaviour described may be, to some extent, generalizable. Kaplan (1974) describes two models of explanation, each of which he suggests may be universal in application and ultimately have some predictive value. There is the deductive model, where a reason is deduced from known facts, and the pattern model of explanation.
whereby we know the reason for something when it fits into a known pattern; i.e., when variables and relationships consistently co-occur and/or co-vary (Magoon, 1977). Instead of traditional null hypothesis tests of a statistical nature being the final arbiters of research findings, one can instead evaluate one account of a situation (e.g., a pattern of relationships between professionals and senior leaders) and weigh this account against other accounts or patterns or the proposition that there is simply no pattern in the situation at all. If we understand a pattern in one instance, we may recognize a similar pattern in another context. Gradually one pattern may be recognized as an explanation of a particular type of situation and, in this sense, becomes a weak form of prediction. (Magoon, 1977). The value of ethnographic research is not, however, in its generalizability, but in the rich insights into a particular phenomenon within a given context, and its potential to inform practical deliberations in other settings. [I do not intend to imply generalization of the findings based on ethnographic studies of two centres].

Data Collection Procedures

The study is divided into two phases of data collection. In the first phase, preliminary to the ethnographies, participant observation records of two leadership training groups and surveys of senior leaders and professionals shed light on leadership issues including what influences seniors to become leaders. The second phase, the major focus of the dissertation, involves an ethnographic exploration of the culture of leadership in two seniors' centres.

Data collection procedures include a survey of professional leaders (i.e., paid staff who are the coordinators or directors) and senior leaders in seniors' centres in the greater Vancouver area; participant observation records from preliminary planning sessions and a leadership training program; document analysis of the formal structure of two seniors' centres; participant observations and interviews with key informants; and iterative interviews and focussed group discussions. Figure 3 is a schematic representation of the two phases of data collection in relation to results.
DATA COLLECTION

Phase I

Participant observations of a leadership planning group

Participant observations of a leadership training program

Survey of senior leaders and leader managers in 20 seniors centres in greater Vancouver

Phase II

Ethnographic exploration of seniors centre A

Ethnographic exploration of seniors centre B

RESULTS

Ethnography of Centre A

Ethnography of Centre B

Portrait of a senior leader

Conclusions

Figure 3. The two phases of data collection in relation to the results as text
PHASE 1

(1) Participant Observations
(a) A continuous record of discussions and interactions with 12 seniors from four centres participating in five formal planning sessions for a seniors' leadership training program (contained in Appendix A) is analyzed for issues in leadership and possible influences on seniors to take on leadership roles.
(b) A continuous participant observation record of discussions and interactions with 23 seniors participating in a ten-week leadership training program (contained in Appendix B) is analyzed as in (a) above.

(2) Surveys
An exhaustive list of seniors' centres in the greater Vancouver area was compiled. From a total of 55 centres, 20 leader/manager's expressed an interest in leadership training, representing a response rate of 36%. These 20 leader/manager's received a copy of the training manual, and two survey questionnaires regarding senior leadership in their centres, perceived problems, training needs, etc. Leader/manager's were asked to fill out Questionnaire A and to distribute copies of Questionnaire B to three senior leaders in their respective centres. (Questionnaires A and B are included in the survey in Appendix B). Of the 20 centres who received surveys, responses were received from 12 leader/manager's, representing a response rate of 60% which is 22% of the total population. Twenty-seven out of a possible 90 seniors filled out and returned questionnaires, representing a 30% response rate. This is a self-selecting sample of leader/manager's and seniors with a particular interest in developing seniors as leaders in their seniors' centres.

Data obtained from these three sources in phase 1 serve to identify issues and supplement, support, or refute insights gleaned in phase 2 (i.e., as a method of triangulation). While data in phase 1 serve to inform the selection of sites for phase 2, data from the two phases are, for the most part, analyzed together. [Appendices A, B, and C represent edited transcripts of fieldnotes from the three sources in phase 1].
PHASE 2

From the surveys in phase I, two seniors' centres were selected that are similar in size and function; one that offered a leadership training program and one that did not. (While a comparative analysis is not intended, the description of the culture of two centres lends greater support to tentative conclusions about patterns of influence in seniors' centres). Given evidence, presented in Chapter Two, that training does influence the emergence of leaders and, to some extent, may reflect a culture supportive of the development of seniors as leaders, training is the variable chosen to differentiate the two centres.

Fieldwork in the first centre I studied, which I have named Carnegie Hall, spanned a period of twelve months from September of 1991 to August 1992. The study of the second centre, which I have named Centennial Centre, spanned a period of twelve months from December 1991 to November 1992. While I made every attempt to replicate the procedures in both centres, there were political and ethical constraints, notably with respect to gaining access. My prior experience and relationship with the two centres was also different and these differences are accounted for below.

Gaining access. My working relationship with members of Carnegie Hall (CH) spans a six-year period. Originally, I had been engaged as program evaluator of a senior peer counselling program (Petty & Cusack, 1989), the first in a series of educational/training programs intended to develop the personal potential of senior members and their willingness to assume leadership roles in providing service to their peers. A leadership and personal development program, called Participation with Confidence (PWC), followed the peer counselling program, and it focussed on building member's self-confidence and ability to participate more effectively in group activities (Cusack, 1991b). More recently, the Speaking from Experience (SFE) program (Cusack, 1992) was designed to build confidence through public speaking.

Fifty is the age of eligibility for membership in most seniors' centres in Canada; however, few 50-year-olds join seniors' centre. I did. To some extent, therefore, the study was my personal initiation into the culture of retirement, although my status was "different": I was an academic with a professional role at the centre. In consultation with the Director of Carnegie Hall (CH), I devised a schedule of visits to the centre.
Gaining access to the second centre (which I have named Centennial Centre, and refer to as CC) was more difficult. I had little prior experience with operations at CC, other than brief discussions with the Coordinator in charge of the centre during my undergraduate years when I first became interested in community programs for the retired. Having received a copy of the leadership training manual (Thompson & Cusack, 1991) in 1991, the Coordinator in charge of the centre expressed an interest in developing a program of leadership training, and consultations with the authors resulted in the creation of a Seniors Leadership Initiatives Board with funding from New Horizons to employ myself and a colleague as leadership training consultants. During contract negotiations with the Coordinator and New Horizons Board, I explored the possibility of engaging in a more indepth study of leadership at the centre, incorporating work not covered by the funding as part of my dissertation research. Members of the New Horizons Board and the Coordinator expressed interest in the research, and permission was granted. I discuss methodological issues further at the end of the chapter.

Fieldwork. The study involved the following procedures in both centres:

1. History: A history of the organizations was obtained through written records supplemented by information provided by key informants (i.e., the Director, her assistant, and president at CH; and the Coordinator and a staff member at CC).

2. Organizational structure: The organizational structures of the two centres were derived from analyses of policy documents supplemented by discussions with the Director and Coordinator of the respective centres.

3. Participant observations: Records were kept of informal visits to the two sites (12 visits to CH spanning a period of seven months; 14 visits to CH over ten months); participation in the Annual General Meetings; attendance at two monthly executive board and chairpersons' meetings at CH and two monthly advisory board meetings at CC. All information (observations and discourse) was recorded that relates to the role of senior leaders, skills of leadership, leadership problems at the centres, perceptions of the function of the centres, and factors that motivate seniors to take on leadership roles. The observational record focuses on three aspects of social discourse and interactions between seniors and professionals from the perspective of the investigator: (1) style of
leadership; (2) dynamics of power (i.e., "who's in charge?"); and (3) the quality of the relationship.

(4) Interviews with key informants: In addition to the professional leaders (i.e., the Director of CH and the Coordinator of CC) key informants were selected in consultation with the Director and Coordinator. At CH, all seven members of the Executive Board were interviewed, as well as two others chosen on the basis of their contributions as leaders and their understanding and ability to articulate how leadership functions in their centres. At CC, the Coordinator identified seven members of the eleven-member advisory board and two members-at-large (one member-at-large was unable to keep her interview appointment). A schedule of interview questions for the Director and Coordinator and for senior leaders is contained in Appendices D and E respectively.

Semi-focused, iterative interviews were conducted by a skilled interviewer who was provided with a list of questions specific to issues and contradictions arising from the participant observations with respect to the four dimensions of culture. The interviewer was instructed regarding particular probes and prompts. Interviews were audiotaped, leaving the researcher free to observe and record, and to insert probes or prompts where appropriate. Interviews were approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes in length, conducted in a quiet, comfortable corner of the centre, with every attempt made to simulate an informal conversation encouraging seniors to speak freely about their views and values.

(5) Focussed group discussions: Interviewees were invited to a final meeting to discuss specific insights and issues raised by the study both for clarification and as a check on the validity of tentative impressions and conclusions. All those who were interviewed at CH attended the focussed group discussion; the two women interviewed at CC did not attend their focussed group.

(6) Final validity check: As a check on the validity of my understanding of the culture, all interviewees who were profiled (nine from CH, and five from CC) were invited to read the first draft of the study of their centre for accuracy. (Drafts of the narratives were reviewed within six weeks of the focussed group discussions in the respective centres). Chapter 7, profiling the influences on individual leaders, was read and approved by both the Director and Coordinator in December of 1992. The reading of
both the Director and Coordinator in December of 1992. The reading of final drafts by members of the cultures also served a political purpose, ensuring that all those profiled were comfortable with the confidential information contained in the study. (As an educator, my "hidden agenda" was also to evoke insights into their own leadership style and behaviour).

Table 2 outlines the three levels of culture as they relate to leadership in a seniors' centre and methods used during the fieldwork phase for gathering empirical data with respect to each level of culture.

Data Analysis

Constructing Ethnographic Text. Ethnography is both a research style and a written product, a genre which represents culture (Atkinson, 1990, p. 3). The translation of fieldnotes into results as text representing the culture was a complex process that proceeded in stages. Field notes chronicling interactions and dialogue, the summaries of the history and organizational structure, and transcribed interview data were coded with respect to the four dimensions of culture. Themes emerged through careful reading and rereading. Once confident I had an understanding of the dynamics of leadership in the centre, I began each ethnography with a summary of the history and organizational structure of the particular centre. I then constructed a narrative of the culture drawing from all data sources.

The narrative account, in which the researcher's voice is silent, first introduces the reader to the physical environment (i.e., level 1 of the culture, according to Schein). The reader is introduced in the manner of a guidebook—the setting is described in concrete terms, features are catalogued, and social types sketched in. Using the method of ethnographic hypotyposis, graphic passages are used to portray scenes and illustrate themes. Drawing heavily on actual conversations and events, the physical space is peopled with profiles of senior leaders and a professional leader (i.e., key informants who were interviewed) going about their activities in the course of a day, expressing personal beliefs and values (level 2 of the culture), and illuminating influences on the evolution of leaders.

The narrative of CH contains profiles of all those who were interviewed; in CC, four of the interviewees who were representative of the group were profiled in addition to the Coordinator. The native view or "emic" view is reconstructed via extensive quotes and excerpts from field notes, informal
Table 2. Three levels of the culture of leadership in a seniors’ centre and the corresponding procedures used to gather empirical data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Culture</th>
<th>Data Collection Procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>level 1: artifacts</strong></td>
<td>• observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(visible, objective, not always obvious)</td>
<td>• document analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organizational variables:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) history</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) structural/functional aspects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g., policy, roles &amp; responsibilities, programs,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>events, ceremonies)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) physical environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>level 2: beliefs and values</strong></td>
<td>• observations of interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(greater level of awareness than 1)</td>
<td>• interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• testable in physical environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• testable in social discourse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>level 3: basic assumptions</strong></td>
<td>• iterative interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(invisible, tacit, preconscious)</td>
<td>• focussed group discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• about retirement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• about needs/abilities of seniors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• about power/influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• about effective leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Schein (1985, p. 14)
conversations, and documents. The researcher presents self as much as possible as a conduit, passing on information in a measured, neutral, intellectual style. It is this narrative account that key informants in each culture were asked to review and edit. (In both CH and CC, all those interviewed read and confirmed that the narrative reflected their personal experience).

**Interpreting the Culture of Leadership.** The final stage of the construction of the ethnography involves a self-conscious interpretation of the culture in which I characterize leadership in each centre with respect to the four dimensions of culture. To uncover the deeper level of assumptions, I explored the data with respect to three levels of culture as depicted in the conceptual framework (ref. figure 1). The reader may find it helpful to visualize this process (and the construction of the results as text) as moving through a three-by-four table with the rows reflecting cultural levels 1 to 3, and the columns representing dimensions of culture. The text can be seen, to some extent, as filling in the cells in table 3.

**Identifying Influences on the Emergence of Senior Leaders.** Addressing the question in Chapter Seven, *What are the influences on the emergence of senior leaders* the focus shifts to the individual. A historical approach is used to illustrate the evolution of leaders and to suggest the influences. Three senior leaders are selected: (1) someone who has been a leader throughout life; (2) someone who initially disengaged during the early post-retirement phase only to re-emerge as a leader following retirement, and (3) someone who emerges as a leader for the first time in the third age.

**Methodological Issues**

There were a number of methodological issues throughout the two-year span of the study, all having some relation to the validity of the results. I discuss them here in terms of financial considerations and the need for consistency of investigative procedures in both centres, my personal history and bias, ethical issues, and my professional role as researcher. The first, to which I alluded in my account of gaining access (page 52), was financial.
Table 3. Characterization of leadership in a seniors' centre with respect to four dimensions of culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RETIREMENT</th>
<th>NEEDS/ABILITIES OF SENIORS</th>
<th>POWER/ INFLUENCE</th>
<th>LEADERSHIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL 1:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(visible but not always obvious)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• history</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL 2:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>values/beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• testable in social discourse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• testable in physical environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL 3:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(invisible, tacit, preconscious)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial. My dilemma was how to finance in-depth studies of two seniors' centres, using comparable methods, procedures, and time frames. To a large extent, I took advantage of opportunities as they arose, which resulted in a somewhat longer time-frame than I had originally anticipated. As co-director of the S.I.P. leadership project Simon Fraser University (1989-1990), I developed a leadership training manual for seniors (Thompson & Cusack, 1991): this project presented the opportunity to identify the important issues and to gather data in the first phase to address the question professionals most frequently asked, What influences seniors to become leaders? A Community Researcher Stipend from the Canadian Association on Gerontology provided funds for the first study of Carnegie Hall, and the schedule of visits was designed in collaboration with the Director. My problem was then how to finance and negotiate the study of a second centre—one distinguished by the lack of formal leadership training—using comparable investigative procedures and a similar time frame and sequence of visits. That opportunity came in the form of a New Horizons Project, Health & Welfare Canada, which involved the development of a leadership program for a seniors' centre proposing to improve the quality of senior leadership. With funding as a leadership training consultant, I was able to negotiate additional work (not funded by Health & Welfare Canada) and a schedule of visits, interviews, and discussions that was comparable to the first study, thus enhancing project work while satisfying the requirements of the dissertation study. My personal history with the two centres was different and provided a bias that I worked to overcome throughout the second study, and in the construction of the text.

Personal History and Relationships. My relationship with Carnegie Hall during the course of the investigation was intimate. I felt a part of the culture, having developed a sense of loyalty and commitment to the people and to the centre. Furthermore, I saw Carnegie Hall as a model centre, exemplifying a style of shared, servant leadership that I had come to believe works best in a community of seniors. While I also became a member of Centennial Centre when I began the fieldwork study there, my status from the beginning was that of professional consultant and academic researcher. Preliminary visits to the centre provided evidence of a traditional approach to leadership common in many other centres that was highly problematic (Cusack, Manley-Casimir, & Thompson, 1992)—I saw Centennial Centre emphasizing delivery of recreational programs and services, rather than developing the personal potential of seniors.
Professional Role. My role in relation to the participants during the course of the two studies was constantly changing from friend, learner, researcher, confidant, teacher, consultant, co-investigator, scholar, to advocate. As the study progressed, I became more committed to the value of ethnographic research as an educational process for everyone involved and used every opportunity to share results and interpretations with members of both cultures. While I filled all roles simultaneously, as the dissertation evolved I too developed greater confidence in my knowledge base and scholarship and a greater commitment to my role as advocate for third-age leadership and education. Filling all of these roles required great sensitivity to people and presented a number of ethical issues.

Ethical Issues. I constantly wrestled with the fact that I had privileged information about the personal lives of real people that I was exposing for the purpose of education (and for personal reasons—to satisfy the requirements of my program). While I made every attempt to preserve anonymity, there are limits to what one can alter while maintaining a valid account. I was careful to represent what might be considered negative qualities as "vulnerabilities" and to emphasize individual strengths wherever possible. In other words, negative qualities (e.g., the authoritarian style of leadership exhibited by the presidents of both centres) were sensitively and subtly portrayed.

When people in Carnegie Hall read the narrative, some were alarmed and disturbed by the personal nature of the portrayal. I encouraged them to be certain they were comfortable with what was written, and offered to change or omit anything that was problematic for them. I was prepared to present my arguments if they requested changes, however, after a number of discussions and meetings at Carnegie Hall (to which I was not privy), everyone agreed that the portrayal was consistent with their experience.

With respect to my original bias toward Carnegie Hall, as the study proceeded in Centennial Centre and I gained intimate knowledge of the people, I developed a greater appreciation of individual strengths and greater sensitivity to vulnerabilities. I saw the Coordinator and senior leaders at Centennial Centre coping with problems created by the hierarchical structure of power and authority in the District (ref. the smoking bylaw and the parking problem), and by newspaper accounts that misrepresented their centre, and I developed
considerable respect for the administrative skills and personal integrity of the Coordinator. I invited the Director of Carnegie Hall and the Coordinator of Centennial Centre to read both Chapters Five and Six, and their responses were interesting. The Director of CH felt that I had portrayed the centre as having too many frail, elderly people, whereas, she was more aware of the vitality and activity of the membership. She did, however, pass the portrayal of Carnegie Hall on to her supervisors in the Recreation Department to give them a better understanding of leadership in the centre, and to impress them with the need to fund ongoing leadership training programs. The Coordinator of Centennial Centre was disturbed by what she perceived to be a negative portrayal of her centre in comparison to the other centre. While I assured her that the study was not formally comparative, impressions were often relative and comparison was sometimes a natural outcome. Her concerns challenged me to examine my bias more closely and I then altered the portrayal of Centennial Centre in specific ways, while retaining information that I considered to be essential to the dissertation study.

Subjectivity and the Question of Validity.

I have suggested a number of issues (e.g., changing relationships, personal history, and bias) affected the validity of my account. My awareness of bias, constant checking with individuals to clarify confusions and contradictions, and participants' reading of the manuscript served to ensure that my portrayals of the centres were valid. However, I would add a caveat, that the study be considered an "authentic" representation of the centre at the time. As participant observer of the leadership training program that followed the study of Centennial Centre, I observed dramatic changes in the approach to leadership—e.g., the President gained an awareness of his somewhat traditional leadership style, developed increased sensitivity to people, and began to change his approach, emphasizing individual needs and sharing the leadership. (My observations were corroborated by the Coordinator, the adult educator who facilitated training sessions, as well as the President himself).

In Chapters Five and Six, the culture of leadership in two seniors' centres, Carnegie Hall and Centennial Centre, are displayed.
CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS
THE CULTURE OF CARNEGIE HALL

This chapter portrays the culture of a seniors’ centre in a city (that I call Centreville) with a population of 40,000 on the west coast of Canada. I named the centre "Carnegie Hall" (CH) because it is a place where seniors are encouraged to display their skills and talents. This characterization of the culture of CH begins with a history of the organization described in terms of evolving leadership, programs and activities, and perceptions of seniors. The organizational structure is outlined, including the external political structure, as well as internal politics expressed in the mandate and formal leadership roles. The narrative begins with a physical description of the setting followed by an account illustrating interactions, relationships, and patterns of influence. The chapter concludes with a characterization of CH with reference to the dimensions of culture depicted in the conceptual framework.

In the body of the text, (i.e., the narrative) the researcher acts as conduit giving voice to the experience of seniors themselves (i.e., the emic view) depicting actual events and interactions, highlighted by direct quotes from field notes. Recognizing the subjectivity of the construction, I have incorporated an element of “confessional explication” (Van Maanen, 1988) in the description of the history and organizational structure, and in the final characterization of the culture of leadership.

History of the CH Association

In 1988, CH published a brief history of the centre from 1958 - 1988 (Scott, 1989). The book contains 83 pages of text and photos depicting key events and people. This account offers an interesting portrait of evolving programs and services, the various leadership roles, leadership styles of directors and presidents, and perceived needs and characteristics of seniors. My interpretation of the Association’s history is derived almost exclusively from Scott’s work. (With the exception of information regarding the current director, I have not corroborated Scott’s findings). Since the CH history was supervised by an advisory board of senior members and is available for purchase at the centre, it can be expected to have a degree of influence on the organizational culture.
The history begins with the official opening of CH on July 23, 1958 (Scott, 1989, p. 1). Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret was involved in a number of civic events commemorating the hundredth anniversary of the founding of British Columbia on that particular day, but it is reported that the main event of the afternoon . . . was to be the inauguration of an entirely new type of recreation centre—one designed specifically for seniors. (p. 1)

Despite the reported Royal Proclamation that "CH is a marvellous place", there was concern as to whether the centre would be well-patronized or whether it might become a sort of "white elephant" (p. 3). Establishing the need for a seniors' centre had been a difficult task. Some members of City Council were of the opinion that a centre for 'old people' was an unnecessary extravagance and would not be popular. Seniors would not want to be identified with a centre for 'old people,' it was said. (p. 8)

Once City Council was convinced by the Recreation Commission (established in 1956) of the need for a seniors' centre, the Commission appointed a director of recreation. Various sites were then considered, and the one first chosen was a quiet place:

Some people had actually thought that the location was suitable for 'older people' on the grounds that it was 'near a hospital,' Others had taken the view that seniors wanted a quiet place where they would be out of the main stream of life, away from disturbance by children in playgrounds. (p. 9)

Objections were raised about the prospective location. Residents who learned of the project objected to the use of land for a seniors' centre. The chair of the Commission objected to the location for other reasons. "His view was that, far from wanting to be tucked quietly away, seniors preferred to be where the action was" (p. 10). To settle the matter, the Director of Recreation attended a "Conference on the Aged" at the University of British Columbia, with instructions to consult with experts from around the world. His recommendations (p. 10) regarding the ideal location for a seniors' centre were:

1. It should be sited centrally in the community;
2. It should be well-served by public transportation;
(3) Shopping and other facilities should be near at hand;
(4) It should on no account be isolated from other centres of activity.

The chair of the Commission toured facilities in the United States and his visit corroborated the view that a seniors' centre needs to be in a central location. Furthermore,

he was surprised to find two or three Cadillacs in the parking lot at Menlo Park [a seniors' centre in San Francisco]. When he queried this he was told that the well-to-do can be lonely too and need to socialize! (p. 11)

Plans were finalized for the building at a cost of $40,000 shared by the city and the provincial government.

CH was acclaimed as the first municipally-owned seniors' centre in Canada. Scott claims that

no other city had realized that as a result of people living longer and retiring earlier, something needed to be done to provide for the leisure moments of their old age. (p. 13)

As a leader in seniors' centre programming, according to Scott, CH has been studied by other municipalities wanting to set up similar centres. One bridge player reportedly said he had "travelled 75,000 miles . . . and had never seen anything to equal CH" (p. 18). No age requirement was set; perhaps it was assumed that there was no need to because no one would join a seniors' centre who was not old. To run such a centre, a director was needed— "someone with programming experience who would be able to relate to older people" (p. 2).

Professional Leaders: Directors. Since 1958, the centre has been served by four directors. The first director, serving from 1958 to 1975, is described as "having the ideal attributes of a leader and her sympathetic and understanding attitude made her the ideal supervisor of a seniors' centre" (p. 23). Though she had no prior experience working with seniors, she learned quickly and was receptive to new ideas. She believed that the best way to operate a seniors' centre was to involve members in decision-making. She might give advice and suggest programs, but would implement only those ideas that reflected the wishes of the membership. One of her greatest attributes was her ability as a
conciliation, always able to deal with problems, always smiling, and never rushed.

The second and third directors served short terms spanning 1975 to 1980; and no reference is made to their leadership or interpersonal skills or styles. Rather, they are remembered for having expanded programs and activities, one particularly noted for incorporating the newsletter and the other for preparing the first draft of the handbook of policies and procedures so that members could readily understand how the Association operated.

The present director, from 1980 to the present, was formally trained in recreation, followed by a two-year training period that introduced her to the operation of a seniors’ centre. She has a vision of the centre as a "one-stop shop" for seniors and she continues to work with staff and seniors to create stronger links with service-providers in the community. One of her first projects was to establish a hot-lunch program; another priority was the training of a contingent of senior office volunteers. The highly successful peer counselling program with its office permanently located at CH, exemplifies her vision by providing both outreach to the community and much-needed on-site service.

Like the first director, the current director has worked toward putting seniors in charge of programs and services, with staff in place to assist them in addressing self-defined needs. Both assumed primary responsibility for resolving problems and conflicts, and dealing with sensitive issues. (A more detailed account of the present director’s leadership skills and style is contained in the narrative). While final responsibility for the operations of the centre rests with the director, that responsibility has been shared, to varying degrees, with senior leaders who have served as presidents of the association.

Senior Leaders: Presidents. The eight presidents of CH have generally been described as either business-like or fun-loving and, until 1977, they were exclusively male. It isn’t until 1985 that presidents are characterized as sensitive to members needs. (A more complete account of the current president’s leadership style is contained in the narrative).

The first president, serving from 1958 to 1960, was a retired farmer from the prairies described as "inclined to be a little old-fashioned in some of his ideas" (p. 37). When he suggested at the annual general meeting that all reports of activity groups be typed and read by "one person with a good voice" to avoid a lengthy meeting, he was reportedly vetoed (p. 38). The second
president served four terms (eight years) and was described as very "systematic and businesslike"—a man who "liked to have things run the way he thought they should be run" (p. 39). His no-nonsense manner did not endear him to everyone, but it was agreed he was competent and effective. Unlike the first two presidents, whose leadership styles were authoritarian, the third president (1968-1975) was "always laughing and joking, a real character" (p. 40).

The first woman served as president for one term in 1977, and is described as a very business-like person. The fifth president was active in organizing community bingo games, and during his term a handbook of policies and procedures was published. During the sixth president’s term, the senior peer counselling program was initiated and the long conflict between smokers and non-smokers finally resolved: she was particularly concerned to insure good communication between executive and members. The seventh president (now serving on the executive board as past president) was active in the hiking and bridge groups; and his influence is described by the present director as positive and supportive through often turbulent times.

**Activities and Programs.** While the centre is intended to be a pleasant place to visit, have a chat, or meet a friend for lunch, the focus of operation is the programs and activities, which initially emulated those provided in other centres in California. In the early days, activity programs offered were traditionally recreational in nature: crafts, quilting, bingo, bridge, whist, dancing, carpet bowling, billiards, and music; later the program was expanded to include yoga, walking, hiking, pottery, and painting. Programs offered occasionally included income tax clinics, foot care, winemaking, a dining club, senior sluggers softball, conversational French, line dancing, a stamp club, stress management, history, genealogy, piano lessons, model airplanes, and theatre going.

Special committees have also been struck in response to member needs and interests. A sick and well committee continues to operate to the present day. A grievance committee was initially set up to deal with complaints, but it was soon discovered there were virtually no complaints—and any that did arise were quickly dealt with by the director. A discussion group began in 1959, but lasted only a few short months because it was dominated by two or three speakers, often involving vehement arguments. It is reported, in the early days, that educational workshops were a luxury the centre could not afford.
The activity committee roster for 1992 shows 33 activity groups representing three different types of participation. These are (1) ongoing activities such as bingo, bridge, carpet bowling, dance, painting, quilting, songsters, and crafts; (2) services such as peer counselling, keep well drop-in, and sick and shut-in; and (3) special events such as theatre outings, and travel club. It is interesting to note that there is no group or category for "education".

What is distinctive about activities offered during recent years is a series of programs of an educational nature, focussed on building self-confidence and leadership skills. Some members of the board have been instrumental in securing funding from Health & Welfare Canada, and have benefitted from the training, as indicated in their individual profiles in the narrative section. While in the early years educational programs were considered a luxury, there is a growing belief at CH, shared by the director, staff, and many members of the executive, that education and training are necessary to ensure a supply of committed and able senior leaders.

In summary, the history suggests a number of themes and trends. Despite an element of controversy both within city council and in the community, city officials conferred a certain status and recognition on its elder citizens from the beginning (symbolized by Her Royal Highness' attendance at the inauguration). With a commitment to providing the best possible centre for seniors, commissioners consulted with outside experts, visited centres abroad, and attended professional conferences. Their message was that seniors were valued members of the community who want to be "where the action is" and to be visible in the community.

The present director can be described as working toward giving seniors a greater "piece of the action", sharing more of the responsibilities with senior leaders and developing their leadership potential. Evidence of the growing involvement of seniors is reflected in the trend from traditional recreational activities (e.g., bowling, bingo, crafts) toward a greater diversity of programming that includes service-oriented and educational programs, a trend consistent with the evolution of community programs and services for seniors across Canada (Cusack & Thompson, 1989).

The history of CH has provided an overview of different styles of leadership. A deeper understanding of how leadership currently functions at CH begins with a description of the formal structure of the organization and the responsibilities of key personnel, as outlined in the centre's policy guide.
Organizational Structure

The [CH] Policies and Procedures Manual, which is given to all new members, defines the formal structure of power relations and the roles of key people. The mandate is explicitly stated as providing opportunities that will help satisfy the leisure and social needs of senior adults; and to provide an environment where members feel positive self-worth through acceptance by others, belonging, recognition, contribution, and achievement. (Centreville Parks & Recreation, 1987, p. 1)

It is important to note that education is not specifically identified as part of the mandate.

The CH Association consists of the membership (which totalled 1,879 according to 1991 membership statistics) and an elected executive board that includes a president, vice-president, second vice-president, third vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and past president. These seven people along with the director advise Parks and Recreation on policies and procedures at CH.

In addition, CH has a total of 33 activity groups whose members typically elect a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, secretary, and treasurer to represent their members and provide links with the executive and the director. Figure 4 is a flow chart showing the formal organizational structure.

The business of the centre is conducted through a schedule of general and special meetings. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) is held the second week of January, conducted by the president and "supervised" by the director ([CH] Policies and Procedures Manual, p. 4). Its purpose is to hear the annual reports of each activity group and, on alternate years, to elect an executive board, which serves for two consecutive years. A monthly meeting of the executive and chairpersons of each activity is chaired by the president. The main purpose is to bring representatives together and to provide a forum to work toward more enjoyable and satisfying leisure activities. Issues not resolved at the AGM are returned for a decision to the executive and director. Special meetings may be called at any time by the president, director or executive.

In January, each activity group elects an activity committee that may charge an activity fee to generate funds to cover expenses. Committees are charged with disbursement of funds and ensuring that, after expenses, one-third
Figure 4. Internal and external organizational structure of power in Carnegie Hall ([CH] Policies and Procedures Manual, p. 6)
of the balance is retained and two-thirds is paid to the CH Association (pp. 9, 10). Published in 1979, the policy book was most recently amended in 1987, restricting each executive position to a term of two consecutive years in order to prevent entrenchment.

Membership Profile

The CH Association compiles membership statistics each year. The Director estimates that approximately 15% of the 20% of the population of Centreville who are over 65 are members of CH. As the population ages, the average age of the membership is increasing. In 1982, 65% of the membership was younger than 75. By 1987, this had dropped to 60%, and by 1991, to 54%. The 65-74 year old group is dropping as well. Fully 50% of the members were in this age bracket in 1982. By 1991 that figure had fallen to 41%. On the other hand, the 75-84 year-old group is the fastest growing group. Only 28% of the members were 75-84 in 1982, compared to 31% in 1987 and 37% in 1991. A 9% decrease in the 65-74 age group has been countered by a 9% gain in the 75-84 year old group. And while the 80+ group is increasing, the under 65 group has remained constant. Table 4 compares the years 1982, 1985, 1987, 1989, and 1991 with respect to proportion of age groupings represented in the membership.

With the wider age span, one can expect a greater diversity of programming interests, and given the aging membership, there is a greater need to accommodate those with disabilities commonly associated with aging, and to provide on-site social services (legal aide, public health nurse visitations, and a podiatrist are newly-acquired services). Some elderly members, formerly active in the community, who have since moved to nursing homes maintain membership status and continue to visit CH.

A further breakdown by gender for 1991 in table 5 shows that women outnumber men 3:1. Of interest, two of the seven members of the executive are male, i.e., representative of the distribution by gender. In other words, this is a culture which is predominantly female both in its membership and its leadership. This has implications for emergent leadership.

Because few older women have played formal leadership roles in their working lives, many may not see themselves as leaders and will require encouragement, support, and training focussed on building confidence in their leadership abilities. Without such encouragement and training, women may be
(figures represent percentage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE GROUPING</th>
<th>1982</th>
<th>1985</th>
<th>1987</th>
<th>1989</th>
<th>1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N =</td>
<td>1361</td>
<td>1304</td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>1879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 60</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 64</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 - 69</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 - 74</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 - 79</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 - 84</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 - 89</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90+</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 65</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80+</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. CH membership by age and sex; 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE GROUPING</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>number</td>
<td>percent</td>
<td>number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 59</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 64</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 - 69</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 - 74</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 - 79</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 - 89</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 - 99</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80+</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
content to let the minority of men take charge. That is not the case at CH, where
the majority of leaders are women. Furthermore, while men are equitably
represented in leadership roles, few men take advantage of the training
programs.

