WORKING ON THE MARGINS:

THE POLITICS OF VOLUNTEER WORK AT AN INNER CITY COMMUNITY

CENTRE

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores relationships of control and power over resources among a group of low-income volunteers at a community centre in an inner city neighbourhood. The key analytic concepts of the thesis are tutelage and resistance, as developed by Robert Paine in White Arctic (1977). The thesis shows that the volunteers use volunteering at the community centre as a means of establishing their autonomy in the face of relations of tutelage and domination in other parts of their lives. To understand this situation, the thesis uses anthropological notions of work to help focus on the ways resources are produced and allocated at the centre through the efforts of the volunteers. Resources are conceptualized as being either tangible, such as housing, goods and services, and money, or non-tangible, such as information, time and identity. Patterns of control over these resources give rise to negotiable relations of power that must be understood in terms of tutelage and resistance.

The low income residents of the neighbourhood in which the centre is situated have long been objects of state-sponsored policies of tutelage: government agents have sought to organize the residents in ways the former have perceived to be in the latters' interests. The centre is the product of the interaction between policies of tutelage and resistance to it whereby the residents have tried to organize themselves according to their own priorities. Daily life at the centre expresses the ongoing contradictions arising from this interaction. The benefits of volunteering appear primarily to be intangible resources, especially those connected with identity, such as prestige and social status.

The primary method of data collection was participant observation, carried out over the five months from October 1986 through February 1987. Key informant interviews and time-diaries were employed to gather detailed information about

individual volunteers and their relationship to the centre. Documentary analysis was also used to explore official perceptions of the neighbourhood and the community centre.

This thesis is dedicated to Joanne Hochu, my partner and companion; without her support and encouragement this project would not have been completed.

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Volunteers at East Line Community Centre

Introduction

In this thesis I will argue that the activities, tasks and practices that comprise volunteering at East Line Community Centre[1] can usefully be understood as work. This is not merely an attempt to impose my own categories on the activities of people at the Centre. The volunteers themselves routinely refer to what they do as work and talk about "doing shifts" and "jobs" at the Community Centre in much the same way as many paid employees might mention their work. Most of them, however, are not employed and, indeed, are on welfare or some other income maintenance programme for which unemployment is a prerequisite so this might be construed as or peculiar sort of institutional idiosyncrasy. If this is the case, what is to be gained by following the lead of the volunteers at East Line Centre and understanding what they do as work?

Anthropological concepts of work deal with questions concerning the management of resources, their evaluation and the relations of control over them (cf. Wallman, 1979a, 1979b). By addressing the kinds of questions arising from the anthropology of work, I hope to make a contribution to understanding the social relations and institutional processes that characterize volunteering and mark it off from other social practices. There has hitherto been little systematic effort to examine volunteering in this way. In so doing, I want to join the ethnographic data

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[1] East Line is the fictitious name I have given to a neighbourhood in the Western Canadian city where the Community Centre is located. The name has historical connections to the real neighbourhood. I have chosen to use fictitious names for the neighbourhood, the Community Centre and the individuals who appear in the following pages primarily because most of the latter are on welfare. This entails strict obligations vis-a-vis work and income which might be compromised by some of the material discussed here. Therefore, I think it wise to preserve the anonymity of the people in the thesis, but also to disguise the location of the fieldwork. Anyone familiar with the Community Centre, will have little trouble deciphering its identity.

from East Line Community Centre with an emerging debate over the nature of work in contemporary society. The task of this thesis, then, is to examine the nature of unpaid work and the relationships of the unpaid workers at East Line Centre in terms of the resources they produce and allocate through their activities at the Centre. Special attention will be paid to the interactions of volunteers with paid staff members, the processes of control that underline these interactions and the relationships of power that are generated through them. The research on which the thesis is based was carried out over five months from mid-October 1986 to the end of February 1987. For simplicity's sake, this period will provide the thesis with an 'ethnographic present'.

The Centre opened its doors early in 1980 in the building which had once housed the municipal library for close to sixty years and the local museum for ten years. Although it is operated by the municipal Social Planning Department, the initial impetus for the Centre's development came from the East Line Residents' Association (E.L.R.A.) with support from a local church, the police and left-wing civic politicians in direct opposition to the majority of politicians at City Hall. It is the product of a process of interaction characterized by relations of tutelage -- carried out by agents of the local government, in particular the politicians on the municipal council as well as the management and employees of the Social Planning Department -- and resistance to it by the E.L.R.A. and its allies.

Tutelage is a conceptual variant on the patron-client relationship as the latter has been constructed by Robert Paine (1971). It has been used to describe the relation between Inuit or other native peoples in northern Canada and the whites who live there. In that context, Paine (1977b) uses the analogy of the "nanny" to understand the situation of the white tutors who must teach the natives "the new identity they need in the modern world" (Paine, 1977a:xi). That identity is, presumably, the white identity. Tutelage is thus a type of power relationship

between dominant and subordinate actors, in which the former seeks to speak and act on behalf of the latter. These actions are based on the assumption that the tutor knows what is in the interests of the tutored. Resistance to relations of tutelage is realized through the attempt by the tutored to assert their own identity when they interact with those who play the role of tutor as well as with each other.

For much of East Line's recent history, its residents have been bound up in relations of tutelage with outsiders who have sought to organize them in various ways that have been seen as beneficial to them. The formation of the E.L.R.A., and the subsequent claims which it and other organizations began to make on the various levels of government, marks the beginning of a process of collective resistance to this situation: rather than being organized by outsiders, East Line residents tried to organize themselves according their own definitions of their needs. East Line Centre was created out of this situation and many elements of dynamic tension which characterize it can still be found in daily life there, expressed through the relations between paid and unpaid workers. The ambiguous positions of both volunteers and staff embody the structural contradiction between tutelage and resistance which characterizes the Centre as an institution. Volunteers are clients as well as workers, and the staff must both control the Centre and facilitate participation by clients in its operation and administration[2]. These ambiguities and the contradiction which they embody provide the ethnographic framework for the rest of this thesis.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will briefly introduce the Centre and the volunteers. This will be followed by an outline of the conceptual framework used in the thesis, including the literature on work and a discussion of the issues it raises in

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[2] I differentiate between administration, as the long-term policy and decision-making process, and operation, as the daily running of things.

relation to the concepts of power, control and tutelage. A brief outline of the methodology used will also be included.

East Line Community Centre

The staff who work at the Centre and are responsible for ongoing administration and day-to-day operations are employees of the City. Their overall purpose is to provide programming and services to the 7,000 or so people who live in the East Line neighbourhood. The neighbourhood is an area where residential space is predominantly single rooms or "housekeeping rooms"[3] in old hotels or rooming houses. Over half the residents depend primarily upon cash from government sources such as welfare, handicapped pensions or old-age pensions. Again, over half the people who live in East Line survive on an annual income near or less than the official poverty line.[4] The Centre was designed as an alternative to the myriad drinking establishments and the streets which are used as social centres by the low-income residents of the Neighbourhood. The programmes and services it offers are the basic framework through which a great variety of resources are produced and allocated by and among a varied population composed of paid staff, their clients, volunteers, government officials, local community and political activists and politicians. The resources that flow through the Centre at various times in different situations include tangible items such as cash and money for clients, volunteers and the city employees who work at the Centre, as well as building stock and facilities, meeting space, books and cheap food. They also include intangibles for people as diverse as municipal politicians and volunteers who are welfare clients,

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[3] A housekeeping room is usually one or two rooms with a sink, refrigeration facilities, cooking utensils, such as a stove or hotplate, and shared bathroom.

[4] This data is derived from the 1981 Canada Census. Gates (1985) states that about 80% of the population of the East Line neighbourhood fits into the official category of "low income."

such as status and prestige, information,sociability, skills and knowledge (expertise), collective organization and time structure. These are both the building blocks of programmes and services as well as their product.

One of the most prominent and widely-acknowledged programmes at East Line Community Centre is the Volunteer Programme, through which volunteers are organized and mobilized. Since the Centre opened, volunteers, most of whom are recruited from people who live in the neighbourhood, have become instrumental in the delivery of other programmes and services and volunteering has itself become a resource for both volunteers and staff. The significance of volunteers is indicated by the existence of the full-time paid staff position of Volunteer Co-ordinator. In the course of interviews, casual conversation and during meetings, I regularly heard volunteers, clients and staff members attesting to the importance of the volunteers at the Centre.

The detailed monthly records of the Volunteer Co-ordinator show that the volunteers' activities are vitally important to East Line Centre. They undertake tasks ranging from running a film projector to sewing, making music, watering plants, filing documents, doing laundry, washing dishes, tutoring students in mathematics and English, repairing equipment, monitoring the art gallery and other facilities, preparing and selling food, cutting hair and working in the library. This is but a short-list of activities. In the ten months from January 1986 to October 1986, each volunteer spent an average of 38 hours a month doing these kinds of tasks. During the latter month there were twenty full and part-time paid staff people at the Centre. The volunteers provided another 4,951 hours of work which makes for the equivalent of another thirty-five full-time people when calculated on the basis of a thirty-five hour week.

Volunteering

This thesis differs from other studies of volunteers and volunteering in both its ethnographic approach to research and its theoretical orientation. Although some writers recognize volunteering as work (cf. Morris, 1968; Gidron, 1973; Park, 1983), none, to my knowledge, has sought to understand its implications in terms of the relations of power and control that characterize it as a form of work. Instead, volunteering is usually expressed in relation to concepts like voluntary action and the "voluntary sector". Such concepts, while useful for contextualizing volunteer work, tend to obscure relations of power involved with volunteering as an everyday activity and the process of resource production and allocation.

Voluntary action is closely related to the notion of volunteering as an activity. It is premised on the idea that when people are not concerned with the subsistence activities that are required to make a living, they have discretionary time that can be used as they see fit (Smith and Macauley, 1980). The voluntary sector is usually seen as being composed of community-based, not-for-profit formal organizations that are directed by unpaid, or volunteer, elected officers in charge of the work of paid staff and/or unpaid volunteers and which perform a range of functions, from providing services to their members to services for clients. It is located somewhere between the state and organized economic enterprise. What makes the voluntary sector different from the other two is that, first, insofar as people participate of their own free will, it operates without the moral regulation imposed by the state, and, second, participation is unconstrained by economic necessity (cf. Rooff, 1957; Sills, 1968). These ideas are rooted in the origins of volunteering as an activity in modern society.

Volunteering emerged as a distinct category of activity in the nineteenth century as a means of providing free or cheap goods and services to people who could not get them through the market or on their own. Many of the features that

characterized volunteering in the nineteenth century are emphasized in contemporary definitions. Unpaid time and the idea of social involvement for the collective good are of particular significance in this regard (cf. Morris, 1968; Howarth and Secord, 1974). The gradual separation of the household and the workplace in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when womens' work became housework and mens' work became industrial work, and the former was devalued in economic terms (Oakley, 1974a) provided the conditions in which volunteering emerged. Middle- and upper-class women who had the wherewithal to escape the cultural confines of the home used volunteering to

> . . . become something - more than domestic or sexual adjuncts to men. It gave them work to do in their communities and a sense of usefulness. (Kaminer, 1984: 44)

The unpaid nature of volunteering thus marks a distinction between it and paid labour that goes back to its emergence as something done by women. The distinction between collective good and private interest, which was and remains a feature of volunteering, derives from Victorian ideals of middle-class femininity: women were portrayed as being compassionate, caring, sensitive, self-sacrificing, gentle and patient. These features, together with their domestic training were presumed to suit them admirably for an unpaid vocation outside the home oriented toward repairing the human damage of industrialization (Prochaska, 1980). The ideology of the laissez-faire state meant that such a vocation was carried out through private societies that voluntarily assumed the responsibility of caring for the indigent poor.

As a consequence of the reorganization of production and the socialization of the reproduction of labour power in the wake of the Great Depression and the Second World War, statutory agencies increasingly assumed direct or indirect responsibility for providing and expanding the scope of services previously supplied by private societies (O'Connor, 1973; Finkel, 1977). In fact, it was only through the

gradual assumption of this role by the state that the voluntary sector itself was constructed as an exclusive social space defined more by what it is not -- ie., it is not the state sector or the business sector -- than what it is. Volunteering and the voluntary sector, however, continue to play a significant role in the implementation of policy concerned with service provisioning. Mobilization and organization of volunteer labour by social workers or other professionals has become a central issue in social policy discussions (Morris, 1969; N.A.C.V.A., 1977; Holme and Maizels, 1978; Labatt, 1980; Johnson, 1981). Volunteers fill a multiplicity of roles in both state and voluntary sector agencies that involve the delivery of resources to other people: volunteers help people improve their reading skills in literacy programmes (Elsey, 1981); they serve as directors of non-profit societies (Ostrander, 1980; Covelli, 1988); they deal with mental and physically disabled people (Ewalt, 1967); they work with prisoners (Kelly, 1972); they help the elderly; they work with children in and out of schools (Janowitz, 1965; Carter and Papper, 1974).

The role of volunteers in provisioning people with resources that might otherwise be unavailable to them belies the notion of voluntary action as something uninvolved with making a living. Volunteering is more than simply a function of individual will. I propose to understand it as a relation between individual and institutional actors whereby unpaid labour is mobilized and organized by state agencies, or by private-sector agencies on behalf of the state in order to deliver programmes and services to individuals and groups who are objects of state policy or clients of statutory agencies. The social significance of this relation is seen in the current debate about how best to deploy volunteers and voluntary agencies. The voluntary sector has long been considered to be more flexible and innovative than statutory service agencies in the delivery of services and thus better able to respond to the needs of service consumers (Mess, 1947; Rooff, 1957). As state managers seek to redefine priorities and restructure state-sponsored funding, "welfare pluralists"

argue for the gradual replacement of many government agencies with competing voluntary associations on the grounds of greater efficiency, responsiveness and greater participation by citizens via volunteer effort (Gladstone, 1979; Hatch, 1981; Savas, 1982). Kramer's (1981) study of voluntary associations engaged in providing social services suggests, however, that they follow the lead of state agencies in providing services and that professionalization and dependence on state funding leads to diminishing flexibility in relation to change and less responsiveness to client needs (see also, Ng, 1988).

As volunteer labour increasingly figures in the implementation of social policy, so does the work of the people who are paid to be responsible for mobilizing and organizing volunteers (Perlmutter, 1982). Without volunteers, many social workers and other social service professionals, together with the government or voluntary agencies which they staff, would be unable to fulfill their various missions. Volunteers have therefore become an object of study and management. Thus, an increasing volume of quantitative analyses have attempted to track the development of the volunteer population (cf. Anderson and Moore, 1974; Howarth and Secord, 1974; Lakes, 1976). There has also been an increased professionalization of volunteering, with creation of volunteer co-ordinator positions in both government and voluntary agencies as well as a mushrooming technical literature to deal with the problems of professionals handling volunteers (Schindler-Raiman, 1971; Scheir, 1972; Ilsley, 1981; Moore, 1985) and the issues that arise out of the use of volunteer labour, such as compensation for time spent volunteering (Carter, 1975; Kemp, 1976; Chapin, 1977)

Despite so much discussion about volunteering, there has been little concern with its dynamics as an everyday activity. Studies of the reproduction of "dominant-class ideology" among upper-class female directors of non-profit charity groups have begun to examine some dimensions of power in volunteering (Ostrander, 1980;

Covelli, 1988). These studies, however, do not focus on real people in concrete situations. They focus instead on the discourse of a certain kind of volunteers, namely upper-class women, in order to determine how such people perceive their volunteering. It is important see volunteering as a relationship between people and institutions in which *things get done* by those people and in which some people have more control over the situation than others. One way of doing this is to consider volunteering as work, the latter being what Raymond Williams (1976:281) has called "our most general word for doing something, and for something done."

Work

The power to determine which activities and practices constitute work and which do not has always been bound up with a process of domination, subordination and resistance. What is or is not labelled socially as work defines the ways in which people experience what they and others do to make their living. Such social definition also informs the meaning which making a living has for the people who do it. The prevailing definition of work in contemporary industrial societies, capitalist and socialist sees only those relationships and activities that are characterized by wage-labour (commodified labour) in the production of exchange-values (commodified goods or services) in the institution of the capitalist (and socialist) firm or enterprise (Friedmann and Havighurst, 1954; Bell, 1956; Bendix, 1956; Ritzer, 1972; Braverman, 1974; Burawoy, 1979, 1985). Other kinds of activities, tasks, practices and relationships are placed within static categories such as "leisure", "consumption" or "unemployment" (cf. Elkan, 1979; Lutz, 1980).

The categories that embody the dominant conception of work are engendered by what Schwimmer (1980) calls an economic ideology, a system of ideas about productive effort that measures values in exchange. Work is both "a resource and a commodity in processes of production . . . a means of participating in

society's economic product" and "*an ideological model for a large number of other activities about which people think in the same way as about 'real' economic work*" (Schwimmer, 1980:525, my italics). Work is thus discussed socially in terms of its instrumental value. On one hand it is necessary for the production and accumulation of material wealth; on the other hand, it is practically embodied in "jobs" or "employment" through which most people gain access to the cash that makes available the other subsistence resources they use to make a living. Even those analysts concerned with understanding work outside employment in terms of various economic sectors, identified variously as the "underground economy", the "black economy", the "informal economy" are primarily concerned with examining subsistence practices and relations (Gershuny, 1977, 1978, 1983; Gutmann, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980; Gershuny and Pahl, 1979; Pahl, 1980, 1984; Henry, 1982; Miles, 1983; Pinnaro and Pugliese, 1985).

Yet, even a preoccupation with the significance of jobs, employment, firms and commodities cannot totally obscure the non-material and expressive dimensions of work. Lutz (1980), for example, argues that economists need to understand work as an output, as well as an input, of production - as an end in itself. This will enable them to account for values which lie beyond the ones easily measured in terms of time or money. The moral component of employment is especially evident in studies of how employees experience and confer meaning on their jobs (Morse and Weiss, 1955; Weiss and Kahn, 1960; Thorns, 1971; Young and Willmott, 1973).

Ethnographic studies of the "informal" activities and relationships of employees have revealed the role that pilferage plays in promoting social integration and solidarity among workmates (Ditton, 1977b; Henry, 1978; Henry, and Mars, 1978; Mars, 1982). Such activities are underpinned by a system of informal moral regulation which has deep historical roots, at least in the case of England (Ditton, 1977a). Studies of unemployed people have shown that the

moral/expressive nature of employment is as significant as its instrumental and more subsistence-oriented dimensions (Jahoda, et al, 1971; Binns and Mars, 1984; Fryer and Ullah, 1987; Jahoda, 1987). Most such studies point clearly to the perception of employment as almost a moral necessity. Thus, when possession of a job is seen as morally valuable in and of itself, the lack of one can be devastating: "The unemployed man . . . will come apart if he has no control over the paying of his bills, no roses to grow, no community to join - if all his resources are in the single domain of employment" (Wallman, 1979a:22).

The centrality of employment, and other forms of work, lies in the access it provides to certain key categories of human experience: physical activity, social status, collective purpose, social contact and a time structure (Jahoda, 1982). That the institutional form through which these categories are made singularly accessible is today pre-eminently the economic firm or enterprise through which work is organized as wage-labour in the production of exchange-values points to the social dominance of that institution and those whose interests it serves. The equation of work with paid employment is thus an expression and a means of class domination since one class is defined in terms of its control of the prevailing institutional structures through which people organize and interpret their experience. Here, the notion of culture as hegemony is useful. Williams (1977) understands hegemony as

> a lived system of meanings and values - constitutive and constituting - which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives. It is, that is to say, in the strongest sense, a 'culture', but a culture which has also to be seen as the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes (Williams, 1977:109-110).

When someone "goes to work" everyday at the factory or at the office and helps produce goods or services for sale on the market, one is also producing use-values: one works to pay the mortgage, the rent, the food bill, but also to recreate

one's self-identity, one's relations with friends and acquaintances, one's status, one's habits and routines. Perception of, or speculation about, any feasible alternatives becomes difficult when almost all around you are doing the same thing, when the reproduction of self is intimately bound up with reproduction of specific patterns of social relations. The organization of people in terms of productive and reproductive processes is a fundamental social relation in contemporary society that gives rise to the patterns of class domination and subordination that are embedded in people's everyday activities and so are reproduced over time through people's experience of their daily life.

Relations of domination and subordination are, however, subject to varying degrees of resistance. If, for example, the unemployed man mentioned earlier chooses to remain in that condition and engages in long-term political activity or makes some part of his subsistence from his garden or doing odd-jobs for his neighbours rather than trying to find another job, the man may be able to put his life back together again. In fact, it is only when such alternatives to the dominant version of reality are realized as alternatives and articulated as such, that domination itself is recognized (Bourdieu, 1977). Effective resistance to relations of domination and subordination and its reproduction over time depends on the degree to which the kinds of experience to which wage work provides accessibility can be made available through other forms and organization of social practice. As Paul Willis (1972) shows in his ethnography of English school boys, resistance can often be incorporated into patterns of class subordination. The (re-) "discovery" of householding as a form of work and the organization of women in opposition to systems of gender domination that operate via the exclusion of housework from social recognition as work is perhaps the most salient example of this process (cf. Oakley, 1974a, 1974b; Armstrong and Armstrong, 1978; Luxton, 1980; Luxton, M.

and Rosenberg, H. 1986; Armstrong, 1984; Housewives in Training and Research, 1986).

Volunteering is one such form of work that is largely hidden from view by the convergent categories of economic and folk discourses. At East Line Centre, however, it is seen as work. To understand why this is so we need to take the claim seriously, on its own terms. In this thesis, I will use anthropological perspectives on work as a means of exploring and understanding what the volunteers do at East Line Community Centre. For anthropologists,

> work is the performance of necessary tasks, and the production of necessary values -- moral as well as economic. . . . Work is then not only 'about' the production of material goods, money transactions and the need to grow food and to cook the family dinner. It must equally be 'about' the ownership and circulation of information, the playing of roles, the symbolic affirmation of personal significance and group identity - and the relationship of these to each other (Wallman, 1979a:7).

