(RE)CREATIVE WELFARE:

A DECENTERED SOCIAL POLICY EXPLORATION

OF THE COMMUNITY CENTRES OF VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

by

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(Re)creative Welfare: A Decentered Social Policy Exploration of

the Community Centres of Vancouver, British Columbia

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ABSTRACT

Municipal parks and recreation services are often examined from the perspectives of leisure or urban studies, but rarely from the standpoint of social policy. This oversight not only impedes identification of the welfare dimension in parks and recreation services, but also obscures an important connection between the localized organization of these services and the defining influence of higher level policy regimes. This thesis traces that connection with reference to the emergence and ongoing operation of a network of community centres, each one jointly managed by the Vancouver Park Board and a local nonprofit community association. The work is grounded in document analysis, supplemented by recalled data from the writer's career involvement with several of these Park Board facilities.

The 'bottom up' approach to social policy analysis implied by the above research agenda derives theoretical support from several sources. The work of Karl Polanyi (1944, 1977), and of social policy critics influenced by his "decommodification" thesis, provides the foundation of a non state-centred social policy. The "dual politics" model proposed by Saunders (1986), and others who equate urban sociology with the sociology of consumption, draws attention to the decommodifying impact of local governance. However, the concept of "semi autonomous fields," adapted from Moore (1979) and Cohen (1987), is found to be

a more applicable model to describe the relationship between local policy processes and the central state.

This thesis argues that, in the community centre context, social policy cannot be characterized as rational outputs from constituted authority, but is rather the outcome of relations between three semi autonomous fields: (1) a branch of the local state, (2) organized volunteers, and (3) professional staff. The 'decentered' policymaking of these fields, at times constrained and supported by central policy regimes, is shown to have -- in a Polanyian sense -- substantive economic impacts. The thesis concludes that a similar analytic approach to other areas of welfare service delivery would also reveal productive outputs of social policy.

DEDICATION

To Claire Elizabeth Hope Vulliamy,

born December 27, 1992,

whose exploration of the "immunity centre"

is much fresher than mine.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Some years ago, the dissonance between the community centre as officially described and the community centre as actually experienced led me to continue my exploration of this institution in the context of formal coursework. My studies began in the Social Policy Diploma program at SFU and -- yet again a short term commitment leading to a longer term one -- continued into graduate work in Sociology. As a neophyte academic, I felt almost as if I was doing fieldwork in reverse; I knew my research context very well, but experienced something amounting almost to culture shock in the encounter with "the literature."

This transition back to school after a twenty year absence was eased immeasurably -- and in ways that only after the fact I begin to appreciate -- by support from Dr. Noel Dyck. I was fortunate as well to enroll in two sessional courses with Dr. Dara Culhane, whose reading lists I am still mining. She also convinced me -- by example rather than argument -- that graduate studies would be a worthwhile endeavour. Dr. Marilyn Gates gave me a running start to thesis completion in a memorable research design seminar. Dr. Jane Pulkingham took over as my senior supervisor soon after her arrival at SFU; I thank her for helping me find the theoretical material upon which my thesis is based and also her subtle but insistent pressure that finally got the job done. May her subsequent charges not be quite so delinquent.

My career and studies would not have gone anywhere at all without the support of Teresa, my life partner. She bore my absences in mind and body with some complaint, but far less than was merited by the indefinite deferral of projects

and pleasures for too many years. One pleasure not deferred was, however, our daughter Claire. Her arrival greatly complicated -- and gave meaning to -- the preparation of this work. I look forward to life's reciprocities with her and her mother.

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Scattered through the City of Vancouver are twenty-three rambling, low-rise buildings called "community centres" (see map, page 2). Some of these centres are located on parks and others on school grounds; some are stand-alone structures and others part of complexes including ice rinks and swimming pools. Community centres and analogous institutions -- recreation centres, settlement houses, community schools and neighbourhood houses, to name a few -- are an ubiquitous presence in North American cities and towns. These facilities are not only common, but commonly overlooked for what they are -- an immediate and tangible presence of the welfare state within urban neighbourhoods. Yet discussion of the community centre or its analogues is very rare within social policy literature.

The reason for such neglect is readily apparent. From the centralized perspective of normal social policy, institutions like the community centre lie for the most part over a conceptual horizon. They are not programs of the central state, but instead projects of local governance or non-profit initiative (or in the present case of both). The activities taking place within these facilities -- usually oriented towards recreation and leisure -- are almost by definition otiose,[1] and certainly do not constitute mandated social services. In short, what the community centre represents is not truly welfare and hence consideration of this institution and the programming it delivers is peripheral to the core concerns of social policy.