The account of the history and of the organizational structure provides a
background against which the day-to-day drama of the centre unfolds. The
narrative that follows provides a flavour of the activities of retired people at CH,
how the business of the centre is conducted, and the interactions and
relationships between people.

Narrative of the Culture

CH is located in a large, modern, one-storey brick home set in the middle
of an expansive park which is surrounded by a children’s playground, tennis
courts, and baseball diamonds. Three feet away from the CH building is an old-
-fashioned two-storey building with brown-shingled siding trimmed with white,
which houses the administrative offices of the parent organization, the Parks
and Recreation Department.

It is 8:30 a.m. as the Handidart bus pulls into the circular driveway. A
small, frail elderly woman is assisted to a park bench near the entrance to CH.
She eases her body to meet a soft cushion, pink and white cotton gingham with
little ties at the back, which the driver has placed on the bench. Comfortably
seated, her body turns in slow motion to face an array of spring flowers in the
garden.

It is 8:45 a.m. when a tall, thin white-haired man with one eye strides up
the ramp toward the door.

This business of retirement? The way I see it—it’s all attitude.
It’s another day. You get up in the morning and you have a certain
feeling, but you have no idea how the day will go and what will
happen—whether it will be a good day or not. When you get up
and go to work it’s different. Some days you get up, feel just
rotten, and just want to stay in bed. But once you get to work you
forget about yourself and the day gets better as it goes along. Lots
of men just can’t wait to retire so they can sleep in. Then when the
time comes, after they've had a chance to sleep in a few times, then what? There's nothing else. A man has to have a hobby. It's just no good if you think too much and get into yourself. You need something to occupy your mind. Now me, I have no problem because I love to garden. That's my hobby. But take my mother-in-law, she's 95 and she just sits in a chair at the nursing home. Doesn't know anything or anybody. That's awful. It's not even living.

It's 8:55 a.m. as the door opens. Marilyn, a vivacious woman in her early 60's, greets all who enter with a cheery "hello". A sign says, "WELCOME, your hosts for today are Marilyn and Lawrence". Marilyn first joined the centre six years ago when she was prematurely "put out to pasture" from her job. She didn't "come here with problems" and doesn't "feel like a senior". When someone told her CH had a good exercise class,

I came down and looked into the sunroom and I thought, 'Oh God', because it was full of white heads and they were playing cards and smoking . . . and I thought, 'this isn't for me'.

She came in anyway, and there was "just something about the way she was greeted by staff and members" that convinced her to stay.

Not long after, the director asked her to represent the centre at an important civic event. Marilyn has a background in theatre. Formerly a singer and a dancer, she loves being in the limelight, and "hamming it up". She says that the opportunity to take part in that prestigious event was important and rewarding for her. That event, coupled with a leadership training program, gave her the confidence she needed to address a group of people gathered at City Hall.

I don't like my voice, and I have always worried about people being critical. But the more I push myself to speak up at meetings and in front of groups, the easier it becomes and the more I enjoy it.

Marilyn worries that as the centre gets bigger, it is losing some of its warm, inviting atmosphere. That prompted her to volunteer for the host program and to welcome people in the friendly manner with which she herself was originally approached. While she has been encouraged to take on a formal leadership role at the centre, Marilyn prefers to help with the trips, with the host program, and with special events. She enjoys the time she spends with her
husband, Lawrence, who often joins her as host for the day. She feels there are many single people who have more time to make a commitment and who could benefit from the opportunity to get more involved in the centre.

Just inside the door is a circle of soft rose and turquoise chairs and a sign on the door beyond identifies the Senior Peer Counselling office. Evelyn, a woman in her 70's with severe rheumatoid arthritis, is on the phone with the public health nurse, recording information about a client who is being referred for counselling. As chair of the peer counselling program, Evelyn attends the chairpersons meetings as well as various other meetings in the local community, and she sits on two provincial senior peer counselling boards. Her motorized go-cart is ready to go at the door.

When Evelyn first joined CH, she lacked confidence and was "barely able to put two sentences together." She had been ill following her husband's death, and did not know how she was going to survive on her own. She needed to know what resources were available in the community in case she required assistance. When the peer counselling program began, the director asked if she would be interested in taking the training. The director pushed her and people helped her: she felt they had confidence in her.

The educational programs helped, and my confidence grew as I got more involved. Being involved builds self-esteem, and especially if you get acknowledgement for what you are doing. People are afraid of criticism because they are losing some of their faculties. They'll say, "Oh, I can't see very well" or "I can't hear very well". But they can still use their heads.

She joined the peer counselling program, because it was something she could do, despite her severe physical limitations. Her background in health care suited her to the job of counsellor, though it required learning new skills.

I'm motivated by the learning and keeping up with what's going on. There are so many things I would like to do, but can't. This I can do and it keeps my brain working ... keeps me from thinking about myself. I see people worse off than I am and it makes me think how lucky I am. I couldn't stand sitting around the apartment. I had been active all my life, and I go into severe depression when I'm cut off from people.
She is reluctant to admit her leadership skills, but says she has always been an organizer with a good memory, particularly for finances. She is, however, humbled by the fact that others in the centre find her an inspiration:

So many people come up to me and say, “You are an example to everybody.” I guess I don’t look at it that way—I see my weak points and what I can’t do. I need so much help with little things, and everybody is there to help. They say, “We draw from your strength”. I guess that is a wonderful thing, but it is hard for me to acknowledge.

Above the host’s desk, a traditional patchwork quilt has been hung with letters in bright coloured stitching that read, “Carnegie Hall: Centreville, British Columbia”. Beyond the host’s desk as one approaches the dining room, there is a large free-standing sign. The message that faces the door, meeting the eye as one enters, reads:

CH PRESENTS:

OUR FORGOTTEN PAST
Join [A.M and V.F.] from the Museum for a fascinating look at our history

Tickets: $2

On the back, facing inside, a more sobering message:

OWWCH!

TROUBLED BY INGROWN TOENAILS OR CORNS?

Would you like help for your toenails? Put your best foot forward and make use of our new podiatrist service.

Dr. [C.] will be here on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month

This is a free service. Just bring your care card.
Someone rushes from behind a desk, grabs a wheelchair beside the front door and meets the small woman struggling up the ramp. The soft pink and white cushion left behind on the bench marks her spot.

In a far corner of the front office, Charlie pounds the keys of an old electric typewriter. An avid lawnbowler, he joined the centre because he wanted "a place to come and play snooker when it rains and I can't go lawnbowling". As the secretary of the executive his job is to keep track of all correspondence and to keep the minutes of the chairpersons meetings held the first week of every month. He prepares six or seven pages of typed notes each month, which often requires "two full days of hard work".

Formerly a banker and a business manager for a chain of newspapers, Charlie retired early for health reasons. He was helping out in the kitchen at CH one day a couple of years ago when somebody convinced him to run for secretary "because they couldn't find anyone else". He felt well-qualified to handle the job of secretary and agreed to take it on.

As a leader, Charlie is a hard taskmaster:

I like things to be done right and I don't want to come to a meeting and find someone didn't do it. I am very organized. As president of the the lawnbowling, I don't do a thing, just organize and others do the work. If I have a job, I do it. I may tread on a few toes, but if I am given a responsibility, then I do it.

On the other hand, he reflects, "I don't like to hurt people's feelings . . . and I don't like to be hurt either . . . in business or in relationships".

Without specific training or a job description, Charlie found the job of secretary difficult in the beginning because it was never clear what was expected of him. When he got "the hang of it", he found it quite interesting and challenging. Aware that the centre was becoming a big business, he identified a number of changes he felt would make the organization run more efficiently. He was, however, unable to implement the changes because, as secretary, his power was limited. He can't say he really enjoys his job, though he has a strong sense of loyalty and commitment to people and to the centre.

"Can I help you?" A cheerful woman in her 60's leans over the reception desk to assist a woman in a motorized wheelchair. Like Marilyn, Liz enjoys
people. She, too, originally came for the exercise classes. When she returned to CH after surgery, a member of the staff asked if she would help out on the desk.

I got more involved as time went on. Last year I came to help with the elections and they needed a 3rd vice-president. The director said, 'Try it, Liz' and I did. I got involved because I just have to have someone to care for and this is a place for me to care for people. The staff are just like my own children, and I love them all.

With 38 years as a salesperson, Liz is used to dealing with people.

I treat people like I like to be treated: I don't talk down to anybody. And somewhere along the way, I think I developed the ability to bring out a sense of humour in people.

As a wife and mother who held a prestigious office in a provincial service organization, she had to be a good organizer. She is proud that "her family never went without a meal." As third vice-president at CH, she has been able to use both her organizational and people skills as convenor of the annual thrift sale.

Liz gets recognition for what she does and a lot of satisfaction when people say that something went really well. She admits, however, that her self-confidence comes and goes.

It's almost a year since my husband died, and I guess now the grieving is over. I'm feeling stronger and more confident. I still haven't got all my confidence back, but it's coming. Working as a volunteer in the office has helped to build my confidence.

On the couch around the corner from the office, a man in his 80's with spikes of white hair radiating from his head in all directions sinks into the chesterfield, adjusting the remote control to a favourite program. Buzz used to spend a lot of his time playing bridge, until one of the bridge players asked him to leave because he shook too much and was upsetting everybody else at the table. Buzz retired from the bridge table, but not before asserting himself:

Someday, when you are as old as I am and you can't stop shaking and you can't hold your cards, I hope somebody will be just as nasty to you as you have been to me.
But it wasn't over. Buzz returned to the bridge table the following week with a cardholder.

It's 10 a.m. and time for the executive committee meeting to begin.

Executive Board Meeting

The purpose of the monthly executive meetings is to deal with issues and concerns, to initiate new directions in the operation of the centre, and to prepare for the chairpersons meeting that follows. The group is gathered around a large table, as the Director arrives: "Gee, we all look so efficient—just like a corporate board meeting."

The Director is a key player in these meetings as she is in all the operations of the centre. Her vision for the centre includes specific goals, some of which have now been attained with the renovations completed last year and the institution of many on-site services.

Things that were tough in the past are now becoming easier because there are lots of checks and balances for them to happen. There are always new things coming up, but they aren't as grand or as difficult as they used to be. Now the goals I see involve promoting personal growth for members and staff, problem-solving an issue, creating new and innovative educational programs, or improving programs and services already in place.

She sees one of her primary roles as an initiator of ideas:

When I want something to happen, I talk about it. I plant some seeds. But I've planted lots of ideas that didn't take hold. It's nice when there is fertile ground, and ideas take hold. Maybe not right away, maybe next year. Like the peer counselling, that was my idea and I had to sell it to them because it was new. Timing is everything. I tried to promote intergenerational programs 10 years ago and we weren't ready. Now it's coming back and the initiative is coming from them—like the intergenerational songfest—it was the president who initiated that event. It really doesn't matter who owns it. It is wonderful to see an idea take shape and grow. My role, and the staff's, is then to assist the seniors in doing what needs to be done. It's amazing what they have accomplished around here. The sky's the limit, really.

She feels it is particularly important for both staff and members to be motivated and challenged:
What makes this kind of work exciting is being involved in something new and unique that people can “hang their hats on” and get some recognition. CH has always had recognition throughout its history and the challenge is to stay “on the leading edge” of things.

The Director says her job is “a lot of fun”. She denies a special interest in old people, and claims to simply enjoy working with people. She particularly likes the kind of contact and continuity that a seniors’ centre affords:

I get satisfaction from a job well done, but I get the most enjoyment from seeing growth in the seniors and the staff. It’s a real pleasure to watch other people blossom. Like the president. She has really come a long way.

Margaret, a woman in her 70's, is a dynamic and influential president whose presence can be felt in every aspect of the operation of the centre. She sees the role of president as a fulltime job and she takes it just as seriously. Margaret has always been a leader, managing her father’s business when she was 18. She sees CH as a business and she runs it like a business, with the emphasis on efficiency. While she admits a certain status, recognition, influence and power comes with the job, that’s not why she took it on.

I took it because no one else would. It’s difficult to say more. Perhaps there is an unconscious need. I’m a workaholic and I need something I can put my all into. I travelled extensively before I got involved, and to me that is superficial.

Like many others, Margaret’s exit from the workplace was premature, and left her feeling unappreciated. As a result, she lost much of her self-confidence. She also missed the friends and connections with stimulating people that her work at the university provided. She knew, however, that she couldn’t “sit around reading National Geographics all day” and it wasn’t long before she decided she had to “pull up her socks”.

The first time I came to CH I thought, ‘this isn’t for me’ because there were old people sitting in the lobby and they had wheelchairs and walkers and, of course, as people get older some of them don’t look after themselves as well.
She attended a session on financial planning, and took out a membership, but didn't use it for some time. When she returned, she joined the fitness class. She had not come to volunteer; as a single parent raising four daughters, she had always worked and did not know what volunteering was all about.

When I started to work in the office, I knew I had the skills, but I lacked confidence in myself. I had a chance to display my competence when I organized the peer counselling office, and my confidence slowly returned.

Margaret started the first hiking group. Then she found she needed a new challenge and the director came to her with an idea about a new program (PWC), which would focus on building confidence while developing group leadership skills. Recognizing that many others in the centre shared her experience and lacked confidence in their abilities, she did not hesitate to get involved.

If I'm asked and it's a challenge, I'll do it. It doesn't matter what the challenge is. If something can be done, and I can make it happen, it gives me confidence. The PWC course helped and my confidence just kept building.

In consultation with the director, Margaret sets the agenda for the executive meetings, allowing considerable flexibility and an opportunity for all members of the committee to present new ideas and issues. On this particular day, the first item on the agenda is a proposal for a project that emerged from a public speaking course (SFE) recently offered in the centre.

The adult educator who facilitated the course has been invited to the meeting, and she outlines a proposal for a project to train seniors as researchers and involve them in "leading edge research" in the field of Education for the Third Age.

DIRECTOR - This sounds mutually beneficial, learning more about retirement issues. And people would have guidance with the reading and the research. Also, part of the research would be to find out where to go from here with educational programs at CH.

PRESIDENT - How about the men? The rest of us know all about it. [Few men take advantage of the educational programs at CH—e.g., participants in the SFE were all women].

PAST PRESIDENT - These are excellent points. We need to look to the future. There is a potential here for all members to benefit. I attended the conference of the Canadian Institute on Seniors' centres (CISC) last year
in Toronto and I was very impressed with the CISC group. They are a dedicated group of people and they do a lot.

PRESIDENT - The CISC conference dovetails with the CAG. That is a good group. Actually they have a great interest in all these things—we are really working along parallel lines.

THIRD VICE-PRESIDENT - This is a real challenge to the brain.

SECRETARY - Who would fund it? Government?

President - New Horizons was our first thought, but they will not fund travel outside the province. We’re not sure about funds at this stage.

DIRECTOR - The CAG conference is a very enriching opportunity—it’s exciting to be with people there. Some are so academic you’re left out in the cold but others are so down-to-earth you say to yourself, ‘yeah, I already know that’. It is a great opportunity to find out what’s happening in different areas that all relate to older people.

PRESIDENT - This would open up many areas for us. Seniors don’t generally know a lot about research and we need to be more aware especially when we have to be responsible for getting our own funding for educational programs.

DIRECTOR - Before we leave this proposal, we need to have a process before we can proceed.

SECRETARY - I just wonder if the same people are involved as always are. What’s in it for other people?

TREASURER - Those of us who have been taking courses [e.g., PWC, SFE, etc.] from the beginning have seen how people progressed. By all means include new people because they have knowledge we don’t have. I think I’ve seen a change in the kinds of people around here—younger people are retiring and are becoming interested in being involved. There is a different outlook on retirement. We need to address the needs of this new kind of retired person.

DIRECTOR - We also need to keep our perspective. We need some direction on where to go from here as far as educational programs in the centre. We need more research and information and then we can move forward in directions that will benefit CH.

TREASURER - I don’t care about going to the conference. I’m interested in research for my own learning. Seniors in years to come won’t just want activity, they will want a greater depth of involvement.

In contrast to the president’s role, the past president’s involvement in the meetings and in activities at the centre reflects a much different style of leadership. He has always been a person who “jumps in with both feet” and invariably finds himself “in a position where people look to him for guidance.” He describes his philosophy as one he learned from his mother: “Honey draws more flies than vinegar.” Fred believes that everyone you meet should be considered a potential friend. “You can benefit from their experience and they can benefit from yours.” He admits he may not be quite as efficient as he should be but considers some things not important enough to be bothered with.
I'm approachable. I take the time to listen to people's problems and complaints, and I offer a few suggestions. Then they feel good. I get satisfaction out of that. Why make people feel bad, when with a little bit of extra effort, you can brighten their life. I may not really have helped at all, but at least they feel better.

Fred's approach to leadership is casual and friendly, his emphasis is on people and making them happy.

As second vice-president, Florence is also a good listener, always cheerful, optimistic, and supportive of others. Widowed a number of years ago, she moved to Centreville three years ago, and was looking for a new circle of friends. She took out a membership at CH, and started with fitness classes, before joining the square dancing club. Attending the PWC course gave her the confidence to take on a leadership role for the first time in her life. Florence had never been much of a leader when she was younger. She recalls knowing the answers to questions at school but not speaking up.

I guess I never wanted to suffer the consequence of my convictions. Now I feel different. I have the confidence. I don't worry about making mistakes. As second vice, I attend activities without the President, and I can say a few words and it goes over pretty well . . . and I feel good . . . a lot better than I would have five years ago.

Florence is sensitive to people's needs and can often be seen in a quiet corner of the centre attentively listening to someone's problems or complaints.

One of the ongoing concerns at CH is whether the people who participate in activities and the hot-lunch program are paid-up members. One week during the year, the Association addresses this concern by conducting membership checks. The following dialogue shows how the board deals with a sensitive issue: it is interesting to note the director's role in keeping the group focussed and in being sensitive to people.

DIRECTOR - Second Vice, do you want to speak to the subject of membership checks?
SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT - Many of the activity groups are not checking to be sure everyone's membership is paid up. The problem is many of these people are active around the centre and they do resent you checking.
SECRETARY - Why do people get so upset when you ask for their card? One guy actually said, 'Is this a police state'?
PRESIDENT - I want to tell you what I overheard at lunch. This younger person [not a member] was having lunch with a group, and she said 'Uncle John is coming for a month and for the price of meals, we'll just bring him here every day'.

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT - Maybe people don't know you have to be a member to eat here.

SECRETARY - Could we consider posting a notice?

PRESIDENT - People don't read signs.

DIRECTOR - In our policy and procedures manual, and I quote, "guest passes are available ... visitors may be a guest for the duration of their visit." That means, Uncle John is more than welcome. And out of 200 people we checked, there were only 4 people who weren't paid-up members. Why not let it go. I feel strongly about this. For the hard feelings we cause, it's not worth it.

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT - I like that attitude. We need to look at it as they haven't done anything wrong, they just misunderstood.

DIRECTOR - It really is amazing to me how many new people there are. We lose 15 to 20% each year. Why those people aren't coming back is an interesting question.

PRESIDENT - Well, when I first came here there were a lot of old people and I didn't stay - it didn't seem like it was for me.

THIRD VICE-PRESIDENT - One old man I was talking to said 'why would I want to sit around and play cards and see all those old faces'?

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT - I guess he doesn't have a mirror.

THIRD VICE-PRESIDENT - Well, when I kissed him this morning, his skin was like velvet.

DIRECTOR - We need to resolve the membership issue.

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT - I think it should be taken in good humour and used as an educational process.

Another problematic issue involves the way in which activity groups keep track of funds. With the centre expanding and becoming a "big business", there is a need for a more effective system of financial accountability. A challenge to the leadership skills of executive members is how to contribute to the effective operation of the centre while maintaining sensitivity to the needs of members. The treasurer has a key role to play.

Clarisse says she has always considered herself a leader. She was in a leadership position for 20 years in her job, and throughout those years she never stopped learning. In the latter years of her professional life, Clarisse taught law students about the court system, and found teaching to be the most rewarding aspect of her job. Leadership to Clarisse means more than just having a responsible position, it means sharing knowledge and experience with others in a teaching role.
As a justice of the peace, she was highly regarded by everyone—the law, society, judges, and her staff.

I had a terrific memory, and I could remember all the cases. Lawyers and judges asked my advice—and they went by my opinion. They also asked me to organize the court chambers, and I did. I had that place running like a clock. I laid down all the rules, and I took away power from some of those lawyers. One of the judges used to say, "You run this place like God."

When Clarisse first joined CH, her "life was at a standstill." She had been forced to retire early when her much-beloved only daughter became terminally ill. She spent two years caring for her daughter and lost all contact with other people. When her daughter died, she just wanted to be alone, and another two years went by before she realized she was desperately missing something.

I wasn't using my mind and I missed the activity of work. I had a great deal of professional responsibility, and when I retired, I did say, 'Thank God' at first, but it wasn't long before I realized how much I missed it.

Clarisse joined the hiking group and soon felt that she was getting and not giving. She had always been a volunteer, even while working fulltime, and she felt she wanted to give CH whatever she had to offer. She is clear to point out that regaining her confidence following retirement has been a long process. She often felt like giving up, but says, "Something inside wouldn't let me. I was determined to see it through." Clarisse has always had a strong drive to learn more about herself. She has always taken courses because there is something within her that propels her to keep on learning. Her participation in the PWC program enabled her to get in touch with her administrative skills, and following the SFE course she assumed the role of treasurer. She finds great satisfaction in the work, and when people appreciate it that is a plus. "Anyone who contributes something worthwhile is eventually recognized for their ability." As she relives her life experience, Clarisse becomes animated and increasingly self-assured.

Getting in touch with the influence and power she enjoyed in the past, renews her confidence in her abilities and in her own power. In her current job as treasurer at CH, she is drawing on many of the skills developed so
successfully in her professional life. Just as she reorganized the legal system in the court chambers, she is creating a system of financial reporting that will make the CH association run more efficiently. Furthermore, she is teaching that system to chairpersons of the activity groups. The following dialogue focusses on the development of a more efficient reporting system, and how to get all the activity groups to comply. One can note Clarisse's sensitivity to volunteers and her facilitative approach.

DIRECTOR - Madam Treasurer, would you like to talk about changes in the report forms for the chairpersons?
TREASURER - Yes, I have typed a little form on the back of their monthly reports, for them to fill in their treasurer's report.
PRESIDENT - We've had problems with many of the groups. People come to me bitching about what's going on. Some say the money is invested. I would like this solved once and for all. We can set out a simple procedure. But we can tell them until we are blue in the face and they still won't listen.
SECRETARY - What if the chairperson in charge of the money has a stroke and we don't know what money there is or where it is?
DIRECTOR - I think we have to be sensitive to the individual needs of the groups. Some groups have very small amounts of money, others have a large amount. We need to recognize the different kinds of accounts, too: for example, petty cash, membership, savings.
PRESIDENT - Don't you think a sermon is necessary?
DIRECTOR - No, I don't think so. Some groups just don't have bank accounts. Certainly it was a bonus for the quilters to have Clarisse go in. What do you think, Clarisse?
TREASURER - I think it would be helpful to have the same format for all the groups.
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT - I wouldn't force anything. Let them know that if you don't agree there is room for negotiation.
SECRETARY - What if some say no? I think the directives should come from us.
PAST PRESIDENT - I think we need to say we are open and accountable with you and you need to be open and accountable with us. That's the beginning and the end of it.
DIRECTOR - I must say it was helpful to have our treasurer work with the quilters.
TREASURER - I could see that the chairperson of the quilting group knew what she was doing. It wasn't like a bookeeper would do, but she isn't a bookeeper; she is a volunteer, and she is doing the best she can. I think if we just get a system it will help her. I think all the chairpersons will feel more secure just having a set way to go.
THIRD VICE-PRESIDENT - Are we finished? I work this afternoon and I have to grab a bowl of soup.
And the group disperses. It is 12:15 p.m., and deliberations have exceeded two hours without a break. Sighs of relief are audible, as the meeting spills out into a busy lunch hour.

Noon Hour Lunch

According to Betty, the hot lunch program is

the flagship program of the centre . . . many seniors get a nutritious and inexpensive hot noon meal here that they would not otherwise have.

As a young widow with four children to raise, Betty enrolled in an intensive training program at a community college, supplemented by university coursework. As a supervisor of homemaking services for many years, she understands the needs of lonely and isolated seniors, and the central importance of food.

She lost her job before she was 65 in a "government shakeup". Believing she had been "railroaded", she sued and won. She felt good about the result, but needed a focus for her time. She had always enjoyed learning and so she enrolled in university courses that, at one time, were offered in another seniors’ centre but,

I knew I needed something more—I had to work at something. My daughter, who was in charge of the lunch program at CH at the time, saw the notice for the peer counselling training program, and convinced me to join.

Betty enjoyed that training, and has been a busy and effective peer counsellor over the past five years. When she was encouraged by the Director to take on the role of first vice-president she agreed, though she insisted on knowing why she was asked.

I was told that it was because I had a background of knowledge and experience in working with seniors, and a broader vision of what the centre was all about. The director has also used me as a negotiator in the centre when there are specific problems and someone needs to help sort things out.

Betty gets "great joy" out of seeing people emerge from "self-imposed isolation", enjoy a hot meal, and feel a part of the community.
There's one elderly woman who has gone into a nursing home now, but to take her away from CH is like death. She is in a wheelchair, but she still comes twice a week. She is a wonderful lady. She just doesn't want to sit in a room all by herself. And I have the same hangup.

The line-up for lunch today is particularly long. Few seem to mind the wait, and pass the time in conversation. There are always exceptions. Anastasia, a notorious complainer, barges in front of the others:

This is disgusting. Look at them there in the kitchen, cackling like a bunch of hens, just having a good time and making us wait. They don't care about anybody else. All they want is our money.

A number of people, like Anastasia, come regularly for the hot meal, and do not participate in any of the activities or programs. Some appear to be bitter; some are known to be alcoholics or drug-dependent. While they may not make for the best lunch table conversation, they are, nevertheless, accepted in the centre.

In the middle of each table, there is a small bouquet of fresh flowers and a sign in a clear plastic holder. One side reads:

```
Welcome to the
[CARNegie HALL]
LUNCH PROGRAM

We hope you enjoy your meal
BUT PLEASE REMEMBER
This service is for members only.
If you wish to bring a guest
pick up a Guest Pass
from the Office.
```

The sign on the other side, developed in one of the educational workshops, reads:
THE ART OF LUNCH-TIME CHATTER

Check how well you are doing:

1. I am pleasant.
2. I am positive.
3. I talk about problems.
4. I hog the show.
5. I share the time so that each person has an opportunity to talk, listen and ask questions.

How well did you do?

But not everyone reads it.

It's 1:30 p.m. as approximately 40 people gather in the Oak Room for the monthly chairperson's meeting.

Chairpersons' Meeting

Like the Executive Board meeting, the agenda for this meeting is set by the Director and the President; however, the Director plays a minor role in this meeting, and the president is fully in charge. It is in this meeting that final decisions regarding the operations of the centre are made. No initiative taken or decision made in the executive meeting can be implemented without ratification by chairpersons representing the membership of 33 activity groups. A certain sensitivity is, therefore, required in "selling ideas", and giving chairpersons a sense of autonomy and power in the decision-making process.

As the meeting begins, members of the board are seated along a head table, with a room full of chairpersons facing them in rows. Like the Executive meeting, people are dressed in business attire. It takes three raps of the gavel for the President to bring the meeting to order.

President - I really needed to bang that gavel today. I am glad you're all so happy. Charlie posted the minutes last week. Would someone please make a motion?...
Old Business:

PRESIDENT - In a whole week of checking memberships, we only found four people who weren't members, so we decided we're just going to do random checks. Please don't be offended if you are asked to produce a membership card, and tell your members not to be offended. Now with respect to guests, may I refer you to our policy and procedures manual, page 3. Visitors may come as guests while they're visiting in the area. If someone is coming from Saskatchewan (and I think everybody's from Saskatchewan these days) they can come for lunch as a guest...

New Business:

PRESIDENT- With your permission we're going to be adjusting the monthly report forms. We are making the system simpler and everybody will use the same form. Let's face it, we're all seniors—things happen—we're getting old, people have strokes and we need to avoid problems. [nb., the realities of aging necessitate a less traditional and more open style of leadership.]

CHAIRPERSON #2 - Does this apply to the health drop-in group?

PRESIDENT - Yes. I notice there are quite a few people missing today, and that's unfortunate. Please take all the information back to your groups. You have an agenda, make some notes on it, and when you go back to your groups, as you are knitting or quilting or whatever, tell your members about what goes on in the meeting. Clarisse, do you want to tell us how the reporting system works.

TREASURER - [She explains the system] Do you understand? Any questions? If you want to set up a system just like we do for the association, I'd be pleased to help you individually.

CHAIRPERSON #3 - If you don't mind I would like to see you about the fitness group because we're a little different.

PRESIDENT - Yes, that's exactly what Clarisse is prepared to do. Everybody clear? Everybody happy with it? How many are happy with it?

The chairpersons then present their monthly reports, each report being formally moved, seconded, and approved.

Activity Group Reports:

SICK AND WELL CHAIRPERSON - Good morning everyone. Last month I sent 12 cards. I'm sorry to report the passing of Gladys Jones. You are probably wondering what I did with that $30.00? I bought cards on sale at $1.49 day. Cash on hand again? Same as last month - nil.

PRESIDENT - Thank you, Irene, that's not as dismal as last month.

POTTERY CHAIRPERSON - Well we have 14 members all busy and enthusiastic, and making pots.

COMPUTER CLUB CHAIRPERSON - I am the new kid on the block. I've been a member for 20 years, but I just got involved because I thought it was time to learn about bits and bites and all those things the grandchildren always talk about. We have nine members but we need more. We have 10 computer systems downstairs and I have never seen anyone down there playing with them.
CANASTA CHAIRPERSON - We are going along as usual. We have 3 tables of canasta—we met 4 times and we have $8 for the association—I'm going to give it to you in nickles.

HIKERS' CHAIRPERSON - Well, we particularly enjoyed last week's hike. We went back because we liked the birds, they were singing. And we are very pleased to report that we have 3 new men in our group.

QUILTING CHAIRPERSON - We met 12 times with a total attendance for the month of 73. We welcome a new member, Mabel Wilson. Gertie has been away. One of our members has decided to retire. Cash on hand is $26.

DANCE CHAIRPERSON - Last month 204 people danced from morning until afternoon. Our instructor's father died and we donated $30 to the heart fund.

WALKERS' CHAIRPERSON - We walked four times and a total of 52 people participated. One Friday was a bit of a washout.

DIRECTOR - I would like to acknowledge the carpet bowlers and the moderate fitness for adjusting their schedules so the mild fitness group could be accommodated.

Executive Board Reports:

PRESIDENT - We are missing a number of people. I guess I better change my deoderant. That's disappointing. There has been a lot of good discussion here. Some people will say we've railroaded things through. The groups should all be represented at these meetings.

PAST PRESIDENT - I'm always impressed by the people who come out to these meetings each time and sit patiently. I think you are all doing a good job. Some of this is a little on the dry side. As a centre we have a lot to be proud of. Now we are even up for nomination for an award. We've all been a part of it and we can all enjoy the fruits of our labours.

PRESIDENT - Last week we entertained the mayor and the new director of the seniors bureau. We did this to develop good working relations and promote good will in the community.

TREASURER - I'd like to report on the mentoring program. The Minister of Education, referred to the program in a recent speech as an example of how seniors are getting more involved in the community. In the Fall, two students studied the court system and this has expanded; two are mentoring computer work, and two more are creating a habitat for snakes. Besides renewed interest in education, students are developing a close personal relationship with an older person. The future looks bright as more business and community groups get involved and make the connections with education and kids.

PRESIDENT - It's time to close. Anybody heard any good jokes? [A chairperson leaps to her feet] Have you heard about the woman who lost 160 lbs? She divorced her husband.

It's 4:00 p.m. and time for tea and a chat. The bingo people are spilling out, many leaving through the back door, one can be heard lamenting, "and all I needed was one lousy 'b', just one lousy 'b'— and Ethel beat me to it again. I
swear those balls are fixed.” Florence is listening attentively to a distraught woman on the chesterfield in a far corner near the library. The President is in the Director’s office going over details of the chairperson’s meeting. There’s fresh tea and muffins in the kitchen, and a pot of coffee brewing. Strains from the “Flight of the Bumble Bee” emanate from a distant piano, rising occasionally above the chatter and intermittent peals of laughter, and then softly fading away.

At 4:30 p.m. the music fades and dies. Within minutes, the pianist, a 91 year-old woman less than five-feet tall wearing a floral-print dress and track shoes, exits from the piano room and charges the full length of the building, out the front door, and down the street. The Handidart bus pulls up at the end of the ramp, and the driver emerges with an arm extended toward the small, frail figure sitting in suspended animation on the bench. Together, slowly and painfully, driver and passenger raise the fragile body up into the bus. The driver descends one last time, scoops the soft cushion from the bench, and they are gone.