Anthropologists are concerned with "the management of resources and the ascription of value to those resources" (Wallman, 1979a:7). We look at the things people do to make a living in everyday life, the ways they experience this and the meanings they attach to it. The resources that people use to make their living include land, labour and capital. Unless one is engaged in the process of mobilizing these for business purposes, however, they are often experienced and given meaning in everyday life as housing, goods and services, and money. To them, I will add more intangible items including time, information, identity (cf Wallman, 1979a, 1979b, 1984). The former three are what Wallman (1984) calls structural resources, in the sense that their relative accessibility constrains people's options. The latter set are organizing resources insofar as their use informs the perceptions which people have of their options[5].

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[5] See Firth (1951:35-40) for a discussion of the notion of structure as the patterns of constraint and organization as the patterns of choice and decision-making.

Another way of understanding 'organizing resources' is to see them as categories of experience to which work provides access. As already mentioned, Jahoda (1982) found from her studies of unemployed workers that employment provided access to physical activity, social contact, social status, collective purpose and a time structure. Other forms of work, whether they involve wage-labour or not, should provide similar access, in varying degrees. Such experiences are also resources that are produced through work and which can be drawn on in different situations; they have values attached to them by the people who so use them, as well as others.

By understanding work thus, we are led to an exploration of tasks and practices that are, in Wadel's (1979) words, "hidden" by the dominant categories of livelihood and subsistence. Wadel (1979) argues for an institutional definition of work

> that takes account of such work of everyday life that remains "hidden" and/or unacknowledged in both the lay and economists' view of work (p. 372).

According to Wadel, such work is hidden or obscured from view because the effort of people in the creation, maintenance and change of social institutions is generally received as secondary to their form and structure. For instance, looking at East Line Community Centre in the latter terms we see it primarily through the roles played by the paid employees and their relationships with their clients, on the one hand, and their employers and administrators on the other. It is a fairly static view that treats the Centre as a <u>fait accompli</u> rather than as an ongoing production that requires continuous effort.

Insofar as work is about the production and evaluation of resources, it is also about power and control. Resources are subject to control and even the values which are attributed to them, and the work which is involved in producing them, can be imposed or manipulated or defined in the interests of one group or individual

over another. As I have outlined above, the ability to label particular sets of activities and practices as work is a matter of class and gender domination and subordination. These kinds of relations are embodied in the everyday relationships through which work is carried out.

I will use the distinctions made by Richard Adams (1975), first, between control and power and, second, between authority and legitimacy, to understand how relations of power operate on an everyday basis through the work of the volunteers. In Adams' interpretation, control simply denotes the ability to manipulate objects in one's environment (including the social environment and people).

> "Power, however, is a social relationship that rests on the basis of some pattern of controls and is reciprocal. That is, both members of the relationship act in terms of their own self-interest and, specifically, do so in terms of the controls that each has over matters of interest to the other. The behavior that results from an awareness of power is such that the actor tries to calculate what the other individual might do that could affect the actor's interests" (Adams, 1975: 22).

While control is direct and non-reciprocal, power is based on people's mutual awareness of their interests and their ability to negotiate their relationship.

Power is generated through work relationships as people compete and/or co-operate for resources, or contest the evaluation of those resources, or challenge the control by one party over some resource, or accept that control as part of the legitimate order of things. In this conceptualization, authority is derived from power: people who have power are also said to have authority or to be authorities. The legitimacy of authority is negotiated and must be agreed upon by all concerned. A breakdown of legitimacy can lead to a direct challenge to control -- or it may lead *from* such a challenge -- if it involves a concomitant erosion in the power of the controlling party and an increase in the power of the challenger.

Volunteer work at East Line Community Centre will thus be conceived of in terms of the processes of resource production and allocation that go on there. I will be particularly concerned with what Wallman has named as "non-material resources"[6] and the ways in which they are controlled by various parties at the Centre, how this control is effected and to what ends this is done. It is this expressive, moral dimension of work which, I believe, is of particular import for an understanding of the construction and exercise of power through work. If power is a reciprocal relationship that must be negotiated by the parties involved, then it is contingent on people's experience and the meanings they give to it, on their perception of themselves in relation to others and on their relative evaluation of the patterns of control on which power is based. In the case of work, it is control over resources, human and otherwise, which provides the basis for power. Yet, because work is a complex collective process, control is never total nor complete; it can only be carried out through the negotiation of power relationships between all the parties involved.

I will consider the situation at the Centre in terms of a particular configuration of power relationships known as tutelage. Tutelage refers to a situation in which one group presumes to make decisions on behalf of and in the interests of another group which is deemed incapable of doing so for itself (Paine, 1977). The next chapter presents a discussion of the structural aspects of this situation in relation to East Line neighbourhood and the Community Centre. Before turning to this, I will briefly discuss the methodology used to gather and analyze the data in this thesis.

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[6] I am not entirely comfortable with the differentiation Wallman makes between material and non-material resources. It seems to me that identity, information and time are as much material items as are land, labour and capital. For the lack of better terminology, however, I will retain Wallman's distinction.

METHODOLOGY

When I began this thesis, my intended focus was going to be the households of unemployed people. I wanted to examine the ways in which people with no paid employment produced and managed the resources the they used to make a living. Thus, I arrived at the East Line Community Centre in pursuit of people without jobs. The neighbourhood seemed like the ideal setting in which to study the ways people make a living outside employment and the Centre seemed like a good place to begin exploring the neighbourhood and meet people who might serve as informants. A friend of mine was the Co-ordinator of the Centre's literacy programme and suggested I get involved as a volunteer tutor there. The transformation between my original goal and the final product took place when I decided that I would look at a specific group of people grounded in a specific kind of activity. The volunteers at the Centre thus became the focus of the thesis. As the research progressed, the institutional locus of my interest shifted away from the households of the volunteers to what they were doing in the context of the Centre. My intention to study work outside employment remained the same.

My fieldwork methods and experiences are detailed in Appendix A. Here, however, I would like to outline briefly the methodology and my (perhaps unusual) position at the East Line Community Centre. When I decided to focus on volunteers at the Centre, I asked the Director and the Volunteer Committee for their endorsement of the project. I was initially going to approach people to ask them to do interviews with me, but the Volunteer Committee suggested that I begin, instead, by asking people to complete a questionnaire. They thought people would be more comfortable meeting me through a formal mechanism such as this. I followed this advice and my initial connections with volunteers at the Centre came through the questionnaire.

Prior to this, I had been volunteering as a tutor in the Literacy Programme. My activities, however, had largely been confined to the third floor, where the Programme is located. The questionnaire enabled me to extend my social network and, in time, a number of people who completed the questionnaire became my close friends of mine. Three of these people eventually completed time-diaries for a four week period detailing their comings and goings over that time. Aside from these two research instruments, my primary means of gathering data was participant observation. The second floor lounge became a regular place for me to meet with friends and talk over coffee, sometimes for several hours at a time. As a volunteer I was an insider, despite the fact that most people met me initially as a researcher.

At the time I began to carry out formal research (as opposed to informal participation as a volunteer), the factional struggle described in chapter six erupted with a vengeance. A close personal friend of mine had been asked to join the board by one of the factions, and her acceptance of this invitation spurred my own interest in the political goings on at the Centre. Because of my own political experience, I was asked to become involved in the struggle to oust the faction which then controlled the board. Although I was sympathetic to the cause, I remained marginal to the struggle, preferring to be an observer rather than a direct participant. This became especially difficult when the Literacy Programme became directly involved in the struggle on the side of my friends.

Throughout this time, the focus of my research was shifting from the households of volunteers to the work of the volunteers in the Centre. Together with this shift, my ongoing experience of the political situation brought to me a realization of the contradictory nature of the institution of East Line Community Centre. In the following pages, then, I have used the concept of contradiction as the key dimension of analysis. Mao (1977) has written that the internal dynamics of an object are best understood in terms of the opposing forces of which it is composed.

In this case, I have sought to understand the dynamics of power and control at the Centre in terms of the oppositions created through work activities and relations.

<p style="text-align:center">* * * * *</p>

The rest of the thesis will take up the concepts outlined above. My primary concern will be to show how the production and allocation of resources - in a word, work - by volunteers, which generates relations of control and power, express particular tensions and contradictions that are based in the origins of the Centre in relations of tutelage and resistance. Each of the chapters which follow has been organized to outline a different dimension of this process. The following two chapters set the social and cultural and historical context in which East Line Community Centre operates. Chapter 2 will deal with the social construction of the neighbourhood and the Community Centre as objects of tutelage, through an examination of the statements of planners and other public officials; the chapter is also concerned with how that tutelage is implicated in the Centre's structure as a formal organization. In order to understand tutelage as a lived relation it is necessary to look at one of the defining features of everyday life in East Line neighbourhood and the Centre, which I call 'cash shortage'. Understanding how people cope with it provides us with a counterpoint to outsider perceptions of the people who use East Line Centre. Chapter 3, then, will examine in detail the relation between welfare involvement, cash shortage and volunteer involvement at East Line Community Centre.

Having established the context, I will proceed, in the next three chapters, to examine in detail the ways in which the contradictions that arise out of tutelage and resistance are expressed in practice. As agents of the local government which runs the Centre, the paid staff are also agents of tutelage. Their relationship with the volunteers can sometimes be fraught with conflict. In chapter 4, by way of an examination of the system of special purpose money by which volunteer work is

recognized, I will introduce the relationship between paid staff and volunteers. Tensions between the groups are embodied in this money system, but are not limited to it. In Chapter 5, I examine unmediated situations of conflict between staff and volunteers. While such conflicts are often spontaneous and are not especially organized, they are expressions of the structural contradiction between tutelage and resistance. Chapter 6 will provide a look at organized conflict arising from the same structural contradiction. Here, however, it is not the staff-volunteer axis which provides the main line of conflict. Rather, it is that of insider-outsider, determination of which is based on the 'work' people are seen to do at the Community Centre. Throughout each chapter, the emphasis will be on the process of resource production and allocation, the role of the volunteers in this and how all the situations arise from this process.

Chapter 2

The Structure of the Centre:
The City and the Association

I learned early on that volunteers socially construct the Centre as a formal organization in terms of two categories: "the City" and "the Association". The City is constituted by the paid workers; the Association is constituted by the volunteers and the clients they serve. The boundaries between these categories serve as the axis along which the contradiction between tutelage and resistance is embodied in the practices of everyday life at the Centre. The boundary shifts over situation and time. Although it is not apparent in or relevant to every situation, it is, nevertheless, a defining feature of the Centre for many people who are both insiders and outsiders. In this chapter I will look at the institutional parameters of the categories of City and Association before proceeding with an examination of the ways in which "the City" views East Line Community Centre and neighbourhood.

Unlike other community Centres, which are administered and operated[1] by "Community Centre associations" through contractual arrangements with the City Parks and Recreation Commission, East Line is an agency of the City Social Planning Department, which provides most of the funding for programmes and pays most of the staff and determines the structure through which the latter deliver the former. The staff serve as *resource keepers*: they control access to key skills[2], certain kinds of knowledge and other resources, such as admission to the

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[1] I differentiate between administration as planning and policy-making, and operation as the daily running of programmes and services.

[2] These kinds of skills are the result of formal and informal training in, for example, the creation and on-going administration and operation of social and cultural programmes, social services or inter-personal relationships.

building and the means to eject a client from the building if necessary, channels of communication to other state and para-statal agencies and the authority and legitimacy that accrues to their positions as employees of the state (Wallman, 1984). These are resources that are central to the administration and operation of the Centre and staff are therefore able to regulate, to a large extent, the ways in which clients use the Centre.

The Centre's staffing structure is hierarchical in more ways than one.[3] The Director is responsible to the Director of Social Planning, who is in turn responsible to the City Council. Under the Director are two 'senior' Programmers: one responsible for educational, seniors, youth and recreation programmes; the other responsible for social and cultural programmes, the volunteers and the kitchen. The Programmers' offices, together with that of the Director and the Centre Clerk, who provides clerical services, are on the third floor. Under the Programmers, both structurally and literally, are the Community Programming Assistants (CPAs), the Volunteer Co-ordinator, the Kitchen Co-ordinator who work largely on the building's second floor, supervising volunteers and the delivery of programmes there. A second Programmer in charge of education, who is responsible to the senior Programmer, oversees the work of part-time instructors and the literacy programme Co-ordinator. All these employees work on the building's third floor. On the first floor of the building are the staff who work at the information desk and handle security. They are classified as clerks. Maintenance staff work all over the building, but congregate in a staff room in the basement. The Literacy Programme Co-ordinator is paid by the City School

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[3] This was the staffing structure during the period in which I carried out formal research. It has since been substantially changed, with many new additions and the creation of new positions. The structure is still, however, hierarchical.

Board while the Librarian and other library workers in the first floor library are employees of the City Public Library.

The Association is the East Line Community Centre Association, but it has no contractual relationship with the City beyond reciprocal motions of mutual recognition recorded in the minutes of meetings. It is impossible to talk about the volunteers and their work, however, without understanding the Association. It is a locally-based organization which, despite the lack of a formal 'operating agreement'[4], is deeply involved in the administration and operation of quite a number of programmes at the Centre. As well, the volunteers are organized formally as a group through the Association, constituting a Volunteer Committee, and providing services to the Centre's clients through its members' work on its programmes.

When East Line Community Centre opened its doors in 1980, its Director stated that

> this is an education centre, but education is a political act that can only be effective if it is grounded in compassion . . . education . . . involves people learning about the relationship between power and powerlessness, in learning how to control their lives, in developing the ability to create or prevent change (quoted in Singh, 1980).

The Association was seen as a step to help "powerless" people gain power over their lives. It was constituted as a legal society in 1982, the third year of the Centre's operation, as a way of enabling the residents of the Neighbourhood and the users of the Centre to have input into its administration and operation. A person was, and is, eligible for membership in the Association if she or he is resident in the City or is employed in East Line neighbourhood and pays the (one dollar) initiation fee. The City, however, still maintained a hand in the affairs of the Association by reserving six of the 21 Directorships for its appointees; the other

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[4] This is the name given to the formal contractual arrangement between the City Parks and Recreation Commission and Community Centre associations.

fifteen were appointed by the City for the first year and thereafter elected by the members of the Association. Start-up funds were also provided by the City in the form of a trust fund. In the years that followed, the Association raised its own money through food sales, a bingo and rummage sales.

The Association's constitution is ambiguous about the organization's function. On one hand it states that the Association is to serve in an *advisory capacity* to the Centre's Director, who is the senior staff-person there, "on the formulation and implementation of all aspects of management policy, including budget, staffing, program development, use of the building and relationships of the facility to the community". On the other hand, the Association is supposed to: assist in the provision of "a wide range of social, recreational, cultural and educational services;" help maintain the programming and staffing directed at local residents; and "provide a forum where people can meet to discuss local area and community problems and to work together toward neighbourhood improvement." In short, the Association's purpose is to provide an arena for participation in the administration and operation of the Centre by the clients and the residents of East Line. Yet, while the Centre's administration is organized hierarchically, the Association tries to organize its members along egalitarian lines. The potential for conflict is thus evident.

When I arrived at the Centre in 1986 the Association had taken the more active course: rather than serving in a simply advisory capacity, it was involved with a number of programmes and committees at the Centre, each of which had either a Programmer, CPA or the Volunteer Co-ordinator attached to it as "staff liaison." The Association's committees included those for Community Relations, the Library, Finance, Programme, and Personnel; subcommittees of the Programme Committee included the Music Guild, the Volunteers, the Seniors, and the Pool Room. The Association also provided other programmes for which,

to my knowledge, there were no committees and so were administered by staff. These included the Kitchen and the Woodwork Shop. Programmes and committees that were defunct by 1986 included Boxing, the Theatre Guild, the Crescent newspaper and Childminding. The Association also employed a bookkeeper and the assistant co-ordinator in the Centre's literacy programme. The former was paid with Association funds, the latter with grant money from a private foundation and a local college.

All this activity, however, had its social and economic costs. By 1986 the Association and its Board was riven with conflict. The reason for this situation was widely interpreted as an outcome of the sizeable debt it had incurred as a consequence of its operations. Financial irresponsibility and embezzlement were presented as explanations for the organization's plight, and staff members were accused of mismanaging and stealing Association funds. Within a year of my arrival at the Centre, the Director of Social Planning suspended the City's relationship with the Association, placed a number of the committees and sub-committees under trusteeship and took over operation of some of the programmes.

At the suggestion of the Social Planning Department, the City Council authorized a special committee to investigate what happened at the Centre and make recommendations regarding the appropriate relationship between the Association and the City. The committee expressed its distress at "the enormous energy being drained away from staff and volunteer leaders by the internal tension and conflicts between members/groups within the Association and between Association and staff", as well as its "surprise to find that patrons and, in particular, Association Board members communicated directly with other senior City officials" (VSP, 1987:7). When it reported back to City Council, the committee recommended "that partisan political activity has no place at [the Centre] at any

level" and urged "all factions to drop their political posturing and get on with *the business of running an important service to the people of the area*" (VSP, 1987, my italics). By voting to accept this report, the City Council signalled a significant transformation in official perceptions of the Centre. No longer was it to be a place of empowerment; rather, it was to embody a means of providing services. The Centre must "be run . . . by skilled professionals to ensure effective management and program delivery". The Association was to be an integral part of this service provisioning insofar as it canvassed its members and advised the staff of their programming needs. In this way the Association would "provide the community with a voice in the affairs of" the Centre.

For this committee, then, the boundary between the City and the Association was marked by control over resources. The displacement of City control over certain key resources by the Association was seen to be the root of the problems at the Centre. Whether or not this was the case, it reflects a way of defining East Line and its residents that has been bound up with the on-going production of social life at the Centre. The perception that residents of the neighbourhood *lack control* over their own lives, and therefore require help from outsiders, unites the founding vision of 1980 and that of 1987 in the common language of tutelage. In each case, the clients of the Centre were being given something that other people thought was good for them: in 1980, it was power; in 1987, services. Turning to a brief outline of East Line's history and the ways municipal planners have seen it, we find this is not an unusual situation.

In a 1972 report that set the scene for the formation of the East Line Residents' Association (ELRA), the organization that initiated the campaign for a community centre in the neighbourhood, a planner wrote that

> having things done TO them and FOR them has been the lot of the
> [East Line] community for six decades. . . . not only should things
> be done FOR people but also WITH them. . . . Poor people lack

financial power, many elderly and poorly educated people lack know-how and energy. Unemployed people lack productive power. Alcoholic people lack, or often seem to lack, staying power. When large numbers of people sharing all or some of these characteristics are concentrated in a fairly small area, it is little wonder that community self-help is practically non-existent (VSP, 1973).

This statement marked a departure from previous official perceptions of East Line and its population which had been considered for the previous twenty-five years as a 'Skid Row.' Skid rows and "skid row man " are phenomena which arose as sociological constructions in the 1950s, although the neighbourhoods to which the label is attached are of much older historical significance. At one time they were transit centres and wintering quarters for countless migrant and seasonal workers in the western North America resource industries (Anderson, 1922). In the City, it was known as 'the loggers district' (Knight, 1980). Following the Great Depression and Second World War, a decline in demand for seasonal and migrant labour accompanied mechanization and unionization in resource industries, stabilizing employment and leading to an increasing material neglect of these areas (Lovald, 1960; Vanderkooi, 1973). The primary characteristic of the residents of such areas was considered to be 'disaffiliation' from kin and any other social commitments (Bahr, 1973). They were seen as an aging, mostly male population, poor, transient, mentally or physically disabled, and living in an area characterized by run-down, deteriorating housing and high petty-crime rates (cf. Bogue, 1963; Wallace, 1963, 1965). Alcoholism was viewed as a rampant problem (Wiseman, 1970; Blumberg, Shipley and Moor, 1971; Rubington, 1971; Blumberg, Shipley and Shandler, 1973;; Blumberg, Shipley and Barsky, 1978).

In the post-Second World War period, the state extended its involvement in redistribution of wealth and provision of a 'social safety net', including provision of services such as unemployment insurance, health facilities and insurance, family planning and subsidy payments to poor people (cf. Guest, 1985; Drover and

Moscovitch, 1979). Skid Rows rapidly became the object of state policy. A report

lamenting the large number of single, unemployed men attracted to East Line

because of its cheap accommodations and the availability of unemployed "relief"

noted the tendency for such men to have had "one or more court appearances

for intoxication in the last six month period" (Colcleugh, 1955). A decade later City

Council "Committee on Skid Row Problems", composed of local politicians and

planners, religious officials and philanthropists, reported in 1965 that East Line:

> has been described as the last place of refuge sought by men and a
> small number of women when all the other services of the
> community have failed to help them achieve a contented life. Skid
> Row is an island in a sea of respectability and the wants, desire,
> values and behavior of its inhabitants are not in step with the
> community at large (SSJC, 1965:5).

In short, the neighbourhood was defined as a marginal area populated by

deviants who didn't fit in anywhere else. It was a social problem that needed to be

"ameliorated" and "eliminated"; the people had to be "rehabilitated."

Another report noted four categories of people living in East Line: "The

Homeless Transient Man;" "The Old Age Pensioner;" "The Unemployable,

Disabled and Handicapped;" and "The Chronic Drunkenness Offender" (CPD,

1965). "Elderly and unemployable men on small incomes," "native Indian people"

and "drug addicts and people with other debilitating conditions" were also

reported to be living there (SSJC, 1965:15). The most important goal of the

solutions proposed for this problem was to provide "a chance of vocational and

physical rehabilitation *to reduce their dependency on the public purse*" (SSJC,

1965:1, my italics). By 1971, when 41% of the residents were on social assistance

and another 30% on pensions, only 7% of those surveyed mentioned more

employment as a change they wanted to see in the area. Even fewer spoke of

rehabilitation or training centres. What they did mention was better housing, traffic

and pollution control, control of drunks, indoor and outdoor meeting areas, public housing and control of young people (VSP/CD, 1971).