In contradiction to the above argument, this thesis begins with the assumption that community centres *are* a form of welfare, and on that premise

Community Centres in Vancouver
operated by the Park Board
(and year open)

WEST END
(1975)

RAYCAM

STRATHCONA
(1972)

HASTINGS
(1965)

ROUNDHOUSE
(1977)

BRITANNIA
(1974)

FALSE CREEK
(1980)

THUNDERBIRD
(1972)

WEST POINT GREY
(1974)

KITSILANO
(1951)

MT PLEASANT
(1967)

TROUT LAKE
(1964)

RENFREW
(1964)

DOUGLAS
(1966)

DUNBAR
(1958)

RILEY
(1966)

KENSINGTON
(1977)

KERRISDALE
(1954)

KILLARNEY
(1963)

SUNSET
(1950)

CHAMPLAIN
(1981)

MARPOLE
(1949)
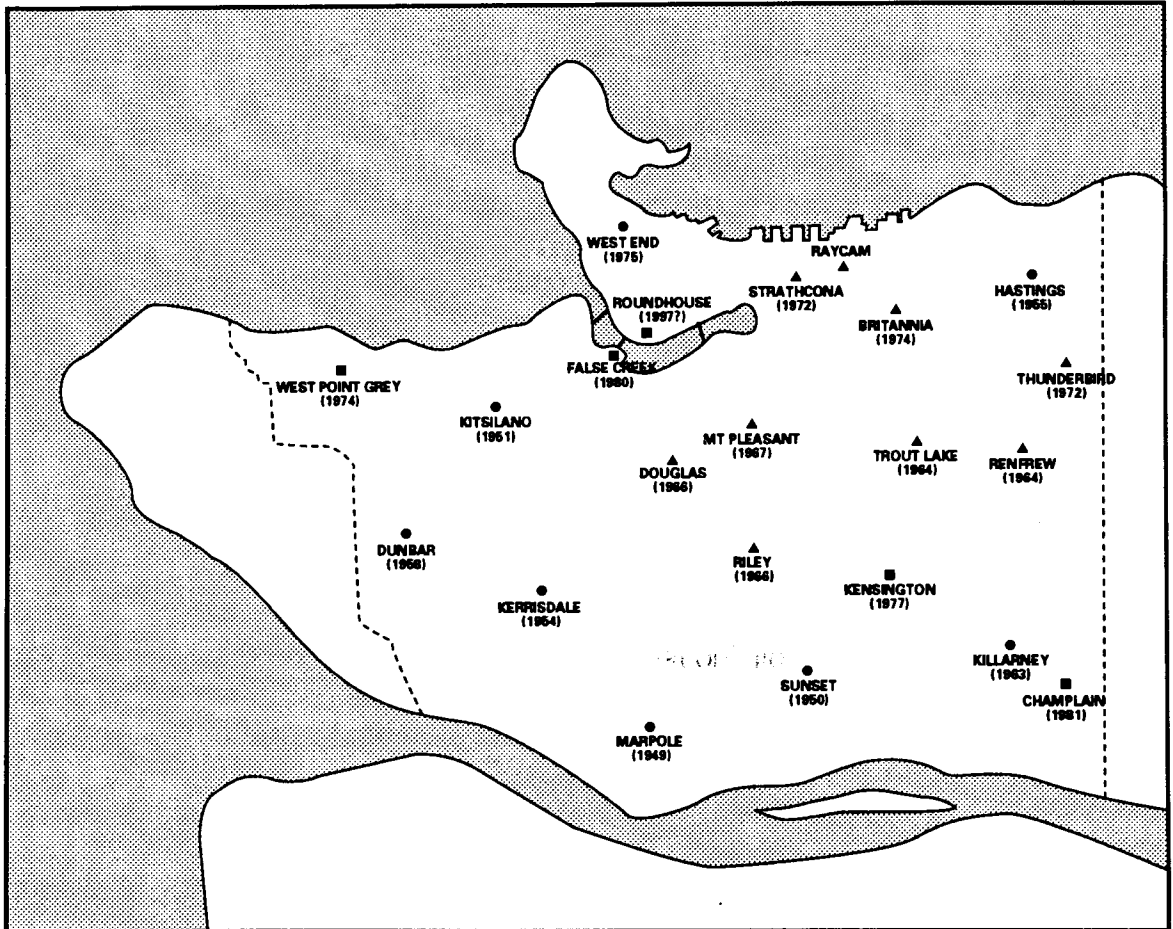
- ● 'War Memorials' phase (area plebiscite) community centres
- ▲ 'Community Development' centres
- ■ 'Planned amenity' centres (and exceptions)

seeks to uncover the social policy processes that have given rise to, and continue to sustain, urban amenities of this kind. Whether the welfare designation is appropriate or not will be dealt with in the next section of this chapter. That question aside for the moment, there remain at least two good reasons to adopt a social policy approach for an assessment of community centres.

First, a social policy perspective provides deeper insight into the community centre and, insofar as they can be considered representative, into the wider class of analogous institutions alluded to above. Community centres are so much a part of every day life, and so taken for granted both by those who use them and those who work in them, that some fundamental questions often go unasked. How and why, for example, did government -- particularly *local* government -- get involved in such an enterprise? What *needs* -- social or other -- are assumed to be thereby addressed? Why was a similar pattern of development manifest in different urban settings across North America? In the final analysis, these questions are perhaps unresolvable (they are certainly not fully resolved by this thesis), but the search for answers has revealed the community centre to have surprising dimensions of organizational complexity, and unexpected linkages to higher level policy-making.