Culture of Leadership: An Interpretation

The narrative provides a flavour of the activities of retired people at CH, how leadership functions, the characteristics and styles of leaders, and interactions between staff and seniors. In characterizing leadership at CH, I draw from the history, centre policies, the narrative account, interviews, and the focussed group discussion to illuminate the deeper beliefs and values regarding the nature of retirement, the needs and capacities of seniors, power, and leadership.

The Nature of Retirement. The history of CH reflects a view of retired people as valued, having a certain status in the community, and, contrary to the disengagement theory of aging prominent when CH came into being, wanting to remain a visible part of the community. History—and perhaps by implication the history of persons—has value, suggested by both the CH history book and the sign in the centre advertising a historical presentation. Visibility of wheelchairs and the structure of the environment provide clues that retirement may involve physical disabilities. Retirement also means aging, which has its downside, such as problems with sore feet that can be alleviated by the resident
podiatrist. Nevertheless, retirement does not imply disengagement, but rather active involvement. (Indeed, there are many disengaged old people, but they probably won't be found in a seniors' centre).

The environment, itself, is a lively one, with senior volunteers welcoming people at the door, preparing and serving meals, selling raffle tickets, answering the telephone, serving as office assistants and receptionists, and managing the senior peer counselling office. However, the transition from work to a productive, volunteer role, was not necessarily smooth. The majority who were interviewed experienced the event of retirement as premature and traumatic. If widowhood is considered a legitimate form of retirement, then everyone experienced the loss of a primary role as undesired, with no direction or expectation for the future. Margaret, Betty, and Marilyn were "let go" from work before they were 65; Charlie was forced to retire early for health reasons; Clarisse retired in order to care for her daughter; Florence, Liz, Evelyn, and Fred did not lose jobs prematurely, but they did lose spouses with whom they anticipated spending their retirement years. During the early post-retirement phase, many suffered depression and/or physical disability, and one person spoke of being suicidal. They all talked of feeling isolated, missing social contact, and needing a focus.

Retirement is not generally experienced as a critical event (McDonald & Wanner, 1990, p. 72). While these seniors are an atypical group, their experience lends support to Martin Matthews and Brown's (1987) findings that attitude and choice are key factors in whether or not one experiences retirement negatively. For those who are forced to retire prematurely, the opportunity for involvement in voluntary leadership roles may serve as a replacement for work, thus reducing the negative impact of retirement. Indeed, the experience of these people is consistent with Bengston and Kuyper's (1966) cycle of social breakdown (cited in Payne, 1977, p. 355), as involving a critical period of disengagement from work, followed by a loss of self-esteem and self-confidence, and often associated with a deterioration of physical and mental health, and withdrawal from social contact.

It was not, however, the need to get involved and find a replacement for work that initially prompted the nine seniors interviewed to join a seniors' centre. They said they missed the social contact related to employment and came to a seniors' centre, even though they did not see themselves as "being old" like the rest of the people there. As one said:
When I was working, I had contact with people eight hours a day. When I retired, I wasn't willing to give up that contact with people . . . and that's what I got here. There was a sense of continuity for me . . . with people still buzzing around.

The function of CH is primarily social: people referred to the centre as a "home away from home" and a "comfortable place to be"—a refuge from "loneliness and inactivity". This warmth and acceptance is something seniors seldom find in the outside world.

[CH] is a place where seniors are valued . . . but more than that it is very personal. People in the outside world are all geared up for themselves and they aren't particularly interested in your problems.

It was not very long before they felt connected to other people. It was not so much that they had acquired "intimate" friends, but that they were recognized and felt a sense of acceptance and belonging.

CH offers much more, however, than acceptance and a comfortable place for seniors to spend time. For Marilyn, whose life was the stage, the centre was her Carnegie Hall:

[CH] is a place for making wishes and dreams come true—perhaps secret dreams and wishes that could not be fulfilled earlier in life. Now that one is a senior and has time, anything seems possible. [CH] provides many of these possibilities and opportunities. A chance to sing, dance, be artistic, learn new things, and meet new people. No talent or qualifications required—the sky's the limit.

The majority were reluctant to use the term "dreams", though when they were pressed during the focussed group discussion, they agreed they could perhaps fulfil "mini-dreams." This was how it worked for Betty:

As a supervisor of homemaking services, I had always been concerned about people who are alone and don't eat very well. I had always wanted to teach a cooking program for people who live alone, and I talked to the programmer. She agreed, we got it started, and offered it. It was something that had never been done here in the way I did it.

CH also functions as a "springboard" to other kinds of involvements in the community. "Everything is possible that could launch you to someplace else."
Margaret has taken a strong leadership role in promoting intergenerational exchanges between the CH choir and a group of children from a school near the centre. Clarisse is enthusiastic about a new mentoring program that links school children "at risk" with seniors in the community. These seniors are not only contributing the skills and abilities of a lifetime to CH and the broader community, they are serving to change negative attitudes toward older people as less active and able that are commonly held by younger people and seniors themselves.

Consistent with Bengston's Social Reconstruction Model, CH offers seniors an opportunity to engage in volunteer roles that provide a certain role continuity, social support, satisfaction, and self-esteem. CH, however, goes beyond Payne's (1977) model of work role replacement, to provide an opportunity to contribute to the community in creative and imaginative ways that may be more enjoyable and enriching than one's past work and/or family role.

Who are the retired people that CH serves? Initial observations and discussions suggested to me that there are two groups: "the movers and shakers" and the "old folks." However, those fully integrated into the culture of CH say they no longer see the distinction between themselves and "old people." "We are all members of CH and not one thinks he or she is old." Even the Director felt that my portrayal of the culture of CH placed too much emphasis on the presence of elderly people. When pressed during the focussed group discussion, senior leaders and the Director identified three groups of people. There are the people who are the givers ("those who get in there and get involved")—and the takers ("those who leave it to others to do all the work"). It was agreed that these two groups of people are the same everywhere in society. There is, however, a third group distinguished by a combination of age and declining health, who have served the membership in the past, now require service and have earned it.

There are a lot of people who have done their share and they are here every day. They are willing to contribute their expertise, but at some point their health, energy, or physical disability limits them.

As Betty says, "leaving CH would be like death" for many of them. Betty wonders when she will be able to retire from active service and let others do the work—or if that is a transition she will ever make.
What everyone receives at CH that is not readily available to retired people in society is acceptance and belonging in a safe and comfortable environment. Given the number of recreational programs and activities, and the majority of the membership who come for the hot lunch and/or activities and do not play a volunteer role, the general assumption about retirement would seem to be that it is primarily a time to relax and have fun, and seniors' centres are there to provide the service.

For these senior leaders, however, retirement is a time to continue to develop their personal potential and to make a contribution to the community to the end of life. And for some, given health, self-confidence, and opportunity, it is "the time of their life." This, however, would not seem to be an expectation commonly shared in the centre. The questions are, "What needs does such involvement serve?" and "What kinds of need satisfaction is associated with or influences the development of leadership potential?"

Needs of Seniors. Older people in society are typically viewed as having needs, yet seldom are their abilities and potentials identified or given expression. Acknowledging the desires and aspirations of older people is not part of the social service mandate throughout Canada which has given rise to a plethora of services for the retired, such as municipally-subsidized leisure services.

There are a number of basic needs associated with aging that are served at CH. The environment is designed, for example, to accommodate physical disabilities. Policy promotes social and healthcare services such as peer counselling, help for "sore feet", legal services, wheelchairs, and displays. History and policy both attest to a wide range of recreational programs from the more traditional crafts and bingo, to ceramics, hiking, and travel. Current policy is to satisfy

leisure and social needs of senior adults: and to provide an environment where members feel positive self-worth through acceptance by others, belonging, recognition, contribution, and achievement. ([Centreville] Parks & Recreation, 1987, p. 1)

However, there are few references to education or any support for McClusky's (1974) theory regarding education as a means to satisfy some of the higher order needs such as achievement, personal development, creative expression,
influence and contribution, or to maintain a level of power and control enjoyed in one's working years.

CH offers unconditional acceptance—every person is valued for who he/she is. Inherent is the assumption that people, when they retire, leave the past behind and become "more equal". This represents a dilemma for those who want to continue to develop their skills and potentials in retirement. One person said:

The difference between the working world and retirement is that in the working world you are accepted for what you do and in retirement you are accepted for who you are. But who you are includes what you have done in the past; who you are now and what you can do; and who you will become in the future.

While senior leaders talked about their social needs and their need for acceptance, they also talked about their desires and aspirations, indicating that they wanted to make a contribution to the community. They also said they are motivated by a challenge and the opportunity to learn new things about themselves and others.

When they were encouraged to talk about their leadership skills, however, they had more difficulty acknowledging strengths than weaknesses. The interviews provided an opportunity to talk about their life experiences and achievements and to get in touch with abilities and strengths they are no longer using. While they could admit they had skills and talents developed over a lifetime, they spoke repeatedly of losing self-esteem and self-confidence as a consequence of retirement. The interview process was specifically designed to get information while enhancing self-esteem, and it was successful for many of the interviewees. Following the interview, one person said, "How much do I owe you for the session? I can't remember when I last felt so important."

For many of these people, participating in the educational programs provided the confidence they needed to get more involved. As Margaret observed,

Everyone who took the PWC training is doing one thing and another, some doing what might be called menial tasks, like working in the kitchen, but they wouldn't have taken it on before they had the class.
As an educator and program evaluator, my enthusiasm for the value of education to enrich retirement years made it difficult for me to understand the lack of interest in education among the general membership. As well as building skills, the classes provided a forum, as did the interview process, for people to talk about their past achievements and to be recognized for what they had done, thus enhancing self-esteem and self-confidence. I was surprised to discover how few people took advantage of the opportunities for training and skill development that CH offered. There seemed to be a core group of people who were inspired and motivated by the PWC training and continued to take advantage of opportunities for personal development. The absence of men in the courses was also puzzling. Thirty-one women and two men enrolled in the PWC program; only one man enrolled in the SFE course and soon dropped out "because it wasn't for him." While education helped to build confidence, skill, and a willingness to get more involved, it seemed of little interest to the majority of retired people.

Certainly there are many other influences in the organization that prompt one to take on a leadership role, and one important influence is the professional leader's belief in the skills and potential of seniors (Cusack, Manley-Casimir, & Thompson, 1992). A request from the CH Director to assume a leadership role often provided the confidence to take a risk and make a commitment. The Director believes in the skills and abilities of members and knows that the Association benefits when these skills are put to use. She takes an interest in each person, is sensitive to their individual needs, and confident of their abilities and potentials. Many said they had taken on a leadership role because the Director (or her assistant, the programmer) had made a specific request. A simple, well-timed request often initiated the process of developing individual seniors as leaders.

Not everyone, however, could say why they had agreed to serve on the board or what they expected to get out of it. Charlie, Liz, Margaret, and Betty said they initially agreed simply because "nobody else would do it." The rewards, on the other hand, were varied and largely unanticipated. People talked about gaining "recognition and status", about the pleasure of "developing closer connections with people they admired", and "a greater understanding of how things worked". In describing just how this made them feel, they used words like "uplifted", "useful", "satisfied", "more confident," "exhilarated", "bouncy", "proud", "appreciated", "energetic", and "10-feet tall". With few
exceptions, they never imagined when they agreed to commit themselves just how enriching the experience would be. Their experiences are consistent with Payne's (1977, p. 359) findings that volunteer satisfaction is related to ways that a volunteer program makes use of individual skills and talents.

When asked if they were motivated by a desire for power, some people were uncomfortable with the word, "power", because it held negative connotations for them. Clarisse, on the other hand, said she had enjoyed a great deal of power in her working world, and it was definitely one of the things she missed when she retired. Reminiscing about her life-experience gave her not only renewed confidence in her own abilities, but she said she felt "empowered" in speaking about her professional accomplishments. Power is, of course, central to leadership in all organizations, and issues of power and authority take on particular significance in seniors' organizations (Cusack, Manley-Casimir, & Thompson, 1992).

Power. The philosophy of leadership in CH, expressed in its policy and procedures guide is to put seniors in charge of the operations of CH—i.e., to empower seniors. The question "Who really holds the power at CH?" proved to be a challenging one. When asked, seniors initially expressed a view that either the President, the Director, or both had the power. This is consistent with the hierarchical organizational structure (I found it interesting that the flow chart in Figure 4 places the Director and President in close proximity and at the same level, whereas the Executive Board is much lower on the page. I believe that such details may have subtle effects on perceptions of power). Policy also suggests the President and Director share the power (e.g., those decisions not dealt with in the meetings are returned to the director and president for consideration). The Director may be presumed to have a greater share of the responsibility by virtue of her direct link with the Department of Parks and Recreation.

After much deliberation in the focussed group discussion, the consensus was that power was shared throughout the organization, though it was expressed in different ways by different people. On an individual level, everybody at CH has a certain amount of power, should they choose to exercise it, simply because staff and executive are there to ensure that member's needs are being met.
Anyone who engages in the conversation has power. You have as much power as you want to have, and to the level that you are involved, choose to be involved, or make your needs and wants known. The man who walks in quietly (no one knows his name), plays cards and never says "boo", probably doesn't have any power. But if he or she comes in screaming and hollering about the parking lot, then someone is going to listen.

Ultimately, it is the Director's responsibility to listen, see what the problem is, and see that it is resolved.

It is definitely a case of 'the squeaky wheel getting the grease', but that is still power. On the other hand, there is the person who comes in all smiles and bubbly and you kind of latch on to them for something, because you'd like them to have some influence.

The Executive has power because it represents the membership, but it does not make all the decisions. The cooperation of membership, staff, and executive is the key factor. The Director and her staff manage the day-to-day operations, put programs in place, and generally work with the Executive to meet the needs of the membership.

We [staff] are here because they are there. There are expectations of both of us [staff and executive] and when one lets the other down, we all suffer. The staff is a small team and the board is a small team. Together we run the show, but in the final analysis, it is the members who do.

Some decisions are the responsibility of the Board and some the responsibility of staff. For example, the Director and her staff make many of the decisions regarding maintenance. In the executive meeting, everyone comes with issues for discussion. Some decisions are the Board's, some decisions are made by staff, some decisions are brought to chairpersons' meetings, and some decisions are made within the activity groups.

The Director and staff, President and Executive, work to maintain the autonomy of the groups, and to enable the participation of activity group members in decision-making processes. With involvement in decision-making there is ownership, pride, and a sense of individual responsibility that filters through the ranks. The groups feel empowered by the process. At the same time, the process acts as a check and balance, and as a way of communicating information to the membership. If the Executive gets support for an idea at the
chairperson's meeting, they feel reassured that they are getting a reflection of what the members really want and need.

It was my impression that the Director sincerely believes in the power of the membership and her desire to transfer power to seniors; and she saw all members having as much power as they choose to exercise. Many seniors, however, were reluctant to acknowledge they had power and felt that the President and Director shared the power, with the Director ultimately responsible and "in charge", although never in an authoritarian manner and with sensitivity to individual needs and serving everyone's best interests. I felt that assumptions about power and authority resting with the Director and President, as well as deeply held beliefs about their own powerlessness in a group, were a barrier to board members having a greater share of influence and power in the centre.

Every board experiences problems relating to power and personal conflict, and this one is no exception. Members of the Board sometimes feel that they are not well-enough informed and therefore do not feel they share responsibilities and power. On the other hand, the Director would like more Members of the Board to bring issues and concerns to board meetings:

> Sometimes, I have a list of items as long as my arm and [board members] come in with 2 or 3. It is an opportunity for them to speak up about their personal concerns and issues, that they don't always take. We should be able to get things out in the open and dusted off.

When there are differences of opinion, people are often reluctant to speak up. When asked why they do not exercise their power and speak up when there is frustration or conflict, board members said they wanted to avoid resentment and hurting people's feelings. In being silent, some said they were not giving their power away, but rather choosing to wait for the right opportunity or showing respect for the other person's right to an opinion. Others said they keep quiet when they know they are right. And as Fred said, "Some things are just not important enough to be bothered with. If people go on a power trip, well I guess they need to."

When conflict and tension arise in meetings, there seems to be a loss of energy in everyone present. Following one of the meetings, everyone (including the researcher) admitted to being exhausted. In contrast, the mood in
another of the chairpersons' meetings was more light-hearted, the discussion more lively, and I felt quite energetic following the meeting (despite two hours of serious concentration and a sore hand from writing copious fieldnotes). My feelings were corroborated in the focussed group discussion. Members of the Executive attributed the difference to a prior informal meeting of the ad hoc chair committee during which they became personally better-acquainted and better informed about what was happening in the centre. As a result, they felt prepared to participate in the meeting, were more actively engaged, and said they, too, felt exhilarated following the meeting.

It has been my experience that when one person assumes too much responsibility and dominates a meeting, others are robbed of their power, and their energy is depleted. It is a subtle process, and throwing in a joke at the end of a meeting seldom generates sufficient energy to enable people to leave a meeting feeling anything but exhausted. When people share the problems and the power, more energy is available and everyone enjoys an enhanced feeling of accomplishment and wellbeing. The connection between energy and power is seldom made, however, and senior leaders tend to give their power and energy to people who take charge of meetings.

Many seniors, and certainly the majority who attend seniors' centres (i.e., predominantly women) have had little power in their working lives. While many have had influence and power in their homes and families, they tend not to derive a sense of power that transfers to other settings. Furthermore, they often hold a view of power as negative, involving authority and control over others. And while everyone may wish to remain in control of their personal lives, the majority have difficulty seeing themselves as having a measure of power over their peers.

While I did not include gender as an aspect of focus, it became apparent that there were issues and assumptions about gender that were related to power and leadership. This centre, like many of its kind, is dominated by women, and women are equitably represented in positions of power. Curiously, with the exception of the Past President, the only male on the Board serves as secretary. And he expressed feelings of frustration and powerlessness. On another occasion, a chairperson closed the meeting with a sexist joke at the expense of the men. Men rarely attend educational/training programs. On the other hand, women seldom see themselves as leaders in the traditional sense of the word.
Leadership. Leadership is relational, and while influence flows throughout the organization, it is in the relationship between the Executive (particularly, the President) and the Director that we see how leadership functions and how power is shared. This involves the professional leader or director and senior leader having particular skills and approaches to accomplishing the tasks of the centre, skills that balance and complement each other.

The Director is confident in her leadership skills. She is not afraid to speak up about sensitive issues. She does not avoid conflict, always carries a task to completion and is prepared to confront people, while at the same time realizing that sensitivity is required. She is always prepared for meetings. With both staff and seniors, her focus is on challenging and inspiring people. She takes pride in their achievements:

There is a lot of growth there and while I don't take a lot of responsibility for that, I do take pride in it. When they do a good job, I think maybe I've played a part. To me, the the staff are just great. I get positive feedback about what they do and it all makes CH a better place.

The Director is also fully aware of what she does that influences seniors to get more involved:

Everything depends on attitude. If you have the right attitude with people and you enjoy them, then you can be a motivator.

One of the things she does is make leadership easier for seniors. Leadership can have different connotations, and she tries to get them to see the benefits and opportunities.

I like to make sure that when they win, they win big—and if they don't, I make sure they aren't going to fall flat on their face. Staff and executive are there to give support and recognition.

The Director claimed the key was knowing people well, and understanding their individual needs and talents:

Staff take the time to get to know people, their level, their interests. The sense of recognition, success, and belonging that people get from being involved are personal things that people appreciate.
The secret is to find out what are the keys for people, what is it that hooks them.

The style of leadership exemplified by this director is one that Barth (1991) and Kotter (1990) refer to as "developing a culture or community of leaders." She attempts to create a climate in which seniors emerge as leaders, sometimes for the first time in retirement. The Director is also a strong advocate of the value of education in developing leadership potential. She admits that staff cannot provide the sophisticated approach that comes with education, because they have neither the time nor expertise to train people. They do, however, try to remove barriers to participation and leadership, and to assist seniors in identifying training needs.

If people identify needs then we can use those needs as a bulwark to remove the problems. And if we can find out where to get funds, then we help people to get the needed training programs in place. We may initiate some suggestions and then they begin to generate their own.

Being a leader in a seniors' centre involves a variety of skills, and senior leaders at Carnegie Hall all recognized that they had leadership skills, although some are more confident and experienced than others. Many mentioned that they were good organizers; they also mentioned people skills. There seemed to be a difference of opinion between the relative importance of the task and sensitivity to people's feelings. Some people felt that the job was secondary, especially when working with volunteers. Evelyn, as a peer counsellor, felt in some cases she was guilty of being too sensitive to people's feelings. Another felt no one should be sensitive to the complainers. Many members felt getting the task done was more important: "The main thing is to get the job done to the best of your ability—that's why we are here."

In the focussed group discussion, these people decided that senior leaders need to be both efficient and sensitive to others. While they remained divided over which was more important, they agreed that in the working world one need not be as sensitive to people, but leadership in retirement was different. One leader described how she had changed:

In my working life, I was very efficient, organized, and business-like, but in my work at CH, I had to become less businesslike, more open and "softer".
As a result of leadership and personal development programs, the centre now has many more skilled leaders. While these people, many currently serving on the executive, express a willingness to play a stronger role and share the leadership, they do not often speak up. And they do not assume more responsibility because of many of the deeper beliefs and assumptions about power, about leadership, and about their own abilities and capacities identified throughout this study. (I believe those same forces that prevent many leaders from exercising their influence and sharing the power, prevent others from getting involved and emerging as leaders.)

Summary

Carnegie Hall offers retired people unconditional acceptance and visibility. It supports a view of retirement as a time for active involvement and continued contribution in self-chosen endeavours—a time to offer one's skills and talents and to continue to develop them to the end of life. In order to develop a meaningful role for themselves within the centre, however, seniors require help in refining existing skills and, in many cases, developing new ones. A style of leadership (exhibited by both staff and senior leaders) that focusses on supporting and developing the potential of people contributes to the emergence of seniors as leaders.

Seniors can be just as needy as people of any age, although losses commonly associated with age, including the event of retirement, put them at risk, and erode their confidence and self-esteem. More than self-confidence, many seniors seek sophisticated challenges and opportunities to be recognized for their achievements. Educational opportunities at CH play an important role in developing leadership skills, and the level of self-confidence and self-esteem needed to participate fully in community life. In this chapter I have attempted to illuminate some of those influences on the emergence of seniors as leaders by drawing on social discourse and lived experiences of a group of senior leaders.

What must happen for more seniors to become involved in sharing leadership and power in seniors' centres, and in benefiting from the rich rewards that accompany such involvement? This account of the culture suggests a number of influences that facilitate a process of emergent leadership. However, assumptions about retirement, the needs of seniors,
power, and leadership seem to persist and serve as strong barriers. I have found the following assumptions to be particularly resistant to change:

- Retirement is a time to leave the past behind, and let someone else do all the work;
- Seniors have needs that ought to be served, but not desires and expectations for challenge and development of personal potential;
- Power is negative and reserved for the few who want to be in charge and suffer all the problems;
- Leadership means taking charge, something few are trained to do, involving a lot of hard work and problems, and not worth the hassle.

In Chapter Six, I explore the culture of leadership in a second seniors' centre using the same conceptual framework, methods, and procedures. In Chapter Seven, I summarize factors that influence the emergence of third-age leaders.
CHAPTER SIX: RESULTS
THE CULTURE OF CENTENNIAL CENTRE

In this chapter, I portray the culture of a seniors' centre in a suburban municipality that I have named Olympia (total population: 84,021, Statistics Canada 1991). I refer to the centre as "Centennial Centre", because the completion of its most recent renovations coincided with British Columbia's centennial celebrations, making it one of the most modern seniors' centres in Western Canada. As with Carnegie Hall, I begin with a history of the organization, followed by an outline of the formal organizational structure of roles and responsibilities. The narrative account depicts interactions, relations, and patterns of influence. The chapter concludes with a characterization of leadership in terms of the dimensions of culture outlined in the conceptual framework.

History of Centennial Centre

The history is brief; the centre has been in operation for only 15 years. While no formal documentation exists, an oral history was obtained from the Coordinator, a staff person, and others who had been affiliated with the centre from its inception. Like the surrounding community, the history of the Centennial Centre Association is characterized by rapid population growth, beginning with a membership of 600 in 1977 and expanding to over 3000 members in 1992. As we will see, this rapid growth has influenced the culture of the seniors' centre.

The surrounding community has grown from a total population of 8,501 in 1941 to 53,250 in 1971 and 84,021 in 1991. One can get a sense of just how dramatic the growth rate has been by comparing it to Centreville, an established neighbouring community. Table 6 shows the population growth of Olympia and Centreville from 1941 to 1991. Whereas the population of Centreville has doubled since 1941, the population of Olympia has increased ten-fold.
Table 6. Population growth for Olympia and Centreville from 1941 to 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Olympia</th>
<th></th>
<th>Centreville</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>8,501</td>
<td></td>
<td>21,967</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>16,066</td>
<td></td>
<td>26,639</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>29,218</td>
<td></td>
<td>35,104</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>53,230</td>
<td></td>
<td>42,838</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>61,077</td>
<td></td>
<td>38,550</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>84,021</td>
<td></td>
<td>42,788</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Statistics Canada, 1991)

Although Olympia currently has twice the population of Centreville, the number of people over 55 years old is comparable in both cultures (Olympia - 11,350; Centreville - 11,435). Since the percentage of seniors in Olympia is much lower than in Centreville, seniors in Olympia can be expected to have a lower profile in the district and to experience greater competition for tax dollars. Table 7 shows the breakdown of age groups in Olympia and Centreville, according to Statistics Canada (1986).
Table 7. Breakdown of age groupings in Olympia and Centreville in 1986

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE GROUP</th>
<th>OLYMPIA population</th>
<th>percent</th>
<th>CENTREVILLE population</th>
<th>percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>5,355</td>
<td>(7.7)</td>
<td>2,050</td>
<td>(5.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-14</td>
<td>8,785</td>
<td>(12.7)</td>
<td>2,965</td>
<td>(7.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>11,715</td>
<td>(16.9)</td>
<td>6,355</td>
<td>(15.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>13,010</td>
<td>(18.8)</td>
<td>8,315</td>
<td>(20.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>11,020</td>
<td>(15.9)</td>
<td>5,275</td>
<td>(13.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>8,050</td>
<td>(11.6)</td>
<td>3,560</td>
<td>(8.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>5,865</td>
<td>(8.5)</td>
<td>4,170</td>
<td>(10.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 65</td>
<td>5,485</td>
<td>(7.9)</td>
<td>7,265</td>
<td>(18.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**total**  
69,285                39,955

(Statistics Canada, 1986)
During a period of steady growth and economic prosperity in the 1960's and 1970's, the municipality of Olympia expanded its community recreation programs to include an indoor pool complex and an ice rink. A group of seniors who met regularly in the pool complex to pursue recreational interests (e.g., bridge, carpet bowling) formed the Golden Age Club under the direction of a recreation programmer (the present Coordinator of Centennial Centre. The local Old Age Pensioners Organization (O.A.P.O.) lobbied the Municipal Parks and Recreation Department for many years before a centre for seniors was finally built. Funding to build the seniors' centre was shared by the Parks and Recreation Department and the provincial government, supplemented by contributions from a variety of service groups in the community (e.g., the Kinsmen Club donated $30,000).

Members of the Golden Age Club were involved in the planning of the centre from the beginning, serving on various committees. Seniors' involvement in planning the centre was so extensive that it is reported that seniors assumed they would be responsible for the operation of the seniors' centre. They were surprised to find staff in place to "run the centre" for them. Operation of the centre in the early days was described as "vastly different than today." That difference is reflected in the activities and programs then and now.

Activities and Programs

In the early years, dinner dances were popular and the organizational work was shared by members and three staff (a coordinator, a recreation programmer, and a seniors' citizen centre worker). One staff person recalls they would usually get about 125 people out to a dinner dance. People would be asked what they would like to bring, and they would lay out a potluck smorgasbord. As the membership grew, the health department became involved and ruled that members should not be bringing food from home because of health regulations, and so this practice was discontinued. Staff then assumed responsibility for preparing and cooking food at the dinner dances.

We'd have a salmon barbeque and we would hose off the scales out on the lawn. Then we would be in the kitchen cooking and washing pots and pans. When I look back, I don't know how we did it. It was hard work, but it was a lot of fun and everybody had a good time.
A number of people shared this nostalgia for the "good old days" and a feeling that things were better then. Staff and members worked together as a team, and staff always had time for people.

People in the centre should come first—if it wasn't for the people we wouldn't be here. I'm a people person. I know everyone. When I see bitchy people, I try to make them laugh. If you don't acknowledge people, they feel like they are being ignored.

One staff member attributes the difference between the "good old days" and now to the size of the place and the level of education required to run it.

I think the difference is education—it's more like a business around here. I hated to see the last addition—it put us over the edge. There is a big difference in the staff and the way they do their jobs. Often they stay in their offices. Others are so busy they don't have time to talk to people... I don't blame anyone—we are all overworked.

A perception shared by many of the older members was that the growth in membership reflected increasing numbers of younger people (i.e., aged 50-65 years) taking advantage of the wide range of low-cost educational courses and the athletic programs.

Now it's mostly younger people who come, and they take a course and go home. Our computer classes are filled. And we get 175 people out to the dinner dances every month, but it's different. Younger people come, but they don't volunteer and they don't mix. We like to get members involved—we can't run it with just staff.

Programming has grown in the past 15 years from approximately 30 activities to over 100, with a total of nine staff members (fulltime and parttime) to assist in programming, registering, food services, and operation of the centre. From the beginning, the centre has had a strong sports program (e.g., curling, lawnbowling, snooker) as well as traditional crafts, woodworking, and musical groups. Community support services that hold their meetings in the centre include an arthritis support group, a blood pressure clinic, C.N.I.B. (for the blind), a stroke club, a cardiac rehabilitation program; H.E.A.R. (for the hard-of-hearing), W.H.O. (a group which began as "widows helping others" and has been changed to "women helping others"), and a care giver's support group.
Educational courses are increasingly part of the centre's roster of activities, although no leadership training courses have been offered, with the exception of one workshop on running effective meetings. An information brochure for the Fall of 1992 advertises a lecture series on the following topics:

- A Closer Look at Religion
- The Arab-Israeli Conflict
- Self-esteem
- Herbs and Your Health
- Expo and Europe, 1992
- Meditation
- Free to be - Friends! (Friendship Workshop)
- Philosophy: The Art of Wonder I (Introduction to Philosophy)

Computer classes are increasingly popular, and a computer group is involved in programming decisions and the operation of classes.

Their purpose is to encourage computer education and participation by offering a variety of computer programs, lab experiences, "open houses" and the like. ([CC] Policies & Procedures, Computer Committee Guidelines, 1991)

A chairperson and vice-chairperson of the computer group are charged with encouraging participating members to assume various duties including contributing program ideas, assisting with program planning, supervising lab practice sessions, overseeing and coordinating all computer business, liaising with the educational director, and calling and chairing meetings of the computing group. In short, senior computing students are assuming the role of educational leaders as well as teachers and teaching assistants.

Professional Leadership: Coordinator. The Coordinator of the centre is described as a "powerful woman" by both members and staff. One staff person claims,

She is a terrific organizer, and not afraid to explore new areas. She has excellent organizational skills. She could have been successful as the head of a big business firm. As director of a seniors' centre, I think she is underpaid.

The Coordinator has been in charge of the centre since 1977, providing strong leadership and continuity in the evolution of programs and services. Following the completion of a Bachelor of Recreation degree, she started as a recreation leader in the district of Olympia working with all age groups. In those
days, she recalls, "there was no special training for working with seniors and I became coordinator of seniors programs quite by accident." The coordinator of the seniors group at that time took ill and she was asked to cover until a replacement could be found. After a few weeks, "I told them they didn't need to find a replacement."

When the construction of Centennial Centre was completed two and a half years later, the Director of Recreation approached her and asked if she would like to continue as coordinator; she smiles broadly, "It took me about ten seconds to say 'yes'". She particularly enjoys working with older adults and the continuity of relationships that it affords:

With other age groups the relationship between staff and participants is transient—there isn't the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships and a sense of community.

In the beginning, she had no formal education in gerontology because no such training existed in the 1970's, however, she now attends gerontology conferences and takes postgraduate gerontology courses. She speaks fondly of the influence that her grandmother had upon her. She describes her grandmother as excessively work-oriented—someone who couldn't see the value of recreation and had little pleasure in her life—and she attributes her vision for the centre to her grandmother's influence.

I wanted to bring pleasure to people in their later years. Some seniors centres are too serious, and they are not for people who are "younger-minded". I know most people don't like to think of themselves as seniors and I felt seniors could do anything. Like the slo-pitch baseball team—at first they didn't think they could do it. I knew they could. Now we have a winning team!

Her mission was to help seniors to "think young", leave the work ethic behind, and enjoy their retirement years.

Since 1977, there have been three major renovations to the centre to accommodate the growing membership and diversity of programming needs. The Coordinator regrets that it is increasingly difficult to maintain personal relationships with members, although she says she always makes a point of greeting people by name even though she can not always stop and talk. With the growth of the centre and increase in staff, the Coordinator's role has increasingly become an administrative role. Three years ago, she applied for
reclassification of her role, and suggested that a director of seniors’ recreation services was needed to coordinate district-wide initiatives. There has, however, been little support for this new position from her supervisors in the Parks and Recreation Department.

To accommodate the growing membership and the lack of staff time to socialize, the Coordinator has instituted a hostess program.