Such a canvassing of the residents signalled a rearrangement of the official construction of East Line. This was the beginning of urban renewal in North American cities and in many places, the "revitalization" of Skid Row did not include the people who lived there (cf. McSheehy, 1979; Miller, 1982). In the Western Canadian city in which East Line is located, however, redevelopment occurred simultaneously with the rise of a municipal reform movement that was part of the national emergence of 'citizen participation.' One study of the impact of redevelopment on Neighbourhood residents and their housing situation noted that as well as "individuals who live in the area primarily because they are disorganized and have a drinking problem", others "are there primarily because they are poor and do not have enough income to live elsewhere [or] choose to live there for personal reasons" (Gutman, 1971:19). The diagnosis of the problem of Skid Row was beginning to change from a focus on individuals' personality disorders to a concern with social inequality, inadequate housing and poverty and powerlessness.

The new orientation facilitated the creation of the E.L.R.A. in 1973. The City provided money to pay an organizer, a local resident, to organize East Line residents and to advocate on their behalf for improved living conditions. An earlier study of housing conditions in the neighbourhood and a 1973 federally funded local newspaper helped crystallize local indignation at the rapidly deteriorating housing conditions. Fires ravaged hotels, killing some residents; other residents died drinking rubbing alcohol and Lysol house cleaner; still others died from knife-wounds. Although the E.L.R.A. alienated a number of other already existing local agencies, such as religious missions, it was immensely successful in organizing

residents around issues like bylaw enforcement in hotels and rooming houses[5] and alcohol abuse by merchants selling aftershave and other substances. In 1974, the E.L.R.A. turned its attention to the lack of recreational and social space in the neighbourhood.

The building in which the Centre is now located had then been vacant for over five years. Originally a library, it had been temporarily converted into the municipal museum when the library was relocated to a more fashionable district in the late 1950s. The museum, too, was relocated in 1968 and the building stood empty in 1974. Convincing the City to renovate it as a community centre was no easy task. Various proposals for the buildings use were put to City Council, including offices for City Health Services renovation for use as a police club and gymnasium[6], renovations for private and government office-space, and demolition for a parking-lot. The proposal to turn it into a community centre, although supported by the police and the Social Planning Department, met with opposition from some municipal politicians. The mayor said the costs of renovating the building for this purpose was "totally unjustified" (Persky, 1980). The chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission said spending money on such a project would be "like pouring money down rat holes" and an alderman announced that "there is not a shred of evidence that there is a need for a library" (Persky, 1980; Singh, 1980). After two years, City Council voted to retain the building and appointed a committee composed of representatives from neighbourhood residents' and cultural organizations and City agencies to begin planning for a community centre. This committee was the predecessor of the Association.

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[5] Particularly important in this regard were the installation of sprinkler and fire alarm systems to prevent so many deaths in the old, wooden buildings and hot and cold running water for the residents.

[6] The police station is half a city block from the Centre.

The Centre is the product of a struggle *by* and *on behalf of* local residents for increased provision of services to the people of East Line. It is one outcome of a complex process involving the interaction of tutelage and resistance that began many years before the Centre was conceived and is continuing still within the Centre and outside it. The people of the neighbourhood have been and are today considered by planners and politicians as marginal economically, socially and culturally. The Centre was seen was a means of bringing them into the mainstream. The Director of Social Planning said that at the time of the Centre's opening,

> the redevelopment of the [Centre] building has, for a long time, been considered an important component of the physical, social and economic revitalization of the [Neighbourhood] (quoted in Singh, 1980).

While the creation of the Centre is an indication of official intentions to involve the residents more directly with what happens in the neighbourhood, control still remains with outsiders who perceive residents in terms of characteristics such as

> physical, emotional or psychiatric handicaps . . . a 'hard to house' . . . a low-income population that has difficulties fitting into society's norms. . . . The residents of this area are . . . mostly elderly, single and low-income. . . . there is a continuing need to orient the services to the specific needs of the various resident population sub-groups (VPD, 1982).

Planners and politicians thus see the Centre as a means of providing residents with the services they need. It is intended to address a situation that is defined in terms of particular sets of *needs*. But, the situation is not defined entirely by planners and politicians, for the Centre is also the product of a struggle by residents and their allies to get access to the services and other resources they *wanted*. Thus, while the Centre has created conditions for extended tutelage and control, it has also created the conditions which have made possible resistance to them by promoting the participation of clients.

Chapter 3

Broke But Not Busted

Regardless of the way in which East Line neighbourhood has been posed as a problem, an important characteristic of the problem has been the low cash income of the residents of East Line. Cash is a fundamental resource in modern life, particularly in cities, where access to food, shelter, clothing and so many other resources are contingent upon its availability to individuals and households. Most volunteers and other clients at the Centre regularly experience a shortage of cash resources that is so closely bound up with the welfare system that the two phenomena cannot be considered separately. People often use the resources offered by the welfare system because they are low on cash. The amounts of cash made available through welfare dependence, however, are so low that surplus cash is an impossibility unless a person is able to raise money in other ways as well. As a consequence, people who are dependent on welfare are also usually short of cash. After looking at a specific incident that occurred as a result of a shortage of cash on the part of an individual, I will look at how welfare influences cash shortage and at how these affect people's subsistence activities. Finally, I will begin to look at what cash shortage and welfare involvement mean for the volunteers and what they do at the Centre.

At the beginning of the New Year a volunteer, whom I will call Sharon, asked me to help her study mathematics. Although we planned to start shortly thereafter, our work was delayed when she was barred from the Centre for allegedly taking money from the concession she was working at. This was not an unusual allegation; in fact the last time I had seen Sharon we talked of some recent incidents involving other volunteers who had taken money or coffee tickets. The same day I heard what happened, there was a note for me at the front desk. It was from Sharon

and she wrote that I would probably be hearing some bad things about her but not to believe them until I heard her side of the story. She asked me to come and visit her because, since she was barred from the Centre and so had nothing to do but sit in her room, she was "bored to death." It was also the middle of a five-week welfare period, so Sharon didn't have any money to do anything.

The circumstances that led to this situation arose because Sharon was responsible for setting up the concession for the Volunteer Committee's weekly Saturday night fundraiser. She had a $30.00 "float" with which to buy supplies for the concession and to make change for cash purchases but she did not show up that night to set up or operate the concession. I was later told that at the monthly Volunteer Committee meeting the following day, someone pointed out that this was the third time such an incident had occurred and it shouldn't be allowed to happen again. Although other people argued Sharon's case at this meeting, it was decided that the Committee would ask her to appear before the Members' Rights Committee -- the committee that dealt with such situations -- to explain her actions. I did not attend the meeting, but I was told by at least two people who were there, when I began to make inquiries about her whereabouts, that Sharon was barred until she "went to Members' Rights."

When I visited her, Sharon maintained that she had been sick and simply failed to show up to carry out her shift, rather than having stolen the $30.00 as was claimed. She was angry at being accused of stealing, particularly at one person who she considered a friend of hers, who had been prominent in making the accusation. She was also worried about what she would do with herself. Normally Sharon spent all her time at the Centre; all her friends were there and if she wanted to see them, she had to wait for them to come to her room. The situation was ultimately resolved in Sharon's favour and she returned the $30.00 for use on another "float." Moreover, she visited the Director of the Centre, who told her in no uncertain terms that she

was *not* barred and that only staff, not the Association or any of its committees, had the power to bar an individual from the building. A month later, Sharon received the Volunteer of the Month award in recognition of her work at the Centre.

This kind of situation is not unusual at the Centre. Volunteers who work on the concessions are often suspected by others of taking money. This is because shortage of cash among the households of volunteers, and its corollary, involvement with the welfare system, are common features of life at the Centre. This generates a situation in which some people are tempted to take money if it seems possible to do so but there is often a general suspicion that others are taking money which is considered to be collective property. A man who insisted to me that Sharon had spent the thirty dollars drinking in the bar with her friend Leigh was known for taking one of the Centre's guitars to the pawnshop to get drinking money. When such actions are discovered by the staff, people are suspended from working with cash or perhaps even barred from the building if the situation is considered serious enough. The amounts of cash involved are never very large, but some people still risk being barred to get it.

The idea of a cash shortage was introduced by Riches, (1975) as a means of underlining the processes by which differential spheres of exchange are generated. In his account of the Eskimo community at Port Burwell, N.W.T., Riches shows how a shortage in the availability of general purpose money leads to the development of other more limited purpose media. In this case there was not a lack of wealth within the community but rather a lack of means of exchange which in turn led to the development of alternative forms of exchange. In the case of the Centre's client population, cash is extremely limited. But unlike the people of Port Burwell Bay, the Centre's clients have no wealth to be exchanged by alternative means. They are, to use Sansom's (1980) words, "people without property." Hence, their involvement with the welfare system.

Lack of property and the shortage of cash can be traced to the non-employment of members of a household. Since jobs, or dependence on someone with a job, are the primary way in which people living in industrial/market societies mobilize cash and credit - and with them, get access to items such as food, housing, clothing - lack of a job will generally restrict this accessibility (Macarov, 1980). According to the 1981 Canada Census[1], over half the people of East Line were not included in the labour force because they had retired, had never had a job or had given up looking for one. Another 15% were unemployed, and one projection based on this figure put the unemployment rate by 1985 at 30%. In other words, over two thirds of the population of the East Line neighbourhood had no employment in 1980 and it was estimated that figure would reach three quarters within five years. Households often become involved with individual and institutional welfare agents[2] because of a non-involvement with employment and a consequent shortage of cash resources; but whatever the reason for welfare involvement, a cash shortage in the household seems, in turn to be its usual consequence.

While I was doing my research, in the fall and winter of 1986-87, welfare-based monthly income for a single person was between $359 and $439, depending on a person's employable status.[3] During the same period, however, the absolute

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[1] The census is based on data gathered the year before. All figures from the 1981 Canada Census are therefore for 1980.

[2] An individual welfare agent is a social or financial aide worker. An institutional welfare agency is a set of socially recognized rules and relationships through which individual agents and their clients are organized; one example of this is the Ministry of Human Resources which administers the welfare system. Although individuals are often taken as representative of the institution by their clients, they do vary from office to office, as I was told by many people. The fact that people distinguish between good, bad or indifferent welfare workers depending on the treatment they receive seems to indicate some degree of differentiations between individual and institutional actors.

[3] The legislation which provides for welfare assistance specifies two categories of clients: one is composed of those people who are deemed to be able to work at a job and therefore employable. The other is made up of people who for one reason

minimum living expenses, *excluding rent*, ranged from $238 per month for a single person household, to $448 for two people.[4] The welfare rates cited above included an allowance of $209 for rent, leaving the recipient with between $150 and $250 for food and other expenses. Since the rental portion of the welfare rate is fixed and a recipient does not get the difference if her or his rent is *less* than the maximum available, it is clear that most single people will experience a shortage of cash on a monthly basis. The shortage for a two person household will be even more acute. For an adult couple the money left over after rent is paid ranges from $255 to 335 each month; for a single parent and child, this figures goes from $317 to $352. Thus, if people become dependent on the welfare system because they are short of cash, such involvement is likely to perpetuate that condition.[5] The 1981 Canada Census revealed that over 60 percent of the households in the area around the Centre had an annual income of less than $10,000. The median income for women was between $4,048 and $5,020; for men, it was between $5,066 and $5,697. Seventy-five percent of the residents of East Line lived in single-family households and 80% of these were classified as"low income", compared to only 36% for all of Western City. Although there are no statistics on welfare involvement, a 1982 survey found that 90% of all lodging house tenants were in receipt of some form of income assistance,

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or another, ie., single-parent, disability, are considered unable to hold a job and are therefore unemployable.

[4.]The figures on the cost of living were derived by applying the Consumer Price Index to a study conducted in 1987 by the Social Planning and Review Council of B. C.(SPARC, 1988) By calculating the difference between the Consumer Price Index in December 1987, when the SPARC study was conducted, and the C.P.I. in December 1986, which is the middle of my research period, I was able to figure the relative cost of living for the latter month. The formula applied was (CPI Dec. 86 x Dec. 87 Living Costs)
$$\text{Dec. 87 CPI}$$

[5] There are many theories of welfare involvement and its consequences. Piven and Cloward (1971) offer the view that welfare rates are deliberately kept low in order to frighten working people into maintaining employment at any cost.

ranging from welfare to old-age pension to handicapped pension to workers'
compensation to unemployment insurance[6].

Many people attempt to raise cash by other means in order to cope with this
kind of situation. I met a number of people at the Centre who devised other options
to supplement their welfare cheque. A number of men had skills that could be
applied on a regular basis to pick up some extra money. Musicians are the most
singular example of this - the Musicians' Association was very active when I was
doing my research and some people who were involved with it were able to parlay
their musical ability into payment for performing at events in the Centre as well as
at other agencies in East Line. This kind of activity rarely paid much money, and a
couple of the musicians I knew complained to me about working for $30 per
performance. By belonging to the national music composers organization, it is also
possible for a musician to collect royalties for playing his or her own music. For
those musicians who belong to this group, playing their own music at as many events
as possible helped them earn a little extra income.

I also knew a couple of men who used skills they had learned through
previous employment to fix things for friends. One of them told me he was paid to
set up a sound system in a local bar. This kind of activity is known as "working under
the table" and entails working for wages without reporting by either the employer
(to the Federal Government's Revenue Department) or the employee (to the
revenue department, the Unemployment Insurance Commission or any welfare
agency). One friend of mine had once built his own house. Putting the skills he had
learned doing this together with what he had learned at his regular job as a painter
on large construction projects enabled him to make some extra money. His
knowledge of electronics meant that he was often called upon by individuals, and

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[6] This figure is based on a survey of lodging house tenants, which found that 90%
of them got their cash income from income assistance.

sometimes even local agencies, to repair small items such as tape recorders or audio speakers for which he would be paid. By doing such repairs at the Centre, he was also able to earn extra coffee tickets. He was also able to get inexpensive, broken items, such as small electrical appliances, and repair them for his own use. The man also was sometimes able to get small jobs doing residential painting as well, but these jobs were infrequent.

Some people actually worked "above" the table but did not inform welfare of their job. This is risky because the penalty for getting caught ranges from becoming the object of criminal charges to being forced to "pay back" the welfare department.[7] One young man was employed on a part-time basis all summer while still collecting a welfare cheque. He claimed that he then managed to collect Unemployment Insurance and welfare at the same time. Such schemes, however, are rare. More often people simply keep on getting their welfare cheque after they find part-time employment. A woman I know was employed at a local agency for a number of months without notifying welfare. She eventually lost this job due to illness. Once she was unemployed, however, someone informed welfare that she had been employed while still getting a monthly cheque. The result was that fifteen dollars was subsequently deducted from each of her cheques until she had "paid back" the amount of money she earned at her part-time job.

Most people pursue extra money through more conventional and less risky activities. A few people sometimes sell their prescription medication to those who want it for recreational use; others might sublet their rooms to prostitutes for a few hours. The lending and borrowing of money provides a means by which people can "bank" money by lending it to friends in the knowledge it will be returned later. As

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[7] This actually happened to a friend of mine who had been laid off from her job when someone informed welfare she had been working. So instead of paying welfare back with money from her paycheque, she was obliged to pay it from her welfare cheque.

one person told me, "If I see you on cheque day and give you fifty bucks and I know I can get it back in two weeks when I'm broke its just like having money in the bank." By borrowing money, people can extend their purchasing power through the latter half of the welfare period; the problem with this, however, is that the borrower must use a substantial portion of his or her welfare cheque to pay off debts and is therefore put in the position of borrowing money again.

"Garbage-picking" is also a means of getting extra money and perhaps goods that wouldn't be available. This activity is well-known among people who live in the East Line neighbourhood, although those who engage in it often go far afield to do so. Garbage-picking involves sifting through the garbage bins in the alleys behind apartment buildings, offices and businesses. People look for whatever is salvageable and can be used or sold. Returnable cans and bottles are the most common items retrieved from garbage bins.[8]

Barry is a volunteer who is something of an expert at this. He lives alone in a small housekeeping suite and makes extra money by playing music and seeking temporary employment. Picking through garbage bins helps provide him with some extra cash as well as items that he uses himself. Barry walks along a regular route that takes him by some bins he knows might contain useful things. One is used by an electronics store and he frequently found saleable items there until his customers began to take them into the same store for repair. The store put a lock on the bin after that. In the past, Barry has found things ranging from stereos to computer disks. Sometimes he tries to sell them to friends, relying on his social network to spread the news that he has something for sale. Other times, he takes things to a nearby "flea market"[9]. It costs money to sell things at a flea market, however, and

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[8] Canadian laws provide for mandatory refund for beverage cans and bottles. This means people can collect them and trade them for cash at businesses that do such trades.

since Barry has no car, he has to move everything by hand over a relatively long distance so he only does this when he has something that is bound to fetch a good price. As more and more people undertake to look through garbage bins, competition for available resources increases and garbage-picking becomes a less attractive option to help supplement cash income. As Barry told me, "There are so many people doing it now you have to get up at six in the morning to make it worth your while."

All these kind of pursuits are marginal, at best, and usually sporadic. I met no one who earned more money at extra-welfare activities than they did from welfare, whether it was through performing odd-jobs, under or over the table employment or garbage-picking. Through such means a person can get a small amount of money that makes life a little easier with regard to cash purchases, but rarely can they supplant or replace welfare income with that from another activity, unless the latter is a regular full-time job. The amount of cash made available by a welfare cheque, even if it is supplemented by other pursuits, is so small that the possible goods and services that can be gotten are very limited. Rent can be paid, and, if there is some place to keep them, groceries can be bought. However, much of the housing stock in the area is not equipped with either refrigerators or cooking facilities, so groceries are not always a realistic option. In any case, the use of the cash obtained through welfare is most often a zero-sum game: an expenditure on one item precludes expenditures on others. In response to my question about what "living on welfare" is like, someone told me, "Welfare isn't so bad. It gives you lots of time. You can come and go as you please. You can do art or music. The only time it gets bad is when you

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[9] A flea market is a place where sellers pay to set up a table to display items for sale. In Western City and its suburbs they are usually in the parking lots of shopping malls, church basements or, more recently, in buildings reserved for that purpose. The flea market Barry used was in the latter.

want to do something and you need money to do it. That's the only thing about working steady, you always got money."

Time is certainly something that people on welfare "have" a lot of. Time and again, when I asked volunteers why they worked at the Centre, the response was "it's better than sitting in my room staring at four walls," or "it beats walking around the streets all day, which is what I'd be doing if I wasn't here." The welfare process is organized on monthly cycles: on the last Wednesday of each month, cheques are issued at the offices of the welfare department, although some people receive their cheques by mail the day before. The significance of this monthly cycle for the ways in which individuals and households organize their time cannot be understated, for the cash provided through welfare provides access to certain other resources that are vital to their well-being, and the small amount of cash means that each household needs to look for ways to supplement the meagre resources accessed via welfare cash.

People thus organize their lives around the availability of resources in relation to the monthly welfare cycle. This engenders a distinctive pattern of time use: a period of almost frenzied activity begins on cheque day and continues for about four or five days, as people pay their bills and debts, buy things they need, pay their rent and socialize in the bars and restaurants. The Centre is often quiet for these initial few days but begins to fill up again once they are over. During this time, some volunteers often put in extra shifts as other people don't or can't show up. Others will show up at the Centre to pay off any debts they may have, and then leave to get other things done. However, once cash begins to run short, they are back at the Centre on a daily basis, volunteering or socializing.

Time is not the only dimension of people's social participation constrained by their involvement with welfare and the consequent lack of cash that it brings. If a person actually does provide food for him or herself, that will make it impossible to

associate with people in the bar or do other things that require the use of cash unless someone else is buying. But spending money on beer or anything else may entail a food shortage later on. I knew many people who were faced with such a trade-off between sociability and subsistence on a monthly basis. Sociability often won out at the expense of subsistence. Even someone with no intention of drinking more than two or three beers might finish a night in a local bar having spent a quarter to a third of their welfare cheque there. Material goods and services are therefore not all to which cash provides accessibility. The prestige value of goods and services, for example, is often as significant as their subsistence value. Other "non-material" values can be equally important depending on the situation and context (cf. Douglas and Isherwood,1979; Beaudrillard, 1981; Wallman, 1984). The Centre is one way for people to avail themselves of not only subsistence resources but also resources that help them organize their livelihood, such as prestige and status, time, information, friendship and sociability.

Volunteer work is one way that people can "plug in" to the Centre, availing themselves of resources not otherwise accessible to them because of a lack of cash. Although some volunteers can garner extra money or other things through their work (eg., the musicians, mentioned above), most of the material resources available to volunteers are also available to clients who do not volunteer. However, the volunteers have the added resource of social status. Volunteering enables people whose primary income source involves them in relationships of domination/subordination to carve out a sphere of autonomy which offers a respite from low-status, low-power roles such as welfare client, hotel or rooming-house tenant, food-bank recipient, medical or legal client.

Involvement with the welfare system, although not universal, is widespread enough that everyone at the Centre is affected by the way the system operates. Not only does such involvement ensure cash shortage, it also confers on the client a

moral inferiority that is an ideological expression of the intrinsic value and worth of employment (cf. Beck, 1965; Flett, 1979; Macarov, 1981). The relations between the agents of the welfare system, social workers and financial aid workers, and their clients, are structured so that the latter are subordinate to the former. This is morally legitimated by the fact that the welfare client is not employed and therefore less responsible for his or her own life (Piven and Cloward, 1971). While welfare involvement is a reciprocal relationship between client and worker, as Handelman (1975) shows, clients are certainly at a power disadvantage in relation to their worker. Unless a client knows all the rules, workers can and in many cases do run roughshod over him or her. I met a number of people whose workers refused to authorize payment for new glasses when old ones were lost or broken.