The role of the hostesses is to welcome people and this is where the women play a leadership role in the centre. Women like helping with the hostess program—they get to dress up—whereas the men just don’t feel comfortable in the role.

She tries to encourage staff and hostesses to do “walkabouts” and to be as accessible as possible to members in the centre. She also encourages staff to socialize in the beverage areas and to facilitate connections among people—especially to introduce members to leaders of activities they may be interested in joining.

We need more volunteers. Some older people have a real fear of making a commitment, because they are retired and they worry that volunteer responsibilities might interfere with holidays—many go to California in the winter months. Others are reluctant if their health is not good, because they feel if they get ill, they won’t be able to carry things out. Certainly, there is a greater reticence on the part of women.

She adds, however, that once people have had the freedom to relax and enjoy themselves in their early postretirement years, they often find they want to become involved in something more productive and meaningful to them personally. That’s when she tries to find a way to make use of their unique skills and talents in serving the needs of the centre. With the increasing size of the membership and growing administrative responsibilities, she has expressed the need for a trained volunteer coordinator to assist her in making better use of the resources of the membership. She is hopeful that the leadership training program, scheduled to begin in the Fall of 1992 will help prepare seniors in formal leadership roles to make others feel welcome and become more involved in the centre.
Senior Leaders: Presidents. Since its inception, there have been six presidents of the Association. The first President was a woman who had a broad perspective on leisure: she is described as very busy, somewhat of a "loner and a do-gooder." The second President was a retired business man who served for two terms and was "nice and congenial, with a passion for carpetbowling." The President who followed him was a man who was described as a "power-tripper." Then came a woman characterized as having a wonderful personality, warm and sincere, who emerged as a leader through the support of the craft group. She was followed as President by Edward and Lorne, who are both profiled in the narrative.

Organizational Structure

The Centennial Centre Advisory Board Policy and Procedures Manual defines the formal structure of power relations and the roles of key people in the centre. Referred to as "the green book," it is a three-ring looseleaf binder with a green cover, which is continually being revised and updated. The first item in the Constitution is the "object of the centre" [dated 1977; revised 1991] which is stated as follows:

To promote within the limitations of allocated resources year-round opportunities for satisfying the leisure needs of senior adults in this community over the age of 50. As well, to provide information services for senior adults whenever possible.

To be a community focal point on aging where older persons can come together for services and activities, as well as a community resource for information on aging.

To provide settings in which members may experience acceptance by others, the feeling of belonging and recognition as individuals of positive worth. (p. 1)

An elaboration of "Seniors Program Objectives" [dated Sept. 1978; revised Sept. 1985] outlines the following mandate:

1. To encourage adults over the age of 50 to participate at (CC) and in community programs.

2. To create an enjoyable, fun, and non-threatening atmosphere.

3. To appreciate individual lifestyles and capabilities, and help them to realize their own personal goals.
4. To provide opportunities for social interaction and to facilitate the development of friendships and the acceptance of others.

5. To provide a range of recreational activities that allow for individual choice and are accessible cost-wise to seniors of differing income levels.
   (a) Keeping Fit and Active Programs
   (b) Craft/Skill Programs
   (c) Education/Information Programs
   (d) Food Services

6. To encourage participants to use own initiative in developing and leading programs.

7. To maintain effective communication amongst [CC] members and other senior citizen organizations and institutions.

8. To facilitate the provision of services for seniors by other agencies when appropriate through facility use, volunteer or staff support, publicity, etc., within limitations of available resources. To be a community focal point on ageing and a resource centre for seniors for information referrals on appropriate agencies/services.

Significantly, despite a very detailed list of program objectives including a goal of encouraging seniors "to use their own initiative in developing and leading programs," there are no explicit references to lifelong learning, leadership training, or personal development, although there are references to "education/information" programs.

The second item in the Constitution outlines power relations between the Olympia District Council and the CC Advisory Board, and emphasizes the need to comply with the District of Olympia Parks and Recreation Department policies. As such, CC receives an annual budget to cover advertising, utilities, program maintenance, supplies, programs instructors' salaries, maintenance and administrative salaries, and staff training. The District receives the annual membership and program fees.

The formal structure of authority is outlined in Figure 5. (Note that this is a structure of external power—implicit is the assumption that internal power is shared between the Coordinator and the Advisory Board.)
Figure 5. Internal and external organizational structure of power in Centennial Centre (District of Olympia, Policies and Procedures [CC] Constitution, p. 2)
Authority is given by the District Council to the Coordinator who works with an Advisory Board and with activity committees. She attends all Advisory Board meetings in the role of non-voting "executive secretary", charged with the task of informing the Board if any of its recommendations are not in accordance with district policies. If the Board wishes to recommend a policy change, it can request that recommendations be forwarded to the Recreation Program Manager and, if necessary, to the Parks and Recreation Committee of the District Council.

The Advisory Board is defined as a representative group of senior adults who voluntarily assist and advise the Centre Coordinator regarding program direction of [CC]; program being the sum total of all that individuals do in the name of the Centre. Potential members of the Advisory Board will be given a copy of the Advisory Board terms of reference—as ratified by Council Resolution no. 1324—so that they are in full understanding of their role and can agree to serve as a member in the outlined capacity. (District of Olympia, p. 2)

The role of Advisory Board members is outlined in the terms of reference as:

- to assist in identification and assessment of needs and desires of senior adults.
- to act as a sounding board for suggested ideas and new programs from members and coordinator.
- to make recommendations relative to program development.
- to promote the centre throughout the community
- to encourage involvement and attendance by all seniors in Olympia.
- to assist in finding resources (e.g., members to lead/instruct)
- to identify problems which are of concern or cause tension and recommend solutions.
- to make recommendations regarding fund raising, activities, objectives, and guidelines.

The Advisory Board consists of nine voting members: a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Crafts' Director, Cultural Director, Sports' Director, Social and Educational Director, and a Past President (as well as the non-voting Coordinator, serving in the role of Executive Secretary). The four Directors liaise with the various activity groups, conducting joint meetings with elected chairpersons from their respective groups to discuss common business, and individual group needs and concerns. (Until this year, a non-voting President of
the Funding Society also sat on the Board. With the formal amalgamation of the Funding Society and the Board, the constitution is being revised to incorporate two financial/fundraising advisors). All Board positions are elected annually, with the positions of President and Vice-president elected at the Annual General Meeting. Members are limited to serving two consecutive one-year terms in any one position, with the exception of Treasurer, who is appointed annually by the Board.

The business of the Advisory Board is conducted at regular meetings held once a month. An Executive Committee (consisting of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Past President, Executive Secretary, and two Finance Directors) meets as needed, with authority vested by the Advisory Board and charged with providing formal reports of such meetings at subsequently scheduled Advisory Board meetings. Each Director prepares a report on the groups under his or her directorship for every second Advisory Board meeting, and presents an annual report at the AGM. On a quarterly basis, representatives from various community groups are invited to meet with the board. Such community groups include: two B.C. Old Age Pensioners’ (O.A.P.O.) groups, two senior citizen counsellors, the local branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, Pacific Rim Rose Society, two retirement homes, the Olympia Lawn Bowling Society, and the various support groups (e.g., for the blind, hard-of-hearing, arthritis, stroke victims, widows).

Membership

The Constitution provides detailed regulations regarding membership. All senior adults participating in CC activities or programs must become members on or before their third visit. The membership fee is subject to annual review (membership sales commence in January with the exception of gift memberships, which are available before Christmas each year). "Any member who has not renewed his/her membership by the 31st of March shall not be entitled to use the facilities at [CC]" (p. 6). A member may be expelled for the following reasons: violating the constitution and bylaws, nonpayment of annual dues, failing to maintain objectives of the Association, inappropriate behaviour (e.g., sexual harassment, being a nuisance, misappropriation of funds, failure to carry out a lawful instruction of staff or board.) The policy and procedures guide allows that any member subject to a proposed expulsion be given an
opportunity to address the meeting of the Board at which the expulsion is being considered before it is put to the vote.

With respect to membership statistics, the District of Olympia does not publish a detailed profile of the membership of CC, although it is needed and, with the recent implementation of a computerized registration system, may be available in the future. The Coordinator, however, keeps her own records of membership and centre attendance. Although the population has continued to grow in the surrounding district, the membership total at CC has remained relatively stable from 1988 through 1991 (e.g., 1986 - 2238; 1987 - 2626; 1988 - 3000; 1989 - 3062; 1990 - 2909; 1991 - 3011). While the membership in 1992 remains stable, however, daily attendance at the centre has risen by 20 percent since 1988.

The stabilization in membership is due, in part, to the fact that rapid population growth is occurring in a region of this large, sprawling district at some distance from CC. Consequently, a small group of approximately 150 seniors, with encouragement and support from the CC Coordinator and Board, is operating in a new community centre serving all age groups—circumstances reminiscent of the emergence of the CC seniors’ group in the 1970’s. While history appears to be repeating itself, economic restraint has prevented the construction of additional recreation facilities. An item in the July/August CC newsletter reads:

> On a more political note, we must share the loss of the referendum with our [members to the north] as so much new, needed development for seniors was at stake. Pity!—it is lost, but all may not be lost and one hopes that good sense and money will come to restore and recover some of the needed facilities and services in the fast-growing north section of our community.

While a breakdown in membership with respect to age and sex is unavailable, the Coordinator estimates the ratio of women to men in CC to be 3:2. The men are, however, more visible and considerably more active in leadership roles.

Women chair committees and activity groups, but few women serve on the Advisory Board. Generally, the women think that men should have their say. Men, on the other hand, come in and want to be in charge—snooker and bridge just aren’t satisfying enough for many of them.
The following narrative describes the interactions and relationships of people who work and play there, and how the business of the centre is conducted.

Narrative of the Culture

It is 8:40 a.m. as Alice approaches CC, which lies at the heart of a maze of community services—a skating rink, public library, track, tennis courts, lawn bowling green, public health clinic, social recreation centre, swimming pool, and a senior secondary school are within a 3-block radius. This is Alice’s first visit to Centennial Centre and she drives cautiously to avoid teenagers, dressed in jeans and black t-shirts, spilling out of the school, onto the road, and into the parking lot across the street. She passes two one-way streets that exit from the parking lot, but confused by the proliferation of buildings, cars, buses, school children, and signs, she misses the entrance to the centre. Approaching once again from the other direction, she notes a large sign,

DISTRICT OF OLYMPIA
RECREATION AND LEISURE SERVICES
Social Recreation Centre
Hemlock Pool
Centennial Centre
  The Rose Garden
  The Lawn Bowling Green

and enters a parking lot identified by a number of inconspicuous signs in various locations that say, “Parking is reserved for patrons of the leisure services and the public library.” There is nothing, however, that specifically identifies a seniors centre.

On her way to the main entrance of a modern, one-story building, Alice passes a large immaculately-groomed lawn bowling green. The grass is so short and green she assumes it must be artificial turf, and can hardly believe, on closer inspection, that it is real grass. Freshly-painted white benches at the edge of a circular path surround the green, with a traditional green clubhouse trimmed in white, on the far side. A rose garden lies between the green and the centre, with numerous varieties marked with their proper names, arbors, and
winding paths leading to a dias with a side-entrance to the centre. A handsome, well-dressed middle-aged couple wander among the roses, speaking in a foreign language. They pause now and then to admire the view, and the woman poses to have her picture taken among the roses. On a grassy knoll beside the entrance to CC, a flag on a tall pole ripples in the breeze above a bronze plaque..."[i]n appreciation of participants and volunteers of the Seniors Summer Games, 1991."

Alice checks the time. It is 8:50 a.m. as she approaches the double-wide glass doors to Centennial Centre. With a burst of air, doors fly open automatically, and she finds herself, like Alice-through-the-looking-glass, in a large atrium with athletic trophies in a long glass case down the left side. A display of photographs mounted on cardboard runs the full length of the glass case, announcing "Congratulations to all Centennial's B.C. Senior Games Competitors" with a list of all those competitors from CC who came home with silver, bronze, and gold medals. Opposite the trophies, hangs a brightly-patterned, old-fashioned commemorative quilt made by the Centennial quilters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Olympia</th>
<th>1891 - 1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 Years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sign on a small desk just beyond the quilt says, "Today's host is Ethel: A sign below the desk says, "Men Needed for the Tea Dance", and another says: "Weight Training", with details provided in smaller print. In the centre, two strands of soft rope mark the line-up (like the kind at the bank) to a high desk that runs full-length along the wall directly ahead, and a sign reads:

Please!
One customer at a time
at the front desk.
Stay in line
and you will be
helped next.
Thank you.
Behind the desk two young women speak in hushed voices. Alice smiles in anticipation, waiting for someone to acknowledge her presence.

When a woman behind the desk looks up, Alice straightens her body and clears her throat. "My name is Alice and I want to become a member. I'm new in Olympia, and I'd like to know what kinds of programs and activities you have to offer."

The woman pauses, and then calls in a loud voice . . . "Is Edward here? . . . Edward, are you there?" Feeling uncomfortable and wanting to be invisible, Alice wanders in the direction of the lounge. She passes the Coordinator, who is speaking on the telephone in her office behind a glass wall in full view.

The Coordinator is much more than a coordinator of activities. Her role includes managing a staff of nine, as well as supervising and budgeting for the overall operations of a centre serving a diverse membership of over 3,000 people. She defines the primary function of the centre to be social and her primary role to be facilitating of socialization—"recreation and activities are just the vehicles for socialization." She also admits that the centre is a big business, although she had never thought of it in that way, until the President brought it to her attention.

The President always puts the business function up front, but I wouldn't. We are in the business of meeting the leisure needs of the senior population within an allocated budget. But it really isn't a big business—it is a people place. But, of course, somebody does have to look after the business end of it. I hate statistics, because they are misleading, even with the membership. Our membership
has not gone up since last year, but we have increased the daily use of the centre by 20 percent. That is very positive and suggests that people are using the centre more often. Up until now council has always justified raising expenses in terms of actual membership numbers. My boss is always telling me to 'check my revenues'.

Although she is described as a "powerful woman," she does not like the term "power".

Seniors use various terms here that bother me—for example, I am often introduced to people as 'the boss'. I very quickly say something like, 'oh, we all work together here'. I don't like being pegged as the boss, because it implies that I am the power... though I do have power.

She describes herself as somewhat laissez-faire, although she seldom thinks about what it is that she does.

What I do is intrinsic—I am not aware of how I do things. It is not my style to tell staff and seniors what to do. I try to take a work-with approach with staff. If somebody makes a suggestion, I try to do the matchmaking between staff and seniors. Before I used to do things all myself and that was fun. I guess I am probably like some of the seniors, in that I miss the old days. I did everything myself and I miss the direct "doing it", but it is also a challenge to inspire and motivate staff to do it as well as I like to see it done. That is a real challenge—every staff person is different and you have to look at how you handle each person in terms of what they will value. They need to have their needs met, just like the seniors.

She is often frustrated by the amount of time that she spends managing and supervising staff. She is also frustrated with district politics and the many administrative details, but tries to "put those to bed as things I can't control" and focus on the centre and creating a positive atmosphere. "It is such a beautiful place to work."

She believes that leadership is different in retirement. The major difference, she feels, is in the approach to getting things done and the way in which work is delegated.

You just don't delegate seniors to do things. As a woman, I don't like that kind of supervision, and I suppose my staff don't either. So I like to have a team approach, working together on different committees toward the same goals and objectives.
Involving seniors is different; they are volunteers and using volunteer resources is different than supervising paid staff.

You have to know what motivates people, what interests them, and where their strengths lie. I ask people and I like to kind of lead them along the path that they don't know they want to go until they have had a chance to talk about it. You need the personal approach.

She finds it a challenge to try to engage people in a retirement setting, and is creative in her approach to making use of people's skills and talents to meet the needs of the centre. For example,

We need to get more of an ethnic understanding here, because the ethnic mix in the community is only going to increase. We have a new member from Hong Kong who is a cartographer. She told me about the various places around the world that she has lived and worked, and she said she could bring a multi-ethnic perspective to the centre. And I immediately thought, 'how am I going to tap into her?'

The Coordinator is pleased, although puzzled, that there are so many people who have signed up for the leadership training program who are not in formal leadership roles at the centre, some of whom are people she does not know.

Beyond the Coordinator's office, Alice notices a coat rack near a side door that opens into the rose garden. As she reaches for a coathanger, the door opens automatically. A woman hanging up her coat smiles, and Alice, wanting to make conversation, says "Oh dear, it's going to be very cold in the winter with that door opening all the time." To which the woman replies, "It is locked in the winter."

The lounge at CC is a quietly elegant room. A large picture window looks out on the rose garden and the bowling green beyond. Inside, the decor is soft and modern—pale turquoise and pink floral patterns, modern white wicker chairs, tables with glass tops. A bookshelf covers an entire wall and a collection of magazines is artfully arranged on a large coffee table. The focal point is a television with a huge screen—an entertainment centre, like a movie screen. Sitting in a chair placed directly in front and two feet from the picture, a
trail elderly woman with snowy-white hair tunes into "Days of our Lives." Opposite the picture window, behind another glass wall, volunteers are setting up the computers for the class which is scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m.

Alice is startled by the small, wiry man with white hair and a beard who breezes in from around the corner, extends his hand, and introduces himself as 'Edward'. "Do you have a card"? he asks. Alice is confused. Card? Should she have brought a card?

"What kind of card?" she asks.

"Business card," he says, "I collect them."

Alice takes her cue and asks him what his business is. He explains that he was the director of a 300-bed hospital in California for many years, and retired in 1979. Since then he has been active in various organizations, and most recently as President of CC, which he informs her has 3000 members. "We have too many members and it is just impossible to serve them all." When she expresses an interest in taking tap dancing lessons, Edward immediately responds:

We used to offer tap dancing lessons, but that's kind of gone out of style. 'Clogging' is the new rage with the seniors. It involves a lot of stomping, and is much more vigorous. We have a clogging class starting next month, and if you're interested, you better sign up for it because the classes get filled up pretty fast.

Edward is proud of the centre and has dedicated himself to making it the best of its kind. He joined CC to find an outlet for his ambitions—he did not come for the athletic programs and is not interested in recreational pursuits. He had climbed to the top of the ladder in medical administration and he wanted to see if he might have an interest in climbing the ladder in a seniors' centre. When he finally got the opportunity to become President, he took it on because,

home was never a place I wanted to spend much time. I enjoy being with people and creating things, looking at problems, and seeing if they can be resolved. That's why I am a seniors' counsellor too, I help people with their problems.
As a family physician, Edward has always been motivated by a desire to help others. Following the war, he contracted TB, spent some time in a sanitorium, and became curious about how the place ran. He completed a Masters degree in Healthcare Management, and worked as a healthcare administrator, where he dealt with all kinds of people. He finds chairing a hospital board no different than being President of a seniors’ centre.

You may be dealing with different kinds of problems, but how people react as individuals and in groups is all pretty much the same. Basically, it isn't any different.

In the role of CC President, Edward has enjoyed meeting new people and he has had an opportunity to achieve some of his goals in improving the operations of the organization.

It's a challenge. Like this morning—I heard about the snooker meeting after I got here. I asked the snooker people if it was published, and they said there was a notice on the board in the snooker room, and I said, well, supposing I don't go into the snooker room because I don't belong to the snooker club, how would I know about it? And he said, 'don't ask me' and I said, 'well, I am asking you'. You need to put a notice up where everybody can see it. These kinds of things go on and they shouldn't because it's half-baked. This whole place is a challenge because it is this funny mixture of different things happening and different people who are all set in their ways like me because they are aging.

In reflecting on his leadership qualities, Edward says he is critical of himself and others, honest, consistent, and has a passion for resolving problems even when he gains no personal benefit. Confidence was never an issue for Edward: he admits that "probably I am too bold."

Annual General Meeting
The first days of the summer of '92 in Olympia are hot and steamy. On one of these days, approximately 225 members of assemble in the comfort of an air-conditioned gymnasium for the Annual General Meeting. The most common code of dress is "California North"—casual clothes and sneakers—staff and Advisory Board members are distinguished by their business-like attire. With
Advisory Board members seated at a long table across the stage, the meeting begins promptly at 1 p.m.

This meeting is Edward's "swan song", his last official duty as President of the CC Association, and he is comfortable, articulate, and fully in-charge of the proceedings. He brings the meeting to order with a moment's silence for "people we have lost in the last while", followed by the welcome and an outline of the agenda. The Coordinator of the centre is then introduced and presents highlights of the year.

COORDINATOR - We have a new relationship that epitomizes the spirit of cooperation here at [CC]. Our beautiful rose garden is a joint effort between the district and the centre: the district planted the rose garden and a group of our members who are "rose enthusiasts" look after the maintenance. Because our centre is getting larger and staff are busier, we are taking steps to maintain a warm and friendly atmosphere. With this in mind, we have two new programs, the hostess program and Operation Friendship, that are designed to help new members feel welcome. We have also formed a New Horizon's board which has hired two leadership training consultants, and you will be hearing more about that following our business meeting.

Constitutional Resolutions: An important item of business is the official amalgamation of the Funding Society and the Advisory Board, which must be ratified by the membership. This item is chaired by the Vice-president and he begins with the legal details.

VICE-PRESIDENT - Ladies and gentlemen, this is all legalese for the amalgamation of the Funding Society and the Advisory Board. Very briefly, we had two organizations going after the same buck. But it's not up to me. Could we have a motion?

Advisory Board Reports: Each Member of the Advisory Board presents their report for the year. The Vice-president begins and his report includes an important issue of great concern to all.

VICE-PRESIDENT - Ladies and gentlemen, we have a parking problem. Students who attend the senior secondary school across the street are using our parking lot. We have applied to council for a permit to prevent the students from parking here. I will be here at 7:30 in the morning on the first day of school in September taking a list of students parked here. The students are going to learn the hard way that they can't park in our parking lot (loud cheering and clapping).

SPORTS DIRECTOR - I have two minutes to report on seventeen activities. We had a total of 650 participants in the following activities: slo-pitch,
snooker, tennis, table tennis, golf, bocce, lawn bowling, carpet bowling, five-pin bowling, roller skating, ice skating, walking, hiking, biking. There is something for everyone, so let's get out there. Besides being fun, it's good for you.

CRAFTS DIRECTOR - I don't like speaking in public, so please bear with me. I'm going to start off with the opposite gender. The boys in the woodworking shop have helped us a lot in the craft shop. Last year, they made all the horseshoes for the senior games. This is a quote that I can't pass up: One of the boys in the shop said, 'The carpenter's shop is the most beautiful place in town—it's full of good-looking sexy old men'. The craft room is also a wonderful place, we meet twice a week and we produce some lovely items. I want to give special thanks to Mabel for her beautiful work. The gift shop is very successful this year. We sold both summer and seniors' games shirts and hats and we got ten percent of the proceeds. The spring fair was the best ever and we made over $1,000. We now have our very own [CC] t-shirts, also crests and caps. It would be nice to see you all wearing them and promoting our centre. There is something very rewarding about volunteering—I have really enjoyed it.

PRESIDENT - My position has been made easier by all these people up here. We have tried to serve everyone. It isn't always easy. My years as President have been very enjoyable in spite of some personal problems, and this last year has been the best. I can't name any one person—everyone who works and volunteers is special. Things don't just happen here, they occur because of the hard work of volunteers. Last year the summer games and the senior games were made possible because of the people who were willing to work.

Special Recognitions:

PRESIDENT - I would ask the Coordinator and staff to step out here and get snowed under with flowers and affection. VP, are you good at hugging? (Nine young women step onto the stage, each receiving a bouquet of flowers and a kiss from the VP). We love you all. We need you. We hope you are here for a long time.

Elections: This year a new member has been nominated for President, challenging the vice-president for the position. Both candidates address the assembly briefly:

VICE-PRESIDENT - I joined [CC] to play snooker and I got interested and helped in the kitchen. I got a new table for the snooker club. I brought ideas for making improvements to the kitchen and they were defeated, but that's democracy. Anything I have done, I have done for the good of the people of [CC].

CHALLENGE CANDIDATE - I have been a member less than a year and since nominated, I have prepared a brief resume of my qualifications. I have been married for 50 years, have children and grandchildren. I have
been a business administrator, self-employed in business 1986-87. I was chair of the Heart Foundation. In 1988-89 I was President of a large seniors' centre in Alberta with a membership of over 4,000. When I moved to Olympia this year, I joined [CC] and I urge you to vote for me.

Someone from the floor calls for a secret ballot. While the ballots are being counted, a professional consultant provides information about a leadership training program scheduled for the Fall. In due course, the Vice-president is declared the new President of CC and the meeting concludes with his acceptance speech, and final words,

NEW PRESIDENT - Thank you for the confidence in me. I will say this: as of the 3rd week in September, the parking problem will be solved (cheers).

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

It is a 8:30 a.m. on a warm and sunny September morning. Registration for the fall program is underway and the parking lot in front of CC is full of cars and people. In the furthest corner of the lot, three teenage boys in cutoffs with baseball caps on backwards are skateboarding. Two other teenagers squat on the curb, their heads together, smoking.

From a chair strategically tucked in the corner just inside the glass doors to the seniors' centre, the new President in a CC sports cap and t-shirt with nose pressed against the glass scrutinizes the parking lot, checking for incoming teens in cars. Behind him, a sign announces the upcoming "Constitutional Discussion," to be held at CC at the end of the month. Special guest will be the local MP who will defend the "yes" position.

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The new President of CC (Lorne) retired at 55 from the federal government, and has "never looked back". He joined CC to get out of my wife's hair. I was interested in snooker and I knew there was a very active snooker group. Through snooker, I found out how the Board worked. I wasn't really satisfied with the way the kitchen was being run, especially over the Christmas period. When I asked what I could do about these problems, it was suggested that if I really wanted to implement change, I should join the advisory group.
But he did not join the Advisory Board right away; he became active in the Funding Society, and then got involved in the B.C. Seniors Games that the centre hosted for the province. When he was asked to run for President, he declined because Edward was running, and he felt Edward would make a good President. He did, however, agree to run for vice-president.

It is almost a given that the vice is going to go on to be President. When the time came, I gave it a lot of thought. The wife and I used to go down to California for the winter. Now I don't want to be boastful but I am the kind of guy that when I take something on, I do it right. And I knew that would mean we couldn't go south. And so I had to ask myself, 'Do I want to go south or do I want to be president?' And I decided there wasn't anybody better than me to be President. And I am glad I did, because I am enjoying it immensely.

Lorne gets satisfaction out of "taking the bull by the horns and deciding on things that have to be decided upon". He is not interested in physical sports; he gets enjoyment out of sitting in a meeting for two or three hours, sinking his teeth into a problem, and finding solutions. He finds it somewhat frustrating, however, that the Board does not have more power.

Not that I am on a power trip, but if people have enough confidence in me to elect me to a position and they say, we want you to make some decisions for us, then I should have more power to carry them out. The Board can make decisions, but they can be overruled. Of course, that's the way it should be, I guess, because the district is paying the bills. I wouldn't want to pay the bills and have somebody else decide how the money was going to be spent.

He describes himself as

not really dogmatic, but I like to run what I call a straight and narrow meeting. If people have something to say, they raise their hands, and I recognize them. As far as I am concerned, if you have the floor, everybody should listen. I like to run a meeting where business is attended to—the odd bit of humour is okay, but I like order. If two or three people are chatting, I would say, 'hey, let's attend to business.' Nobody can say [Lorne] doesn't give people equal opportunity.
While he was never in a leadership role as a civil servant, he became involved in a large non-profit society in mid-life, where he was first appointed to a committee, then he got onto the Board of that society, became vice-president and eventually President. It took him nine years to get to the top, and by that time he was confident he could do the job of President of the Board of Directors. A similar on-the-job learning process gave him the confidence to take on the job as President of the CC Advisory Board. "If I wasn't confident that I could do the job, I never would have run for President."

Lorne sees no real difference between leading 20-year-olds and leading 60-year-olds, although he is "sorry to say" that he was never in a leadership role and did not attend business meetings in his working days. From his experience at CC, he feels that men tend to make better leaders because they seem to grasp the problem, look at it, and say 'this is what has to be done'. Some of the women I have worked with tended to be less decisive and they don't always speak up in meetings—though I have also worked with some very competent ladies and some men who were real bummars.

Lorne describes his relationship with the Coordinator as open, friendly, and honest, although he admits that was not always the case. In the beginning, they disagreed on some issues, but since have come to an "understanding". While he feels respected by staff, he does not always feel respected by members because of certain controversial decisions. He is frustrated with people who spend time in the centre and do not make a contribution, and he cites the "snooker people" as an example. He is going to try to change that by encouraging people in the snooker room to take the leadership training program, so they will take a broader view and feel more committed to the organization as a whole. He feels there is leadership potential that needs to be channeled, and he expects the leadership training program to bring results.

It is 8:50 a.m. and the monthly Advisory Board meeting is scheduled to begin at nine o'clock. It is the first meeting of the new Board which has now amalgamated with the Funding Society. Lorne is in charge, and he extends a
particularly warm welcome to the new vice-president, Theresa, who is the former President of the Funding Society.

Theresa worked for 10 years after her husband retired, because there were still children at home. She started working part-time, which gradually became full-time office work. When her husband became ill, she was forced to give up work. She then joined CC (15 years ago) because her husband was "unhappy and complaining a lot", and the doctor told him to "get over to CC." She considers joining CC "a godsend for both of us." She started with the exercise classes, then volunteered to help with the Funding Society when it started in 1983. Since then she has served in various offices with the Funding Society, being President for two years. She is also on the Board of Directors for the B.C.O.A.P.O. and works as a volunteer in the computer classes.

As vice-president my job is just to support the President and be prepared to fill in if he is away. If he needs any help I should be there to do it. I'm new at it and I haven't had any real duties yet. I'm not sure if there is any literature on it. I think they just tell me if they want anything done.

She agreed to take on the role of vice-president because they said, 'you really should'. They didn't know who else they were going to get, and because I felt duty-bound. I felt I owed CC—it really saved my husband and me, too. Don't misunderstand me, I'm more than glad to help.

She never knows what she is really going to get out of it when she assumes a responsible role, but she does know that she always gets more out of things than she puts in.

She describes herself as confident, and attributes her confidence to working out of the home.

My confidence has grown as I get older—it comes from experience over the years. These last few years I feel much more confident than I have ever been. I used to be scared to death to talk to the mayor, and now he's a good friend of mine.

She feels that being a leader in retirement is much different than leading younger groups:
it doesn't matter so much how well you do it. It's a case of, 'I will do the best I can and so what'. I used to be terrified to make mistakes and I just laugh it off now.

While an effective leader has to be tolerant and understanding of people, regardless of the age group involved, she knows from experience that many seniors are self-conscious and lack confidence. Many are desperate to join in, but they may stand back, and wait to be invited and encouraged.

I think women, in general, tend to be a little more tolerant and sympathetic than men. Women don't have to be tough, whereas some of the men think they have to put on sort of a macho front.

But she is not prepared to say that women at CC would necessarily make the best leaders. It would depend on the personality of the individual.

I think a leader has to be kind and friendly, and understand where the other person is coming from. Leaders must truly feel they are serving others, rather than being served in their leadership role.

Power has a negative connotation for Theresa, and she is not interested in having any of it.

Power means that somebody feels they are above other people. It is an unpleasant thing and refers to control over people. I guess in some places, and in some cases, power can be used effectively, but I don't think it is effective in a seniors' centre.

She admits that the Coordinator is powerful, but also kind and tolerant. While she has observed that the Coordinator can stand her ground when needed, Theresa doesn't think the Coordinator enjoys having to use that power. "You can see it on her face."

Theresa is frustrated by people who complain a lot and try to stir up trouble. She tries to get people who complain about things to participate in the decision-making process and to work toward consensus.

Like this no-smoking thing. One lady came to me and said there were many people who were unhappy. So I told her we had tried everything to make everybody happy, and I suggested she and her group might like to work with the Board to make a decision we can all live with. But of course, we didn't hear from her.
Sometimes people go on power trips, and you just have to laugh it off.

Generally, issues are resolved and people are asked to settle down or leave. It is a real challenge to get volunteers. She finds that everywhere she goes, it is always the same people who are involved. Theresa claims that whether or not people volunteer to help depends to some extent on the way they were brought up.

I was brought up in a home where my mother was always involved in the church and doing things in the community. I grew up in the Depression years and things were tough, but people helped each other. Of course, there weren't the things then that needed to be done by volunteers.

Volunteers need the desire to become involved and the skills, which vary depending on the task. The centre's responsibility is to provide the opportunity to those skills, with some fun and enjoyment built in. Theresa admits that some jobs just are not any fun, but somebody has to do them. One way to get people to work in the kitchen is to say 'we'll close it down if nobody volunteers'. Sometimes that works.

But people don't want to commit themselves to working two hours in the kitchen or the tea garden. What would be the payoff? Maybe it would be talking to people and meeting new people. There has to be an incentive, maybe a free lunch or a free coffee. We charge a lot for coffee here, and every volunteer gets a free coffee.

One of the biggest reasons people are reluctant to take on responsibilities, in Theresa's view, has to do with lack of confidence. There needs to be a way for people to build their self-confidence and she hopes that the leadership training program will help.

It's 9:03 a.m. when the Advisory Board meeting is brought to order.

Advisory Board Meeting

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - Does everyone have a copy of the agenda? Do you have a copy of the minutes of the special Executive Board meeting on July 30th.
PRESIDENT - Can we have a motion re agenda? re minutes?

Business Arising from the Minutes:

PRESIDENT - What about the question of the no-smoking policy?
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - Well, we were acting [in enforcing a no-smoking policy at CC] in good faith. Council set a district no-smoking policy for public buildings three years ago and so we moved to make [CC] a smoke-free building effective Sept. 14th. Now district council has done an about-face and said we can't enforce it without council's approval.

PRESIDENT - At [CC] there has been a campaign from members who smoke and councillors are getting phone calls (actually it is headed up by a lady). The mayor is livid. He asked that we postpone policy change from the 14th to the 22nd. I informed him that if council didn't back us on this, I would personally take it as a vote of non-confidence in me and my board.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - Even if it goes through I expect we are going to have a real problem with smokers. We're going to have to get tough. Same as we are doing with the kids out there in our parking lot next week.

PAST PRESIDENT - I say we uphold the bylaw and enforce it on the 14th.

SOCIAL/EDUCATION DIRECTOR - I'm new and I have a lot to learn. I'm going to be asking lots of questions about things you people already know. Who are the members of the Parks and Rec Committee? Who is our Coordinator's supervisor? Who is at the top?

As social/educational director, Michael is a new member on the Advisory Board, and he has a lot of questions about how business is conducted and who is in charge of what. He first got involved in the computer group because of an interest in computers; when the program grew and became instituted as an activity group, he was elected as chair after which he was elected to serve on the Board as the "spokesperson" (i.e., director) for all the educational and social groups.

Michael retired six years ago. He and his wife planned for their retirement and wanted to enjoy life, travel, and volunteer.

But I'm taking on too much now. I don't have enough time. I get talked into things too easily, and I have trouble saying, 'no.' I'm interested in computers, so I was kind of pushed into chairing the computer group. The last thing I got roped into doing was serving on the board. Nobody else would do it. One of the staff called and asked me, and I couldn't say no.
Michael feels that a lot of people don't get involved when they retire because they do not want more responsibilities. Whether or not people deserve to sit back, they can choose not to volunteer.

He is also aware that a lot of women who have never been in the public are afraid they will "embarrass themselves if they put themselves forward". Michael notes there are two or three volunteers in the computer classes who are very knowledgeable, but they will not teach. The question is how to build their confidence.

Michael developed his confidence to speak in front of a group when he started work as an engineer. The company gave all its employees a public speaking course. The first day, they just picked people "out of the blue", and they had to get up and talk for two minutes about anything. He feels that public speaking is much more difficult when people are older.

When you're older, you are more set in your ways and reluctant to take chances—you are less-prepared to take risks. Like, I'm not going to go bungee jumping at my age—you don't see many people over 60 doing that. Do you?

While Michael is confident about speaking in a group, he does not enjoy leading a group. He finds it frustrating dealing with volunteers, because one cannot delegate in the same way.

I'm not really a very good manager, because I tend to be too soft. When you are dealing with volunteers, you have to be persuasive and that is one of the reasons I am taking the leadership training course.

He does admit that he is having fun, because he is interested in computers and he enjoys taking courses.

I'd like to take the philosophy course again and I can't, but for the most part, I do what I enjoy. Some people have a more civic attitude, and they do their duty first, rather than what gives them pleasure. At our age, we've served our time and, in a sense, we deserve to do what we enjoy.

Michael doesn't see himself as a leader, more as a "poder" who follows written guidelines. He sees leaders as visionary people who come up with great ideas all the time, and Michael is not very happy that he may be expected
to become such a "visionary". He feels everybody has good ideas, but they are often too shy to express them.

Maybe they haven't thought out the idea sufficiently to where they have the confidence to speak up. Maybe that has something to do with the leader. Maybe the leader needs to set up the right atmosphere. I don't know how to handle people in that respect. Part of it is that I have never done it. Maybe if I take the leadership training course, I can get better at it. I would like to be able to do it, but I am not sure that I can change.

Leadership in retirement is different, in Michael's view, because in business the goal is to make money. In the business world, you hire employees that you know are capable, you tell them what to do, and they do it.

In retirement, you don't have a choice of the best people for the job, they volunteer. The first question is, are they willing? The next is, can they do the job? If they can't, you have to train them.

Power, to an engineer such as Michael, suggests electrical energy. In the human context, he feels that politicians have too much of it, although it is "okay" provided power is used for the public good.

I have some power over what happens in the computer room. As the chair, I have power in that I will make suggestions and we make joint decisions. I am both leading and sharing the power.

Generally, Michael also feels he is respected at CC, because people know they can come to him if they have a problem.

I have a mug here that says, 'volunteers are special', and we have a volunteers’ tea. We don't get paid, but we do get a free cup of coffee every day. I feel respected by members and staff... but the kids at the school across the street don't respect us.

The Advisory Board meeting continues with...

The Parking Problem:

PRESIDENT - [RR] from council informed me that we needed two people to issue tickets to kids who are parking in our lot. We got here yesterday at 7:30 a.m. and lo and behold there was a staff member from the Parks Department handing out tickets too. Who was this person?
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - Fifteen staff members were trained to hand out tickets this week. As of Monday students' cars will be ticketed and towed away.
VICE-PRESIDENT - Does this have to be passed in the school?
PRESIDENT - Well, I can't make a motion, but I suggest an ad be placed in the student newspaper. The ad could read the same as the notice handed out with tickets.
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - Parks and Recreation may already have done that.
PRESIDENT - The reason they are ticketing Monday is on advice of council—I would have ticketed today but they said no we have to wait. I have a message for the Coordinator: If it is going the way I think, I suggest you be here at 7 a.m. tomorrow to hand out tickets. And I'll be here to help you, dear.

Reports from Activities/Groups:
CULTURAL DIRECTOR - People in the drama group are planning on resigning. It seems there is a lack of interest. Can we stimulate interest?
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - I've recognized they have had their day and we need to let it go. Sometimes groups die and they come back with new blood.
CULTURAL DIRECTOR - It seems to me there should be more room for culture - this place seems to have become a massive sports facility.
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - Maybe it is time to visit the drama teacher at the high school again.
CULTURAL DIRECTOR - Do you take the chair of the drama group with you?
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - Good idea - let's take [Frieda] and maybe [Mary].
CULTURAL DIRECTOR - I think they feel left out. Why not put it in their lap?
SOCIAL/EDUCATION DIRECTOR - Maybe the drama group could be in a play with them.
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - What about they do a play - we do a play?
SOCIAL/EDUCATION DIRECTOR - Why not get seniors and students together in a play.
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - Good idea—ask the drama teacher if he'd like some grey-haired students . . . and some bald-headed ones. Students might as well get used to it. They'll soon be graduating, and people of all ages go to university now.

The Lunch Room
The lunch room at CC is located at the back of the building. Alice passes the craft shop with its display of items for sale, produced by the membership—including the traditional crafts one finds in any bazaar or hospital auxiliary shop, trendy jewelry made in the lapidary shop, and woodcarvings made in the woodworking shop. Winding her way through the tea garden and around the corner, Alice observes a man outside a glass door demonstrating his golf swing.
with an imaginary club to another who sits silently watching and smoking. The snooker room is crowded and noisy—men stretched across tables with the sound of balls smacking sharply and dropping in muffled tones into side pockets. Down the long hall beyond the snooker room, straight-backed chairs in a row line the outside of an office with its wooden door closed. Peaking through the small window, Alice can see the last patient in the blood pressure clinic. A buzz saw announces the woodworking room behind closed doors across from the lunch room.

Standard fare is soup and sandwiches, with a variety of tempting desserts—today there is fresh blackberry strudel fresh from the oven. Alice is tempted by the "English trifle"—a bargain at $.85 a serving. The lunch room crowd is markedly diverse. A tall, gaunt man, in his late 60's, shouts in a strained and raspy voice to his dinner partner—a well-dressed, relaxed, and tanned man with white hair and a white cane. A couple in their 50's in matching athletic jackets and sneakers sit under the clock silently sipping their soup. A tall middle-aged Indo-Canadian man enters somewhat apprehensively past a trim young woman in tights and sneakers who sits near the door, munching on carrot sticks from a tupperware container. A pale, blonde woman in her early 40's, wearing a white nurse's uniform and a sad expression, sits silently chewing. A group of older women chatter amicably over soup and sandwiches, heads bobbing up and down, back and forth. Two staff members enter with trays, smiling, nodding, and acknowledging by name each person they pass en route to their table.

On one end of the wall, hidden behind a hanging plant, an honour roll recognizes "the many outstanding volunteers who have contributed to [CC] and the [District of Olympia]." Theresa and Edward are among those listed. Beneath the plaque, two middle-aged women in business suits and carrying brief cases, share a joke and a hearty laugh that seems too loud. Behind them, through the glass wall, the President of CC in business suit, white shirt and tie, briefcase in hand, strides across a lush and expansive lawn and past the tennis courts with one ear to the ground and nose to the wind—a man with a job to do and no time to waste.
Culture of Leadership: An Interpretation

The narrative gives the reader an experience of CC, its members, and their activities. Although I use a similar approach to that described in the previous chapter, it was more difficult to interpret the culture of leadership in this second centre. My conclusions about CC are more tentative than my conclusions about CH for a number of reasons, including the larger size, brief history, and greater diversity of the membership as reflected in the larger number of programs and activities. My primary impression was that leadership in Centennial Centre was similar to traditional organizational leadership in the business world, with more men than women in formal leadership positions, and men having a stronger voice in the operations of the centre. Despite the larger number of women (3:2), their voice is not as adequately represented in the study. The women on the Board did not participate in the deliberations to the same extent nor with the same enthusiasm as did the men, and the two women who were interviewed were absent from the focussed group discussion. (While the narrative reflects "Alice's" experience and is, therefore, the perspective of a woman, Alice is new to the centre and not a member of the culture).

The Nature of Retirement. Judging from the variety of activities the centre offers to anyone in Olympia over 50, retirement is a time to remain both mentally and physically active. The high profile given to athletics suggests the third age may be the time to develop a level of excellence in sports such as slo-pitch baseball, golf, tennis, and swimming. One can also keep mentally sharp by engaging in educational courses such as Introduction to Philosophy, and one can even become a volunteer teacher in computer classes.

Senior leaders at CC agree that retirement has generally met all their expectations. As one man said,

Retirement is excellent. It is probably the best—or at least the second best—time of my life. My teenage years were pretty good, too. Fitness is very important—I look after myself and my health has been good.

Some people are so busy they don't have enough time for themselves, to go dancing or just relax. Some people say they are busier now than they ever were when they worked. Indeed, Alice observed few people "smelling the roses" in the rose garden.
Many people said they joined CC "to keep busy and to stay active". Others joined "to make new friends" or "to play a little snooker". Women often joined with their husbands, because their husbands retired. Some described CC as a place to go when people have nothing to do with their time—a place to just "hang out". There was general agreement that,

the main function is keeping people busy. If someone sits at home and worries, they are better off coming down here and doing some pottery or some embroidery, making something in the workshop or playing table tennis—i.e., exercising body and mind.

The Coordinator, however, was adamant that the centre's main function was social: "All the activities are just a vehicle to bring people together."

Increasingly, with the growth and diversity of the membership, retirement is becoming a "big business." Certain features of Centennial Centre suggest that the organization is a business (e.g., aspects of the environment, the history, the organizational structure, the many references to finances, and the long list of rules for members and conditions under which membership can be terminated.) Running such a business requires effective and efficient fiscal and organizational management. As one senior leader said, "Old people don't like to be pushed around, but sometimes it's necessary."

Most people were reluctant, however, to think of their seniors' centre as a business,

because I don't think we are here to make money. We are a non-profit business. If it is a business, we are in the people business . . . the business of living.

One person simply said that the centre's function was "to cater to the needs and desires of retired people." The question is, what are the needs and desires that this seniors' centre serves?

Needs of Seniors. People have various needs that might influence them to get involved in a seniors' centre, and they have certain abilities that might be given expression there. As already mentioned, one Member of the Board specifically said he was looking for an outlet for his ambitions and wanted to see if he had an interest in "climbing to the top" in a seniors' organization just as he did in his professional working life.
Few people, however, joined the centre with the idea of taking on a leadership role, although some found themselves involved. A common reason they gave for assuming more responsibility was that they "couldn't say no" or that they felt "dutybound." A strong element of the Protestant work ethic seems to be operation: "I think everybody should do volunteer work—I don't think it's good to just sit and play bingo or play pool all day". One person added, "Sometimes volunteer work interferes with the square dancing, and my wife and I would rather go dancing!" But when asked, "Why would anybody take on a leadership role when they would rather go dancing?," everyone agreed it was a good question. But none could provide an answer, other than "everybody should volunteer... if they have the time... and if they have the time to join, they have the time to volunteer".

There were, however, many rewards for volunteering, that senior leaders experienced. One woman said,

I always get more out of things than what I put into them. Many people don't know what they might get out of it. They don't believe there is really anything in it for them. If you could convince them of it maybe they would come out.

Others talked about a sense of feeling wanted and being appreciated, of accomplishment and achievement. It was a good feeling to know "that what I do to some degree benefits somebody else's life." Being a leader gave them recognition, a feeling of importance, and self-esteem. One Member of the Board who had been an administrator in his professional life, felt that ego aggrandisement is something we all need. Being in a leadership role is a chance to feel my usual self in spite of the importunes that are upon me at this time. It is maintaining a sense of self-worth. I don't mind being seen with glasses, but if I have a hearing aid or I have to walk with a cane, then that bothers me. And we see that amongst people. It is a sense of having status and recognizing in myself what I have done and what I am capable of doing and it offsets some of the difficulties. This is why we are in leadership positions.

Whereas, another Member of the Board said,

Some of us, maybe in the course of our lives, have never had the opportunity to be in the forefront. Now that we are retired, we see the chance and we say, "hey, it's my turn to be in the forefront and let somebody else "gopher" me."
The same person spoke of the energy that being in a leadership position gave him,

There are lots of days when I get up in the morning, and I think geez, I have to go to the centre, and I feel good about it. It really does give me a reason to get up in the morning.

One man made a direct connection between energy and the challenge that being a leader presented to him.

One of the advantages of being in a leadership role is to develop whatever it is you are setting out to do, whether it is programs or procedures in a large organization such as this. We put our brains in gear and we are challenged—we are looking for new problems as well as solutions. I find this particularly energizing to me to be challenged to think. We need to use our brains in spite of getting aged . . . to keep them from going a little grotty later on.

The enthusiasm with which the men debated an issue, such as the smoking or parking problem, was a testament to that energy. And the Coordinator concurred,

It is the excitement. I have seen all of you get energized. And I see a wonderful blossoming that has occurred because of your energy. It is not only you that get energized, but you cause more energetic things to happen around here.

What seemed to prevent people from volunteering at CC was a pervasive attitude (particularly common to the men) that "I have worked hard all of my life and I don't have to anymore." Many retired people have "had it with the work scene" and feel they should not be obligated to volunteer. Whereas, women who have not worked outside the home do not see themselves as leaders, and lack confidence in their abilities. While senior leaders agreed there was an element of power that is a benefit to them, they could not say that it was the reason they got involved.

**Power.** The Coordinator is a "powerful person", although the designated title of "coordinator" does not suggest that she has administrative power. She has both administrative skills and power, which she uses judiciously. Those
interviewed felt that seniors did not "run" the centre, rather they volunteered to serve in various capacities.

Despite formally designated titles of "director" on the Advisory Board, members of the Board generally felt they had very little power.

Technically, we are an Advisory Board and if anybody wants to listen to our advice that's fine. And if they don't want to take our advice, that's their prerogative.

One person said, "The President probably has about as much power as you can get around here." And the President agreed that, 'the Board can give all the advice it wants, but if the Coordinator doesn't want to act on it, it doesn't go anywhere'.

Nevertheless, the general consensus was that there have been a lot of changes in the centre and the Advisory Board has played a major role, simply because the Coordinator and her staff try to act in members' best interests. When the Coordinator has not been able to initiate change in response to the wishes of the Board, she has represented the interests of seniors at the level of the Parks and Recreation Commission. For the most part, limitations have not been imposed by the Coordinator or her immediate superior, but by financial constraints.

Where we spend our own monies that we have earned we do have the power to make our own decisions, but where it comes from tax monies we don't, and that is the way it should be.

With respect to matters of policy, the Coordinator and her staff act on the advice of the Board and do the jobs that they believe seniors would not want to do. In that way everyone works together to insure that policies get carried out and power is shared.

Consistent with McClusky's (1974) margin of power theory, those who have not had power in their working lives tend to view power as negative, as involving control over others, and as something they do not want. Others, like Edward, who have exercised considerable power in their professional lives, view it more positively and may fight to maintain a high level of power and influence in retirement. Lorne became a volunteer leader in mid-life and is enjoying a greater level of power in retirement. He seems, however, frustrated by the fact that he does not have as much power as he would like. (He was
surprised to find staff taking on the responsibility of patrolling the parking lot, even though he knows that controversial Board decisions (e.g., decisions regarding the smoking and parking problems) sometimes threaten the respect and recognition he might want or deserve.

The conduct of affairs at CC resembles decision-making in business, and men are more clearly identified with positions of authority, although power is limited. Both Edward and Lorne's styles of leadership are traditional in their emphasis on power and authority vested in the leader, and in the leader's responsibility for setting goals for the group, and making decisions according to the democratic process where the majority rules.

Leadership. Leadership at CC is similar to traditional leadership in a large business. Being a senior leader in a large organization requires a number of administrative skills such as taking charge of meetings and making decisions that are not always popular—skills more commonly developed by men than women in the workplace. There is, however, an important difference that is not always appreciated by everyone. CC is in the "people" business and, therefore, its focus is on serving members' needs, and keeping everyone happy.

Along with a traditional view of leadership, there is a general belief that leaders are born, and a belief that there are leaders and there are followers.

People who say they will help, aren't necessarily leaders. The leader is the one that decides what needs to be done—those who are helping are not leaders. The person in the kitchen who serves the coffee isn't a leader.

A distinction is made between leaders and volunteers. Volunteers are not necessarily considered to be leaders, nor is their influence in the centre fully appreciated.

If I came up to talk to the President of [CC] and to have a cup of coffee, I am sure I would get more out of talking to the President, than I would out of having a cup of coffee. Perhaps I know the lady behind the counter and I can discuss with her the weather, her children, her grandchildren, and things like that. If someone new comes in here and they have to wait in line and they get mad and take off, we couldn't care less.
Despite a general belief that some people will never be leaders, the Coordinator felt that every volunteer was a potential leader.

I think there are potential leaders and they don't know it. For example, their self-esteem is low. There are some people who have blossomed here over the years who never thought they could do it.

Many seniors have the abilities, but lack the confidence, and this is especially true for men and women who have not been leaders in the workplace. They need confidence building, encouragement, and support. One man said the way to begin the process was to
give people specific tasks—it gets them into some form of group action, and then maybe they will start to talk about their grandchildren or their kids. The reluctant person may be challenged enough to give expression to thoughts that are relevant.

While many were prepared to admit that good communication skills and sensitivity to people's needs were important qualities for a senior leader, they did not feel that leadership in retirement organizations was any different than in the workplace.

Communication is always important—and there is no difference between then and now. My job is to show people that I am not afraid to make decisions whether they are good or bad and to stand by them no matter the consequences. That is my role as President. The most important thing is to be sure that the organization goes ahead, not necessarily in terms of profit, but in terms of making sure its members are generally happy and content with the way the organization is being run.

Senior leaders, nevertheless, felt that the emphasis had to be on the task at the expense of individual needs.

You have to have a plan and you have to explain to people what you are doing. But the most important thing is getting the job done—and you are never going to keep all of the people happy.
Summary

There are a number of beliefs and assumptions within the culture of CC that serve as barriers to emergent leadership. First, retirement is a time to stay active, mentally and physically, in ways that are personally enjoyable—i.e., it is time to do what you really want to do. This message conflicts with the Protestant work ethic, and a "do-gooder" mentality that believes everybody ought to contribute. The Coordinator has worked hard to promote retirement as a time for recreation and fun and to dispel the Protestant work ethic that has supplied the "willing horses who do all the work". Many retired people at CC now choose freely, without guilt, activities that are personally enjoyable and they no longer feel the obligation to contribute. The centre, like many others of its kind, is left with a shortage of volunteers and a need to find more creative ways to promote volunteerism and emergent leadership.

There are a number of assumptions about traditional leadership that act as formidable barriers to the emergence of seniors as leaders at CC: assumptions that the leader must be a visionary who takes charge and makes decisions on behalf of the group, and the view that there are leaders and there are followers, and most people will never be leaders. Because the organization is a business, there is a view of leadership as involving the kinds of skills associated with leadership in the work place and, therefore, there is an assumption that men should be "running things."

Assumptions about power act as barriers to emergent leadership as well. Women and men who have not been in positions of power in their working lives tend to view power as negative and, therefore, say that they do not want it or need it. Thus the people who have always had power in their working lives and want to maintain the same level of power in retirement as the ones who assume leadership roles in retirement. Such people often have traditional styles of leadership that perpetuate many of the assumptions about leadership identified in Chapters Five and Six, thus preventing the vast majority of older people from getting more involved, developing their personal potential, and sharing the power and the leadership.
CHAPTER SEVEN: RESULTS
INFLUENCES ON THE EMERGENCE OF SENIOR LEADERS

In this chapter, the unit of analysis shifts from the macro level of culture to the individual level in order to illuminate the individual (motivational) and socio-cultural (contextual) influences affecting the emergence of senior leaders. I offer as prototypes three senior leaders profiled in the studies of the two centres in Chapters Five and Six. While the individuals and situations are unique in many respects, each represents a distinctly different life-history with respect to leadership. However, they share in having transcended the cultural barriers to emergent leadership explored in the two previous chapters and, therefore, discussion of level three assumptions is omitted here.

In developing a historical perspective, I draw from all data sources (with the exception of the focussed group discussions) but most extensively from the individual interviews, expanding on information contained in previous chapters. I recount individual experience at various stages: education and work history, the event of retirement, the early post-retirement phase, and events/opportunities following the decision to join a seniors' centre that relate to leadership. In the summary I discuss individual and socio-cultural influences, and integrate findings from the earlier studies in phase 1 (contained in Appendices, A, B, and C).

Three Profiles

The first profile is of Edward, who represents a person who plays an administrative or managerial role during his or her working years, and transfers these skills to voluntary work during retirement. In this case, the predominant impression of Edward as leader is one of a strong sense of continuity with what he has been, who he is today, and what he will no doubt continue to be for as long as he is able. Like the professionals in Chetkow-Yanoov's (1986) study, he has no desire to disengage from community life.

The second profile is of Clarisse, who represents someone who was a leader during his or her working years, experienced retirement as a critical event according to Martin Mathews' and Brown's (1987) definition (i.e., not freely chosen), and suffered a period of disengagement. She, however, experienced a renewal of confidence in her abilities, and has re-emerged as a
respected leader in the third-age. Her story is one of reconstructing a meaningful and productive role for herself, and the path she took resembles Bengston and Kuyper's social reconstruction model (Payne, 1977).

The third profile is of Florence, a woman not unlike the majority of people who belong to seniors' centres today—i.e., women who are widows, mothers, and grandmothers, who never played formal leadership roles in their working lives. (While the majority of widows do not see themselves as leaders, many have played an informal "domestic" leadership role in managing a home and family.) Despite her claim that she never was a leader at any time during her youth or her adult years, Florence has emerged as a self-confident leader for the first time in her late 60's. Florence's history with respect to leadership is one of growth and development of leadership potential *beginning* in the third age.

Edward's Experience: *Once a Leader...*

**Life Before Centennial Centre.** Trained as a physician in his early years, Edward later studied healthcare management, and had a long and satisfying career as a hospital administrator during which he "climbed right to the top." In the period just prior to retirement, he was the administrator of a system of prisons and he describes that work as challenging and rewarding—so much so that he requested to be allowed to work beyond the age of compulsory retirement. He worked one year past the age of 65, while searching for other activities and organizations that might give expression to "my ambition and my drive... I'm insatiable."

When Edward officially retired, he took on the role of volunteer coordinator for a regional mental hospital, and when he "could not agree with the politics of that organization", he resigned from his formal leadership role and became "just a regular volunteer". During this time, he was also involved in various community organizations, such as the B.C.O.A.P.O.—always looking for new opportunities to challenge himself and "climb to the top". One of those organizations was Centennial Centre. Edward's formal education and professional experience prepared him for an administrative role in a large organization delivering service to people—and the position of President of CC particularly appealed to him.

**Life at Centennial Centre.** Edward feels that his past experience in healthcare administration equipped him well for leadership at CC, and he describes his
most salient leadership qualities as honesty, consistency, and a highly critical nature.

For example, I'm mad as hell about what's going on with the bus service out here. I see seniors lying on the grass under the tree because there is no place for them to sit and wait for the bus. It's not right that seniors are suffering because the bus company has union problems. Nobody else around [CC] did anything about it. I did! I went right to the top, and I gave the guy who is in charge an earful!

Edward is intelligent, quick-witted, feisty, and articulate, and he has had a substantial influence on people and programs at CC, as well as the broader community of Olympia. He has a traditional style of leadership (which is discussed further in the concluding chapter) and exercised considerable authority as President.

While the Board is an advisory board, the power is shared between the Coordinator and the President. As I watched for the four years before my presidency, I observed that my two predecessors were strongly influenced by the Coordinator and I said "this is wrong". If this is a democratic organization then the elected President should be able to exercise more leadership and I determined to do just that.

As President, Edward achieved many of his goals in making the organization run more efficiently and effectively, and in giving the office of President greater authority and a higher profile within the centre and in the community. He has represented the centre in a variety of ways—as senior advisor on the School Board and as advisor to the Mayor's office regarding seniors' housing developments. In addition, he was instrumental in having the District of Olympia declared a city, a recent event at which he was honoured with conferral of the Freedom of the City award.

In his present role as Past President, he refers to himself as "some-what of a has-been" because "the Past President doesn't have any power." He considers his responsibilities to be setting the tone at Board meetings and assisting the newly elected President in running an effective meeting.

The Vice-president doesn't get much opportunity to learn the role of President. The new President didn't talk to me about it, and so I just passed on manuals, and transcripts of meetings, and told him I thought they might be helpful. His background and mine are very different and
we really weren't on the same wavelength. He said openly in a meeting that he was going to rely on me to write his letters. I said, "You're the President now, get busy and learn!"

During his terms of office, Edward has become aware of leadership problems at CC. In particular, there is a serious shortage of people who are willing to serve in leadership roles and there is a need for stronger and more effective senior leaders. To improve the leadership, he has worked closely with the Coordinator to bring together a New Horizons Board to develop a proposal and secure funding for a senior leadership development program for CC members. Edward, however, did not enrol in the leadership training program currently in progress. He has turned his attention and energy to the increasing multicultural nature of the community. His intention is to explore ways to encourage the participation of ethnic minorities in programs and CC activities.

Clarisse's Experience:  *It Ain't Over 'til It's Over*  
**Life Before Carnegie Hall.** As a young woman Clarisse was trained in bookkeeping and clerical skills, ultimately rising to a position of considerable responsibility as a justice of the peace. Her professional life spanned 43 years, and she claims she was "still learning right up until retirement". At that time, she was also teaching law to the public and instructing law students in the municipal court system. She had considerable power and authority, was highly regarded, and loved her work—so much so that her co-workers often told her she'd never be able to retire.

But Clarisse took early retirement in order to care for her only child, who was confined to bed and died within two years. She suffered the effect of two major losses in succession—the loss of a demanding and rewarding job and the loss of her only child. Her disengagement was profound and took the form of complete withdrawal from social life. She became reclusive. Clarisse was fortunate in having a close friend, a former director of CH, who coaxed her out of her self-imposed isolation by convincing her to join a seniors' centre. Clarisse feels this woman "saved her life", and she wonders if she would have taken that first step without her friend's insistence.

**Life at Carnegie Hall.** With the increased social and physical activity (e.g., hiking with the hiking club), Clarisse began to feel better physically and
emotionally, and her desire to improve herself slowly returned. "It was very hard at first, because I thought my life was over." But she describes herself as determined and stubborn, and never willing to give up.

When the Director asked her if she would be interested in joining a New Horizons' Board to develop a funding proposal for a program designed to build members' confidence to participate in group activities, her response was, "this is it, this is learning—this is what I want!". Being on the New Horizons' Board gave Clarisse an opportunity to use secretarial and bookkeeping skills for which she had trained as a young woman. When the New Horizons' proposal was successful and the Participation with Confidence (PWC) program was implemented a year later, she enrolled.

The program marked a turning point for her, providing an opportunity to get in touch with skills and talents she had almost forgotten she had. As confidence in her organizational abilities returned, she became concerned about failing eyesight. She had been told that she would eventually go blind, and this threatened her ability to participate fully and to contribute to the centre, thus eroding her confidence. A new doctor gave her hope and performed a surgical technique that restored her vision. Then, when the Director asked if she would take on the responsibilities of treasurer of the Executive Board of the 2000 member Association, she did not hesitate. With renewed confidence in both her physical health and her abilities, she felt confident in assuming the role of treasurer.

The treasurer's role made full use of Clarisse's secretarial, bookkeeping, administrative, and teaching skills. CH was becoming a big business and there was a pressing need to make the system of financial reporting more efficient. Clarisse met the challenge, devised a more-efficient system, and then taught 33 chairpersons how to implement the system into their respective activity groups. I was struck by the similarity in the role Clarisse played as treasurer of a seniors' centre and the one she had played at the height of her professional career when she revised the court system and taught law students how it worked. But there was a difference. In her professional life, Clarisse was very business-like (i.e., efficient and task-oriented). She has become aware that, in retirement organizations, people have to come first. In her work at CH, she has changed her leadership style and become more patient and sensitive to the needs of others.
With encouragement from the President of CH, she recently joined the Board of a mentoring program serving potential dropouts in a nearby high school. She derives particular satisfaction from this activity because it places her once again in a teaching capacity with younger people and, she explains, "Leadership to me is more about teaching than anything else."

Florence's Experience: The Time of Her Life

Florence was trained as a nurse; however, like many in her cohort group, the training was "insurance"—her real career was marriage and family. Never one to take on a leadership role, Florence said she always hesitated to speak up, even as a child, for fear of making mistakes. Like the women in McClain's study (1989), Florence did not feel the word "retirement" even applied to her, because she was always looking after her family and the only out-of-home work was as a helper in her husband's business. The premature death of her husband was perhaps the most significant event, releasing her from her primary working role as homemaker, and precipitating her entry into the third age of life.

Five years passed before Florence made a decision to sell the family home, move to a neighbouring community, and begin to create a new social life. She never imagined then that within three years she would be having more fun than she had ever had before. And she certainly never dreamed she would be the Vice-president of a seniors' centre.

Life at Carnegie Hall. Florence came for the exercise classes, the dancing, the opportunity to meet other single people like herself, and to create a new life. She found people in the centre were friendly, and many were single widows like herself with whom she has had "a lot of fun". Like Clarisse, the turning point for Florence was an educational program that presented the opportunity for personal growth.

Florence enrolled in the PWC program because she wanted and needed more confidence. Participating in the program gave her a new perspective on herself and her life—the change was so dramatic that it was highlighted in the program evaluation report (Cusack, 1989, p. 443). During the course of the program, Florence took on two new leadership roles in activity groups to which she belonged as a result of her newfound confidence. On a self-rating scale of one to ten, the self-assessment of her level of confidence in a group jumped from two to eight, while her perception of her leadership abilities went from two
to only five. Apparently, while she still did not see herself as a leader, she had enough confidence in group situations to take on new challenges. Shortly after the PWC program concluded, Florence was asked by the Director if she would consider running for the position of Second Vice-president of the Association. She did not hesitate.

When asked where she learned how to be a leader, she maintains, "I never was a leader... though I guess I have always been a good listener." She describes herself as very friendly and easy to get along with. I smile readily and I identify closely with others in the centre. I find it easy to listen to people and they seem to find it easy to talk to me... and if anyone presents me with a problem or a request, I will see it through to the end.

Florence radiates a quiet calm, warmth, and joy in reflecting on her new sense of accomplishment. "[CH] fills my life in many ways, and I thoroughly enjoy it, but I do have a life outside". She is also the chair of the housing co-operative in which she lives and she uses the skills she has learned at CH to chair meetings and to delegate responsibilities for managing the co-operative. And she testifies, smiling broadly, "I can do it!" As a result of accepting new challenges and achieving success, her confidence continues to grow.

Individual (Motivational) Influences
What motivated these people to join a seniors' centre and, ultimately, to assume leadership roles, and what benefits do they derive from their voluntary contributions? All three joined a seniors' centre for the social aspects, to be with other retired people like themselves. This is hardly surprising, since the primary function of a seniors' centre is social. However, their individual needs and desires differ significantly.

Edward. Edward seemed singular in his need to have an outlet for his personal leadership ambitions, and the role of President of a seniors' centre particularly satisfied that need. Furthermore, he recognized that being in a leadership role was critical to his self-esteem. While he does not mind being seen with glasses, he is bothered by having a hearing aid and having to walk with a cane. Status
and recognition for what he has done and what he is capable of doing helps him to cope with the physical disabilities commonly associated with getting old.

Edward also admitted that the President of a seniors’ centre has power.

If one wants to exercise it, I think the President has power, and there is a struggle at times between the President and Coordinator (who should be called an administrator because that is what her job is).