Such experiences often provide important topics of conversation around the Centre. Welfare workers and welfare offices are rated according to how they have met people's needs, how flexible they are in dealing with emergencies as well as their general attitude toward dealing with clients. Most people have few good things to say about either their welfare workers or the offices from which they work. Some women at the Centre have had their children taken from them by welfare authorities. Other people report difficulties getting emergency money for special items. One woman who frequented the Centre had to ask her doctor to intervene with her worker before she was able to get a new winter coat at a time when she had a chest infection. Some people are deemed too irresponsible to handle their money themselves and are thus "administered" so that their rent is paid directly to the landlord and small amounts of spending money are made available on an occasional basis. Sometimes, welfare cheques are lost or stolen and it takes time to replace them. In one instance, a woman's cheque was lost in the mail and, because her worker was on vacation, was not replaced for two weeks; in the meantime, she was without any money except what she could borrow. The same person had a similar

experience when a man she was living with left town with her rent money. Fortunately one of the desk clerks at the hotel where she was living was a friend so she was able to postpone paying her rent for a few days until other friends helped her gather enough money to "cover" it. The public health nurses subsequently contacted her welfare worker to insist that she be given enough money with which to buy food.

Volunteer work offers the possibility of reversing this relationship: while welfare involvement is based on a relationship between a social worker and a household, and thus is intrinsically individualistic and isolating, volunteering is a collective activity and effort; receipt of welfare assistance effectively defines a person as a non-worker while volunteering at the Centre provides social recognition for one's work; involvement in the welfare system means giving up control over large areas of one's life in favour of rules laid out via legislative and bureaucratic procedures which are often perceived by clients as being administered in an arbitrary and off-handed fashion, but volunteering gives a person the chance to participate in the rule-making and perhaps even to (help) change the rules. In many ways, the Centre serves the same purpose as do bars in Elijah Anderson's A Place on the Corner (1976:3-4). It is the centre of a social scene - or a number of different scenes - and a place for collective involvement. Such involvement is one way of coping with a cash shortage, primarily by reasserting some of the personal autonomy that is given up through involvement with welfare.

This autonomy, however, is not absolute. For instance, the relationship of volunteers to the paid workers is contradictory in nature. Volunteers are not only co-workers but also clients who participate in a *volunteer programme* that is one of the services delivered to clients through the Centre. Moreover, some of the resentment on the part of clients that arises out of the welfare relationship is sometimes projected onto the professional staff at the Centre. That the volunteers

and staff stand in a contradictory relationship to each other is an expression of the fundamental structural contradiction which has underpinned the ongoing production of the Centre from its inception as an idea. The attempt by outsiders to organize residents according to what the former perceive to be in the latter's interests, and the attempt by residents to organize themselves according to their own priorities inevitably come into conflict at various times and situations. In the next chapter, I will further explore this contradiction by examining its practical expression in the system of recognizing volunteers' work.

Chapter 4

"Do you want me to sign your card?": Coffee tickets and social solidarity

Many of the tensions and conflicts generated by the general shortage of cash among the households of East Line's clientele are expressed through the coffee ticket system. In short, coffee tickets are the primary way in which volunteers' work at East Line is recognized. These are strip tickets that can be exchanged for food and drink at most of the concessions that operate at the Centre. Yet, given the situation and context at the Centre, the system of coffee tickets has become something more than simply a means of recognizing the volunteers' efforts. In this chapter I will explore some of the implications which this form of remuneration of unpaid workers has for their relationships with each other and with the paid workers at East Line.

Coffee tickets demarcate people's volunteer work from their other activities at the Centre. They symbolize the value of volunteer work and confer recognition of this value on the part of people who do the work. As such, they also serve both as a potential means of control by the staff over the volunteers as well as a means of resistance to that control. Coffee tickets are a special purpose money (Bohannan, 1955; Dalton, 1965; Bohannan and Bohannan, 1968) that are only available officially to volunteers and can only be used inside the Centre at the designated concessions. The worth of the tickets, as their name suggests, has traditionally been equal to the price of one styrofoam cup of coffee, but they can be exchanged for most things available at the second floor concession. Items available there range from coffee to juice to breakfast cereal and toast, baked goods, sandwiches and soup, all prepared in the kitchen[1]. Volunteers work in shifts of up to four hours and, at the time of my

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[1] At that time, weekly breakfasts and special dinners were inexpensive but usually required cash. They were also somewhat sporadic in nature. Since the research

fieldwork, were entitled to two tickets for each hour of work to a maximum number of eight tickets. Although I knew a number of people who worked more than four hours per day, none received more than eight tickets.[2]

The tickets express more than the economic valuation of volunteers' effort that is implied by their equivalence with the price of a cup of coffee. They serve as a kind of community currency that facilitates the flow of non-commercial values and promotes social integration. This occurs through a process of informal movement. Coffee tickets represent a phenomenon similar to that of cash, credit and gambling in Riches (1975) northern community: where there is a shortage of cash in a cash-based exchange system, alternate systems of money and exchange are likely to develop to facilitate the flow of goods and services.

The system of ticket allocation is set up in such a way as to ensure that only volunteers who have done their work can collect them. Ticket collection is also monitored through a written record. Throughout the time of my research, the Centre's elected Community Association was responsible for regulating the ticket system because the kitchen was an Association programme and the Volunteer Committee, as a constituent part of the Association, sponsored the tickets. It was up to the non-profit Association to set the value of coffee tickets and to determine the number of tickets given to volunteers for their work. However, the staff of the Centre, who are employees of the city and not of the Association, are responsible

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was conducted, breakfasts prepared in the kitchen, consisting of eggs or omelets, bacon, potatoes and sausages and toast have become a regular weekly or twice-weekly feature at the Centre, as have nightly dinners prepared by volunteers. Although both still require cash, there is presently some discussion of making them available in exchange for coffee tickets.

[2] As we shall see below, there was one exception to this rule. However, in my experience it was the only exception. As I write this paper more than a year later, a decision has been made to give more tickets to people who work "double shifts." This is a move that has been advocated by a number of volunteers for some time; it had been said previously that people wouldn't work more than four hours because they didn't get anything out of it. At least one person who said this to me frequently put in more than four hours of work.

for enforcing the rules determined by the Association. It is the staff who supervise volunteers and who initial the white card certifying that a person has completed a shift of a specified number of hours at a particular job.

The staff also oversee the distribution of tickets. A staff person responsible for the second floor - usually a Community Programming Assistant - brings an envelope with coffee tickets to the second floor reception desk at the beginning of each volunteer shift. Together with the authorized volunteer who is working at the desk, the CPA counts out a number of tickets and marks down their serial numbers. As volunteers come to the second floor reception to get their lot of tickets, the volunteer "on" the desk takes their white card and writes the name, job, hours worked and initials of the authorizing staff-person and finally, the number of tickets each person receives. At the end of each volunteer shift on the desk, the volunteer and the CPA check to make sure that the number of tickets given out on paper matches that gone from the strips of tickets. It is also possible to ascertain that no one is getting more than his or her allowable share of tickets, perhaps by working two four hour shifts and getting different staff people to sign different cards. Volunteers are only allowed to get two tickets per hour for one four-hour shift per day. Any time worked over four hours is not remunerated. And tickets must be collected on the day which the volunteer worked the shift.

It is thus impossible for any volunteer to amass a large number of coffee tickets unless that person does not use them. And most people who volunteer are too short of cash to do that. In fact the opposite problem of accessibility to an adequate number of tickets more often prevails. Some of my early fieldwork experiences with people at the Centre took place during the time breakfast was being served at the second floor concession. I would arrive shortly after the Centre opened at 10 AM, get a coffee and stake out a seat from which to watch and listen to the action. It didn't take me long to realize that coffee tickets played an important

role in the interactions of at least one group of men who were meeting on a frequent basis for coffee, breakfast and conversation on the Centre's second floor. Five of these men I saw almost every morning that I was there. Even before I met them, I knew that two - Al and Herron - wrote poetry while Al, Mike and Ed played and wrote music and Herron was also an artist. Another man who met with them regularly, Steve, was a night clerk at a hotel a couple of blocks from the Centre. Other men would meet with them over coffee or food, but these five formed something of a regular social circle.

Coffee tickets were instrumental in these morning gatherings because they usually enabled the men to get coffee and whatever breakfast items were available. In fact they weren't around as much during welfare week, when they had money. All but Steve were on welfare and volunteered at the Centre in various capacities: Al, Mike and Ed got tickets for some of their musically-oriented work and together with Herron, they worked on the (as then recently established) newsletter. For their work they received tickets they could exchange for coffee, juice or food at the concession. As the end of each month drew near and the money from welfare ran out, the use of tickets as a means of getting coffee and food grew in importance. The problem was that the direct availability of tickets was restricted by the rules governing their allocation. Coffee tickets could often make the difference between eating breakfast or not. However, none of them had "regular" shifts to do at the Centre. The three who were musicians got tickets only sporadically for that work. However, Al and Herron managed to avail themselves of a more or less steady supply of tickets by their work on the newsletter.

The newsletter had been started under the auspices of the Association. The organization took advantage of a government programme that offers grants as a means of providing people on unemployment insurance with additional benefits in return for work at a sponsoring agency or community group. An application was

made to the state employment agency for a grant to "hire" someone to organize a newsletter operation for the Association, its membership and the clients at the Centre. The man hired was a journalist named Tim who had recently finished a book about unemployment and poverty in Canada. Although he was considered at one level as an employee, and therefore staff, he identified more with the volunteers who worked with him on the newsletter than he did with the staff. He felt that the system of coffee tickets provided the staff with a means of controlling the volunteer workers and so he had no qualms about signing the cards of newsletter volunteers each day for a four-hour shift. The rationale for this was that, first, volunteers were controlled through the tickets, and, second, that newsletter work required irregular effort, sometimes taking more than a single shift and at others taking less.

Al and Herron, and - more sporadically, Mike and Ed who wrote for the newsletter on occasion - were thus able to secure for themselves a steady supply of tickets. Each morning, one or two, or sometimes all four would be on the second floor, waiting for Tim to show up at the newsletter office in the basement so he could sign their cards for the coming day. Those with tickets could then get breakfast as well as coffee and perhaps soup or a sandwich later on in the day. This arrangement didn't always work out. Sometimes Tim was late or had a day off. At other times, someone would arrive around ten o'clock and have to wait until eleven, when Tim usually came in to the office. Often one or two people would have tickets and others wouldn't. What developed then was a process of ticket exchange, in which tickets would be given or lent by and between members of the circle. If one of the men arrived in the morning without cash or coffee tickets, he was able to ask another for a ticket, or alternatively, a ticket would be proffered in return for or in anticipation of a similar action.

Ticket exchange was not invented by the members of this morning social circle, nor was it confined to them. There is a great deal of it going on at the Centre.

What is important about it with this group of men is that it facilitated the development of an informal and fluid group. Al, Herron, Mike and Ed, together with Steve, met together or in some combination virtually every morning over a period of more than two months. Of course they also had other interests in common, not the least of which were music and work on the newsletter. By coming together each morning they could discuss issues involving these and other things. The fact that tickets would be available directly from the reception desk or via indirect exchange made the get-togethers more feasible and more probable by making food and coffee available to the men. Moreover, indirect access to tickets by informal exchange helped promote a feeling of camaraderie, adding to that already created by an identity of interests and further cementing it by fostering inter-dependencies and mutual obligation between the people in the social circle, as well as those others who participated on a less frequent basis.

Although tickets are only supposed to be exchanged for food and drink at the concessions, I saw and participated in numerous instances where they were converted into cash or tobacco. This became a regular occurrence, for example in my relationship with a man named Ron; he frequently travelled by bus and exchanged coffee tickets for cash to get busfare and purchase the cigarettes he sometimes chain-smoked. Generally, however, lending and giving coffee tickets is more frequent than trading them for other items. I personally witnessed few cases where somebody borrowed or lent tickets on the explicit expectation of repayment (in fact I got the impression from some people that this was considered bad form). But there was much giving and taking of tickets, as occurred with the circle of men who met in the morning. Often people to whom I had given cigarettes or lent small amounts of cash would simply give me tickets.

This kind of exchange usually happens between friends only, and sometimes acquaintances, but it is frequent and creates a feeling of mutual obligation. I

participated in a small network of volunteers who gave and accepted tickets freely whenever someone was flush with them and someone else had few or none. Tickets are frequently offered with no riders attached, simply because someone considers someone else a friend. Jerrome (1985) describes friendship as a *"voluntary, informal, personal* and *private* relationship. . . . It is possible that in our society friendship . . . provides the individual with a refuge from the glare of public life and its burden of institutional obligation" (1985:696-97, my italics).[3] In contemporary life, friendship is an interstitial relationship, falling between the cracks of the social relations that constitute institutions (Wolf, 1967).

In chapter six, I will deal with a special case of friendship at the Centre that is expressed through the idiom of kinship. In the case of informal ticket exchange, however, friendship is a broadly-based category of personal relationship that blends subtly into the category of acquaintance. While the above definitions of friendship emphasize its extra-institutional character, however, a salient dimension of friendship at the Centre, especially with regard to its expression through ticket exchange, is precisely its institutional nature as well as the obligation attendant upon it. Perhaps because it is such a personal relationship, different people define friendship in different ways. Yet for all, the institution of the Centre is somehow connected insofar as it provides the dominant context and, in some cases, the <u>raison d'etre</u> for the relationship. Some of those I questioned told me they had no friends whatsoever at the Centre, although I saw them talking with many others whenever they were there. These people, it was explained to me, were acquaintances. Other volunteers, however, claimed everyone at the Centre was their friend. In the words of one young man, "I know everyone *here*" (my emphasis). For people such as this, friendship is also a very public matter. The young man in question, as well as others

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[3] See also Leyton, 1974, for extended discussions of friendship and its meaning in modern life

I knew, often went out of their way to display friendships, ranging from calling someone 'buddy' to making unsolicited gifts of tickets.

The tendency seemed to be that the older a volunteer, the less likely that she or he would claim to have a great number of friends around the Centre. For the latter, trust, rather than knowledge seemed to be the basis for the claims of affection and other mutual obligations subsumed by the category of friendship. People who claimed to have few friends at the Centre were more likely to engage in ticket exchange with acquaintances than those who claimed many friends. Even in these cases, however, the institutional obligation of ticket exchange seems to weigh heavy upon the maintenance of the relationship.

No one I met at East Line ever talked of exchanging tickets with people they did not know as a friend or acquaintance, nor did I ever witness such an event. As well, ticket exchange with a person whom one has "seen around", that is, recognizes but does not know personally, is also extremely rare. Ultimately, there is no social basis for such an act since the flow of tickets helps create - and tickets flow along - relationships of mutual obligation and friendship. The bonds which this creates are undoubtedly fragile and dependent upon a mutuality of other interests between people. They are also subject to various forms of reciprocity. Tickets are generally given not only in generosity but also in anticipation of or in return for tickets or other items received. The mutuality of friendship is expressed through the informal exchange of tickets; if there is no reciprocal action, there will be no further offer of tickets and a subsequent loosening of the social bond.

Coffee tickets thus facilitate two contradictory tendencies. On the one hand they help foster a sense of community and social cohesion by providing a currency that expresses values of reciprocity, friendship and mutuality. The distinction conferred on volunteers' work by the allocation of tickets in return for the work they do furthers this process by creating a loose network of ticket takers and givers who

are at least elementally conscious of the importance of their work to the ongoing functioning of the Centre. On the other hand, the role of staff as resource-keepers means that the ticket system is also a means of control over the volunteer clientele. Although the legitimacy of the staff is sometimes called into question by various people, their role is ultimately reinforced by the fact that they can exercise the final sanction of denying a person access to the Centre and thus to the resources available there. By controlling the primary means of recognizing volunteer work and differentiating it from other kinds of work at the Centre, the staff control an important symbolic domain of the volunteer work process. (Ed once told me he had been doing things for a few years before he found out he could get tickets for his work.) This is not to say that they actually use this control in a manner which explicitly subjects volunteers to unreasonable demands. It does, however, reinforce the subordinate position of volunteers vis-a-vis staff. Yet this relationship does not remain uncontested. The informal flow of coffee tickets is one way in which volunteers assert their autonomy.

Although informal exchange is not formally sanctioned by the staff, neither is it suppressed. What is frowned upon and not taken lightly by staff or volunteers is the "illegal" getting of tickets. Despite the supervision of tickets and the rules governing their allocation, I witnessed a few innovations that extended beyond the types of informal exchange described above. For instance, some people would use their own initials or forge those of a staff person in order to get coffee tickets. Although I did not get the impression that this was a widespread practice, the people I met who did it were not very secretive about it. A couple of times I was asked if I wanted my own card signed by someone who had just signed his with his *own* initials. While this lack of secretiveness indicates a degree of trust in the people around, on the part of whoever is signing a white card, it also can lead to problems for that person. The man who became President of the Community Centre

Association for a short while during my research had previously been barred from the building and from the Centre's literacy programme for forging the initials of the programme's coordinator in order to get extra coffee tickets. Another man, named Albert, who was involved in this incident, later found some used tickets in a garbage can in the alley behind the Centre. Although tickets are supposed to be ripped in half after they are used, these had only been ripped partially. By applying some scotch tape, Albert and a woman named Sheri were able to use several of these tickets without being found out. Albert offered them to other people for use as well, but the offer was generally declined. However, Albert and Sheri were able to exchange them for small amounts of cash, cigarettes and tobacco.

These attempts to subvert the accepted allocation process are not only frowned on by staff, but also by most volunteers, at least in retrospect. Volunteers who talk about incidents where people have been caught getting tickets with forged or phony initials are resentful of someone getting something for nothing. It is seen as a violation of what might be termed as the collective trust. Nevertheless, this sort of innovation in ticket distribution does represent a form of resistance to the dominant role of staff over volunteers. It is not particularly effective as it is clearly an individualized response and is held in disrepute by the collectivity of volunteers. Moreover, once a person is apprehended for engaging in such action, the staff are able to reassert their authority by "barring" that person from the building or some other form of discipline. Such measures are usually met with approval by other volunteers.

There are more acceptable ways to get extra tickets, but they are limited to a few people. Ron was one person who was sometimes able to get tickets for more than one shift. His technical skills enabled him to fix various electrical appliances around the Centre such as microphones and other musical equipment and he was able to get tickets for this work on occasion. He also did some work for the Seniors

Committee, which purchased tickets from the Association to distribute independently. By doing a regular volunteer shift, and then working for the Seniors Ron picked up a larger than usual allotment of coffee tickets. Other volunteers were able to do similar things with tickets, so some people were often flush with them. One group of young men regularly helped set up, monitor and dismantle the Association's weekly bingo game, which was operated by the Senior's Committee. For their work they were given a set number of tickets each week, along with the tickets they received for their regular shifts. With all the tickets they had they were often able to give tickets away to people who had no money and wanted a coffee. This they did regularly, as a gesture of friendship and goodwill or as a means of reciprocity.

The coffee ticket system thus embodies in microcosm a more general pattern of relationships at East Line Community Centre. In particular, the informal use of coffee tickets by volunteers, together with the power over the volunteers which management of ticket supply and distribution gives to the paid staff, is an expression of the institutional contradiction of the Centre, between the organization of local residents by outsiders and organization of locals by themselves. Originally intended as a means of recognizing unpaid workers, the system has become a means of evaluating not only the work itself but also people's relationships with one another. This is not to diminish the strictly material importance of the tickets. After all, when a person has spent all her or his welfare cheque and has a week or two to go before receiving the next one, four tickets a day "come in handy when you're feeling hungry."

Yet the ways in which the tickets are used are clearly expressive of more than material needs. The feelings of commonality, friendship and belonging that are expressed through their use are at least as important as are food and drink. As an expression of social solidarity the coffee ticket system is a means of self-organization

in the face of outside control; paid staff cannot use the tickets and are therefore excluded from the solidarity they express, as are, by extension, other people such as welfare workers, who control resources that are important to volunteers. Ultimately, however, the staff control the ticket system. Although such control rarely extends beyond the simple management of tickets for the sake of efficiency and maintenance of the rules regarding their distribution, conflicts can and do arise over the fairness of such management. Such situations are usually resolved in favour of the staff position.

The solidarity that is expressed among volunteers through the ticket system exists, to a large degree, in opposition to staff control. The informal use of tickets usually involves implicit opposition insofar as staff are excluded from the process that expresses solidarity. In the next chapter, I will deal with more explicit forms of opposition and conflict between paid and unpaid workers at East Line Community Centre.

Chapter 5 - "Are you taking his side?" --
Paid workers and unpaid workers

The dynamics of volunteering at East Line Community Centre are bound up with a process of differentiation between paid staff and unpaid clients.[1] The fact that welfare workers are paid to administer people who do not have jobs and, consequently, have very little money, is an irony not lost on many of the latter. The extraordinary amount of control and power welfare workers outside the Centre often exercise over the lives of their clients can create resentment and resistance which is often extended to other employees who work with people on welfare. Given the prevalence of welfare involvement among the people who live in and frequent the area, this generates tensions that reverberate thoughout the East Line neighbourhood. This chapter will deal with the ways in which this differentiation is expressed in terms of work at the Centre and the workers who do it.