He was, however, adamant that he does not have a need for power nor does he derive a feeling of power from his involvement at the centre. Rather, he maintained that he has been motivated all his life by a desire to help people even when what he achieved was of no personal benefit. Otherwise, he asks repeatedly, “Why would I have become a physician?”

He admitted that he “got pleasure out of getting away from home” because home was always “just a place to eat and sleep”. While he does not like physical activity and sport, he makes a conscious effort to keep mentally active in order to keep from getting what he called “a bit grotty later on.” He claimed that mental engagement was particularly critical to his wellbeing.

He began his interview for this study by saying he was exhausted by caring for a wife who was dying from cancer, and did not have the energy to give a proper interview. He gave the interviewer permission to begin, with the proviso that he be allowed to stop it at any time. With each question, his body and his mood changed; as his energy slowly returned. When he was asked if he thought men made better leaders than women, he became almost aggressive.

Now you’re talking sexuality, you’re not talking gender. And sexuality is coitus. It has nothing to do with leadership. Pauline Jewett was someone I admired greatly—and she was as good as any man.

He visibly derived energy from the exchange, and became more intensely engaged in the interview process. At the end of the interview, Edward thanked the interviewer and said how much he had enjoyed the experience, and how much better he felt compared with when he arrived.

Edward is a clever and powerful man. I would describe his physical transformation during the interview as dramatic—and this was not an isolated incident. He speaks often about how much he likes a challenge, and enjoys
identifying and solving other people's problems. "That's why I'm a senior's counsellor." He seems to need a challenge in order to engage fully in any exchange, and he often appears to provoke an argument in order to "get the juices flowing." His self-esteem depends upon knowing he still has what it takes to run an organization effectively.

**Clarisse.** Clarisse first joined CH because a friend encouraged her to do so, and she came primarily for the exercise classes and to be with people. After two years of isolation, she realized she was missing something; when questioned repeatedly in the interview, she identified that "something" as the mental stimulation she received in her professional life.

I have taken courses all my life, because something within me propels me to keep learning. I always had the urge to improve myself. If a job came to where I couldn't learn any more, I'd leave it. I'm in the middle of eight kids, and I have always felt that by improving myself, I could get recognized.

Teaching and learning were what she had always enjoyed—and that's what she missed most when she retired. "I needed a chance to use my mind, and the more I participated at [CH], the more I felt that need being answered".

During the interview, she reviewed her professional life and seemed to gain a greater awareness of the power she had enjoyed. When asked what the word "power" meant to her, Clarisse simply and without hesitation said "energy". Along with the power, she also received considerable respect and recognition. As treasurer of CH, she gets the same kind of respect and recognition for what she does, even from people who don't know her. "Everyone around here gets recognition for doing a good job."

**Florence.** Florence originally joined the centre to replace the social role she lost with the death of her husband. Following the PWC course, she felt more confident in her abilities than she ever had in the past. "I liked learning about what was happening at the top and I liked being a part of it." She said being a leader just "felt good", and she smiled broadly each time she was asked why she took on so much responsibility when she could be dancing all day and having fun. She said, she enjoys having some influence and making things happen. "If there are problems, it's nice being part of the solution". She claims
that power and status don't appeal to her, she just enjoys the involvement and
the feeling of self-confidence and wellbeing she derives from them.

Socio-cultural (contextual) Influences
As was apparent from the portrayal of the cultures in Chapters Five and Six,
Carnegie Hall and Centennial Centre are distinctly different organizations.
Features of the organizational cultures in which these three people are situated
influence their emergence as third-age leaders. In this section, I focus on
contextual variables related to the structure and function of each organization,
and the relationships among seniors and staff, particularly the relationship
between individual members and the professional in charge of each centre.

Centennial Centre. When Edward was asked to describe the function of CC, he
said that "it is business, social, and recreational—the business of CC is to bring
people together and to help them use leisure wisely in whatever way they
choose". Recreation for Edward means mental engagement, challenge, solving
problems, and taking charge—CC was merely the place for him to exercise his
administrative skills and satisfy his need for challenge and achievement. He
had a lifetime of experience in the administration of large, complex public-
service institutions, and he also had prior knowledge of the community and the
political system in the District of Olympia.

Centennial Centre is characterized by rapid expansion, increasing
diversity of membership, and a complex organizational structure. CC is a "big
business", and the predominant style of leadership in the centre is traditional
with the emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness. Growth in numbers, coupled
with a climate of recession, have created a growing need for more senior
volunteers to help run the centre and for a more business-like approach to
leadership. A retired professional with the kind of administrative training and
experience that Edward has may be perceived to be "just what the doctor
ordered". With a sizeable staff and increasing administrative responsibilities,
the Coordinator has less time to spend getting to know the individual needs and
talents of new members, and encouraging and supporting the development of
potential leaders. Many seniors might find the operations at CC complex and
sophisticated and feel overwhelmed by the expectations placed on senior
leaders. However, Edward has confidence in his leadership abilities ("some
people might say I have too much confidence") and he required neither training, encouragement, nor support in order to assume a leadership role.

In traditional organizational leadership, influence and responsibility for decision-making are concentrated at the top; in this case, much of the power is shared by the Coordinator and the President. While differences of opinion between Edward and the Coordinator often arise, they are generally resolved amicably. Edward does not have much contact with staff who carry out the day-to-day operations of the centre, although he describes his relationship with "the girls" as good—"I learned to greet them by name, same as the members. If you are interested in people, you take the time," but he adds, "the place is getting too big and it just isn't possible to get to know everybody anymore."

In conducting business, CC generally uses a traditional democratic process to resolve problematic issues. This may leave 49 percent of the people unhappy with decisions that are made.

Some things come up from time to time. Like this bloody smoking thing. The majority didn't want it and my position was to uphold the bylaw.

Sometimes unpopular decisions result in confrontation and conflict. "The group in the pool hall are kind of an ambitious group. The guys are always competing and that's the nature of the game." When the approach to making decisions is confrontational and competitive, women may be left "out of the game" both by design and by choice. In many cases, I observed "the boys" take a competitive approach and maintain a protective attitude toward "the girls," who were sometimes called "dear," and relegated to volunteering in the kitchen and making crafts. Such traditional sexist attitudes were often so subtle that they passed unnoticed. In one instance of sexist behaviour, however, a woman in the pool room became physically violent, attacking one of the men. Edward knows he has made enemies, because "you just can't please everybody". He views dissatisfaction as a natural consequence of democratic leadership, but does not appear to be aware that his sexist remarks and confrontational style may create unnecessary problems. [I revisit problems of traditional leadership and issues of gender and power in the final chapter].

**Carnegie Hall.** In contrast to Centennial Centre, Carnegie Hall is a less complex organization with less emphasis on athletic recreation and activity, and
greater emphasis on providing a safe and comfortable place for seniors to spend their leisure hours. Clarisse views CH as "a place for seniors to feel welcome" as well as "a place to learn." When she first came to CH, she felt vulnerable, but found a level of acceptance and comfort, and she eventually had an opportunity to learn. Florence views the function of CH as "a home away from home, providing entertainment for people who don't go out a lot, and particularly single women and men". When she first joined the centre, she had just sold her family home and CH became her "home away from home." There she met many other single women like herself with whom she "has a lot of fun."

Numerous organizational factors (e.g., the smaller size, longer history, fewer members, smaller staff) make it easier for the Director of Carnegie Hall (than the Coordinator of Centennial Centre) to get to know members personally and to nurture their leadership potential. In comparison to Centennial Centre, Carnegie Hall is smaller (2,000 members, compared to 3,000 in CC) and the membership seems less diverse with respect to interests and education. The organizational structure of Carnegie Hall is simple (e.g., all new members receive a copy of the policy and procedures manual which is brief and easily understood). The Parks & Recreation Department in Centreville seems more supportive of seniors’ programs, perhaps because the percentage of seniors in the community is twice that of Olympia and seniors, therefore, have more voting power in Centreville.

In examining Clarisse's and Florence's biographical sketches, one can identify a sequence of events and opportunities in combination with personal encouragement and support from others (notably the Director) that contributed to their evolution as senior leaders. Clarisse's re-emergence as a leader following retirement proceeded as follows:

1. The former Director of Carnegie Hall convinced her to join, and accompanied her there while she took out a membership.
2. She joined the hiking club and began to feel better physically.
3. The Director invited her to join the New Horizons board.
4. Serving on the Participation with Confidence board provided an opportunity to exercise her secretarial and bookkeeping skills and to learn about the role of confidence in senior participation.
(5) Participating in the PWC program increased confidence in herself and her administrative skills and presented an opportunity to learn and develop a style of leadership that was more sensitive to the needs of seniors.

(6) The Director asked her to consider running for treasurer.

(7) As a result of serving as treasurer, confidence increased in her leadership skills.

(8) The need to revise the system of financial reporting presented a challenge.

(9) Creating a new financial system presented a teaching opportunity, and teaching is consistent with Clarisse's personal approach to leadership.

(10) The invitation to get involved in a mentoring program in the community provided another opportunity to be involved in a teaching situation.

Similarly, specific contextual influences contributed to Florence's emergence as a leader for the first time in her mid-60's.

(1) The Director of CH responded to Florence's warm and engaging personality, and recognized her listening skills as essential to leadership in seniors' groups.

(2) Florence was encouraged by her peers to participate in the PWC program.

(3) Participating in the PWC program gave her increased confidence in group situations.

(4) During the course of the PWC program, she was asked to assume the chair of two activity groups to which she belonged, and she had the confidence to accept these new challenges.

(5) Her success as chairperson increased her level of confidence.

(6) When the PWC course was over, the Director asked her if she would run for the Executive Board, and she had the confidence to say, "yes."

(7) Her experience as Second Vice-president has been positive; she says that being a leader "feels good."

... and she wants more opportunities to play a leadership role.
Leaders both influence and are influenced by organizational culture. The culture of Carnegie Hall is one that encourages and supports the emergence of leaders and it had a significant influence on the personal development of Clarisse and Florence and their evolution as leaders. In comparison, Edward required neither training, support, or encouragement to assume a leadership role in the centre. He is an articulate and powerful man who has been a traditional leader throughout his life. He joined Centennial Centre, a leader in search of an organization, and he found a place to challenge his administrative abilities and maintain his self-esteem. However, his authoritarian style of leadership serves to reinforce a traditional view of the leader as someone in charge who takes responsibility for achieving group goals, something few seniors feel qualified to do. His confrontational manner is, furthermore, intimidating to many seniors who are less confident of their leadership skills. Thus, the centre is left with a shortage of seniors willing to assume leadership roles, and a need for a program of leadership development.

The Coordinator of Centennial Centre regrets that, due to increasing administrative responsibilities, she no longer has adequate time to personally motivate, encourage, and support emergent leadership—a common problem identified by professionals in the survey (Appendix C). She has, therefore, worked with a New Horizons Board to offer a leadership program that will foster a new style of shared-servant leadership, developing the ability of senior leaders to motivate, encourage, and support the development of leadership potential among their peers (Thompson & Cusack, 1991).

Summary

Factors influencing the emergence of seniors as leaders fall into four broad categories: (1) personal motives (needs/desires), (2) events/opportunities for engagement and contribution, (3) encouragement and support from others, and (4) educational programs. When asked, people often found it difficult to identify their motives for assuming a leadership role. Both Edward and Clarisse articulated their need for mental stimulation. Florence, on the other hand, was never able to say specifically what she needed beyond social activity and a bit of fun—she did say she enjoyed learning about how the organization worked and being involved in solving problems. Edward insisted he was motivated by a desire to help people and Clarisse said she had always been motivated by a desire to improve herself. Seven of the 27 senior leaders
who completed the survey (see Appendix C) said they had a need to contribute; four said they needed a challenge. No one, with the exception of Edward, explicitly identified a need for status or recognition in the planning meetings (Appendix A), the survey (Appendix C) or the interviews.

There was confusion with regard to the need for status and recognition. Upon reflection, Clarisse said she was always striving to improve herself as a child because, in a family of eight children, that's how she got recognition. While she gets recognition for the work she does at CH, she cannot say that is why she does it. On the other hand, Edward readily admitted that he needed status and recognition to counteract the negative aspects of aging.

These profiles provide evidence that the third age may be neither a time to disengage from community life nor a time to continue to share the workload out of a sense of duty "because somebody has to do it"—but a time for personal development, achievement, and self-fulfillment. Many seniors expressed a need to contribute and volunteering affords them that opportunity. If they have an opportunity to engage in volunteer roles that are personally fulfilling and receive adequate recognition for the work they do, they may continue to contribute to their centres in ways that are mutually beneficial to individual and organization for as long as they are able, as did all three of the individuals profiled in this chapter.

Many seniors lack confidence in their abilities, as did both Clarisse and Florence, and may need encouragement, support, and opportunities for personal development before they are willing to contribute their skills and talents to the betterment of their centres. A timely sequence of experiences/interactions contributed to Clarisse and Florence's evolution as leaders. In such a sequence of events, relationships between seniors and professionals are critical. Fundamental to the relationship between seniors and professionals is the professional's attitude toward seniors—his or her ability to recognize each human being for their uniqueness and to communicate confidence in their abilities. Both the Director of Carnegie Hall and the Coordinator of Centennial Centre identified recognition of individual need and leadership potential as a priority for them, as did all the professionals surveyed. With the increasing demands placed on staff, few professionals have the time or the expertise to cultivate individual leadership potential in the way that the Director of Carnegie Hall nurtured the personal potential of Clarisse and Florence. The Coordinator of Centennial Centre specifically identified the need
for leadership training, as did one-half of the professionals (6/12) who were surveyed.

Educational programs develop both confidence in the skills developed over a lifetime and new skills for participating effectively in groups. Whereas Clarisse lost her confidence and just needed to get "in touch" with skills she already had, Florence developed confidence, an awareness that her caregiving and listening skills were valued, as well as new leadership skills. Without both educational opportunities and personal support, it is unlikely that either Clarisse or Florence would be recognized as the self-confident senior leaders they are today. [As an addendum, six months following the completion of my study, Clarisse has just published a seniors' column in the local newspaper and Florence is the newly-elected President of Carnegie Hall].

In contrast to Clarisse and Florence, Edward's profile raises important questions regarding traditional leadership and the role of education in third-age leadership. Edward, like many others who have served in formal leadership roles throughout their working lives, has confidence in his leadership abilities and views leadership in retirement as no different than leadership in the working world. While he recognizes the need for leadership training for others in Centennial Centre, he did not enrol in the training program himself. One of the purposes of third-age leadership training (Thompson & Cusack, 1991) is to educate the more traditional leader, such as Edward, how to share the power and the responsibilities with others and how to encourage and support the contributions of their less-confident peers. In many cases, the problem is not just to convince the more traditional leaders that leadership in retirement is different, but to convince them they can benefit from a training program.

In the final chapter, I summarize individual and socio-cultural influences on the emergence of third-age leaders identified in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, addressing questions raised in Chapter One, and discussing problems with traditional leadership and issues of gender and power. The thesis concludes with the role of third-age education and future directions for research in the field of third-age leadership.
CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS

I have explored the following question throughout this thesis: What influences seniors to assume leadership roles in seniors' centres? My professional experience led me to believe that a focus on seniors' needs would fail to answer the question fully because it failed to account for contextual variables (i.e., socio-cultural influences) that either facilitate or inhibit emergent leadership. My review of the literature suggested that an organizational culture perspective was needed to uncover hidden factors, such as the taken-for-granted assumptions shared by members of the culture. Seeking to uncover these socio-cultural influences, I conducted ethnographic studies of two seniors' centres and constructed narratives illuminating assumptions about the nature of retirement, seniors' needs, power, and leadership. While recognizing the reciprocal nature of individual (internal) and socio-cultural (external) influences, I then shifted my focus to the individual senior leader in Chapter Seven, taking a historical approach and assuming a developmental perspective to illustrate influences on emergent leadership.

In this final chapter, I begin with individual motives that might influence seniors to assume leadership roles, and I summarize socio-cultural influences that facilitate and assumptions that inhibit emergent leadership. I discuss problems with traditional leadership, and explore the confusion regarding power and empowerment, issues of gender and power, and conclude with comments on the role of education and future directions for research in third-age leadership.

Individual Influences: Needs and Desires

Many people find it difficult to identify their needs—and particularly difficult to identify why they might take on a leadership role. When they were asked, "Why would anyone want to take on more responsibilities in retirement when they could spend the time dancing and having fun?" the response was invariably "good question!" No one offered an answer that was particularly insightful. Many said they liked to help others or they felt a sense of obligation, but nobody said they needed or wanted power.

Many people, like Florence, have never before experienced the sense of power that a leadership role affords them and they say they do not need it or
want it. Yet the more they speak their own mind, the more influence and power they have, and the better they feel. People generally want to feel good, but power is not commonly associated with energy and feeling good. For people like Edward, who have always had power, it is something they need, whether they are willing to admit it or not—it is critical to their self-image and self-esteem.

Maslow's hierarchy and McClusky's margin of power theory proved useful in exploring and understanding the needs and desires of seniors that might motivate them to assume a leadership role. The reasons people give for joining a seniors' centre are varied and may be as specific as "because I wanted to play pool when it rains and I can't go golfing". The main reason for joining and the primary function of a seniors' centre, directly expressed by the Coordinator of Centennial Centre, is social. Joining a seniors' centre apparently satisfies Maslow's third level of need for belonging.

Once people have met their need for acceptance and belonging, they may become willing to play a volunteer role (as did many interviewed in Carnegie Hall). In the leadership planning meetings, the training program, the survey, and the ethnographies, seniors repeatedly expressed a need to be needed and to make a contribution. Many said they eventually felt that they *wanted* to "give something back"—i.e., they felt a *desire* to contribute to the centre. It is at this fourth level of Maslow's hierarchy that we may consider a need to be associated with a desire or expression of intentionality.

The fourth level of need, according to Maslow's hierarchy, is the "ego need" for respect, self-esteem, recognition. I will focus on the need for recognition, because there was such controversy in the leadership planning meetings (Appendix A), the training program (Appendix B), and in the ethnographic studies around whether seniors need status and recognition, and because the focus on status and recognition led to a growing awareness of the controversy and ambivalence around notions of power and the primary importance of social recognition.

Clarisse, who re-emerged as a leader following a period of disengagement, recognized that she had always strived to improve herself as a child because that is how she got recognition. While she gets recognition for the work she does at Carnegie Hall, she does not say that is why she does it. It seems difficult for seniors to admit they need recognition, perhaps because of the prevailing assumption that retirement is a time to leave the work and achievement behind, a time for seniors to withdraw from public life. The need
Seniors have needs much the same as people of any age, although losses commonly associated with age, including the event of retirement, put them at risk, and erode their confidence and self-esteem. Most seniors in Carnegie Hall expressed a need to develop more confidence in their abilities before they were willing to assume responsible roles. Once a level of self-confidence was achieved, many then expressed the need for a sophisticated challenge and a desire to contribute their personal skills and talents to the betterment of the centre. It seems once people get the recognition they need,
they may continue to develop their potential and to make significant contributions in the groups to which they belong. This clearly reflects a movement up Maslow's hierarchy.

The profiles of senior leaders throughout this study provide compelling evidence that the third age may be a time of continuous personal development and self-fulfillment for many older adults. If we acknowledge the potential of many seniors (including those such as Florence, who never dreamed she would be the President of a 2,000-member seniors centre) to contribute to community life in self-defined ways that give full expression to their unique life-experience, skills, and talents, then we need to offer educational experiences and create the kinds of cultures in which such development and expression is possible. What are the socio-cultural factors that inhibit the emergence of senior leaders and what are the factors that contribute to a culture of leadership?

Socio-cultural Influences

The ethnographic studies in Chapters Five and Six illuminated a number of assumptions that serve as barriers to emergent leadership. My interpretation suggests that stereotypes common in society about the nature of retirement, the needs of seniors, power, and leadership act as formidable barriers to the emergence of seniors as leaders in seniors' centres. Such assumptions are: (1) retirement is a time to leave the past behind, engage in enjoyable mental and physical activity, and let someone else do all the work; (2) seniors have needs that ought to be served, but not desires and expectations for challenge and personal development; (3) leadership means being in charge, something few are trained to do, involving a lot of hard work and problems; and (4) power refers to authority and control of others, something few seniors need or want, and reserved for the few who want to be in charge and suffer all the problems. The prevalence of these assumptions in seniors' centres helps to explain why so many seniors are reluctant to assume leadership roles.

With specific reference to the profiles of Clarisse and Florence in Chapter Seven, I identified a timely sequence of opportunities, events, and interactions that served to overcome the barriers and facilitate the emergence of seniors as leaders. I refer to Carnegie Hall as a "culture of leadership"—i.e., one which promotes the development of personal potential and contribution to the centre through leadership. The Director's approach or style of leadership is one of
encouraging, motivating, and supporting the development of individual potential and self-expression of talents. Education was identified as a primary influence in combination with the following sequence of experiences/interactions:

- someone inviting/encouraging the individual to join a centre;
- experiencing improved health as a consequence of social and physical activity;
- someone understanding their particular interests/needs/talents;
- someone inviting them to join a group or board;
- experiencing renewed self-confidence as a result of learning new skills;
- someone inviting them to contribute their skills and talents;
- someone encouraging and supporting their contribution;
- someone recognizing their contribution;
- experiencing new challenges and self-actualization.

The centres were selected on the basis of a difference with respect to education. Two significant differences in the findings were of particular interest, and the first was a difference in the approach to leadership which, I suggest, can be partly attributed to education. I found the culture of Centennial Centre particularly insightful because it manifested many of the problems suggested in a previous paper, Reconceptualizing Leadership in Retirement Organizations, (Cusack, Manley-Casimir, & Thompson, 1992). This is not intended to imply that Carnegie Hall is without its problems, but that problems with traditional leadership are more clearly represented in the study of Centennial Centre. Leadership training courses offered at Carnegie Hall during the past four years promoted a concept of shared-servant leadership, an approach that differs from the traditional and is considered to be more effective in seniors' groups (Thompson & Cusack, 1992). The study of the culture of Centennial Centre was undertaken following recognition of the need for more able and willing senior leaders and prior to the implementation of a leadership training program. Consequently, it was not surprising to find a more traditional approach to leadership at Centennial Centre.

The traditional conception of leadership that many senior leaders (and Edward is a prime example) typically operate from is a variation of the dominant view presented in Chapter One:
Leadership involves establishing a direction, aligning people in support of the direction, and motivating and inspiring people to continue moving in the chosen direction. (Kotter 1990, p. 6)

The role of the leader that transcends the particulars of a designated role (i.e., whether that person is Chairperson, Director, or President of the Board) is the authority to and responsibility for envisioning a particular group's goal, defining its tasks, and motivating and inspiring "followers" to achieve these goals. Problems with the traditional approach are experienced in both centres, although (as I have suggested) they are more clearly reflected in Centennial Centre.

Problems with Traditional Leadership

Assumptions about traditional leadership act as formidable barriers to the emergence of seniors as leaders at Centennial Centre. These assumptions include the belief that the leader must be a visionary who takes charge and makes decisions on behalf of the group, and the view that there are leaders and there are followers, and many people will never be leaders. Kitchen volunteers at Centennial Centre, for example, are not considered leaders, but simply willing workers who are followers.

Consistent with a concept of traditional leadership, there are assumptions about power that also act as barriers to emergent leadership. Most women and many men who have not been in positions of power in their working lives tend to view power as negative and, therefore, they say they do not want it or need it. This, unfortunately, leaves the people who have always had power in their working lives and want to maintain the same level of power in retirement, according to McClusky's (1974) margin of power theory, as the ones who are willing to assume leadership roles. In Centennial Centre, men typically occupy formal leadership roles (despite the fact that men are the minority group), and they tend to transfer traditional styles and attitudes toward leadership learned throughout their working lives.

In retirement groups, a traditional authoritarian style of leadership is particularly problematic because retired people who have lost a certain status associated with the workplace may be particularly vulnerable to loss of confidence and self-esteem. The leader who operates from a position of authority and control, even if coercing people for what he or she sincerely believes to be in their own interests, may have an insidiously harmful effect on
individual autonomy. In some cases, I observed authoritarian leaders not only to rob group members of energy and vitality during meetings, but also to have a detrimental effect on the physical and emotional health of group participants. (One member of the Board at Carnegie Hall actually took her phone off the hook for six weeks so she would not have to deal with an overbearing, authoritarian leader). As Peters (1972) claims,

> When it is said that [one] who settles [peoples'] lives for them without consulting them shows lack of respect for persons the implication is that he does not treat others seriously as agents or as determiners of their own destiny, and that he disregards their feelings and view of the world. He purposely interferes with or nullifies their capacity for self-direction. He denies them the dignity which is the due of a self-determining agent, who is capable of . . . choice, and who has a point of view about his own future and interests. (p. 210)

Edward saw himself as someone dedicated to serving and helping other people, yet he said, "Seniors don't like to be pushed around, but sometimes it's necessary". Regardless of whether or not the leader considers him or herself to be working in the best interests of those he or she is leading, failure to respect their rights and freedoms often diminishes them as persons and may create further dependency.

Another problem with traditional leadership concerns the ability of the leader, whether senior or professional, to define group goals that address the felt needs and desires of individual members. The service-providing type of organizational model sees the role of the leader as providing service to the client. Many people leading seniors' groups interpret this as making decisions for older people, when what is really needed is to address the needs of each person to develop their personal potential and to contribute their particular skills and talents to the betterment of the group. In other words, promoting the personal development of individuals and their full participation in community life is more important than achieving organizational goals. Neither centre, however, explicitly stated personal growth or leadership development as part of the centre's policy.

The concept of recreation is changing. Recreation now means recreating one's own life and helping others do likewise, according to Ross (1991). If seniors' centres are committed to providing opportunities for third-age persons to "recreate their lives", a traditional approach to leadership is clearly
inadequate to the task. The investment of power in one person denies all members a measure of personal influence and allows the leader to set goals that serve the organization but may not serve the actual needs, goals, and aspirations of individuals. If seniors' centres are genuinely concerned to develop the leadership potential of the membership, then an explicit function, stated as a policy, ought to be the personal and leadership development of its membership. The professional leaders' primary role must be to create a culture of leadership in which the full participation of all persons is promoted, encouraged, and recognized. Such a mandate is premised on a more optimistic and increasingly more tenable view of late life potential and a view of the third age as a time to create a meaningful and productive role.

A New Mandate for Seniors' Centres: Creating a Culture of Leadership

The creation of a culture of leadership begins with an appreciation for the nature of retirement and the fundamental needs of retired people the organization is designed to serve. What is characteristic of retirement and of retired people? Retirement marks the end of a professional career or working life for most men; and for many women, it means the end of a demanding family role (i.e., that of wife and/or mother). For some it is experienced as a long-awaited release from tiring and often unfulfilling work, an opportunity to relax, travel, play some golf, read, rediscover a forgotten or undeveloped talent. As a rite of passage, it is unique because it is incomplete (Jarvis, 1989). Unlike other rituals in life (e.g., marriage, graduation, etc.) it marks a transition "out of" with no sense of what is beyond, what to expect, or how to prepare for it. Regardless of whether retirement is experienced as a welcome or a traumatic event, it involves the loss of a productive role:

More than 90% of the employed population of this country work in formal organizations. Status, position, a sense of competence and accomplishment are all achieved in our culture through belonging to these institutions. (Bennis, 1990, p. 135)

Older people are distinguished by their diversity of lifestyles, of health, income, but most importantly by the knowledge and skills developed over a lifetime of personal, practical and professional experience in the workplace, in the family, and in the community. They are unique and individual in ways that 5-year-olds and 20-year-olds are not. As a result of retirement and the loss of a
designated role in society, many suffer from the feeling that they are not recognized and valued as persons (and this was the experience that many seniors interviewed at CH expressed). Everyone needs to feel good and to be recognized as a person of worth. Regardless of whether retirement is experienced positively or negatively, it is a time for every individual to establish a particular role that provides a sense of meaning and purpose.

To assist them in developing meaningful roles for themselves in the centres to which they belong, seniors require educational opportunities that help them to recognize and enhance existing skills and, in many cases, develop new ones. For those who take advantage of them (i.e., almost exclusively the women in both centres), educational opportunities play an important role in developing not only leadership skills, but also the level of self-confidence and self-esteem needed to participate fully in community life. Furthermore, the training most senior leaders at Carnegie Hall received challenges them to believe in their leadership potential, to communicate more confidently, to approach leadership in a new way with an emphasis on people rather than the task, and to appreciate the needs and the potential of all seniors to share in the leadership and the power.

What human beings need to survive and what they need in order to flourish as human beings are two different matters (Ignatieff, 1984). The human capacity for learning and growth continues well into later life, provided opportunities and incentives are available (Moody, 1988, p. 5). Yet, social policy typically offers seniors help with basic needs, but offers little funding for education to address higher level needs. As Butler (1975) suggests we tend to settle for mere survival when so much more is possible:

Man thinks of himself as wise and distinguished from other animals by his capacities for forethought, language, and symbolic thinking, and for the transmission of culture. And yet we have failed to maintain conditions which bring those capacities to their fulfillment. Those qualities which are especially associated with middle and later life—experience, accumulated skills, knowledge, judgement, wisdom, and perspective—are discarded just when they are coming to fruition in human beings (p. 64).

If we accept the potential for continuous personal development throughout the third age of life, then the role of the leader, whether a professional or a senior leader should be, as Bennis (1990) claims,
to create not only a climate of ethical probity but a climate that encourages people to learn and grow, prizes their contributions, and cherishes their independence and autonomy. (p. 146)

The task is to create the environment and opportunity for each individual member to satisfy individual needs for continued growth and expression of personal skills, talents, and knowledge. For many seniors, part of that development will involve assuming formal leadership roles themselves, roles that will be much different from the authoritarian model to which many have been accustomed.

We cannot, however, escape issues of power by focussing on the personal development of individuals, because power is central to leadership. Being a leader means having a measure of power and influence over others. A major difference between the cultures of the two centres, which was unanticipated, was the difference with respect to gender and power. Carnegie Hall was dominated by women—the Secretary of the Board was a man who felt frustrated by his lack of power; whereas, Centennial Centre was dominated by men, and the contribution of women was generally undervalued and unsolicited. I found it interesting, though disturbing, to discover the extent to which traditional sexist attitudes prevailed in Centennial Centre. I was also disturbed by the subtle ways in which men were excluded from power in Carnegie Hall.

Issues of Power and Gender

McClusky's (1974) margin of power theory was particularly useful in understanding issues of power. He suggests that people are motivated by a need to maintain the same margin of power and control as they enjoyed in earlier years. Edward's experience would seem to support that view, yet he claims that power is not something he needs. Clarisse, on the other hand, was able to identify the power she had in her professional life and to feel a renewed sense of power upon reflection. She equates power with energy, as did a number of the men in Centennial Centre. Power has negative connotations for Florence and she doesn't want any of it, and many other women who were interviewed shared the same view. Yet when Florence has to speak in front of a group, she "likes it" and it makes her feel good. Is it not having power that
makes her feel good? Or is it the confidence and self-esteem she derives from exercising power?

The subject of confidence did not arise in discussions with Edward, and when he was asked specifically what gave him confidence, he would only say that "people would probably say I have too much of it". The question is, *To what extent does a strong traditional leadership style deter less-confident and less-experienced seniors from getting more involved and taking on a leadership role?* My interpretation of the culture of leadership at Centennial Centre suggests that the traditional approach to leadership, and Edward's influence, has contributed significantly to leadership at Centennial Centre that fails to give voice to those who are less-confident in their leadership abilities (notably the women).

Women generally outlive men, leaving a large population of widows, many of whom (like Florence) have never played leadership roles and have small expectations for their later years. This largely untapped pool of volunteers are often unaware of the value of their natural helping skills, as was Florence. Walker (1985) paints a bleak picture of the experiences of such women:

> Millions of intelligent, perceptive, talented elder women remain trapped in uninteresting lives because modern society provides no useful channels for their ambition or energy. After producing and raising their children, most women are expected to fade away into the mass of nonproductive consumers, to spend the culmination of their adulthood on childish pastimes like those of teenage girls, including useless worrying about their appearance, so that the cosmetics corporations may grow rich and prosperous. (p. 140)

Feminists, such as Walker (1985) and Cohen (1984), are serving to raise awareness of the experiences of older women and of their lack of status and power. But what about the experiences of older men? A recent article in a local newspaper showcases women who were engaged in a leadership training program at Centennial Centre following completion of the study, while ignoring the presence of men in the program. The only reference to men is a comment that one woman's empowerment and emergent leadership was "intimidating to her husband." How many men have worked hard to support families at mindless jobs that failed to give expression to their talents and creative energies, or to develop their communication and leadership skills? How many men, like Clarisse, suffer overwhelming loss during retirement and remain in
self-imposed isolation, believing that their lives are over? Yet no men at Carnegie Hall enrolled in the Participation with Confidence program and only four out of 30 people in the leadership course at Centennial Centre are men. What are the experiences of men who are disenfranchised as a consequence of retirement from meaningful work? Why do men not participate in educational programs to the same extent as women?