One morning early on in my research I was drinking coffee on the second floor with some of the men who gathered there regularly. Herron, who was the chairperson of the Association's Programme Committee at the time, was talking to Booker, the second floor CPA, about the inaccessibility of a senior staff-person at the Centre with whom he was supposed to be working. In order to avoid dealing with people at the Centre, Herron claimed, "She hides behind her paperwork." Booker countered with the observation that rather than hiding behind her paperwork, "She's buried underneath mounds of paperwork. She doesn't have time to come out of her office sometimes, when she gets a stack of it." Al Thomas, who was sitting nearby, interjected, "Maybe its better when she's buried under

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[1] The concept of differentiation here is derived from Wallman (1978) who emphasizes the active participation by people in drawing and marking the boundaries between groups to which they consider themselves and the 'others' to belong.

paperwork. When she comes out of her office it's just trouble anyway." Booker was called to attend to something by another volunteer and Al then turned to Herron, saying that there wasn't much he or the staff-person in question could do about the situation. Paperwork was part of her job, even though it meant she couldn't do what she was supposed to do. This made Herron angry and he asked Al, somewhat contemptuously, "Are you telling me you're taking his [Booker's] side, he's staff." Al replied, "I'm telling you the truth man! That's the way it is."

Almost everybody at the Centre, paid and unpaid, gets frustrated with the constraints imposed on their activities by limitations of time and energy. Herron, however, chose to identify his frustration as being a problem with a paid staff-person rather than as a universal experience. This is not an unusual situation. The differentiation that is made throughout East Line neighbourhood between paid welfare workers and unpaid clients is often expressed at the Centre as an opposition between the staff and unpaid volunteer workers. These kinds of boundaries are drawn most often when staff decisions or actions infringe on what volunteers see as their rightful access to resources. In Herron's case, above, the resources he felt he was being denied were information and the senior staffperson's time, which would, in turn, make it easier for him to do his job on the Association's Programme Committee.

This peculiarity has developed out of two related characteristics of the Centre's organization that have been mentioned in earlier chapters. First there is some ambiguity in the status of volunteers because, although they are workers, they are largely drawn from the client population. At the Centre, volunteering is itself a programme that operates not only to facilitate the provision of services but also to promote community participation by local people. This brings with it a second potential source of tension. On one hand the paid staff must facilitate participation in the decision-making process on the part of clients; on the other hand, they need

to exercise control over the resources at the Centre and power over the clients, which effectively excludes the latter from large areas of decision-making processes. These two conflicting goals sometimes give rise to various situations in which the staff are challenged by volunteers who see themselves as active participants in the running of the Centre. Moreover, volunteers often claim to represent the interests of the client population generally.

In their capacity as resource-keepers the staff members control not only access to key skills and other kinds of knowledge, but also the greatest sanction of all at the Centre, access to the building itself, and, for volunteers, the distribution of tasks and duties. The fact that staff are paid sets them apart from the bulk of the unpaid client population and particularly contrasts their position with that of volunteers, who work but are not paid. Moreover, staff are vested with authority by virtue of their status as paid employees of the administering agency but exercising the control on which their authority is based can bring the staff into conflict with unpaid workers. On such occasions, the staff members' legitimacy as resource-keepers may be questioned; during the period of my research the power arising from staff control was even challenged, although not very successfully. The ways in which differences between staff and volunteers are expressed are not always antagonistic, nor do they necessarily call into question the former's legitimacy. However, tensions arising from the ambiguous status of volunteers and the contradictory mission of the staff hold the potential for intense conflict and serious struggles between staff and volunteers, as well as between volunteers. In order to avoid these kinds of situations or to handle such difficult situations when they do arise, the paid staff must be skilled at negotiation. Relationships with volunteers (and most other clients) need to be carefully managed.

There are three kinds of staff members who deal with people at East Line on a daily basis. First, the director and the senior staff, or programmers; second, the

CPAs and the Volunteer Co-ordinator; third, the various clerks who work in a variety of capacities not necessarily associated with clerical work. Although this classification is not explicit, it is manifest in the ways in which people respond to staff members and the kind of relationships they have with them. Interestingly enough, the differentiation made between the staff people by clients is paralleled by the physical separation between them which I noted in chapter two: the office of the Director and senior staff are located on the third floor while the CPAs and the Volunteer Co-ordinator work out of the second floor and the clerks work primarily on the first floor, around the information desk. Such differences reflect the relative accessibility of staff to clients, as well as various aspects of the work relationship between staff. For instance, I heard first floor staff talk of "getting heat from upstairs" or "from the people on the third floor." In his exchange with Al, cited at the beginning of this chapter, Herron showed that he considered Booker to be of a piece with the senior staff. Yet the fact that he raised the topic at all with Booker is an expression of a subtle differentiation *between* paid workers.

Although the Director and senior staff are generally accessible to people in the Centre, they are less so than are other staff. Their offices are located in a small complex on the top floor of the building and they are able to close their doors and/or lock the door to the complex if they wish to secure privacy. This is necessary to avoid a continuous flow of people coming through one or the other staff person's office - usually the Director's - that interferes with the person's other duties. People often visit the Director, or in her absence another senior staffperson, to discuss problems they are having with staff members, with other clients or volunteers or personal situations, to talk about committee work or other issues or to just pay a visit and have a conversation.

But this conviviality can interfere with the staffperson's other responsibilities, the tasks involved with administering and operating the programmes through which

services are delivered. The relationship between senior staff and the Centre's users is thus characterized by a certain tension. These staff both control access to the Centre and many of its resources, including themselves, and serve as advisors, authority figures and crisis managers to many users. On the other hand, the latter can often cause problems for the senior staff as they carry out this work. However, if a senior staff person sees fit to deny access to a user of one resource or another there is not much the latter can do about it. This can cause problems, especially in light of the fact that (senior) staff are paid and that users are for the most part cash poor and have access to comparatively few resources. Moreover the work of the senior staff is not always visible or apparent to the other people at the Centre because much of it consists of administrative tasks conducted behind closed doors.

The Director is a frequent target of this kind of criticism. A man once told me he didn't have much confidence in the Director because she was a woman and wasn't strong enough for the job. "They [the board of directors] walk all over her and she doesn't do nothing about it. Anyway, a woman shouldn't be doing that job." He was convinced that she would not be the Director for much longer. The Director, however, outlasted the board members who were indeed trying to harness this kind of sentiment as a political resource (of which more later). On another occasion, a good friend named Charlie told me he was going to apply for the Director's position. "I've had more experience than she'll ever have. She doesn't live down here. She's never been down and out in her life." I was once in a meeting with Charlie when the Director walked in to hand someone a note. He expressed surprise she was at the Centre that day. "She's hardly ever here," Charlie told me. I pointed out to him that the Director had been on holidays, but she was otherwise at the Centre most days of the week. However, he insisted that he rarely saw her.

The staff who work out of the second floor, the CPAs, kitchen staff, and the Volunteer Co-ordinator, have far less opportunity to limit users' access to

themselves. In fact it is the CPAs' job to work with the people who use the Centre, both volunteers and clients. They are thus exposed to other people during almost their entire shift. The Volunteer Co-ordinator is in a somewhat different position for that position requires constant contact with clients and also a great deal of administrative work. Although the Volunteer Co-ordinator is in charge of the operation of the volunteer programme, she must also administer it. This makes for an extra degree of separation from the clients on part of the VC. While the CPAs work alongside volunteers, often directly supervising volunteer activity, the VC has an office where the door can be shut, if necessary. Like the senior staff, some features of the Volunteer Co-ordinator's work are not always self-evident; the legitimacy of the person holding this position in the eyes of volunteers is thus predicated on her or his ability to manage relationships with other staff and clients. While this is also part of a CPA's job, the work which a CPA does makes it less necessary to manage relationships as a means of establishing and maintaining legitimate authority.

The first floor staff are the people who work at the information desk, as clerks or a building security. In effect they are frontline staff and are in contact with clients continually throughout the day. Security staff are there to maintain order in the Centre, to prevent people who are barred from entering and to eject people who are violating the rules in some way. The information clerks provide information to people who ask for it, take in cash for various things, provide games, manage crises along with other staff, and attend to emergencies. The legitimacy of these staff is rarely questioned. In fact, many of them are local people, former clients and volunteers who have been around the Centre for years and know many people. People generally tend to accept their authority as a given and mostly treat them as friends - which they often are. The people on the front desk, then, are often seen as local people doing a tough job.

While I was conducting research the tensions and contradictions involved in the relations between paid workers, especially senior staff, and unpaid workers were escalating during the course of a factional dispute within in the Community Association's Board of Directors (of which more in the following chapter). Not all expressions of differences between staff and volunteers/clients are antagonistic. When they are, however, they often take the form of what I call staff-bashing[2]. This includes direct challenges to the authority of the staff and may, if the challengers feel sufficiently strong, result in questioning the legitimacy of the staff's role.

A particularly cogent example of staff-bashing occurred during an incident involving the Centre's popular newsletter, put out under the auspices of the Community Association. Tim, the editor, was not a volunteer, since he worked at the Centre in return for extra money on his Unemployment insurance. He worked closely, however, with a number of volunteers on the newsletter, however, and identified more with them than he did with the staff.

The staff-bashing incident arose out of the imminent departure of Tim at the end of his "U. I. top-up" grant. Initially, a meeting had been held in the newsletter office by some of the newsletter volunteers to decide how the programme would work after his departure. One of the clerical staff, named Helen, also attended the meeting. Tim later stated that she was uninvited, but no one objected to her presence at the time. One of the prominent agenda items at this meeting was the departure, with Tim, of the personal computer with which the newsletter had been written. Helen promised that the volunteers could use her electric typewriter that had various functions. This solution to the potential problem was welcomed by everyone else. A few days later, I went to the newsletter office and Tim said Helen

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[2] I selected this term to classify a certain type of antagonistic sentiment toward the staff. I was later gratified to learn that other people at the Centre used the same term for similar reasons.

had backed out of her offer to let the newsletter people have access to the typewriter. He was obviously upset about this, and it confirmed his view, initially advanced in relation to the distribution of coffee tickets to newsletter volunteers, that the staff wished to control the newsletter's contents in order to avert potential criticism that might cause them some sort of trouble. Tim was never clear about exactly why he thought the staff wanted to control the newsletter. It was evident from his conversations, however, that he saw it as a kind of focus for oppositional expression by volunteers and other clients.

As a result of this incident the staff-person who was present at the next meeting of the Association's programming committee was subjected to a serious - almost ritualistic -"bashing." When the issue of possible changes to the newsletter's organization came up on the agenda, Herron, who was the committee's chairperson, suggested that a special meeting be held to deal with it. Everyone agreed to this. However, Tim then decided to bring forward the issue of the typewriter. He spoke loudly and forcefully, describing the situation as he had to me a few days earlier. And he added that after Helen told him the typewriter was no longer available, she went to the newsletter office and took the only typewriter there back to her office. Tim accused Helen, whom he identified only as "certain staff-person" of "reneging" on her deal with him.

After this, Wendy, a senior programmer who was the staff liaison for the programme committee, became the focal point of the meeting. While Tim was giving his account, Wendy began to say something and then stopped quickly. Al paused, turned to her and asked what she wanted to say. She replied that the programmers were going to ask the Senior's committee to buy or rent a "fancy" typewriter. To which Al answered, "Thank-you, but if you'll just let me finish," and continued on.

When Tim was finished, a volunteer said he thought the staff person in question should make some amends for the problem she had caused. Then Wendy gave her version of the situation. The "fancy" typewriter that Helen had been working on, and promised access to for the newsletter, was rented by the Association. It broke shortly after Helen had promised it, and the Board of Directors of the Association decided it was an unnecessary expense. Helen then had to get back her original typewriter which had, up to that point, been used by the newsletter.

This explanation did not defuse the situation. After Tim's statement, a motion was passed by the committee to instruct the staff to provide the newsletter with use of a typewriter in good working order. However, when a newsletter volunteer named Alice heard that the "fancy" typewriter rented by the Association was broken while in use by a city staff person, she got permission from the chair to speak, and addressed herself to Wendy. She asked Wendy, rhetorically, if she thought the typewriter should be replaced by the city since it was broken by a city staff-person. Wendy replied, "I wish it were possible, that we had the best of all possible worlds, but that just isn't the way things are." And Alice said "Yes, but . . . " and essentially restated the same question in a different way - two or three times. Throughout this generally one-way exchange, Alice had been advancing on Wendy until at the end, her voice had reached a crescendo and she was standing over Wendy, who had remained seated, and was looking down, yelling at her. Everyone else in the room looked passively on.

When this finished, people started to suggest ways in which the volunteers working on the newsletter could get access to a typewriter. Tim kept interjecting, "Why don't you cancel the [newsletter] programme, if you can't provide the equipment, you should cancel the programme." This was obviously directed at Wendy. People were talking excitedly to each other or interrupting whichever speaker had the floor at the moment. For a while it seemed as if everyone was

talking at once. Al, another volunteer at the meeting, pointed out that the motion made earlier was invalid because the newsletter was an Association programme and it was therefore up to the Association to get a typewriter, not the staff. Rick backed him up on that, and suddenly everyone's attention shifted away from Wendy. People became calmer and Herron finally succeeded in getting people to stick to the order of the speakers' list he was keeping. At the end of the meeting, one committee member thanked everyone for what he though was a "really good brainstorming session." The attack on Wendy and Helen seemed to have been forgotten; at least it was pushed into the background for the time being.

This incident itself was not a direct challenge to Wendy's control as a staff-member. However, it took place in the context of a bitter and vitriolic struggle for control of the Association's board of directors by two factions, one of which was attempting to mobilize the potential for anti-staff sentiment as a means of building its own support. This will be examined in more detail in the next chapter. What is relevant here about the larger context of this situation is that the latter can be taken as a case of what Schwimmer (1973) calls 'symbolic competition.' When a subordinated group does not possess the resources to compete directly with dominant groups, it may engage the latter symbolically, through the maintenance of social boundaries which, while not "advantageous" to the group interest, are nevertheless important to collective self-identity[3].

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[3] Schwimmer (1973) refers to symbolic competition with a dominant group carried out by an ethnic minority which has "a lower economic and social status: its opportunities for political participation are limited; its standard of education is lower. Being placed in this disadvantaged position, somewhat separate from the dominant group, it forms symbols of in-group solidarity and claims to have a 'separate culture'." The other important point for this thesis made by Schwimmer is that not all locii of power in the dominant group are subject to competition, symbolic or otherwise, from the subordinated one. Rather, those power centres which are seen as particularly oppressive or central to the relationship of domination/subordination are open to the competitive process.

Cohen (1982, 1985) and Wallman (1978) have noted that the definition of collective, or community, identity is as much a matter of what a group understands itself *not* to be as what it says it is. The volunteers define themselves in opposition to the paid staff because they do not get paid for their work. As well, despite the vital role they play in the operation of East Line Community Centre, the volunteers are still subordinated to the paid staff because they lack the latter's control over key resources that are required to make the Centre run, including the legitimacy and authority conferred on the staff by their status as employees of the local government that operates the Centre. Although the volunteers do not claim for themselves the status of cultural distinction which Schwimmer uses as a criteria for symbolic competition, the staff-bashing incident can be seen as a case of symbolic *opposition* in which volunteers marked off the boundary between themselves and the staff. The particular situation that gave rise to the incident involved the control of a resource by staff, in this case, a typewriter, and the desire on the part of some volunteers to get access to it. By invoking the Association, and placing it in opposition to the City, Alice and the other volunteers symbolized both their autonomy from the paid workers and their unity as a group. In so doing, they tried to legitimize their claim to the typewriter as a collective right. The final resolution of the incident reinforced not only the differential identity of the Association and the volunteers in relation to the City and the staff, but also the latter's control over East Line.

Despite the differentiation between paid and unpaid workers, and the very real control which the former wield, staff are by and large considered to be insiders who are as much a part of the Centre as the clients who use the place and the volunteers who work there. Much of this has to do with the fact that the staff, like the volunteers who work at the Centre and are therefore seen to be serving the clientele. This is widely considered to be something of a social commitment that transcends internal boundaries and which therefore marks people at the East Line

Community Centre off from those outside it. In chapter six, I will explore this
differentiation on the basis of insiders and outsiders at East Line.

Chapter 6

"What do you do around here?": Insiders, outsiders and the politics of
community work

Volunteering at the Centre is a way for people who are outsiders in many

situations and places to become insiders if they work at it for awhile. Only a few of

the volunteers I met during my fieldwork hailed from the neighbourhood around the

Centre and most were from other cities and other provinces. Yet most spoke of the

Centre as if it were theirs. The fact that they work at the Centre entitles them to

status as "insiders". Volunteers quite often draw boundaries between those who

belong and those who don't on the basis of their work. Because of this, staff are also

counted as insiders, albeit of a different type than volunteers. The construction of

insider status on the basis of work (or being the recipient of that work as a client)

means that staff must be seen as co-workers of a sort, albeit in something of a senior

position. The inclusion of staff as insiders is derived from their role as resource-

keepers: they know what is going on and know everybody at the Centre. This is the

case precisely because they *work* there. Constant presence breeds familiarity and

knowledgeability which are important items at the Centre.

Although it is not the only such mechanism, volunteering can provide an

entree into a network of people who can offer certain kinds of support in a variety of

situations. The keywords here, again, are familiarity and knowledgeability. For

example, a woman, whom I'll call Julie, lived in East Line for three years before she

went to the Centre. She arrived in the city a year after having left her home town

when her marriage broke up and she lost her children. Her first three years in East

Line neighbourhood were spent in a succession of violent relationships with men,

living in various hotels, collecting welfare, and using barbiturates, tranquilizers and

alcohol. After a chance encounter with an old friend at a local drop-in, Julie went to

the Centre for a coffee and has been a volunteer there ever since. Except for welfare workers, doctors and her few remaining connections with her home town, Julie's entire social network is composed of people she knows through the Centre. Her closest friends are people she has met there and with whom she socializes and relies on for support in a variety of situations such as when she is short of cash, when she goes out socially or when she is in a crisis, such as losing her rent money.

Recruitment of or recruitment into a social network or social circle involves becoming known by the other people, and, conversely, knowing who among them can offer particular kinds of support in certain situations and when it is appropriate to ask for or expect it. This situation is explicitly recognized in the categories of fictive kinship that are sometimes applied to relationships generated out of situations at the Centre. The categories of "street" dad or "street" mom, for instance or "street" son or daughter or brother or sister are frequently used by people whose relationships involve mutual or one-sided support of some kind, or the implicit offer of support if and when needed. Relationships between older and younger people are sometimes placed in this category if the former have provided the latter with food and shelter or other items when they are in need of them.

However, not all such relationships are characterized by the use of kinship terminology. For example, Sharon has many close friends at the Centre, but only one refers to her in kinship terms. When Sharon was in the hospital for three months she was visited by a number of people on a daily or weekly basis; another friend who did not visit her at all during this time sent her things and took care of her belongings. A few months later, when her young friend Maureen and her three year old son needed a place to live for a month they stayed with Sharon. At this time, I found out that Maureen called Sharon her mom. Although there are no hard and fast rules about when a person should be treated as fictive kin, it is used to

indicate a relationship that is more than friendship and to which the participants attach considerable importance.

If, by volunteering, a person can become an insider via the social contacts he or she makes at work, then it is also true that a person can also become an insider by virtue of the status the work brings. One of my early experiences at East Line shows how this can occur. Early on during the research, a woman named Betty directly challenged my credibility when I tried to convince her to fill out the questionnaire I was doing as a means of introducing myself at the Centre. She insisted it was her day off and she was not going to do any work. The conversation then turned to me and what I was doing there. Betty demanded to know what right I had to bother her. "We work here, what do you do?" I responded by telling her I volunteered in the literacy programme. Once I told her this there was a distinct change in Betty's tone; she seemed mollified by the fact that I worked as a volunteer. But though she decided to recognize me as an insider for the time being, I was not entitled to interfere with her time, only to recognition as someone whom she should know. After this incident Betty always acknowledged my presence by saying hello or nodding to me.

As a volunteer, however, there is more to becoming an insider than simply getting to meet and know people. For the volunteers, the idea of volunteer work is bound up with the notion of active and public participation. As I noted in chapter 3, most people told me they volunteered because they preferred it to doing nothing, which seemed at the time to be their only other option; many people followed this up with a statement to the effect that they "wanted to do something worthwhile, something for other people." This idea is derived partly at least from feelings of commonality that stem from the experience of cash shortage and the knowledge that just about everyone else at the Centre is in a similar situation. Volunteering means working for "the people down here," as more than one friend of mine referred to the

clients at the Centre and the residents of East Line neighbourhood. Volunteers are thus accorded a special status in the Centre that is recognized in practice by events such as the volunteer dinner, at which, once a month, staff members cook and serve a full meal for the volunteers and where the Volunteer of the Month is named[1]. The volunteers seem to appreciate the ironic dimensions of this symbolic reversal, so the event is the scene of good-humoured joking, as volunteers take the opportunity to tell the staff how to do things.

Despite the advantages of the paid staff in terms of their control over resources, the relationship between volunteers and staff is reciprocal: volunteers consider themselves to be entitled to particular privileges and when these are not forthcoming, volunteer services may be withdrawn. Al is well-known as a musician around the Centre and often plays at events in the theatre, such as the monthly volunteer dinner or the twice-weekly lunch for seniors and disabled people held at a church up the street. He is also eager to get paid for his performances whenever there is money available. On the occasion of the annual Volunteer Recognition Week dinner the Centre had money to pay someone to perform. However, instead of asking musicians around the Centre, it was said that a group of people who were acquainted with a staff member were hired to perform at the dinner. Al was incensed: he had expected to be given first choice on performing at this dinner since he regularly played at the Centre for nothing and worked on various other things as well. Claiming that neither he nor his work was appreciated at the Centre, he decided to withdraw from volunteer work, saying, "It's time I got a real job, anyway. I can use the money." I was present on one occasion when a staff-member implored him "not to be like that," and said that 'outsiders' were asked so that the regulars would be able to relax and eat dinner at this celebration of volunteer work. But Al

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[1] I was once the recipient of this award.

would have none of this, and he began to go to the temporary employment Centre to find a paying job. The next time I saw Al, he was onstage with two other people from around the Centre, playing the music at the Volunteer Recognition Week dinner. This was the paying job he had wanted in the first place.

In Al's case it was not simply money he was after, but the recognition of his status within the Centre which the paying job would convey. He considered that his long record of service to the Centre and the people there entitled him to be the first choice candidate for the job. It is generally acknowledged by most people there (including non-volunteer clients and staff) that without the volunteers the Centre could not operate in the way it does now. Volunteers' work is seen as being instrumental in delivering programmes and services. Thus, when the board suggested a decrease in the purchasing power of coffee tickets at the concessions as a money-saving measure, the volunteers threatened to revolt; there was talk that volunteers would no longer work and, more than once I heard the words "we'll see who really runs things around here." Finally, the suggestion was withdrawn. This kind of recognition is important for people who often play a subordinate role in many of their other relationships. (cf. chapter 3)

Volunteering is considered to be a public demonstration of commitment to the Centre and to the people there. By making this commitment, volunteers also earn the right to entitlements to such resources as prestige, status and social recognition. These are treated as if they were collective property, a notion which is, I believe, bound up with the relations and situations that are generated by the prevailing shortage of cash. The general situation of many people in the neighbourhood, namely that of subordination to welfare workers, landlords, professionals and others, means that items such as status, prestige and social recognition are "scarce" resources. Although, in conversation, volunteers do not articulate their situation in such terms, it is implicit in the way such resources are

socially allocated by the people at the Centre. As collectively managed resources, status/prestige/recognition must be *earned.* It is not good enough for someone to demand it by virtue of their position or role. In the previous chapter, for example, we saw that the staff members' position as resource-keepers is not necessarily enough for them to be automatically accorded legitimacy by some volunteers. The idea of a man as being "a good guy" is used frequently around the Centre. However, this is not simply attributed to a person by virtue of their character. It is a reputation that is earned through work (or play) with other people, or via publicly visible volunteer work and evidence of a commitment to "the people down here."

The East Line Community Centre Association, its Board of Directors and various committees, represent the formalization of the boundaries between outsiders and insiders at the Centre and of the notion of collective resources. As I wrote in the second chapter, the Association is heavily involved in the delivery of service programmes. Participation in the organization, through election to its Board of Directors or voting status on the committees, thus entails a certain degree of control over many resources used by clients and volunteers. As such, the Association is central to the distribution and allocation of collective resources. Not everybody at East Line participates in the Association. Staff people are not permitted by their municipal employer to participate directly in the Association's affairs, although they may be Association members. As well, many clients do not participate in the affairs of the Association. For the most part, the people who participate in the Association by serving on the Board of Directors and/or attending committee and/or board meetings also volunteer in other capacities at the Centre. Although people do not get coffee tickets for doing Association work, the organization is largely run by people who are volunteers In turn, it represents the volunteers as a collectivity and therefore, as a *body politic.*

The Association is "a public stage within the community, on which certain decisions must be discussed that may affect the interests of everyone" (Paine, 1970:173). It serves as a forum for public participation in decision-making about their collective affairs by the clients of the Centre. Membership on the board is a matter of some prestige around the Centre, since it indicates collective recognition of a person's abilities and status as one worthy of decision-making position. Being a director of the Association is therefore a position assented to by the group. If a Director is seen not to be acting in the perceived interests of the group, the prestige of the position, and therefore the legitimacy of that person to act on behalf of the group, may be withdrawn by the group.

During the time I conducted research at East Line Centre, the Board of Directors became the locus of intense competition between two factions of Association members over control of the Association and its resources. In the course of this struggle one faction sought to mobilize the clientele and volunteers in an effort to oust its opposite number from the board by portraying the latter's members as self-seeking individuals concerned with personal goals rather than pursuing the general interest of "people down here." The story of this conflict, then, is one in which one faction attempted to maintain the insider status of its members as its opposition systematically and successfully promoted the idea that they were in fact outsiders in relation to everyone else at the Centre, including the staff. The detailed examination of this struggle which follows underlines the significance of differentiation in terms of the work people do and its implications for their relation with East Line Centre as well the very political nature of work and differentiation at the Centre.

Anthropological interpretations of factional struggle have been concerned largely with the transactional nature of factions (cf. Van Velsen, 1972; Boissevain, 1974; Bailey, 1977). The transactional perspective seeks to understand social

relations in terms of individual's desire to maximize values in exchange relationships. To understand the struggle between the Association's factions it is necessary to modify this focus somewhat. Certainly strategic use of resources was a significant dimension of this struggle; but an underestimation of the importance of expressive, incorporative and ideological elements in this situation will lead to a fundamental misunderstanding and one-sided interpretation of what happened. Boissevain (1977) notes that in his Maltese village, the imperatives of factional leadership require the latter's adoption of the membership's ideological perspective, and thus a modification in the direction of the factional process. At the Centre, collective sentiment and ideological persuasion played at least as great a role in this process as did transactional considerations. Ultimately the collective sentiment and ideology were used as resources in the conflict, but not indiscriminately. Appropriation of collectively managed resources requires conformity to its proscriptions.

The conflict in the Association originated in situations that occurred long before I arrived at the Centre; some of it, indeed, began outside the Centre. When it came to my attention, in the autumn of 1986, the factional struggle had almost reached a crisis point. During the Board elections at the Association's Annual General Meeting in June, a unified slate of candidates secured a majority of the directors' positions. The primary issues at this meeting were, apparently, the financial problems of the Association and the malfeasance of the treasurer of the last board, who had disappeared along with an undetermined sum of money. The candidates for the winning slate declared their intention to clear up the situation. Significantly, the ex-treasurer had been employed on a project grant at the local East Line Residential Association (E.L.R.A.) while a number of the candidates for the victorious slate were associated with the East Line Economic Renewal Organization (E.L.E.R.O.), another local group which considered itself a rival of the

E.L.R.A. Later on in the struggle, the members of the original slate and their supporters would accuse the opposition of taking its direction from the "E.L.R.A. crooks."

Although the rivalry between the two organizations was not at the heart of the internal conflict at East Line Centre, it is nevertheless relevant to subsequent developments, because it highlights the ideological differences between the rival board factions. One of the candidates of the E.L.E.R.O. associated group worked at the E.L.R.A. prior to quitting and speaking against it at a municipal council meeting; he then helped form E.L.E.R.O. Three other candidates were involved with the E.L.E.R.O. group at the time of the election. The approaches of the two organizations to social and economic change in East Line is clearly different. The work of the E.L.R.A. is based on political lobbying and local mobilization as a means to achieve its ends, which include increases in welfare rates and improved park space in the neighbourhood. It is also heavily involved in the construction and operation of new co-operative and social housing in the area.

E.L.E.R.O.'s approach is based on the idea of community economic development, which entails setting up small business enterprises to generate capital that is kept in the area and put to further use there, thus generating more business and economic activity. The success of this approach has yet to be determined. Nevertheless, E.L.E.R.O. sees itself at odds with the E.L.R.A. over the underlying philosophy of the two groups. The latter, according to people in the former, are "afraid of change," and interested primarily in securing their own social and political position at the expense of local development. Ultimately, they say, the E.L.R.A. is perpetuating the marginal status of East Line residents. The E.L.R.A., in contrast, disdains the economic development approach, claiming that since most people in the area have no money to begin with, the concept is tenuous, at best. Moreover, they claim, E.L.E.R.O. has no popular base or constituency among the residents of

the neighbourhood. In any case, both organizations have been successful in attracting grant money from various levels of government as a means of funding projects.

At the time of the general meeting, and for a number of months afterwards, the people who were associated with the E.L.R.A. were, in fact, fragmented and seemed to lack unified direction. When, shortly after the election, a local cafe owner complained that an Association-sponsored childrens' food programme in a local park was eating into his business, the board split decisively into two groups: a dominant faction supporting the merchant, which was composed of the members of the slate which won the board elections, and an opposition coalition supporting the food programme. The rancor of the debate over this issue prompted a number of directors to resign, enabling the E.L.E.R.O. associated group to consolidate its position as the dominant faction by appointing sympathetic replacements to the Board of Directors. However, the situation also provided its opponents with a rallying point, enabling the latter to contrast its own position as the defender of community interests with that of the dominant faction, the members of which were said to be aligning themselves with business interests. Lacking a coherent strategy and leadership focus, the opposition took on the characteristics of a levelling-coalition (Van Velsen, 1972).

By autumn, the board was in disarray: despite the dominant faction's majority it was unable to conduct any business due to the ferocity of its opposition. The controversy engendered by the food programme issue lost it considerable support and the financial problems of the Association were not going away either. The formation and regular publication of a Centre newsletter served to create an audience for the conflict beyond the venue of monthly board meetings. Association members and Centre clientele became increasingly disenchanted with the conflict and the conduct of the board members (see Bailey, 1977:29 regarding popular

disenchantment and the loss of mediating elements in factional conflict). About the time I began to carry out my field work, in mid-autumn, two women who were well-known local activists, newcomers to the Centre but not to the neighbourhood, were appointed to the board via a membership vote at a board meeting. Because the President had also resigned his position, one of them, a women named Shirley, was appointed President by the board members themselves. It was around this time that I became especially interested in what was happening with the board. Shirley was also a personal friend of mine from outside the context of East Line Community Centre. I followed her activities with keen interest, and my access to her gave me some insights into what was happening that might not have been possible otherwise.

It became evident during this meeting and the next that Shirley was siding on a variety of issues with those people who were identified with the E.L.R.A. In fact, as it turned out, she had been asked by the opposition to become involved in the situation. Although not directly involved with the E.L.R.A., she was a supporter of the organization and her participation in a number of other neighbourhood organizations meant that she was well-known in East Line. Shirley's intent in joining the board was to help organize the opposition and mobilize the Association membership to break the stalemate. When this commonality of interest became evident through Shirley's voting record the dominant faction took advantage of her newness at the Centre and began to accuse her of being an outsider who only became involved in order to further her own partisan political aspirations, the goals of the E.L.R.A. and other "leftist/marxist" political organizations. She was eventually forced to resign from the board when it was discovered she had only joined the Association three days prior to her appointment as a Director and President, a violation of the Association's constitution.

The process in which Shirley was forced off the board took more than two months to complete. It also split much of the membership into two groups, each one

aligned with one or other of the two factions on the Board. During this time, she began to assume leadership of the opposition coalition, and to organize actively within the Centre. Shirley provided the previously lacking leadership needed to transform the levelling coalition into an interest coalition. Moreover, because she was seen to be working in the building in various capacities, Shirley garnered significant support among the Association's membership and the Centre's clientele, including those people who had lost interest out of frustration. People who were following the situation frequently remarked that while the people who belonged to the opposition faction were always in the building, those who were considered to be the leaders of the dominant faction were seldom around except to conduct Association business. The opposition seized on this point, contrasting the dominant group, characterized as a bunch of individuals with little interest in the community, with Shirley who was seen to be working regularly at the Centre.

With the departure of Tim as its editor, the newsletter jumped into the middle of the fray, aiding directly in the construction of the "outsiderness" of the leading members of the dominant faction. While Tim was in charge, the newsletter reported on the conflict from a distance, objectifying all the participants and the issue itself. The new editor, a volunteer named Perry, immediately became directly involved in the factional conflict on the side of the opposition. He used the newsletter to mobilize support for the opposition by treating the conflict as an "us" (ie, the Centre's clientele/users/members) against "them" (the dominant faction) situation and declaring the newsletter to be firmly on the side of "us." Each issue was full of stories, letters and personal commentary directed at the perfidy of the dominant faction. Its members were characterized variously as "incompetent", "sleazy", "sneaky", "dishonest", "self-seeking", "right-wing", and "outsiders." The opposition faction, on the other hand, was held up as being an embattled group of local people striving to save the Centre from those outside forces who sought to use

the Association and its board for their own ambitious agenda. The newsletter proved so popular that the dominant faction was unable to shut it down despite its majority. As a result of the newsletter's activity, as well as the organizing being done by the opposition, Shirley was able to turn her resignation to good stead and through it to become the focal point for opposition.

The opposition's inability to control board meetings led it to adopt a two-pronged strategy: on one hand, it confronted the dominant faction at each board meeting from both the floor (unelected Association members) and from the board table (opposition directors), dragging out the meetings so that several sessions were required to finish business; on the other hand, the opposition formed a counter-organization called CENSUS, short for Centre Supporters. The counter-organization then began to carry out some projects which it stated the Association would have done were it not for the turmoil at the board level. These projects included working with staff to conduct a user survey and a public meeting on renovations to the building and canvassing clientele on programmes and services. The dominant group denounced CENSUS as an opposition conspiracy to undermine the board. This denunciation had little effect, however, as CENSUS served to bolster clientele confidence in the opposition abilities and intentions. Once again, the latter had out-maneuvered the former because of the work commitment of opposition members and their consequent entitlement to collective resources.

Aside from blocking Shirley's re-appointment to the board, three other situations helped bring about the downfall of the dominant faction. One involved the public investigation and "firing", over two board meetings, of an interim treasurer - identified with the opposition - for alleged misuse of $7.00 in Association funds. Another incident involved direct intervention by a E.L.E.R.O.- associated director in the cancellation of a contract with a E.L.E.R.O.-backed business by the Centre's Director. This was offered as evidence of the dominant faction's hidden

agenda and its alignment with business interests rather than community interests. As the situation became more and more unmanageable, the dominant faction increasingly used staff-bashing techniques as a means of gaining support. This led to the third situation, involving an alliance between the dominant faction and a local municipal politician, who also owned a hotel and bar in the neighbourhood.

The politician was prone to making public statements of a somewhat exaggerated nature and his involvement at the Centre proved no exception. As the turmoil within the Association was being reported in the newspapers, the politician announced that he wanted the mayor to give him an office in the Centre so he could clean out the "the reds" who were causing all the trouble. Although he had been moderately popular among people at the Centre, this kind of situation turned many people against him and his association with the dominant faction became a liability. His pronouncements started to focus on the staff and their supposed misuse of funds and monopolization of power at the Centre. This attempt to capitalize on tensions between paid and unpaid workers by a group of people who were seen as contributing little or nothing to the collective resource pool was the final tactic of the dominant faction. When the E.L.E.R.O.-associated faction called a secret board meeting at which the politician was present, and at which it was rumoured that firing of the Centre's Director and senior staff was advocated as a course of action, the dominant faction and the local politician lost whatever support they had left. The opposition had been circulating a petition to recall the board and hold new elections. The rumours circulating about the secret meeting were enough to convince many waiverers to sign the petition.

It was at this time that the relationship between the city and the Association was suspended. Nevertheless, the petition succeeded in gathering the number of signatures which the Association's constitution specifies is required to recall the board. A new board composed entirely of opposition members was subsequently

elected by acclamation. None of the members of the dominant faction attended the special meeting at which the new board was elected. The process of making outsiders of the dominant faction was completed.

Making outsiders of people who had previously been involved in the Centre for extended periods of time was a process that was perhaps more of an unintended consequence than a deliberate strategy. Nevertheless, the effect of portraying members of the E.L.E.R.O. faction as people who did no work at the Centre except that which was clearly in their own interests effectively constructed a relationship in which they appeared as outsiders. Because of this construction, the E.L.E.R.O. faction's strategy of appealing to the Association's members and particularly to the volunteers via attempted mobilization of anti-staff sentiment failed. Staff, whatever their shortcomings in the eyes of the Centre's clients, are ultimately people who work for and with the volunteers. They are insiders. Although the dominant faction calculated correctly that social boundaries are, in many cases, drawn according to people's work, they didn't reckon they would be branded as non-workers themselves. The opposition was only able to accomplish this labelling by confirming the proscriptions of collective resources - the leadership and membership of the opposition faction had to be seen to be insiders in order to prove that those in the dominant faction were outsiders. Without the volunteer work carried out by the opposition members they would have been granted no entitlement to the collective resources that helped them win their struggle.

Chapter 7

Work and Its Malcontents

The task of this thesis, as stated in the first chapter, has been to examine the relationships of volunteers with paid workers at East Line community Centre. By using anthropological concepts of work to understand the volunteers and what they do, I have tried to underline the relations of power and control that are intrinsic to the production and allocation of resources. If, in the course of the thesis, I have emphasized the importance of the expressive side of the volunteers' work and of what Wallman (1984) calls 'organizing' resources, it is because these appeared to me to be crucial to an understanding of the ways in which the volunteers shaped their interactions with the staff and therefore defined themselves individually and collectively. This is not to underestimate more instrumental dimensions of work, nor the role of 'structuring' resources in power relations at East Line Centre. The differential dimensions of work and resources are inextricably linked to each other, however, and we cannot truly understand the latter without grasping the significance of the former. In this concluding chapter, following a summary of the previous chapters, I will examine some of the implications of this data for anthropological notions of work.

SUMMARY

East Line community Centre has been constructed as a locus of tutelage. Whether the Centre is envisioned as a place where the powerless can be given "power" or the unserviced can be given "services", it is understood by state agents as a means of improving people who are seen to be lacking something. Yet, the creation of the Volunteer Programme and the extent to which its participants are instrumental in service delivery at East Line has in many ways counter-acted

relations of tutelage. Volunteering at the Centre, in fact, provides an alternative to many of the relationships of domination and subordination to people in East Line are subjected.

The Volunteer Programme is a complement to, but not an escape from, relations of welfare dependency. Cash shortage precludes participation in many activities and relationships for which the mobilization of cash and credit is a precondition; by becoming a welfare client in order to ameliorate the shortage, a person is labelled as a "non-worker," both of which carry moral connotations conducive to low prestige and status. The Centre is a place in which people can reverse the label of non-worker and replace it with one of their own fashioning, as well as determining to whom the label applies or does not apply. The label of non-worker, and all the connotations that accompany it, are replaced by that of volunteer; volunteers are people who "work" at "shifts" or "jobs" around the Centre; they are people who have demonstrated a commitment to the Centre and the other clients there; they have therefore earned entitlement to recognition by others (individual and institutional) around them. This ability to redefine the situation is a powerful resource that affirms the collective experience of volunteering and supports the autonomy it produces. Ultimately, as we saw in chapter six, the labelling of certain practices as work defines the social boundaries between East Line Centre and the outside world.

In claiming for the volunteering that goes on at the Centre the label of work, the volunteers signal the central importance which this volunteering has for their lives; what work is about experientially is the way people make their living. The East Line volunteers are more than just a bunch of individuals who happen to work at the community Centre once in a while. For a good number of them, volunteering parallels employment insofar as it provides access to five categories of experience Jahoda (1982) has found are also accessible through wage-labour: volunteering is a

regular activity or set of activities that helps define who they are in relation to people inside and outside the Centre; volunteering helps provide a time structure through the scheduling of shifts; there is a ready-made social network that can be shaped to an individual's needs; there is an organizational framework that mediates certain kinds of relationships and places the individual's work in the context of a collective goal. Depending on the task, volunteering may or may not provide physical activity. The Volunteer Programme at East Line Centre thus provides a way in which people who are, or who feel, constrained in other relationships or areas of their life, in the sense of a lack of control over their environment, can create other relationships in which they do have some control, and hence, where they are no longer subordinated. From this viewpoint, the Association is the organization of collective volunteer power.

Another way of understanding the ways that volunteering provides access to these categories of experience is to look at how the "non-material" resources outlined by Wallman (1984) such as time, information and identity -- ie., 'organizing' resources -- are used in the course of volunteering. The problems of time for people on welfare were examined in chapter three. The lack of a daily time structure can be alleviated by a regularly scheduled volunteer shift, which, in turn, can make available to a person a sense of purpose and connectedness with a collective goal. At the same time, because volunteering is relatively free of constraints compared to domestic work or a paid job, it is flexible enough for a person to fit it around other situations with little fear of negative consequences such as losing a job. Thus, in the period following cheque day, volunteers are often out doing other things, either having scheduled no shifts for that time or simply not showing up for scheduled shifts.

Recruitment of or recruitment into a social network is a means of expanding lines of communication and therefore of information. We've seen, for example, how

musicians use their connections at the Centre to find out about paying jobs and we have identified the ways that stories about different welfare workers and offices serve as mutual affirmation of the experience of welfare. In a more contentious situation, the role of the Association newsletter was instrumental in creating a public and mobilizing public opinion in support of one of the factions involved in the struggle on the board of directors. The control of information is thus a political tool. In what I call the typewriter incident, in chapter five, different parties acted on the basis of different pieces of information; only when all of it was put together was a resolution to the situation made possible.

To volunteer at the Centre is to become a member of the collectivity and to gain access to the collective resources which help construct identity. The recognition of work and of a person as a worker involves the allocation of social status and prestige by other people at the Centre. Having been awarded recognition for her work means a person "belongs" at the Centre. At the same time, the collective volunteer effort legitimates the widespread sentiment of the Centre as "our" place. The personal investment in the Centre which some people make by virtue of their volunteer effort is transformed into a collective purpose with the Centre as its focus. The work becomes a statement of identity that defines a person's position within the Centre as well as the larger context of the neighbourhood and - perhaps - the city. The Centre is thus a moral community in which people are allocated certain social resources according to their position vis-a-vis the collectivity.

This brings us to the question of control. At East Line Centre, the allocation of resources and the values attached to them is not a neutral process. The paid staff act as resource-keepers, who control particular kinds of resources that are crucial to the Centre's administration and operation. Some of these resources are intrinsic to the staff's role as professionals, such as the knowledge and skills that enable them to manage such an operation. Others are more contingent on their role as

representatives of the state, a situation that confers on them the authority of the state. Thus, staff people control not only the skills and knowledge which they (or some of them) possess as trained individuals but also access to the funds made available to the Centre by the state, access to other institutional and individual agents of the state outside the Centre, and the physical facilities of East Line Centre, ranging from food for the second floor concession, for example, to access to the building itself. Despite their control of so many resources that everyone else at East Line depend on, the staff must exercise their authority with care.