People who have not had power in their adult lives, whether male or female, may not feel the need for power. Yet when seniors experience a sense of power as a result of their work (e.g. Clarisse's experience), it often gives them a feeling of exuberance and wellbeing. If people have had power and lost it prematurely, the need to have it may be excessive. It may then become unhealthy, creating an insatiable need for power, and no sense of satisfaction or feelings of exuberance and wellbeing accompanying the recognition and achievement. Such is the case with many traditional leaders (e.g., the Presidents profiled in both centres) who may derive little satisfaction from their insatiable drive for power, while denying others the opportunity for meaningful involvement and contribution. If that power is not legitimate, (e.g., when the board is an advisory board that can be overruled) then the traditional leader who has previously experienced a degree of power may feel justifiably frustrated and disempowered, and may need and want more power.

Power, Empowerment, and the Role of Education

Clearly, seniors want to remain independent and to have a measure of power and control over their own lives as well as to experience a measure of influence in the groups and organizations to which they belong. Yet negative connotations of power, lack of confidence in their abilities, and a belief in their own powerlessness in groups prevents many people from getting involved in leadership roles. Assumptions tend to be that there are those who have power over others and those who do not. And because traditional leadership is a lonely enterprise which does not facilitate connections between people, it seems quite reasonable to expect that few people who join seniors' centres to fill a need for belonging and connectedness with a community of peers will want to assume a leadership role. Yet, the central mandate of social services across Canada is to empower seniors—i.e., to give them power over their own lives. The concept of empowerment as taking control of self ignores the critical aspect
of connections with people. Such power seldom occurs in isolation from others, and must always be experienced in relation to others.

We cannot escape the notion of power as domination which, as I have suggested, may lead to manipulation and control that is harmful to group members. Power, however, need not be exclusionary. Kreisberg (1992) explores the concept of power in a way that suggests how we can create relations of power between people that are empowering for everyone.

Empowerment is the ability to make a difference, to participate in decision-making and to take action for change. Empowerment does not assume control of resisting others, but emerges from work with others who are also deciding, acting, and making a difference (Kreisberg, 1992, p. xi).

Kreisberg describes personal and political relationships within which power is shared as an expanding resource, in which the experience of power elicits further expressions of power from others. Strength is expressed in openness to the voices of others, to change, innovation and trust in the growth that comes as people work together. Power with is power between equals. It is the type of power required for people to become active participants in shaping the social and economic structures that affect their lives. Such power is implicit in the concept of shared-servant leadership (Thompson & Cusack, 1991).

Empowerment is a process that demands both personal and institutional change. It begins with a personal transformation out of silence and submission that is characterized by the development of an authentic voice. In order for such empowerment to occur, there must be a commitment to providing needed lifelong education for seniors, not just through sporadic funding opportunities that give seniors a taste of what is possible, only to be frustrated and disillusioned when their creative achievements are inadequately recognized and funding is withdrawn. As Novak (1985) suggests

If senior education is to have a future, government must help—and not just with short-term grants. Long-term plans to fund and support education for older people makes the most financial sense. Seniors with active, alert, and questioning minds are healthy people, and can be most useful to society and the community in which they live. (p. 249).
Empowerment is a process through which people and communities increase their control and mastery of their own lives. Therefore, the primary role of third-age education must be to develop a critical cultural awareness among the growing populations of older adults—to help people to understand how organizational structures and cultures influence the quality of their lives and to recognize when their creativity, motivation, initiative, and generativity are being eroded. Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) refer to "contested public spheres—i.e., places that have the potential to contribute to social transformation. They suggest that schools ought to be such places. I submit that seniors' centres have the potential to become such places—public forums for lifelong education for older adults.

Future Directions for Research in Third-age Leadership

The organizational culture perspective has proved to be a useful approach for understanding the culture of retirement within the context of seniors' centres. Ethnographic exploration is particularly appropriate to research involving seniors because the process of illuminating beliefs and assumptions engages older adults as co-investigators rather than as objects of study, giving voice to their experience and knowledge. Engaging in such research is potentially educative and empowering for all concerned. As the researcher, I shall be particularly interested to observe evolving leadership in both centres and to speculate on how helpful insights derived from the research have been to members of both cultures.

I would recommend both the conceptual framework (depicted in figure 2) and the investigative procedures to researchers and professionals seeking to understand and promote leadership in retirement organizations. The framework proved to be a useful tool for guiding the exploration, lending structure to the investigation, while sufficiently open to unexpected findings, such as differences with respect to gender. Given the issues of gender that emerged, as well as the increasing diversity of seniors' centre membership with respect to ethnicity and socio-economic status, one may wish to incorporate considerations for race, class, and gender into the framework of future studies.
Issues of power, empowerment, and conflict illuminated in this investigation are worthy of further exploration. At the heart of the culture of a seniors’ centre is the relationship between the senior leader and the professional (ref. figure 2). The personal encouragement, support, and recognition extended by the professional is a key factor in the emergence of seniors as leaders. Both the Director of Carnegie Hall and the Coordinator of Centennial Centre perceive one of their primary roles to be to create a context that supports and encourages emergent leadership. However, the study of Centennial Centre suggests that a number of socio-cultural factors (e.g., rapid expansion, increasing administrative duties, negative attitudes toward seniors in the broader community, conflicts of power with supervisors, lack of support from the Parks and Recreation Commission) frustrate the Coordinator’s ability to create a culture of leadership. If we are to embrace a policy of empowering seniors, we need clarification of the concept of empowerment and of issues related to power in order to increase our understanding of how professionals and seniors can work toward more mutually empowering relationships.

Society’s negative attitudes toward older people reflected in the culture of seniors’ centres—attitudes that seriously limit late life potential—are attitudes that we will inherit and we, as educational leaders, need to work with them in order to create opportunities for enrichment and engagement in later years that will be their legacy. If we remind ourselves that we are talking of our own not-to-distant futures, we may be more willing to give questions raised by this study serious attention.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


LEADERSHIP PLANNING MEETINGS

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION RECORD

November - December 1989

MEETING I
November 7, 1989

AGENDA

Introductions
Purpose of the planning committee
Outline of the project
Background information about leadership
Outline of the manual
Workshop content
Discussion
Planning the next meeting

WORKSHOP COMPONENTS OF A TRAINING PROGRAM

- Leadership: definition, styles, and issues
- Motivating, Encouraging and Supporting Others
- Confidence-building
- Communication
- Listening
- Team-building / group dynamics
- Group Roles and Responsibilities
- Conducting Effective Meetings
- Problem-solving
- Program Planning, Goal-setting and Evaluation
PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION RECORD

INTRODUCTIONS
A - new at centre.
B - on the Steering Committee at Centre X, nothing in leadership available there, we are a small active group
C - president of lifelong learning library
D - lifelong learning library volunteer
E - dedicated to lifelong learning
F - manager of snooker room
  - interested in how to lead the unleadable
G - new here, on Steering Committee at Centre Y
  - Centre Y is bursting at the seams, need a new centre
H - coord. of Centre Y music
  - we can always do with guidance to keep us going
  - volunteers come and go, somebody has to become a minor dictator.
I - pres. of steering committee at Centre Z, active for 5 years,
  - no leadership program
J - VP at Centre Z very active group but no courses
K - coord. of diabetic support group, grown from 4 to 30

• Have you found that people resent the word leadership?
  - What it needs to be is more assertiveness and making your wishes known.
• What do you mean by learning? Some of us are 80 and we already know a lot.
• Learning needs to be more ...stepping outside ourselves, becoming a part of our community... involves more a kind of sharing of experiences...not back to kindergarten”.
• The most important part of leadership to be established is the ability to communicate, and that is not just talking, but being able to take others point of view. ...and communicating requires a level of confidence. We all have a certain amount of anxiety.

What is the biggest problem in your centre?
• space
• recruiting volunteers
• lack of communication between groups and groups and staff
• leading people who don't want to be lead
• there are many older people who are not able to be actively involved
• getting volunteers
• getting commitment and dedicated
• Certain people always carry the load
  - there are more takers than givers and at this stage the givers begin to resent doing everything
• lack of flexibility is a problem
• there must be a financial problem at some centres
• lack of willingness to take responsibility and leadership marginal participation.
General comments about training:
The leadership workshop should be at the end — motivation is where you start — but you need good leadership to motivate people. The focus should be on skill-building—they don’t know what skills they have and therefore, the training will help them across the border. The point of it all - to highlight for people what they have and that they’ve got what it takes to be leaders. People are reluctant to take that first step.
(When she got up to ask a question, she was too nervous to hear the answer)

WORKSHOP CONTENT

Topic - Communication:
• expressing your ideas clearly with no double-talk or political talk. You have to know your subject, BUT you need to be able to get your ideas across.
• developing rapport, has to be a 2-way street.
• ability to get ideas across (written, verbal or visual)
• give a model to people - nb. a conceptual picture, awareness of process and purpose
• there are specific skills that can be learned
• practice is necessary to build confidence.
• important to have humour
• know your audience
• know you are dealing with specific people and they have needs
• intro to public speaking, icebreakers.

Topic - Listening:
• the problem is really hearing what has been said
• keeping attention/eye contact
• be aware of process - overview - responsibility to check/give feedback
• barriers to communication
• meaning and content/ what is the message?
• active listening - prompting questions
• atmosphere - keep distractions to a minimum
• ask to repeat
• use of diplomacy - tact - make them feel they are really being heard
• use of simple aids, a board, a visual
• important of concentration.

Homework for next week:
1. talk to 2 or 3 people at your centre who may be interested in becoming more involved.
2. think about the overall purpose of each workshop
3. think about what to call the program.
MEETING II
November 14, 1989

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION RECORD

• We need to provide information to interested people about the program and how to register. More next week...
• Title of the program - needs to reflect person you want to reach
• This is entry level leadership for people who want to be more effective on committees. The person who is trained in leadership ought to be able to get people involved.
• Problem - a great number of people need skill in order to get involved—many are coming in to participate but not to be leaders.
• This is a good time to get leadership because so many people are retiring young—we need to zap in on the new people and GET THEM INVOLVED—focus is on more effective involvement but we really are after leaders. After they have taken the problem, they will be able to take on leadership even if they did not intend to in the first place.
• Motivation to be involved - leaders ability to make people feel they want to do it for you...importance of concern for others, empathy, willingness to make others feel wanted and needed and warm.
• Modelling is important - who are your models?

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM - TO MAKE GIVERS OUT OF THE TAKERS.

What is the one quality that makes you a leader?
• willing horse - because noone else will do it
• caring for others and how they feel
• willingness and being outgoing
• having ideas but being willing to put them into practice, we all have ideas but don't put them into practice
• making people feel at ease (i.e. through humour, friendliness
• communicating well
• satisfaction that comes from making something happen
• knowledge - knowing something about what you are leading

Why is there a problem getting people to volunteer?
• attitude - "I don't do anything unless I get paid for it!"
• There just aren't people anxious to volunteer - they want to take what's offered - they just want to participate.
(Noone here would be happy just to participate, but many become resentful of the takers)
• We need to involve the takers.
• We have to have givers and takers - that's life
• Some will not be leaders and that is that - it is the nature of the person
• Most famous sentence - oh, Joe will do it.
• danger - what happens when Joe won't do it?
If Joe says, no, I've done it for 15 years and I'm not going to do it anymore. Often... it doesn't get done!!

That is why I have joined this group—I want to be able to motivate others to become givers.

We all have our terms. Lots of people will work but don't want to be leaders. Maybe they are leaders in their own right.

Some people don't want to be decision-makers, because they don't want the responsibility.

The greatest enthusiasm comes from new members—people who have been coming for years aren't going to change but new people are more willing.

I get resentful when people start to complain about how you are doing things—some people are the first to criticize if you've done something but won't offer to do anything themselves.

People don't take the time to understand how things work—i.e. the organizational structure and how to make things happen.

We have to stress the concept of volunteer because you are not getting paid. We're here because we are getting fulfilment...getting a sense of value...it is nice to be needed.

If people would only ask new people to take things on instead of getting the same old ones to do things.

Our centres need a new member contact system to hook people in to getting involved.

Part of accepting people and welcoming them has to do with taking time to find out where they are at and what they have done.

I am involved here because I can do it—I was trained in my working life and I miss it. A lot of volunteers have never had the opportunity to develop those skills—and if we could give them that chance to grow we would really be doing a lot...

How are you feeling about the session today?

• stimulating me to work harder
• stimulating to get others ideas
• informative, stimulating
• enjoyable, exciting
• a sense of accomplishment
• thankful to be here - this is what I wanted to get involved in
• enjoying it - I have a function
• stimulating - making part of my brain work that hasn't worked for awhile
• enjoying relating to peers, on an equal basis
  (question - do you participate like this very often? no.

Why did you come?

• One of my objectives for being here was to visit with other centres - to see how they are progressing—Cameron is very limited in space—others have large facilities and I want to know how they got them. Paid staff from the various centres meet but the seniors don't.
WORKSHOP CONTENT (CONT)

Topic - Confidence Building
- you develop confidence by giving thorough training and letting people get involved, let them make mistakes, trust them
- give ideas, and leadership and discussion - you get confidence from sharing ideas

How do we build confidence in self or in others?
- know subject
- communicate
- don't set high goals
- don't be disturbed by criticism. You always have to be able to accept criticism - may not go along with it but if people criticize it means they have listened to me. People who accept criticism are able and have confidence
- I'm here to get confidence in myself. I have a big problem with confidence in a group
- let people have a share
- getting them involved and allowing them to speak out
- understanding and encouraging
- giving a pat on the back to show appreciation
- working with and not for
- stress participants attributes and skills
- accentuate positive factors
- exchange of ideas
- give small successes
- try to overcome limitations from the past
- self-evaluation - what are limiting thoughts.
- Formal education in the past is not important - they don't have to work. They have lots to give that doesn't require education.
- A leader can talk down to other people and take away their confidence. One thing you have to have is the belief and trust and value for every human being and their uniqueness.

Homework:
- registration process
- title of program and publicity
- purpose of each workshop.
FIRST IMPRESSIONS: Informal discussion overheard prior to meeting)
(Centre - has 500 members - 350 very active)

CTV was here last week and did a 30 minute video—they got a shot of
the women playing basketball. We need to make a video on what older
people do now as compared to what they used to do. We were going to
have the meeting over in that room but they've got the line dancing in
there. We have the same problem at our centre—not enough space.

I would like to introduce you to our centre coordinator [Tammy
Jones]. [Ma:k Smith] is actually our centre director but he is away.

That is something that puzzles me—why do the
coordinator's change so often—just when I get used to somebody,
things change and it takes a month to get to know them. Maybe
it's an advantage - things change and they have to learn—they get
new incites. I guess that's good. What I find—they get a new girl in
and they haven't a clue. Now she has gone on maternity leave. At
least we have the same director all the time—thank goodness we
have her.

Topic - Confidence Building (cont'd):
When we are talking about confidence, are we talking about self-confidence?
• developing other people's self-confidence
• focus - must be on developing self-confidence so that these people will have
  more confidence in themselves as leaders.
• The quickest way to dissolve any group is for the leader to dither around.
• I think everyone here has self-confidence
• I want more.
• In some circumstances I have confidence but not in others.
• I have a fair amount of confidence but circumstances change and I want to
  learn how to have more. If you expand to something new are you going to
  have confidence?
• You need to know what you're doing.
• A little of this is public speaking itself.

What about the issue of public speaking?
• The most important part of leadership is speaking to a group. This is a big
  fear—many people are mike-shy and need to have experience. Putting
  people on the spot and making them get up and speak sometimes makes
  people radiate. When they have to do it they become totally different people.
• Many people people are willing workers but they won't take on leadership.
  Speaking is important—it is communication and it should be in
  communication.
• Speaking puts you on the spot, being in the chair is like public speaking.
Some people can't take being in the spotlight. They need opportunities to develop their public speaking skills.

I taught a 3-part course in speaking. The first was the intro., then you had to give a 30 sec. talk on a given topic. Finally you had to give a 5 min. talk on something you knew about. It taught you to think on your feet. Also gave you confidence when you could talk on what you knew something about.

n.b., all the topics in our list involve speaking out and confidence-building.

**Topic - Leadership: Styles & Skills**

A number of years ago there was a leadership course at Britannia. They decided to try a Drama Group. We have gone into so many areas and we have seen people blossom. It's amazing what it's done for them. It all began with a leadership program. They live better, they speak better, and they're doing a service for others.

issues - It has a very wide definition, it encompasses much more - people who are participating are leaders. A group was formed which just took off and everyone is a leader.

skills of leadership include
- communication skills
- facilitating a group
- being able to give guidance
- knowledge to help group reach objectives
- decision-making
- rights and responsibilities
- assertiveness
- understanding needs and how to meet them
- motivation, people skills

issue - the personal needs of a leader are for self-expression

issue - some have need for power and status

issue - there are assumptions about leadership, these need to be checked.

issue - need to be constantly clarified.

issue - it's a job - you don't do it for status or power

it all sounds like personal development on the one hand but it is getting things done, delegating, acting as a role model

issue - taking charge, dealing with problems.

issue - it is personal development - life itself is personal development. We all want to be able to do things better.

issue - it is communicating with people to lead them to a goal or solve a problem

issue - it is getting results

issue - it is making people feel at ease.

The diabetes support group involves a special kind of skill. It involves getting speakers, introducing speakers, supporting people, testing their blood surgars, following up, contacting them asking them how they are feeling, motivating them to take care of themselves

issue - introducing a speaker is public speaking - but it is easy when you know your subject.

motivation - I don't know of anyone in leadership who does it out of a need for power or recognition. All are there to serve a need. Noone I know is in there
for status and recognition. They have it. We don't think highly of anyone who is there for power or status. But along with leadership comes recognition and status.

- I can't think of anyone who is there for personal glorification. Everyone is there to help people. If they are there for recognition and status we wouldn't want them.

- It's the need to be needed—when your family life is gone you must put something in its place - or you'll be a bystander and you're not going to grow.

- There are many people who have had good lives and they want to give something back.

- we are fulfilling a need and it is nice to be known and recognized. If you don't get recognized you say TO HELL WITH IT.

(90% are bystanders, 10% are leaders)

- Well, you have to have something to do to keep active but it's not an ego kick. Some of us that have been working in supervision want to keep those skills active - we don't want to waste ourselves. It wasn't for my own gratification - it was self-satisfaction.

- I came in here to do exercises and I knew at once they needed someone to get involved and I did it before and so I wanted to get involved—I used to be involved in hockey with the kids (etc.). Recognition comes but whether I get a pat on the back I know I can still do it.

- You get satisfaction from being able to perform a function. We get self-satisfaction. We also get others thinking. We feel good. We feel good about ourselves because we can still do it. When I worked I had strengths—now those strengths can be used to help the community.

- I had no leadership - I worked in an office - my first day I was put on a committee. Opportunities came to me. If you told me a year and a half ago I'd be speaking and doing this I would have said no way. You need that push at first for those who don't see themselves as leaders.

- Retired persons want to be involved and have a need to serve. They need to continue to relate to others as they have done over the years. They need to be needed, to be recognized as a person.

- I don't want anyone labeling what I say because they might not get it right!!!

- There is always recognition. Some retired people need recognition in some form or other.

- Self-actualization is what we all need.

- Retired people have a need for recognition because it gives them a sense of worth.

- Status is an aggravating word, it is associated with power, it is why you buy a bigger car. As a retired person I'm not looking for status, maybe recognition but not status.

- Ego needs are less when you are retired.

- Status is not a derogatory term.

- The job of president is not something you seek for status.

- You don't take it for status but you get it and you have to have it to do your job.

- Everyone here has status.

- It's the first time I've ever thought of it.

- I don't have it yet (oh, I think you do)
- A sense of your own worth, you're contributing. I think we get into a job because we have an idea of how to help and make things go smoother. And the first thing you know the job is in your lap.
- As soon as you volunteer people ask you to participate more.

Homework:
- purpose of each workshop
- purpose of the program
- title of the program

---------------------------------------------------------------------

MEETING IV
November 28, 1989

AGENDA

Business
publicity
title for the program
other
Continuing discussion of the workshops
Planning the next meeting

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION RECORD

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE CENTRE:
( a magnificent modern structure, space age design)

First thing you see is a restaurant in the front with a coffee shop. The sign on the door says, "Exercise classes at 9:15 cancelled - the instructor is sick - sorry for the inconvenience. In the centre of a large open lobby is a group of soft sofas with a table with pamphlets publicizing activities. Two small East Indian children are playing about with daddy trying to supervise. To the right, behind glass is Dinosaur Park Playcare. About 20 little children are busy inside.

Located on the back wall is a large information desk with a very impressive, modern INFORMATION BOARD—a ticker tape is running in the background with 2 very official ladies manning the information desk. Is this the stock exchange or the Vancouver International Airport? To the right of the information desk is the pool viewing area - a white-haired lady in her 70's sits in a cozy sofa watching the swimmers. A man of similar vintage enters in a new spiffy track suit.
In the coffee shop- a young woman of about 25 in a jean jacket with a sheriff's badge chats over coffee with a young man and a retired gentleman in jeans and a baseball cap that says "Finning Tractor".

Comments re the organizational structure:
- Srs. object to being in a large centre - they don't feel it is theirs. At our centre we have 1300 members and already we are overcrowded. We can never get a room for meetings. And the openness of the centre creates a fishbowl effect. You can be in a meeting and people will wave through the glass and it disrupts the meeting.
- Our meetings are too laissez-faire. Meetings will be called for a specific time and they can go on and on. When meetings are called at a specific time, people have to be there. Some people take over at meetings and even our leader who is very good hasn't got control.
- Our leader is very good, she is into everything, she heads everything. But now our centre is too big and she is holding on to too much. She has to let go. It is still being run like a small centre and it has outgrown that kind of leadership. I've been in the business world and I see pettiness and I see what has to go. There needs to be change to be successful. The craft group is still doing things that are outdated. They say, it is what we have always done - but they have to change with the times.

What do we do about recruiting new leaders?
- The more people we have to choose from, the more there will be who get involved. At our centre we have no space. We have volunteers but the don't want to do the real work. It is the same problem all over. Nobody wants to commit themselves.

What about the level of training?
- Who do we want the training for? If it is for leaders, like us then we need to be able to grow.
- The intention is to have an entry level - many people bring skills from leadership in other areas that are not necessarily appropriate. People who have never been in leadership almost have the edge.
- Those who have always been leaders need to learn how to deal with volunteers. That means a different approach.
- I think what people really need is how to speak out and be assertive—the practical application is what is important. Nobody will want a lot of theory without practical application.

Re Status, recognition and power:
- From the cradle to the grave, isn't our task to be recognized. Who wants to pass through life with no-one knowing you were here.
- Most need recognition but not all. In some volunteer programs you feel so important from the moment you walk in.
- Isn't that part of personality - some people can just make you feel important.
• My husband is effective. He gives everybody a hug. He makes little 80 year olds feel like 60. I think that touching is very important.
• Being on the steering committee is satisfying for us but what will be important for the first course is participation. We have 1400 members and we only got 2 volunteers for the steering committee. We want the first course to draw people in...
• Are we going to get our names in the manual?

WORKSHOP CONTENT CONT.

Topic - Group Roles and Responsibilities:
• know the goals of the committee
• help whenever you can
• develop a sense of teamwork
• try and be productive
• make it work
• understand what others want and need but attend to what benefits the whole group, be careful not to show favouritism.
• need job descriptions
• have a specific vision of where to go, you need a roadmap
• Our role is to encourage other people.
• Ivor - does persuasion come into it?
• If you look at it as an opportunity then you don't need persuasion.
• Wouldn't this come under the "head fellow" who can identify people and tell them they should be here?
• Maybe coordinators should be here.
• You are always a salesman.
• The time concerns me - 10 weeks is a long commitment.
• Suggestion: If each person here brought someone who works in the centre along and asked, "What can we get out of this to help our centre?" We need to speak to someone who runs the centre.

Topic - Conducting Effective Meetings:
• most important is to keep control, not allow a person to go on and on
• pay close attention to time
• keep on topic
• there are different kinds of meetings
• what is the distinction between a discussion and a meeting?
  (you get more out of a discussion?)
• most people have to have their say
• need an agenda
• need to thank people and acknowledge their contribution
• always have a purpose
• I always open it up for discussion at the end and get people to save their comments for that time)
• have a procedure so people will know
• Allow exchange of ideas without duplication
• Pat - you catch more flies with honey
• remember who has spoken and give everyone a chance.
• finish unfinished business
• use humor
• try to summarize at the end.
• basic of Roberts Rules of Order
• what about ethics, leave personalities, gossip, out of it!
• no postmortems

**Topic - Group Decision-making and Problem-solving:**
- identify problem, be specific
- keep it simple
- try to come to a decision acceptable to a simple majority
- consider what is best for the membership
- ask the right questions
- consider a problem as a challenge
- be creative in searching for solutions
- what about the question of making your solution acceptable to all?

**Homework for last meeting:**
Group to bring purpose of each workshop

---

**MEETING V**
December 4, 1989

**AGENDA**

Business
- promotion
- registration
- homework - purpose for each workshop
- other

Continuing discussion of the workshops
Wrapup

**PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION RECORD**

**FIRST IMPRESSIONS**
There were only 5 cars in the parking lot as I drove up at 9:30 a.m. In one of them a young woman about 40 checked her lipstick and straightened her wig before emerging from her car with a briefcase and I wondered if I was at an alopecia conference.

The first thing I saw as I entered was some Xmas directions and a piano. Around the corner at the coffee counter was a sad-looking wrinkled old man in a hat who looked like someone I
knew but he stared straight ahead and I decided maybe it wasn't
him after all.

A sobre-faced white-haired woman poured the coffee
without any form of verbal or nonverbal communication. A very
tall, pleasant-looking man about 65 in a Richard Nixon "fireside
outfit" (or was it Jimmy Carter)—i.e. white turtleneck, navy
cardigan and grey flannels with a broad smile—wandered back
and forth between the tables... As did a little man who looked like
he had just escaped from behind the iron curtain. This one wore
a traditional trenchcoat and clutched an airlines bag. When he
peered at me for the third time from behind his coke-bottle lenses
with those eyes five times the size of normal, I was forced to
speak. Going on a trip?, I asked. It's a great day for it. No, he
said, "I'm here for the stroke club. there's an executive meeting
today". I wondered if he knew he looked more like a member of
the KGB than the stroke club at seniors recreation centre. The
coordinator intervened, "Your room is ready". And we gathered
for our meeting:

- I just met another one of my university buddies. He's taking a test today.
  Some of these guys go 3 or 4 times a week—they are just born scholars.
- Report on the Alopecia Conference.
  Glaser - 5 needs of adults:
  1. survival (a given)
  2. control
  3. belonging/love
  4. fun
  5. freedom.
- Leadership training must meet some of those needs or people won't attend.
  Learning is more than just taking a look at the past—it is looking to the future
  and moving forward.
- This must be why centres are so successful - because they are meeting these
  needs.
- What does he mean "freedom". We are all free - we go our ways.
- Teaching people to evaluate is very important. I don't know anywhere along
  the line where I have been taught. You need to make that a part of people's
  learning process.
    What do you expect?
    What is being offered?
    How do you know you got it?
    Teach people to think objectively.—i.e. what happened, was it delivered?
    If it didn't meet my expectations, I would leave.
- No I might not give it a fair chance.
- Would it be impolite to say in a meeting "would you repeat that?" or I didn't
  understand that?—could we review the agenda?
- I wouldn't. I'm too easygoing. I would sit through and then not come back.
  Knowing life—for every one person who complains there are 9 who don't
  come back.
• If you do complain you should be brief - ask for recapitulation.
• I would ask myself - maybe it is me. I would not project my needs on the leader or professor.
• good point!
• You make a commitment and you have to hang in there - complainig in public is being selfish.
• It's time we stopped sticking it out. How many times do we tolerate things we shouldn't?
• It is very important when you advertise to know your audience and who to target. Don't give too much appeal unless you are prepared to DELIVER THE GOODS
• Walking out isn't the answer. Speaking up is. Then everybody wins.
• So many times people don't back you when you speak out.
• Wouldn't that be good to get those people who complain behind your back to speak out and support you in meetings.
• Don't you think that 90% of the people who have the gift of the gab become leaders and the rest become followers. -- they are the effective communicators. In our centre there are 5 or 6 who can and they become the leaders.
• We need to make people aware of how this happens—i.e. aware of group dynamics.
• The bottom line - there is always something to be learned from every experience and everyone has different expectations. You must speak your mind, don't waste your time and don't suffer and don't be silent.
• What makes the experience good—may be ideas, participation, the topic.
• Why do we cheer at the end of a program?
  If the buildup is too much you go away disappointed.
  If we don't get our needs met, we go away disappointed.
• At this stage in life, we will not accept someone standing up there telling us 1+1=2, when we know there is no pattern. We've gone through life and we have learned there are many ways to make 2. Learning gives me a chance to understand my fellow man (and fellow women).

WORKSHOP CONTENT

Team-building:
• encourage and provide incentive for people to work together
• it is linked to motivation
• delegation
• be sure people know they can contribute and that you need them
• encourage loyalty
• encourage each person to share selves, strengths and weaknesses
• understanding of process and commitment
• pick people that are flexible and easy to work with
• each person must have a genuine interest in the subject or they won't contribute to the team
• stress cooperation.
Topic - Program planning, goal-setting and evaluation:

- have realistic goals
- have a time frame
- be specific
- evaluate
- brainstorm
- have a feedback process
- must include needs assessment
- only one person knows what I need - me.
- How to introduce something new? - through conversation
- For every problem there is a solution—Must take risks with programs and be prepared for failure.
- We offered an "alcohol and the older adult program" and nobody came. It is important and we believe in it but nobody came - maybe because they didn't want anybody to think they drank too much.
- The way it was presented was all wrong.
- Which comes first? need or a new program? Centres have to put out expenditure to initiate something.
- Somebody at our centre got the great idea we needed a band and it didn't go anywhere. I told them they needed it to come from the membership first.
- I - what do you mean, take a risk?
- There must be responsibility for failure.
- All the centres don't have a licence to earn casino money and that money must be specifically designated.
- Program planning involves some very distinctly separate steps: needs assessment; planning; goals; evaluation
- need purpose for each workshop
- Goal for this program is to build confidence in ourselves so we can give others confidence in participating in their community centre.

Purpose of the Workshops:

1. Listening
   - how to really hear what is being said
2. Communication
   - to express yourself clearly
   - sending and receiving
   - understanding and confirming.
3. leadership
   - skills, building, heading
   - to increase the awareness of what leadership is and the advantages of different styles.
4. motivating, etc.
   - to learn how to provide others with a reason for wanting to act
   - to create contagious enthusiasm
5. confidence-building
   - to develop a belief in your own abilities sufficient to be able to build it in others
6. problem-solving
   - to give people a process for defining and solving problems in their centre.
What has been the benefit of this experience for you?
• informative and instructive
• very worthwhile
• thought-provoking and scintillating
• it helps to renew enthusiasm to do what we do (time you did something a little different, honey)
• a new experience - sometimes you went over my head. Thank you for your time.

This group could be identified as a resource - a group that represents the centres. We are a group. We all come from the same place.

Plan - set up a meeting after the end of the program to review and evaluate the experience.
LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION RECORD

The following overview of the program is derived from the continuous participant observation records and the evaluator's summary impressions following each session. It is intended to give the reader a flavour of the evolution of the group throughout the 10-week period and to highlight some of the specific comments of senior participants relative to issues in senior leadership.

Session 1 - Leadership and You

Following the preprogram registration and evaluation, the formal training began with a session entitled, Leadership and You. The concept of leadership was introduced and defined. The group facilitator began by outlining a history of leadership and how it has changed from a view of the leader as God to the leader as servant, which is the focus for this program. We looked at the skills and qualities of a leader and participants were asked to consider their own particular skills and what they have to offer a group. Typical functions of a leader were outlined as well as decisions about group functions that must be made in consultation with group members. The session closed with the suggestion that people begin to keep a personal journal of their progress in the program and that they consider the subject of self-confidence for next week.

Impressions. There was a tentativeness on the first day and, as so often happens, the usual technical difficulties were experienced. The overhead projector didn't work, so the facilitator spent a great deal of time printing on the flipchart—some of the "qualities of a leader" which were stuck with tape on the glass remained permanently stuck. There was confusion about the activity and, from the group presentations it appeared that only one of the three groups fully understood the instructions. However, the participants seemed generally eager and some wrote copious notes, requesting that the facilitator provide handouts for subsequent sessions. (There was no evaluation of the workshop, because participants had been engaged in the formal preprogram data collection procedure during the first half of the meeting).
Session 2 - Building Confidence

In the second workshop, the focus was on confidence. We were asked to reflect on who we are by completing the sentence, "I am . . . ". Participants were then asked to think about what confidence means, where they get it from, and how they can get more of it. During a group activity, people were asked to consider how (1) people, (2) expectations (3) physical surroundings and (4) our general thoughts affect our self-confidence. Each group picked an area and brainstormed how we might act to improve confidence in a specific area.

Following a lecture on self-concept and how it is formed, participants were asked, How does aging affect your self-confidence ?.

- When people retire, they want to do things they have never done before -- I started dancing 2 years ago and I want to do more. During the depression we never had any fun and for many of us the first opportunity is in retirement.
- We do a lot of introspection and I think it is healthy and helps me to see who I am.
- Seniors groups are easily stimulated to do something new.
- The trouble with the diagram is that it is all internal. There are societal expectations that effect how we see ourselves—expectations about retirement.

The session closed with a personal development exercise to improve self-esteem. People were then asked to think about communication for next week and to bring one piece of fruit, a funny story or a joke and the knowledge that they have done something that was fun during the week.