The staff at East Line are in an ambiguous position: on one hand their role is to control resources and clients; on the other hand, by virtue of the city's recognition of the Association and its role at the Centre as well as the development of the Volunteer Programme, staff must help facilitate client participation in administering and operating the Centre. The position of volunteers is also ambiguous: they are at one and the same time clients of the paid staff and the latters' unpaid co-workers. These ambiguities in the status of the workers at East Line provide the central aspects of the contradiction that underpins the Centre's institutional development. This is the contradiction between the control of the staff and the autonomy of the volunteers. While the staff possess undoubted control over so many of the resources at East Line, this does not always translate directly into power. This is something which must be negotiated in an ongoing effort to resolve the contradiction between staff control and volunteer autonomy.

Volunteers' autonomy is derived from the control which they exercise over certain kinds of resources. The resources controlled by volunteers range from collective and individual identity -- prestige, status -- sociability and social connections to programmes and services which, although largely administered by staff on a daily basis, are operated by volunteers through the East Line Community Centre Association. Volunteers, of course, also control their own labour. The

operation of the Centre in its current fashion would not in fact be possible without volunteers. Nevertheless, there would be no Centre at all were it not for the paid staff. The construction of the Centre as a social phenomenon, however, by almost everyone concerned holds that it is the volunteers who are the crucial link in holding things together. It is on this basis that the exercise of control by the paid staff, derived from their authority as employees of the Social Planning Department, is sometimes challenged or questioned by volunteers who see themselves equally important as staff in running the Centre.

The contradiction between staff control and volunteer participation is practically expressed in a myriad of different ways. It is embodied, for example, in the very structure and organization of the coffee ticket system. Coffee tickets mediate relationships between the staff and volunteers as well as among volunteers. In the former situation they facilitate a rather benign but nevertheless direct form of control by staff over volunteers; in the latter, they serve as a 'currency of community' and a means of asserting volunteer autonomy in an arena the staff cannot control. 'Staff-bashing', too, is symptomatic of the contradiction. Aside from the demonstrating the relative inequality in the resources available to staff and volunteers each situation also represents a measure of the staff's ability to negotiate the situation. Ultimately, however, the staff at East Line community Centre call the shots if they need to. This became apparent in the Association's factional struggle. Rather than symbolically challenging staff control, members of one faction attempted to utilize the feelings embodied in staff-bashing incidents to make a direct challenge.

Interwoven with this structural contradiction between control and participation are the distinctions made by the people there between outsiders and insiders. Despite the anti-staff sentiment, or perhaps because of it, staff are also considered to be part of the Centre. They are workers in a place where a person's

work counts for a lot, even if it consists only of sitting in a chair for two hours monitoring the visitors to art gallery. The fact that staff work at the Centre -- even if it is for money -- is important to the volunteers, who see them as co-workers, albeit with more authority. Presence also counts for a lot at the Centre and full-time staff are there on a regular basis, thus breeding familiarity between them and the clients and volunteers. At the lower levels of authority, staff are often people who began their association with the Centre as clients and volunteers.

That the distinction between insiders and outsiders transcends that differentiation between paid staff and unpaid volunteers points to another moral dimension of work at the Centre. It is a shared commitment based on presence and commitment. Although staff are included as insiders by virtue of their work, and, as we saw, insiders can be made into outsiders by a conspicuous disengagement from work at the Centre, the clients at East Line Community Centre who do not work are generally considered to be insiders. What differentiates volunteers from the rest of the clients, however, is that they make a commitment to the other clients (or "the people down here") and on that basis, can claim to speak, through the Association, on their behalf. To volunteer is to participate and to participate entitles a person to a political role in the Centre.

East Line Community Centre, then, is the scene of multiplex social boundaries: differentiation is made between insiders and outsiders and between staff, volunteers and clients; there are certainly other differences which have escaped my attention for the time being. People at the Centre are distinguished according to where they live as well as what and how much they do at the Centre. These multiplex differences ultimately embody the contradiction between tutelage and resistance. They also provide the dynamic through which social life at the Centre changes constantly, as people respond to a variety of situations and

conditions by differentiating themselves from others and thereby defining their own identity as well as that of the others.

CONCLUSION

When I began to do research for this thesis, I was determined to find "work" among people who had no jobs. It seemed like a straight forward task to me at the time. In the process of writing up that research, I found the situation, along with the task I set for myself, to be more complex than I had imagined. I initially saw the volunteers standing at the cutting edge of a new way of life that was an alternative to class domination through employment. I had hoped to draw out the implications of this research by connecting it with questions about the relationship between volunteering, class and state policy in Canada in the late twentieth century. In the end, however, the scope of the questions I was able to pose, and the research underlying them, have been too limited to allow me to proceed with anything more than tentative steps in that direction. Conclusions concerning the relation of volunteer work and volunteer workers to the implementation of state policy as well as questions of volunteer work and class await further research. Instead, my conclusions are more immediately concerned with East Line Centre and the question of volunteering as a form of work.

In terms of the dominant understanding of work, which is interpreted through the lens of an economic ideology (Schwimmer, 1980), most volunteers at the Centre are defined as non-workers by virtue of their dependence on welfare. By calling what they do 'work' the volunteers are engaging in a redefinition of their own situation that enables them to justify in moral terms their dependence on welfare in the face of claims to the contrary made by the administrators of the welfare system.

They are not only relabelling an activity or set of practices, but giving a different meaning to their experiences in relation to those practices.

The ability to redefine the situation is a powerful resource. At the Centre, it is a collective resource that contributes to the construction of an institution that serves both as a locus of resistance to domination and an immediate comfort in everyday life. At the same time, however, forces of tutelage and control also contribute to the institutional process, which means that East Line Centre is also a means of domination. The institutional development of the Centre is therefore characterized by a fundamental contradiction that is only evident through understanding volunteering as work and the volunteers as unpaid workers. This is so because the contradiction is expressed in everyday practice through the work that is done at the Centre.

By looking at institutional life in terms of the work that goes into producing the institution and specifically at the ways people produce, allocate and control resources in the institutional context, it is possible to get beyond definitions of work that limit its application to commodity producing relationships and refocus on the total range of value-producing practices in which people engage. Wadel (1979) argues for such an 'institutional definition of work' as a means of understanding the relative impact of changes within an institution or institutional sector on other institutions or sectors:

> . . . it has been possible to show that the creation of values in one sector, the economy, can have negative as well as positive consequences for the creation of values in other sectors. This being the case, do we need (eg. for fuller understanding of these consequences) a common set of trans-sector concepts? And is not "work" one of them? . . . in the West today, we have a "lop-sided" notion of what work is and is not. Not only that, but in practical terms, the distribution of work, ie. "jobs", is also dangerously lop-sided. The one follows the other and a consequence is that some social institutions - heretofore generally acknowledged as "valuable" - are increasingly difficult to maintain. Put another way these institutions need to be supplied with more work (Wadel, 1979:380).

At East Line community Centre, it seems to me that such an institutional definition of work is an integral part of the overall definition of the Centre itself.

Such explicit recognition of "other than economic" activities and tasks as work and the incorporation of that recognition into daily practice, makes it possible to supply more work to socially valued institutions. This is certainly the case at the Centre. Of course, this can lead to the kinds of tensions and contradictions that characterize East Line Centre. More research needs to be done in this area, particularly on the effects of long-term, close-quarters involvement between paid and unpaid workers and the relations of power and control that are generated in such situations. As volunteering increasingly figures in the implementation of state policy, decisions regarding the production and allocation of unpaid work itself should also come under greater scrutiny from social scientists.

Recognition of the unpaid work involved in the production of tangible and non-tangible use-values -- even if only done tacitly -- will create a problem for policy-makers. Hitherto, volunteering has been constructed as a "generous" action, as something of a gift to others. This is rooted, as we have seen, in the origins of volunteering in the nineteenth century. The volunteers of that time could afford to work without money. The reality today is much different. Recognition of work does not necessarily imply financial compensation. At East Line Centre volunteer work is recognized through entitlements to collective resources and minimal subsistence compensation via coffee tickets. Outside the Centre this work is unrecognized except at isolated events staged to highlight volunteer work and honour volunteers. The mechanisms by which volunteering and other kinds of unpaid work can be recognized needs more research; I am sure that in any situation where an observer can uncover "hidden" work, there are informal institutional means such as those at the Centre by which such work, when and if it emerges as such, will be recognized. Formal mechanisms for recognition of unpaid work in the production of use-values

are more problematic and there have already been efforts to investigate these

(Carter, 1975; Kemp, 1976; Chapin, 1977).

The possibility of an explicit recognition of unpaid work as work, *per se*,

raises a number of interesting questions. As I've stated above, the fact that the East

Line volunteers call what they do work is a potentially subversive situation because

it is premised on a separation of income and work.

> In a society marked by post-scarcity conditions owing to
> technologically wrought plenty, the idea of separating work from
> income becomes the most subversive and cultural force (Aronowitz,
> 1987:35).

Income, or, more specifically, cash income, is a necessary form of subsistence for

most people in contemporary industrial societies. Without adequate means for the

direct production of their own subsistence needs, most citizens of Canada and all

other so-called advanced industrial countries must get cash through engaging in

wage-labour in order to make accessible other goods and services which are only

available in commodity form. These include food, clothing and shelter. Yet, the

linkage between income and work is as much a **moral** category as it is so-called

economic necessity (Macarov, 1980[1]). It is this morality which excludes unpaid, non-

waged forms of labour from the categories of work and places them socially into

leisure, consumption or unemployment.

Recognizing as work certain kinds of tasks and practices, such as those of the

volunteers at East Line community Centre, establishes a fundamental break with

this kind of moral categorization of human activity and asserts the value of things

which have hitherto been considered less important than paid employment. The

social devaluation of volunteer work is connected not only to the fact that it was

originally 'women's work', but also to its construction as an action of free will and

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[1] See also, in this regard, Jean Beaudrillard: "Revenue production is a moral
imperative, not an economic function" (from "Sign Function and Class Logic" in
Beaudrillard, 1981: 55).

generosity outside the cash nexus. The values involved with volunteering are perhaps less "tangible" than those of wage-employment, but they are no less real to the people involved with it. Explicit recognition of the social significance of volunteering by labelling it as work and volunteers as workers is one step toward subverting the morality of work as wage-employment.

At East Line Centre, the volunteers have started to move in this direction. The relabelling of their activities is an act of resistance to a dominant moral order that confines them to its margins. The relations of power and control within the Centre embody the tentative nature of this situation. As an institution of tutelage, the Centre is a fragile environment for resistance since, with the exception of their own labour, the volunteers have only moral power rather than physical control over crucial resources.

APPENDIX A

DOING FIELDWORK AT THE CENTRE

One of the hallmarks of anthropology is its concern with "remoteness". Remote here does not refer so much to geographical space as to social space; remote areas are those social spaces which are different from those of the anthropologist. They are spaces into which the observer's categories do not easily fit, that are filled with significance and where regularity is a rarity. They are, Ardener says, "event-rich or event dense." Remote areas are also reflexive in the sense that they are there (or here) not because of any relation to the periphery but rather, in relation to a dominant area; they are defined by the observer.

> As more and more internal remotenesses are defined out of our changing societies, it will be no surprise that social anthropologists, addicts of the event rich, will be disappearing into them (Ardener, 1987:50)

Remoteness is therefore a condition not only of faraway places but may also define the people next door. Ethnography is a process of becoming situated in a social scene and of understanding how what seems significant from the outside is for the people who are part of that scene, regularity. The ethnographer must endeavour to comprehend the structures and processes that inform social regularities, yet never letting them become so regular that they are no longer significant. In short, ethnographers must disappear into remote areas without losing the sense of remoteness. The ethnographer must constantly be aware of how the categories she uses contrast with those of the people around her.

Keeping the sense of remoteness has been a problem for me, during the research phase of this thesis and also as I wrote it. This thesis is largely a chronicle of my becoming a part of the community at the Centre. My relationship with the people at the Centre has been one that started with ethnographic curiosity and

developed into one of community and a feeling that I belong there. In some ways, I disappeared into a remote area and was absorbed into the social space. This is perhaps the cardinal sin of anthropology. Given the context of my involvement at the Centre and the course of events, it would have been difficult for me to avoid this and unlikely that I would have tried.

For reasons I will outline shortly, I was aware that I might encounter this sort of situation so I knew that I needed research tools that would help maintain that sense of remoteness. As well, the scale of the project meant that it would be impossible for me to always be in a position to participate in and observe what was going on. I intended the research focus to be the significance of volunteer work for the households of volunteers. It therefore seemed in order to appropriate techniques oriented toward the study of households. But I also needed to overcome the problem of presence-availability among large numbers of people in a diffuse and fluid urban setting. The tools described by Wallman, et al (1980) in Ethnography by Proxy were ideal for both purposes, as well as having the potential to help overcome any tendency of becoming absorbed into the social space of the volunteers. When I embarked upon formal research in the early fall I planned to start with a questionnaire survey adapted from Wallman, et al (1980) to the contingencies of research at the Centre (see appendix B). The survey was to provide basic information on volunteers' households and their work at the Centre; it would also be a device for introducing me to volunteers and establishing an identity as a researcher. Having started this process I intended to proceed to more detailed and intensive work with key informants via the use of life-history interviews, time-diaries to determine patterns of time use (see appendix C) and network maps detailing the ways that informants perceive their own social location in relation to the all people they know. Flowing through all this, of course, would be the basic ethnographic tool - participant observation. Data validation was to be provided by the process of

triangulation: oral evidence offered in both formal and informal interview situations would be compared and cross-checked with that garnered through observation as well as with the survey data and other formal techniques.

Armed with these techniques, I entered the field. But as the research proceeded, the field helped shape and mould the way I used them so the focus itself began to shift away from my original problem toward a concern with the dynamics of volunteering within the Centre. In retrospect, this was not a surprising situation, given the way my association with the Centre and its volunteers had developed. I was already familiar with the neighbourhood when I decided it would be the setting for the research. I had earlier done an undergraduate research paper on a housing co-operative in the area. I chose the area as a research setting so that I would be able to participate in what I saw as a "politically hot" neighbourhood[1]; I was acquainted with many people who were involved politically in the area and decided that I too wished to work there. It seemed to me as if the people and organizations there were on the cutting edge of social change and that to do research there would be contributing to something tangible. I would also have the advantage of knowing some people and a little of the setting. At the same time, although I had frequented similar areas in my youth, the setting had the advantage of being far enough removed from the realities of my daily life that I would not feel too comfortable or take too much for granted.

At the suggestion of a friend who co-ordinated the Literacy Programme at the Centre I began working as a volunteer tutor in late spring of 1986. A major redevelopment of an adjacent area was being undertaken by the provincial government and this was having serious repercussions in the neighbourhood. I thought the Centre would be a good place to enter the neighbourhood, although I

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[1] When someone asked me why I wanted to do research in the East Line area, my response was "That's where the action is."

had no intention of actually carrying out research there. As I stated earlier, what I wanted to study was households and the ways in which members of households who are defined as non-workers make their living. I supposed that I would eventually work with a variety of different individuals and households that would represent the different styles of livelihood in the neighbourhood.

Given the changes that were beginning to take place in the area, I though this kind of research would have some importance for people trying to resist redevelopment. With this in mind I started to volunteer at the Centre Through this work I began to get an idea of how the Centre worked and what people did there as well as a rather vague notion of how the Centre was related to the neighbourhood outside. Generally I was only there to volunteer and I rarely stayed longer than my shift. I usually felt uncomfortable around other people in the Centre, unless they were obviously outsiders like myself; I was fearful of committing some dreadful *faux pas* that would brand me as an outsider and alienate me from others. I was usually there four or five times a week for two or three hours at a time. This was hardly enough to begin investigating the social life there but since I was not going to do research there I did not think it mattered. Nevertheless, I was establishing a presence and some relationships. I was also becoming familiar with and to the people who spend time on the third floor and in the literacy programme. The second floor, where I would later spend much of my research time, was still unknown territory to me and I only went there to get something from the concession or to pick up coffee tickets for my volunteer work. But whenever I did this, I recognized whoever was at the desk distributing them, and they often recognized me, if not by name, by sight and they knew me as a tutor.

Despite my own involvement as a volunteer and the large numbers of volunteers who were always present and active at the Centre, I did not click on to their importance until I went on a two week vacation. The time away from the

Centre and from my thesis prospectus gave me a chance to reflect on what I had been doing and what I had seen in the neighbourhood so far. I had been having great difficulty crystallizing in the prospectus both my field setting and the people with whom I would work, with the result that my research proposal was still rather vague and full of generalities. It was long on theory and short on specifics. Despite the increasing amount of time I was spending at the Centre as a consequence of my volunteer involvement, I still intended to go outside to do my "real" research when the time came. I thought I could just walk up to people on the street, tell them my name and what I wanted and then begin research. I only realized that the Centre itself was the scene of a tremendous amount of work when I decided that I needed to focus concretely on a particular kind of worker, rather than on the category of work. When I came to this decision, I realized that the solution to the problem of research setting and subjects was staring me in the face and that I had been where I needed to be all along.

My entrance to the Centre as the setting for the thesis research led through the Director, who introduced me to the programmer responsible for volunteers and to the Volunteer Co-ordinator. The latter then arranged for me to attend a meeting of the Volunteer Committee to ask for its endorsement of the project. After explaining the whys and wherefores of the thesis proposal I was asked to assure the committee that any money be made from the project would be donated to the Centre. One volunteer suggested that instead of simply approaching people as a researcher and asking them to be interviewed, I should put together a questionnaire. This would be a means of announcing my presence as a researcher as well as mediating introductions between myself and potential informants. I enthusiastically adopted this suggestion. Although I had not planned to use a structured questionnaire or survey, it proved to be an important tool for me. The questionnaire provided an excuse for introducing myself to people and gave our initial relationship

and situation a structure which would not have been there; without it, such introductions and initial situations would have been awkward. The data I gathered through these interviews was also invaluable - it often exceeded what was asked for on the questionnaire. Although I was extremely reticent about approaching people, since I did not like impinging on other people's space, it was an excellent device for introducing myself. This reticence never really abated during the research and was a crucial factor in my decision to stop using the questionnaires after two and a half months of use. Nevertheless, the people I met through them began to introduce me to their friends and their social scenes, tying me into a number of personal networks. The process of incorporation that developed out of the participation side of my participant observation ultimately led to a shift in the research focus from the households of

volunteers and their relationship with the Centre to the dynamics of volunteer work at the Centre itself.

The shared meaning that underpins every culture and provides the fabric of daily life is also a fertile source of information for the anthropologist when the common sense assumptions of researcher and subject clash (Rabinow, 1977). Yet such disjunctions in categories of meaning may be scarce or less obvious when the anthropologist endeavours to study the cultural fabric of his or her own society. In this sense, "auto-anthropology" is a self-reflexive process insofar as the anthropologist comes to critically appraise her own categories and notions of common sense directly by examining the way many of they are expressed by others, rather than through an comparison with those of people to whom she is an outsider. Participant observation at home, as it were, is thus a matter of learning how to observe when you want to participate. Yet participation is a necessity if the anthropologist is to gain any specific understanding of a situation. And given the

importance of presence at the Centre, participation in the round of daily life is what it takes to be accepted.

At the most basic level, this meant sitting around, generally on the Centre's second floor, drinking coffee and talking with people. As Berger and Luckman (1966) point out, talk is a way of constructing and confirming reality. By sitting and talking with people on a daily basis, I was able to participate in the construction and confirmation of the reality that informed people's daily life, slowly becoming a part of that reality. The second floor is in many respects the nerve centre of the Centre. If there is any gossip going around, this is where you can find out; if there are any conflicts going on you'll hear about them there or any news of a local or Centre-based nature, this is where to find it. Certainly not everybody at the Centre frequents the second floor, but virtually all the volunteers go there at one time or another during the day. Despite the wealth of information I gained and the numerous people I met through this type of activity, I would have missed much more had I not extended my participation beyond sitting and chatting with people. Attending meetings and going to public events, neither of which are infrequent at the Centre, thus became part of my routine. In doing this, however, my priorities began to change and I became more concerned with the Centre itself, what it meant to volunteers and clients and what they did with it. The question of the relation between Centre and household became incorporated into that of the role of volunteering at the Centre.

As I became more familiar at the Centre, my work as a volunteer also became an important factor in my ability to gather data. Not only was I frequently present, but I worked at the Centre. This enabled me to deal effectively with challenges to my legitimacy as a researcher on the few occasions when they did arise since I clearly had enough of a commitment to the place to work there. Although I was enough of an outsider to be able to bother people with questions, I was also

enough of an insider to point to my volunteer involvement if somebody accused me of being an outsider. It took some time to establish myself in this role, however, and I am not sure if I was ever completely successful. I initially undertook the survey as a means of defining myself as an independent anthropologist. But because many of the questions I asked involved household issues such as income, education and residence, a number of people were sure I was a social worker "from the Ministry [of Human Resources]". It took some time to dispel this idea. And despite my efforts to avoid identification with the staff, some people thought I was a staff person for a number of weeks into the research. The survey itself took only a small portion of my time, and I used the other formalized research tools with only a few people, so many people forgot that I was even doing research. It did not take long to become a fixture around the building.