**Impressions.** There still seems to be a little reserve and politeness in the group and a reluctance to speak up. I was aware of the distractions (both visual andaudial) in the room, which is located in the middle of a large recreation centre and the feeling is one of being in a fishbowl. To one side I am aware of people playing billiards in the background, chatting and drinking coffee, and on the other side there is noise from the kitchen and music from the exercise room where a large group of ladies are participating in line dancing. Noone else in the room has expressed difficulty in hearing, yet I am certainly finding it difficult to hear. Perhaps in our communication session next week, people will be more willing to speak up.
The evaluations suggested people were reasonably satisfied:

**What did you enjoy most?**
- informality
- reinforces what I learned in the past
- enjoy the discussion and groupwork (x5)
- enjoy the brainstorming

**How to improve?**
- with a play or skit
- we don't cover enough
- more group involvement
- more time
- would like handouts (x4)
- would like knowledge of how to get the things talked about (?)
- too much time on group activities (x2)

**Session 3 - Communication**

In the third session we talked about the characteristics of clear communication. Participants were asked to consider whether they were highly or moderately verbal, or fairly quiet in a group. We then considered the respective contributions of the three types of people to a group. We talked about how to handle disruptive people and concluded with a personal development exercise, setting a personal goal with respect to improving our own communication behaviour.

**Impressions.** Good session! The content here was good and participants seemed focused throughout. There seemed to be a better balance between group tasks, general discussion, and lecture. Just an all around better flow. The coordinator's opening remarks and humour seemed to add a lot to the group energy.

Today the facilitator began by disclosing to the group that she was very tired and wasn't feeling well. One wonders about the extent to which it is appropriate and wise for a group leader to admit to feeling lousy, having a headache, etc. Is it better to assume a confident stance always and to pretend you are on top of things when you aren't? Obviously Sharon's admitting that
she wasn't quite there did not interfere in any way with the session, perhaps because, having had two sessions, the participants had confidence that she would pull it off.

I was even more conscious of the distractions surrounding the room today—and had a great deal of trouble hearing. The P.A. system seemed particularly annoying. Could it be that it really isn't a problem for others, because they never mentioned it on their evaluations nor did anyone complain during the session.

The level of information seemed to be appropriate to the group. One might want to keep a closer watch on the time in future, to challenge them a bit more and allow less time for group activities.

The evaluations were more positive, confirming my sense that this session went well.

---

**What did you enjoy most?**
- group participation (x3)
- group presentation (x3)
- meeting new people
- group leader is great

**How to improve?**
- insist people change tables
- more discussion
- more group participation.

---

**Session 4 - Motivating, Encouraging and Supporting Others**

In the fourth session on motivation, we began with exploring our view about other people. Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire that suggested whether their personal beliefs about people conformed to theory x or theory y. (Theory x was related to beliefs that support autocratic leadership and theory y related to a more democratic approach). Whether we are autocratic or encouraging depends to a large extent on how we view other people. We also talked about Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Finally, the groups participated in roleplays demonstrating how people can be encouraged to get involved in programs in their centres and organizations.
In response to the question, What motivates you?, people offered the following comments:

- music, because there is enthusiasm
- thinking
- a chance to use the skills and talents that I have (Nan)
- a chance to reach my goals (Bernard)
- a challenge (Bernard)
- doing things now that I have never done before (Bob).
- anger motivates a lot of people (Andy)

Comments on theory x and theory y:

- In Scotland we were raised under theory x and we didn't like it. Now we won't put up with it. It doesn't leave any room for personal growth. When we were brought up maybe I person in 100 enjoyed what they did, now people have choices (Andy).
- as a volunteer you wouldn't work under x Nan - we can't hear! It is a common problem in the group. Some people have soft voices and we can't hear them.

Impressions. As the session opened there was generally a more friendly and relaxed atmosphere—there was much more discussion and interaction and people changed tables, with the exception of one group. It is becoming more apparent that people are having difficulty hearing. The noise was particularly distracting today and one of the participants finally spoke up about it. When people can't hear someone speaking they tend to carry on their own discussions at their tables. The group did not take responsibility, however, for people at their tables who were talking and not listening. Perhaps we need to move the tables together a bit or consider a different arrangement for discussions and group work. I suspect that hearing is a much more serious problem for many people and that it is simply too much effort to hear and so they don't make the attempt to listen. (Maybe the session on listening needs to be moved closer to the beginning?)

This was a good time to introduce roleplay —i.e., once people are beginning to be comfortable with each other.
Attendance today was 18/25. I don’t think anyone has "dropped out" at this stage—it seems they are either not feeling well or away on holidays. The question was raised after the session about the need to charge people a small fee so they will make a firmer commitment to attend all sessions.

The evaluations suggested that they were enjoying the sessions more each week, and their written responses were both more detailed and more personal. And they are now becoming more concerned about being able to hear and wanting the facilitator to be more active in getting people to speak up so they can be heard.

What did you enjoy most?

• presented in a light-hearted way
• group leader makes me feel good about myself and gives me confidence to participate at a higher level than ever before—I feel I will grow and develop in this group.
• information and interaction
• roleplay (x4)
• different points of view
• the way the facilitator kept the group on topic
• frank and informal presentation

How to improve?

• more roleplay
• more involvement
• encourage people to speak out and communicate thoughts to others in group
• get people to talk louder
• be more forceful
• keep a time limit on all group presentations
• more feedback on roleplay

Session 5 - Group dynamics/ Team-building

In the fifth session we talked about how groups work and why people belong to groups. We participated in a very demanding group activity (broken squares) which served to give participants insight into how they worked in a group and the importance of teamwork in achieving a group goal. In response
to the question, Why belong to a group?, participants gave the following reasons:

- socializing
- companionship
- feel healthier
- exchange ideas
- it beats loneliness
- a sense of belonging
- stimulation
- interested in a cause or purpose
- feeling useful
- "herd" instinct
- strength in numbers
- developing your ability
  - fulfills a need
- sense of accomplishment, ownership, meeting new friends
- safety in numbers
- direct benefits, i.e. an employee group
- research shows the health benefits of volunteering and belonging to groups

We participated in an exercise to identify team-building and blocking behaviours at different stages of group development.

During the wrapup, the coordinator asked people how they felt about playing games (since a large portion of the time was devoted to the game of broken squares):

- I hate games - it didn't inspire me because it brought out one of my weaknesses, I'm not good at puzzles
- I was frustrated
- I was frustrated at first.

How many would want to do that again?

- It is very important to explain these kinds of games very clearly and to debrief the implications.

**Impressions.** This was a very complex and difficult task and people really worked hard. It was interesting that some people were so obviously frustrated and did not enjoy the group activity/puzzle. When they were asked at the end of
the session if 2 1/2 hours was the right length of time for these sessions—4 people said they would prefer 3 hours and a number suggested 2 hrs. and 45 minutes.

The evaluations suggested people are becoming increasingly clear about what they like and, while they appear to be enjoying the sessions more each week, they are at the same time articulating more ways it could be improved.

What did you enjoy most?
- the roleplay
- the insight it gave me into myself
- the clarity of the presentation
- I am more than pleased with the quality of material each week

How might it be improved?
- more time
- could be more dynamic but then the leader is not a dynamic person
- more time for input from group
- more discussion time in small groups
- have more fun
- repeat rules verbally
- would like people to be quiet when Sharon is talking

Comments:
- Sharon brings new challenges and ideas for us to try out. Brevity is important. It provides people with an opportunity to grasp concepts quickly—long convoluted statements serve as blocks to many people learning new material.
- the three leaders are inspirational in their own way.
- pleased to hear comments re starting and finishing on time—very important. Congratulations for carrying this out.
- not having a mechanical mind, the first half of the session seemed to last forever. I learned not to do puzzles, but to do things that I know won't upset me.
Session 6: Group Roles and Responsibilities.

When we arrived for our 6th session, a sign at the door as we came in said:

SEATING:
Please choose a table based on your primary role:
- executive or steering committee
- committee member
- volunteer (service-oriented)
- general group member

And the tables were identified accordingly.
(This group had a greater number of executive and steering committee members, so some adjustment had to be made).

During this session, we learned about what to expect of secretaries, treasurers and presidents. We learned what a board does and how to conduct effective meetings.

Impressions. This was a very intensive working session. It became obvious that Sharon was now more conscious of being heard and was projecting much better and everyone else also seemed to be making the effort to be heard.

Three people in their last evaluation questioned the need to complete evaluations each week and therefore, the coordinator elected to omit the written evaluations and to have some verbal discussion. The final 15 minutes was taken up with a discussion of how things are going. Some points were made by Wendy about the nature of a demonstration project and the importance of evaluations. People generally said they felt rushed and would like more time for discussion. Wendy informed them that there were certain tradeoffs in a demonstration project and a regular program would allow more time. The point was also made that there is not enough time to take notes and the facilitator needs to inform people when information will be duplicated in a handout.

The conclusion seemed to be that while 2 1/2 hours was not long enough, it is difficult to have people commit to a 3 hr. workshop. Perhaps 2 1/2 hours is sufficient for an introductory course and 3 hrs. for an advanced level once people are fully committed.
Session 7: The Art of Listening

Following two very demanding group sessions, we returned to a more personal focus on general listening behaviours and the session began with an individual exercise. People were asked to answer some statements about a photograph of the Smith Family which served to demonstrate how much we take for granted and how much we operate on assumptions. Participants were involved in some committee work at their tables and an observer was prompted to record effective listening behaviours. The session concluded with an impromptu roleplay by the coordinator and the evaluator demonstrating effective one-on-one listening behaviours. In a one-to-one it is easier to understand feelings.

When asked, How do feelings enter into it? the responses were:

• In a group you don't often express feelings unless you know people well. It really depends on the group.
• In groups we tend not to recognize people's feelings unless it is a support group. This is one reason support groups are so very important.
• When you are in a group more feelings are often raised but we just don't express them.
• That depends on what the emotions are—whether you are comfortable with acknowledging them. Negative emotions are harder to acknowledge.
• This discussion has gone far beyond what I intended.
• That's because it is such a good group.
• That's because they had such a good roleplay to get them started.

Impressions. People are beginning to express their feelings and there is a good feeling developing in this group. The timing was good. People really got into things today and the evaluations bore out my impressions.

What did you enjoy most?
• the roleplay (5)
• group discussion (2)

How to improve?
• could have more roleplay
Comments:

- I feel I am learning so many skills. Hope I can put them to good use in the future.
- There is a lot to learn about listening and I thought I was a good listener.
- I look forward to participating in each and every class - I would not miss a class unless I found it impossible to get here.
- We as a group are 100% more comfortable with each other than in the start of the program.
- Considering she (facilitator) was really tired, I didn't even notice it.
- The facilitator's expertise is encouraging quieter ones to present their opinions.
- W. continues to be an inspiration.

Session 8: Group Decision-making -

Bob opened the session. He said he was planning to have a funny story but he had an incident that he wanted to share. A friend of his called to say that she was unable to get her husband out of bed and Neil was inspired to write something that he wanted to share with the group:

As we get on in our years we have to forget what could have been and how we didn't do this or that. We have to say to hell with it, I'm the age I am and I can't change that. So look life straight in the eye and say to yourself, 'Do I want to sit and become a victim of old age or do I say, no was Jose?'

You have to take the years you have left and use them and enjoy them and when the time comes to meet your maker, you can say, "God, I lived the life you gave me to the fullest and never gave up as long as I could get around."

This was once again a hardworking session. We began with each person making a guess about how many candies were in the jar—each table was asked to choose a leader and each leader was given a particular approach to adopt in helping their group come to a joint decision about how many candies were in the jar. Members of the group were then asked to consider how they felt about the way the decision was reached. The groups were
engaged as a committee in planning an event and making decisions using both a structured and an unstructured method of decision-making.

**Homework:** Next week will be group problem-solving and participants were asked to bring some real problems to work on that are relevant to their particular organizations.

Ethel closed the session by announcing that the group would like to plan a social event for the last day and inviting people to plan to have lunch together at the centre.

**Impression.** Today's session was a great deal of work and demanded concentration right from the time the session began, and everyone seemed to get fully involved. There is tremendous experience and incite in this group—they could certainly teach all of us a few lessons in planning events. It is particularly interesting to reflect on how far these people have come. It is not that they have learned so much in 7 weeks, but rather that they have developed a level of confidence and trust that allows them to work comfortably and successfully together.

The evaluations were short and to the point. Basically, they enjoyed "everything" and the presentation was "excellent". (They may well have been too exhausted to write more!)

**Session 9: Group Problem-solving**

We began by considering the various symptoms of a problem using the illness analogy. The group was given a problem-solving model and each table was asked to focus on a real life problem in one of their centres and, using the model, to work through to a solution. One group's problem was that one member of the executive board at the centre is not respecting the confidentiality of meetings. Another group were concerned that the coffee bar was not being efficiently run at their centre.

The concept of power was explored under the title: Sharing the problem: sharing the power. To assume responsibility for a problem is to assume a certain amount of personal power. When asked, What words come to mind when you hear the word power? participants gave the following responses:

- leader
- authority, fear, opportunity, ability, knowledge, decision-making
- dictatorship
- energy, action
- influence
- threatening
- coercion, intimidation, security, God-like, whose in charge.

(note how every word has both a positive and a negative aspect - S)

What gives a leader power?
- position, knowledge, personality, experience, longevity, popularity,
- control, verbal skills (also written).

What gives a group member power?
- strength in numbers, collection, resources, source of money and time,
- legal power through constitution, resource of experts, experience.

How do you keep a balance of power in a group—ie. empower a group? (discussion)
- give everyone a chance to speak out
- rotate positions around
- ask for individuals opinions (take a vote)
- involve group in decision-making
- solicit individual input into meetings
- questionnaire
- suggestions box
- graffiti sheet
- phone committee
- newsletters
- I won't do another mailout of newsletters - it's too much work
- Of 1400 members, 100 is the most you will get out at a meeting - that is less than 1%. Anyone who is really interested will make a point.
- You should find out why if no one responds to a questionnaire
- There are 2 kinds of people, the takers and the givers—some people just don't want to do anything
- Those people who don't respond give up their power.

In closing, Francis reported that she had spoken to everyone and would phone those who weren't here and make the arrangements for dinner for the group for next week.

Impressions. Three of the participants really don't seem to understand a lot of what is going on, yet they continue to come regularly—one wonders why they continue?
The problems at the centres were interesting and it seemed an excellent idea to have real problems that people could sink their teeth into—it would be interesting to see if any of these people do begin to tackle the problems addressed here. One of the evaluations suggested that it would be useful to work through one very simple problem example as a whole group so people could understand the model more fully before applying it to their group’s problem.

What did you enjoy most?
- contributions of the group to provide many of the answers
- groupwork (3)
- stimulation of discussion (2)
- getting an idea of how to take a place in group decisions
- seemed more speedy.

How to improve?
- I would like also an imaginative problem, maybe one or two quick easy ones so that we learn by practice that we do it in stages—I don’t think several of the group I was in really understood the differences between symptoms and answers.
- longer
- more time

Comments:
- Sorry to see our meetings coming to an end.
- Feel I am learning a lot about what is involved in being a member of a committee
- Glad not to have the distractions of the dance class and this room should have curtains (at least).
- The facilitator seems more confident each week.
- The quality and quantity of information was excellent and provided lots of food for thought.
Session 10: The Senior Leader Volunteer

The final session focused again on the individual. Wendy opened with a joke and some comments about how she had enjoyed receiving the contributions from people about fun things they did and funny stories and jokes. She also made some comments about expectations—suggesting while it was an expectation that everyone bring a contribution each week, without diligent reminders and careful attention of the leader each week, the contributions tended to dwindle somewhat. If the leader is serious about expecting something from members there must be consistent reminders and encouragement or people forget.

Participants were asked to reflect on the past 10 weeks and what in particular has been valuable. They were asked to think about what they have as an individual contributed to your organization or centre. And finally, they were asked to consider what they would like to do in the future.

Following the group discussions about what individual people have contributed to their organizations and centres, the groups were asked, Would anyone like to share with the group comments that came out at your tables?

- We were interested in what Mary was involved in.
- Have you heard of celebrity challenge? Well, 22 MLA's are going to be diabetics for 3 days. The reason? - diabetes supplies are not covered by medical. Seniors on OAP have to pay 153$ per months for supplies and they simply cannot afford to look after their own health. Our focus - is to get the Minister of Health to put extra money aside for these people.
- Bob took over 411 Newsletter and has continued on a volunteer basis.
- We as volunteers aren't always appreciated by staff - eg. someone will say 16 adults and 2 seniors are coming—as if we aren't normal people!! Staff often put us down and treat us like children..
- Paid staff at the centres all meet with the Parks Board—why don't the sr. volunteers from all the centres also meet and gain equal status?.
- I have had 20 yrs. volunteering in the community in my capacity as Pres. and Brd. member for the New Vista Society. I was able to get a grant established from Xmas dinner in the care home for people from low rental housing living in the surrounding area and this is now a regular event. I was also able to establish a foundation to build a new recreation area and workshops for the residents and a policy manual so these people will be treated respectfully. I sit on 7 executives - federal,
provincial, and municipal. As I drop some of these I will hope to make a greater contribution to the seniors centres.

When asked to reflect on your experiences in this program, participants had the following comments:

- Well I am not so frightened to stand up and talk any more.
- Any 1 of the 10 sessions was good. I can benefit from each—every one is essential to leadership.
- I really liked the first one—the idea of the leader being a servant and the way you pointed it out—it really made sense to me.
- I am really interested in roles and responsibilities—many people who volunteer don’t really know what is expected of them and it is so important to have a clear outline of the roles and expectations.
- You often get belittled when you volunteer—there are groups of volunteers that become cliques and they don’t make you feel welcome.
- That is a reason why the terms of office must be limited to 2 or 3 terms at most—so there aren’t the same people there.
- Jessie has been stuck with the same job and would like to do something else. Many volunteers need to be given new opportunities and the leader needs to recognize this.

Did you do anything about the problems in your centres following the problem-solving session?
- Yes, we brought up the business of the kitchen and we discovered the poor soul who was running it had a son in hospital who was deathly ill and the person in charge was afraid to give orders...so the matter was solved!

Changing the attitudes of staff
- I was interested in the kinds of comments you made here about staff people referring to “16 seniors and 2 adults”—i.e. the patronizing attitude. Very often we hear it’s not the retired people who need the training, it’s the staff and they need a lot of training in how to speak to seniors and how to treat them as real people. A lot of things we learn incidentally and we are all trying to change the world just a little. I think I can speak for Sharon and Sandra when I say, if I were a senior
volunteer I wouldn't tolerate some of the treatment that you do. Whose responsibility is it for some change to take place?

- Each of us. That is the point of shared leadership. It is up to each one of us to take some responsibility—I know many of you are doing your part. None of us should be sitting back and tolerating anything.

What about diversity of experience and levels of leadership?

In a group such as this we're all at different levels. It is interesting to us (the group leaders)—because we came in thinking this is an entry-level course and this is really a very skilled group—there is a great blend of experience. Those who are more experienced can take on a role inside the group to others who are new at the game. The question is...should the program be for beginners or leaders?

- Modeling plays a big part. People who have less skill can come up to others who have more experience.

- One of the roles we need to look at for those experienced leaders is how to help others become leaders.

- Experience you can't teach—we have that—you have given us the basics. Having an advanced course would not be of benefit.

- We had a lot of discussion about whether to call it leadership (eg. in the planning group) and I am glad we called it leadership because this draws people with all kinds of experience. It has been good for me to review and to step back. Anything advanced might be better just as individual workshops but not as a specific course. and call it what it is -- leadership.

As a final challenge, the groups at each table were asked to use their creative imaginations and to present their concept of shared leadership in an innovative way—using a song, a skit, a poem...

One of the members of the group had arranged for the kitchen to serve lunch to our room and the tables were set in banquet style. Wendy served champagne and orange juice; the 3 group leaders were treated to lunch and each received a bouquet of flowers. Skits were presented following lunch—and very much enjoyed. Two involved the piano—some very creative contributions.

Those who were interested were invited to attend a final session with the planning group in two month's time to hear the results of the evaluations of the program. People were asked to sign their name and telephone number if they
planned to attend - AND EVERY PERSON IN THE ROOM SIGNED THE SHEET.

**Final Impressions.** I believe this was a very positive experience for everyone—
and all the plans for the final day were undertaken by the participants in the
group who presented flowers to the group leaders, rather than the leaders
presenting certificates and gifts to the participants.
I particularly enjoyed the opportunity to observe and reflect without a great deal
of responsibility for making things happen.

The teacher has done an excellent job of facilitating. She combines
many years of experience in presenting material clearly and at a level
appropriate to a group such as this—she also has a good knowledge of the
volunteer sector and how organizations work. She was honest and forthright—
injected just enough of her own personal life to make her a real person—she
shared some personal comments about the native culture (her husband being
native). She was never afraid to be honest about being exhausted and under a
lot of stress—it was always clear that she had prepared well, no matter how
tired or stressed she was. I think we always had confidence that she would
deliver the goods in any case. Perhaps it is good modeling for a group such as
this to have someone admit she is tired, didn't sleep, is under stress, etc.
because it tells seniors that this is okay—you don't have to pretend you are
feeling good when you are not. I think what is important is that she worked hard
and she was truly an expert in her subject area. I wonder how many
coordinators and facilitators think all you need is to care for "old people" to be
effective as a workshop leader. I am inclined to think the person presenting a
workshop for seniors who has tremendous compassion and empathy may
operate at an emotional level of intensity and at a personal level that may not
always be appropriate for everyone, particularly the men in a group. It is that
balance between knowing your subject and understanding the needs of the
group you are working with that is critical. Our decision to engage this facilitator
for the full course was a good one.

A lot of positive energy was generated in this group that seemed to peak
in the final session—and the general feeling of goodwill and the very humorous
and creative presentations are both expressions of that energy. In reflecting on
the group process, it is hard to believe that the sometimes uncertain, sometimes
confused "older" people whom we met just 10 weeks ago are actually the same
articulate and energetic people who were here today. One can't help but wonder:

- in what various and unforeseen ways the knowledge and the confidence they have gained will be put to use in the future?
- how fast and in what ways some of the confidence they have gained will be eroded?
- what is necessary to maintain this level of confidence?

Eighteen out of 24 people who originally enrolled were present on the last day. A number of people missed 2 or 3 sessions because of holidays, illness, etc. However, the level of attendance suggests a high degree of commitment and interest. **Who says seniors won't commit themselves to a 10-week program?**
APPENDIX C

SENIORS AS LEADERS

A SURVEY of PROFESSIONALS AND SENIOR LEADERS

Introduction

The purpose of the S.I.P. Leadership project was to develop, implement, and evaluate a leadership-training program for seniors and to produce a training manual based on the demonstration project (Thompson & Cusack, 1990). The evaluation of the training program supported its effectiveness in developing participants' leadership skills and willingness to get more involved and to take on leadership roles in their groups and community centres (Cusack & Thompson, 1991). The study also raised questions about what influences (other than training) within the organizational culture of individual centres might either inhibit or encourage them to be more actively involved and committed.

Seniors centre professionals/staff who participated in an assessment of leadership training needs of seniors' groups and organizations throughout British Columbia (Cusack, Thompson, & Manley-Casimir, 1991) identified their greatest leadership problem as getting new and old members involved and committed. They also identified issues related to this central problem.

- What is the role of senior leaders within the organizational structure?
- What are the barriers to senior involvement and participation?
- How do we break down the barriers?
- What is the role of the staff member in developing seniors as leaders?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of board members vs. the responsibilities of staff?

In order to shed some light on these issues, a survey was conducted of professional leaders (i.e., staff who work in various roles—program coordinator, centre director, etc.) and senior leaders (i.e. seniors in formal leadership roles—chairman, treasurer, members of the board, etc.) with whom they work. From a list of 55 seniors recreation centres, 20 professional leaders who expressed an interest in senior leadership and requested a copy of the training manual, Flying High, were asked to complete a questionnaire A and to ask 3 senior leaders in their organization to complete copies of questionnaire B. (Copies of the questionnaires are provided on pages 221 and 222)
(A) QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PROFESSIONALS AND STAFF

Your experience in the field will be used in the ongoing development of leadership and personal development programs for the retired. All information will be held in confidence. A summary of the final report will be available from Sandra Cusack, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby V5A 4G5.

1. Age_______ 2. Sex_______
3. Name of your organization or seniors'centre
4. Briefly, what is the main function of the centre?
5. Does your centre offer any form of leadership training?
   (a) If yes, please describe
   (b) If no, why not?
6. What is your role at the centre?
7. What education/training has prepared you for that role?
8. Do you do anything differently to recruit seniors versus how you get staff or younger volunteers involved?
   If yes, what?
9. Why do you think seniors take on leadership roles?
10. Could leadership be improved at your centre?
    If yes, what would you suggest?
(B) SENIOR LEADER QUESTIONNAIRE

Your experience and ideas will contribute to our understanding of leadership in retirement and assist in the ongoing development of leadership and personal development programs and opportunities for participation in the future. All information will be held in confidence. A summary of the final report will be available from Sandra Cusack, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby V5A 4G5.

1. Age______ 2. Sex______ 3. Marital status______
4. Do you live alone? ____yes ____no
5. Are you retired? ____yes ____no____
6. What was (is) your primary life occupation? (e.g., clerk, doctor, homemaker)
7. Name of your organization or seniors centre:
8. Briefly, what is the main function of your centre?
9. What were your reasons for joining the centre?
10. What is your major role? (e.g., chairperson, member of the board)
11. Why did you take on the job?
12. What do you get out of it?
13. Could leadership be improved at your centre?
   If yes, how?
Respondents

A total of 12/20 professional leaders, representing a 60% return rate or 22% of the total population; 27/60 senior leaders completed and returned their questionnaires, representing a 45% response rate.

Professionals. The 12 professionals who responded worked in a variety of roles, i.e. as program coordinator, recreation leader, activity coordinator, etc. All were female with ages ranging from 27–58 (2 did not give their ages). With respect to training: 3 had degrees in recreation, and 3 had diplomas in recreation, 1 was an activity therapist, 1 was a social worker, 1 was a recreation therapist and 1 had training in recreation leadership. One said, *I have worked with seniors for 12 years and I am presently enrolled in an administration program*; and another said, *As a community volunteer I have recognized the need for additional opportunities for seniors at our centre.*

Seniors. The 27 seniors who responded represented a variety of roles in their centres, e.g., chairman of the bowling club, tour hostess, trustee, president, coordinator of woodworking shop, etc. The age range was 64-82 years with an average age of 71. With one exception, all were retired; half lived alone; 11 were male and 14 were female. There was a diversity of life experience in occupations ranging from physician and healthcare administrator to millworker and homemaker.

Function of the Centre

Respondents were asked, *What is the main function of your centre?*

Professionals

recreation 11
social 5
fitness 2
education 2
leisure services 2
counselling 1
information 1
promote volunteerism 1

*To provide emotional health and cognitive services* (recreation therapist).
Seniors
recreation 11
social 6
activities 4
volunteerism 3
quality of life 3
education 3
outings 2
involvement 1
lunch 1
serving seniors 1

• To bring seniors together and to make their senior years more pleasant.

Leadership Training

When professionals were asked, Does your centre offer any form of leadership training, 3 said they offered hostess training, 3 offered training for board members, and 1 offered training in income tax. Some specific responses were:

• The parks board provides training sessions for staff - the community association provides these opportunities for volunteers.
• We have a brief orientation session for the newly elected executive board each year.
• I don’t have time in the hours I work.
• I don’t often see the need.
• There is not enough staff.
• We would like more but it is difficult to find the time to organize these seminars.

Leadership Issues

In response to the question, How could leadership be improved at your centre? the following suggestions were recorded.

Professionals

leadership training program 6
more staff time 2
board development 1
• We need to undertake a more comprehensive program to help seniors see themselves as leaders and as effective volunteers.
• Perhaps training components could be brought into some meetings to demonstrate a need and create an interest for more formal training. The problem would probably be getting the ones that really need it to take the training (as they wouldn't perceive the need).
• How to update programs to meet the needs of the new active seniors.

Seniors.
greater involvement of members 6
there’s always room for improvement 5
It’s fine the way it is 4
leadership training 3
better communication 2
• More people need to be involved in shared learning of roles and responsibilities.
• Much progress has been made but more specific guidelines could be included in the “job descriptions” for some executive positions, also in how to set up committees to involve more people in the activities of the centre.
• Imagination and new ideas must be encouraged.
• Too few people are trying to do too many things.
• The organization of getting things done seems to be lacking.
• Better communication.
• More people involved in the volunteer part of our programs.
• I need more experience as a leader and more confidence in my ability.
• We need better communication between municipal planning, the parks department and the municipal council so we don’t get lost in the shuffle.
• Why be retired? We need firmer commitments and taking on jobs of more people.
• Need better stimulation of members to take on volunteer work at the centre.
• All employees at the recreation centre are friendly and helpful to seniors at all times.
• We all need to learn and grow. It would be nice to take a workshop or course
• To better ourselves with more knowledge—to help organize events with the coordinator.
Influences on Emergent Leadership
Professionals. When asked if they did anything different to recruit seniors versus how to get younger volunteers involved, the following responses were recorded:

- It evolves from joining a group as a participant.
- It is more difficult to convince seniors that they have valuable skills to share.
- Older staff is preferable.
- I spend more time finding out where seniors wish to volunteer - their skills and needs are most important, not what we want!
- You always consider the needs of the person.
- It takes more time to make them feel comfortable in taking a new responsibility.

When asked, *Why do you think seniors take on leadership roles*, they responded:

- to feel useful or needed 5
- to share experience and skills 4
- to stay mentally active 2
- to build confidence 2
- The "mother hens" see the need (i.e. me stretched too thin) and take up the slack.
- To make a difference.
- To satisfy a need—retirement can be a traumatic experience for some. There is a loss and a leadership role helps fill the gap.
- The choice is theirs and this is very important for self-esteem.
- They have the time.
- To provide a service for others—filling a need of their own.
- They want to feel useful.
- They have a genuine interest in making an organization work better
- Desire to contribute.

Seniors identified the following reasons for joining a centre:

- social 11
- recreation 5
- exercise 3
education 2
• Since retiring I have a lot of spare time and this is an outlet to use.
• To meet new people and join in activities.
• Originally to be treasurer and then became totally involved.
• To have a place to go for recreation and companionship.
• To learn new skills and make new friends and thereby enhance quality of life.
• To be around people my own age and for friendship.
• To get out of the house.
• Because I have been involved in volunteering all my life.
• In 1984 I became exercise conscious.

When they were asked, Why did you take on a leadership role? responses were:

for the challenge 4
a need to contribute 3
put something back 2
share experience 2
social 2
• To be a part of something productive
• enjoyed my association with other members though I should help as well.
• It was a challenge and kept my leadership abilities active.
• For the love of it.
• No one else would take it on.

When asked, What did you get out of it?
pleasure 7
fulfilment/satisfaction 5
social 5
feel useful 2
• The pleasure of seeing seniors enjoying the activities and participating,
• The pleasure of working with people and a sense of accomplishment.
• Great satisfaction in knowing my experience can be helpful.
• A lot more enjoyment and satisfaction than my expended effort.
• Enjoyment, fun!
• come out feeling A1.
• have a feeling of belonging. I fit in with new friends.
• could write a full page on how great I feel since exercising regularly.
APPENDIX D

SEMI-FOCUSSED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
FOR PROFESSIONAL LEADER/MANAGERS
(Director of Carnegie Hall; Coordinator of Centennial Centre)

MOTIVATION:
1. What is the main purpose of your centre?
2. Do you have a vision for the centre?
3. Why did you take on the job?
4. What do you get out of it besides a paycheck?
5. What education and/or experience prepared you to run a seniors centre?

LEADERS: NEEDS AND ABILITIES
6. What are your leadership skills?
7. How do you get seniors more involved and willing to take on leadership roles?
8. Do you do anything differently to recruit seniors versus how you get staff or younger volunteers more involved?
9. Why do you think seniors take on leadership roles?
10. What role does education play in developing seniors as leaders?

POWER
11. What is your role in the operations of the centre?
12. What is the role of the board?
13. Who runs the centre? What power does the board have? The president? The director?
14. How would you describe your relationship with board members?

LEADERSHIP
15. What works well?
16. What is problematic or frustrating?
17. How could leadership be improved?
18. The last word . . .
SEMI-FOCUSSD INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
FOR SENIOR LEADERS

MOTIVATION
(1) What is the main function of your centre? Please clarify
(2) What were your reasons for joining the centre?
(3) What is your major role? (e.g., treasurer of board).
   What are your responsibilities?
(4) Why did you agree to take on this job?
(5) What do you get out of it?

SENIORS/SELF AS LEADER
(6) What training or experience prepared you for your job?
(7) What are your leadership qualities?
(8) What has been helpful in developing your confidence as a
   leader?
(9) Is leadership different in retirement? Do you need different
   skills?

POWER
(8) What is the role of the board in the operations of the centre?
(9) Who has the power in the centre? The board? The president?
    The director (coordinator)?
(10) How would you describe your relationship with the director
    (coordinator)?
(11) Do you feel respected for what you know?

LEADERSHIP
(12) What makes the centre run effectively?
(13) What do you find problematic or frustrating?
(14) How could the director's (coordinator's) leadership be improved?
(15) How could the board function more effectively?