Aside from challenges to my credibility, I encountered a number of other problems. It was virtually impossible to take field notes openly without being constantly interrupted and asked why I was writing so furiously. People tended to clam up when I started to write in front of them in informal situations. Instead, I learned to make mental notes and go home each day to my field book. Although I sometimes ducked into the bathroom to write quick reminders to myself, I relied primarily on my memory, which improved to the point where I could remember whole conversations almost verbatim. In other cases, such as choosing key informant, I had to adapt to circumstances. I wanted to work closely with at least six people but because it was so difficult pinning people down I finally completed detailed work with only three volunteers. Unemployment, low income and the contingencies of insecure housing tenure combine to create a situation of relative instability for some people. Although I offered cash payment as an incentive for completion of the time-diaries, only three people managed to return a finished product to me. None of the other three gave me more than a week. Once I realized

the obstacles involved with working with the other three people I was convinced to carry on with the former three. As a result, the life-history interviews which were conducted concurrently with the time-diaries, cover the same three people. When it became apparent to me that the research was almost finished and I had not yet done network maps with any of the three volunteer informants I decided to drop them as impracticable under the circumstances. In any case, they were not crucial to the research. What information I did obtain turned out to be adequate for purposes of finer interpretation of data gathered through participant observation as well as for validation.

My increasing presence for breakfast and coffee as well as at meetings and events coincided with some other developments that were to draw me more deeply into political life at the Centre and ultimately help end the research, although not my involvement at the Centre. It became increasingly difficult for me to avoid this kind of involvement as time went on. When I started to volunteer at the Centre, the Community Association's Board of Directors was beginning to engage in struggle. As time went on, this conflict widened to include more and more people and took on a significance greater than simply a political struggle in the narrow sense of political. As I pointed out at the beginning, my earliest -- and continuing -- connections with the neighbourhood were with community and political activists. During my research, I had moved into the neighbourhood as a resident in a housing co-operative associated with the Residents' Association and a room-mate of a staunch supporter of the organization. As the struggles on the board of directors erupted into public view and gradually involved more and more people and energy at the Centre, Shirley became involved in the situation, as I outlined in chapter 6. She was a close personal friend of mine and so it became increasingly difficult for me to avoid taking sides in the situation. As well, I was a familiar face in the literacy

programme and participated regularly and prominently in the weekly meetings of students and tutors who worked in the programme.

As the dominant faction in the board struggle came into conflict with the literacy programme, I was expected to take a leadership role in organizing the response to this situation from the people in the literacy programme. My relationship with Shirley and other people who had become involved in the struggle on the side of the opposition faction and who I'd grown close to in the course of my research precluded a neutral stance in the situation. Moreover, my concern as a volunteer - as a "authentic" participant in the Centre - was that the struggle was undermining the credibility and viability of the Community Association and therefore the autonomy of the volunteers which has been described in the thesis. I became convinced that the only way to avoid this was to remove the dominant faction from its controlling position and reconstitute the Board of Directors. Although I did not participate directly in this process, the people in the opposition, more and more being people who had served as informants in one capacity or another, were aware of my sentiments. However, because I was not a vocal opponent of the dominant faction, its members did not seem to be aware of my feelings. In fact, if they noticed me at all, for they rarely did, since few of them were at the Centre on a regular basis, they sought my ear to tell me of their problems.

When the situation reached a climax and my involvement intensified I decided it was time to conclude the research. With forty-one completed questionnaires, three time-diaries covering one month each, three sets of interviews and copious field-notes, I had enough data to begin writing what preceded this appendix.

APPENDIX B

EASTLINE COMMUNITY CENTRE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME
STATS FOR 1986

TABLE 1

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
Total # of Volunteers	122	133	141	139	128	138		137	119	134
Total # of Hours Worked	4554	5453	5577	5276	5000	4316		4630	4793	4951
Avg # of Hours Worked	37	41	39	38	39			34	40	37
Maximum Hours Worked	160	191	264	152	204			230	192	172
Minimum Hours Worked	4	8	4	4	4	4		4	2	2
No. of Coffee Tickets Issued	6842	7502	7175	7323	6944	6223		6499	6618	6589
No. of New Volunteers	17	17	35	10	11			27	11	25
No. of Volunteers Who Quit	31	6	27	12	22			28	29	10

TABLE 2

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
MALE										
45 plus	35	36	30	31	37			38	41	42
under 45	56	67	73	67	59			63	52	60
Total	91	97	103	104	96			101	93	102
FEMALES										
45 plus	12	14	10	13	14			14	12	15
under 45	19	21	28	22	18			22	14	17
Total	31	35	38	35	32			36	26	32
Total # of Volunteers 45 plus	47	50	40	50	51			52	53	57
Total # of Volunteers under 45	75	S3	101	89	77			S5	66	77

APPENDIX C

A DIAGRAM OF EAST LINE COMMUNITY CENTRE

First Floor

Basement

Second
Floor

stor. xerox

BATHROOM

BATHROOM   elev.

upper part of gymnasium

LITERACY
PROGRAMME

ART
GALLERY

CLASSROOM

ASSOC.
OFFICE

DIRECTOR'S
OFFICE

programmers'
offices

Third
Floor

BATH-
ROOM

change

shower

elev.

BATH-
ROOM

change shower

GYMNASIUM

CAFETERIA

POOL
ROOM

WEIGHT

ROOM

food
storage

CHILD
FINDING

food
stor.

vc

KITCHEN
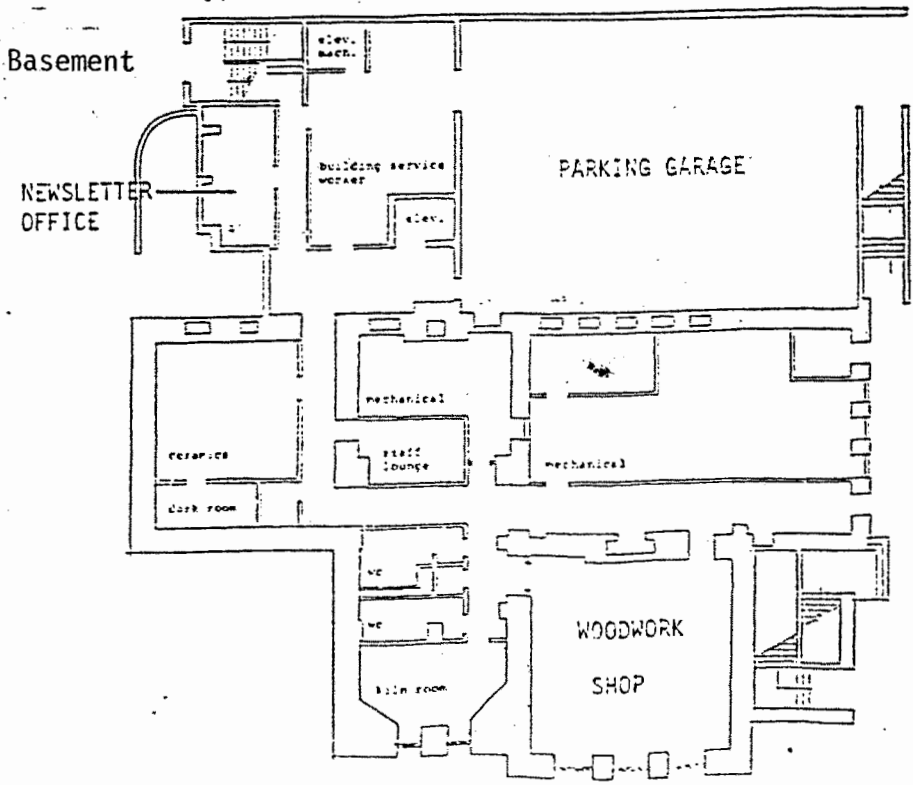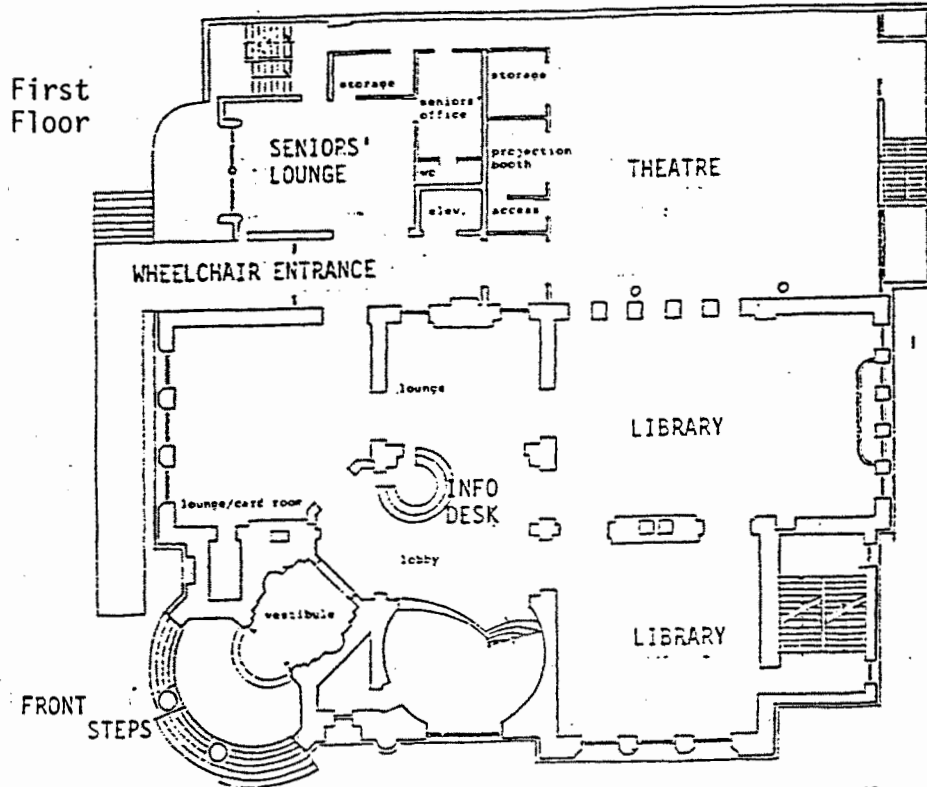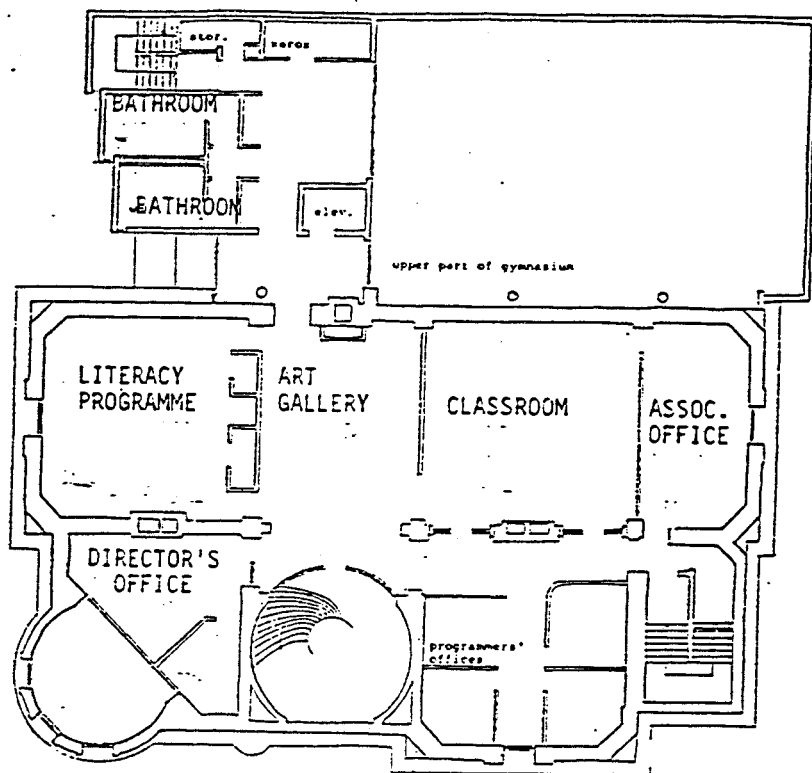
VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR
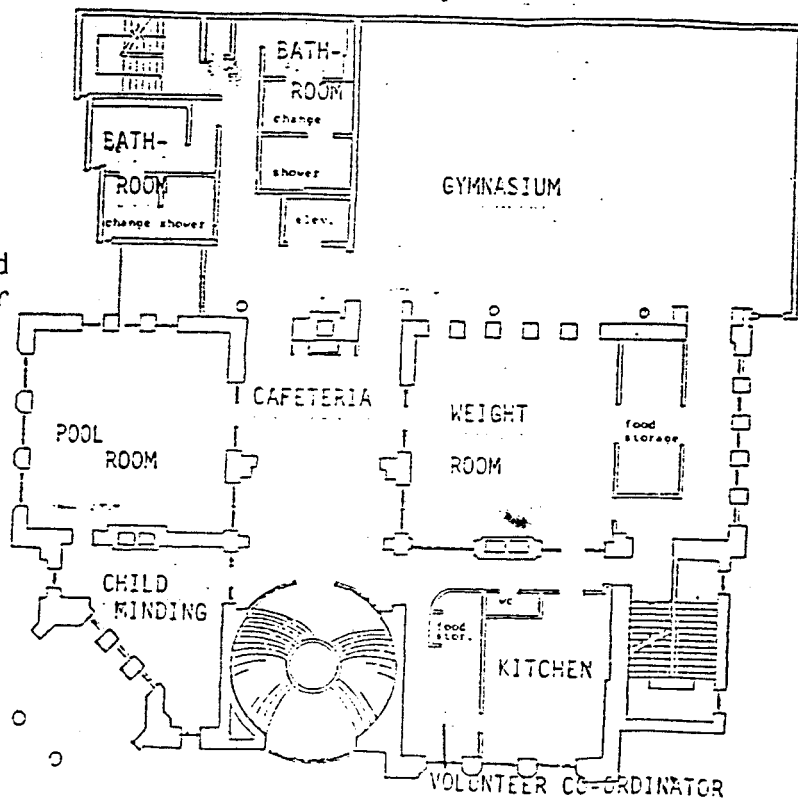
APPENDIX D

THE VOLUNTEER SURVEY

A. <u>Volunteering</u>

1. How long have you been volunteering at East Line Centre?

1.	less than one month	1
2.	1 - 3 months	2
3.	3 - 6 months	3
4.	more than 6 months	4

2. How often do you volunteer here?

1.	daily	1
2.	more than once a week	2
3.	once a week	3
4.	less than once a week	4

3. How many hours a month do you volunteer at
   East Line Centre?

1.	less than 4	1
2.	4 - 8 hours	2
3.	9 - 15 hours	3
4.	16 - 25 hours	4
5.	26 - 40 hours	5
6.	more than 40 hours	7

4. What kinds of work do you do when you are
   volunteering at East Line Centre?

----

5. When you are not volunteering, do you use East Line
   Centre for:

1.	personal business	1
2.	social activities	2
3.	education	3
4.	information	4
5.	relaxation	5
6.	sports	6
7.	other _____	7

6. How often do you come to East Line Centre for
   reasons other than volunteering?

        1.   daily   1

1.	daily	1
2.	more than once a week	2
3.	once a week	3
4.	more than once a month	4
5.	once a month	5
6.	less than once a month	6

7. Do any of the people you know volunteer at
   East Line Centre?

1.	friends	1
2.	family	2
3.	room-mates	3
4.	partner	4

8. Do any of the following people you know use
   East Line Centre?

1.	friends	1
2.	family	2
3.	room-mates	3
4.	partner	4

9. Do you receive CIP/VIP for your volunteer work
   at East Line Centre?

1.	yes	1
2.	no	2

10. Do you volunteer at any place(s) other than
    East Line Centre?

1.	yes	1
2.	no	2

11. If yes to question 10, please say where and what kind of
    work you do there.

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. How much time do you spend volunteering
   outside East Line Centre?

1.	more than once a week	1
2.	once a week	2
3.	less than once a week	3
4.	none	4

B. <u>Neighbourhood</u>

13. Do you live in

14. How long have you lived there?

1.	less than one month	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	1 - 3 months	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	3 - 6 months	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	more than 6 months	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

15. Where did you live before this?

16. How long did you live there?

1.	less than one month	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	1 - 3 months	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	3 - 6 months	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	more than 6 months	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

17. Are you planning to move in the next year?

1. yes	1
2. no	2

18. If yes to the last question, where would you
   like to move to?

19. Does you immediate family live in:

pr

1.	East Line	1
2.	adjoining neighbourhoods	2
3.	Metro	3
4.	Greater Metro Region	4
5.	in the province	5
6.	Canada	6
7.	outside Canada	7

20. How many people you know would you call close friends?

1.	none	1
2.	1 or 2	2
3.	2 - 6	3
4.	6 - 10	4
5.	more than 10	5

21. Where do your close friends live?

1.	in East Line	1
2.	in Southside	2
3.	in Viewmount	3
4.	other adjoining neighbourhoods	4
5.	other Metro	5
6.	the province	6
7.	other Canada	7
8.	outside Canada	8

22. How did you get to know your close friends?

1.	because he/she lives nearby	1
2.	connections at work	2
3.	family ties	3
4.	through other friends	4
5.	through children	5
6.	other _____	6

23. When did you last have contact with a close friend?

1.	this week	1
2.	this month	2
3.	1 - 6 months ago	3
4.	within the last year	4
5.	over a year ago	5

24. How often during the past year have you used the following services?

		once a week	once a month	2 to 3 times	once in the year	whenever a crisis came up
1. hospital/clinic	1	1	1	1	1	
2. UIC/manpower		2	2	2	2	2
3. MHR/welfare	3	3	3	3	3	
4. housing services		4	4	4	4	4
5. food bank		5	5	5	5	5
6. employment agency		6	6	6	6	6
7. legal services	7	7	7	7	7	
8. police	8	8	8	8	8	
9. counselling	9	9	9	9	9	
10. thrift store	10	10	10	10	10	
11. other		11	11	11	11	11

C. Activities

25. When did you last do each of these things?

1.	this week	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	within this month	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	1 - 6 months ago	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	within this year	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	more than a year ago	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

26. Where do you prefer to do each of them?

1.	at home	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	at a friend's home	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	in the part	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	in the pub	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	community centre	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6.	breaks at work	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7.	hall/stadium	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8.	private club	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8

27. Who are you most likely to
    do them with?

1.	partner	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	other family	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	work mates	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	friends	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	neighbours	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6.	other _____	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

_____

28. When did you last go to:

1.	last year	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	last month	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	2 - 6 months ago	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	more than 6 months ago 4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	never been	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

29. How did you get there?

1.	on foot	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	by car or motorcycle	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	public transport	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	taxi	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	other	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

30. What was your main reason
    for going?

1.	connected with work	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	personal business	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	social activities/ holiday	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	shopping	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	family reasons	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6.	other _____	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

31. How often do you eat at the
    following places?

1.	every day	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	once a week	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	less than once a week	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	once a month	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	less than once a month	5	5	5	5	5	5
6.	never	6	6	6	6	6	6

32. Where do you eat:

1.	breakfast	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	lunch	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	supper	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	coffee/snacks	4	4	4	4	4	4

D. Household Members

33. Could you give the following
    details first about each
    person living in your
    household at this time?

first name	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
first name (resp)	r e s p							

34. sex

35. age

36. marital status

37. relationship to you (eg., wife,
    husband, room-mate, father,
    friend)

38. Where was each person born?

			A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1.	East Line		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	adjoining neighbourhood	2 2	2	2	2	2	2	2		
3.	Up-town		3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	Mountview		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	other Metro		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6.	in province		6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7.	rest of Canada		7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8.	outside Canada		8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8

39. Do you or any members of your household have the following?

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1.	grade 7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	grade 10	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	grade 12 graduation	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	completed apprenticeship 4 4	4	4	4	4	4	4		
5.	university degree	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6.	trade/technical certificate 6 6 6	6	6	6	6	6			

40. What are the income sources of each member of you household?

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1.	employment	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	GAIN	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	OAP/CPP	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	HPIA	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	DVA	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6.	DIA	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7.	UIC	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8.	WCB	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9.	CIP/VIP	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
10.	savings/investments	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11.	other _____	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11

41. Does any member of your household belong to any club or society?

_____

42. Is any member of your household:

1.	a student	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	working full-time	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	working part-time	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	a housewife with no paid work	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	retired	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6.	sick or disabled	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7.	unemployed/looking for a job	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8.	unemployed/not looking for a job	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9.	a volunteer	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9

43. How long has each unemployed member
of your household been out
of paid work?

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1.	less than one month		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	1 - 3 months		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	3 - 6 months		3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	more than 6 months		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	never worked		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

44. About how long has each employed
member of your household been at
his/her place of work?

1.	less than one year	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	one to five years	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	five to ten years	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4.	more than ten years	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	all working life	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

45. How did each person find the work
he/she how has?

1.	just applied at the place	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
2.	through a friend			2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	through a family member	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3		
4.	through a neighbour			4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5.	through an advertisement	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5		
6.	Canada Employment Centre			6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
7.	a commercial employment agency			7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8.	other _____		8	8	8	8	8	8	8		

48. About how often does each unemployed
member of your household see a
financial worker, social worker or
UIC counsellor?

1.	once a week		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	once a month		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	less than once a month	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
4.	never		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

E. Housing

47. How much rent do you pay per month?　　　$_____

48. Do you live in

1.	a hotel	1
2.	a rooming house	2
3.	an apartment	3
4.	a house	4

49. Is your residence

1.	a single room	1
2.	two rooms	2
3.	studio/bachelor suite	3
4.	one bedroom apartment	4
5.	larger than a one bedroom apartment	5

50. Does your residence have

1.	a kitchen	1
2.	fridge and stove	2
3.	hot plate	3
4.	bathroom	4
5.	hot water	5
6.	sink	6

APPENDIX E: TIME DIARY

TIME	ACTIVITIES (what you were doing)	LOCATION (where you were doing it)	PEOPLE (who you did it with)	(why you did it)	REASON
1am-7am					
7am-10am					
10am-11am					
11am-noon					
noon-1pm					
1pm-2pm					
2pm-3pm					
3pm-4pm					
4pm-5pm					
5pm-6pm					
6pm-7pm					
7pm 8pm					
8pm-9pm					
9pm-10pm					
10pm-11pm					
11pm-1am					

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