Second, the attempt to apply social policy analysis to the particular case of the community centre forces a re-examination of where social policy originates, what the term exactly means, and what is included -- and what excluded -- from its analytic frame. Community centres did not result from articulated intent at any level of government, so any notion of social policy as conscious statecraft has to

be abandoned right at the start. Even so, in a multitude of ways the community centre is abetted or constrained in its operations by the influences of state power, and the totality of these influences constitutes, in effect, social policy. To make sense of policy at this level, one has to consider not only the exercise of regulation, also the social processes acted upon, and reacting to, the regulatory environment.

This study, then, challenges some preconceptions as to what a community centre is all about, and equally, some received notions as to the proper scope of social policy. These conventions are not explored in any great detail, however, because my main intent is not to deny mainstream interpretations, but instead to open up other possibilities for consideration. This research agenda naturally inclines towards an assessment of the whole institution of the community centre, rather than a dissection of any of its constitutent elements. Since every step of this re-evaluation demands the undoing of popular, almost reflexive, judgements upon the subject matter, the work is done, of necessity, in rather broad strokes. The hope is that what ultimately emerges is a new way of perceiving the community centre in relation to social policy -- and social policy in relation to local welfare services.

'Leisure' or 'Welfare?'

It might seem more logical to classify the community centre, not as a welfare service -- to be dealt with from a social policy perspective -- but instead

as parks and recreation service -- to be addressed from the standpoint of leisure policy. Reframing the issue in this way, however, only shifts the debate to a different level, as the following statements show:

> ...our services should not be classed as a welfare function, but rank as a social utility much the same as health services and/or education services.
> -from "The Philosophical Stance of the Etobicoke (Ontario, Canada) Parks and Recreation Services Department" (1977).

> In short, a city government should have no parks and recreation department. It isn't what government is supposed to be about....If you want to understand why we have deficit spending at the Federal level, think about it in connection with your own parks and recreation department.
> -Machan, T. (1991) "Welfare State on the Street Where You Live"

Etobicoke claims that parks and recreation are not welfare; Machan asserts that they are. The contradiction between these two positions may at first sight appear absolute. However, upon closer reading, a number of congruencies become apparent, all of which bear on the argument to be developed in this thesis.

First, neither Etobicoke nor Machan define what they mean by welfare. Their avoidance of this key point is readily understandable, since welfare is an extremely malleable construct. On top of the more or less literal concept (i.e., of human wellbeing ensured through networks of caring and support) one has to sort through a number of contextual and ideological overlays. The dominant contextual reference is to "government support for the poor, and particularly to the free or subsidized supply of certain goods or services" (Bullock et al., 1988:904). Ideological shadings of the term are far too numerous to inventory, although Hewitt (1992) provides an excellent overview, particularly of radical critiques of welfare.

It should be noted, however, that welfare ideologies do not break down neatly on a conventional left-right political spectrum. The idea of welfare as a debilitating influence upon individual initiative and on the 'economy' as a whole is certainly central to the conservative worldview, but the propriety of giving welfare to the "deserving" poor (a notion dating back to Elizabethan Poor Law) retains its currency on the right even today. On the left, responses are similarly divided; welfare is alternatively viewed as compensation for the distributional inadequacies and deleterious social impacts of a market economy (e.g., Offe, 1984), or as a mechanism of the state for social control and poverty management (e.g., Piven and Cloward, 1979).

It is neither possible within the space of one chapter, nor necessary for the purposes of this thesis as a whole, to demarcate the limits of welfare and establish with any certitude whether 'parks and recreation' lie within these boundaries. Instead welfare will be deemed a provisional designation for any involvement of the state predicated or rationalized on the basis of social need. This statement is not intended to define, but rather to stake out provisional grounds for social policy investigation. The area encompassed is admittedly wider than what would, with reference to "poverty," "deprivation" or "special need," normally be assigned to welfare. Instead the position is advanced that -- whether under its own name or disguised as "social utility," "collective consumption," or "mandated social program," -- welfare is ubiquitous in its presence and universal in its effects. State

sponsored parks and recreation services, putatively a response to a public leisure need, certainly form a part of the entire package.

That it is contentious generally to expand the definition of welfare, and in particular to make such a link with parks and recreation, is a second point of commonality between the Etobicoke and Machan statements. Etobicoke takes pains to put welfare at a distance, justifying the services it provides on the basis that they are not welfare. Machan unreservedly identifies as welfare the very establishments where he -- with confessed unhappiness -- takes his children to play. One senses, however, he is being intentionally provocative. Both statements in their way are representative of a sentiment widely held by leisure theorists and practitioners alike: parks and recreation services -- alone amongst all state sponsored social programs -- are somehow in a separate and higher category by virtue of their leisure content. This maintenance of an artificial boundary between leisure-oriented services and welfare perpetuates the classical distinction alluded to above between 'deserving' and 'undeserving' populations. On one hand a set of non-workers -- welfare recipients -- are stereotyped as dependent, incompetent and terminally non-productive. On the other, a set of non-workers -- leisure service recipients -- are construed to be freely choosing, self-actualizing and, if not currently productive, then either 're-creating' themselves in preparation for production, or enjoying merited rest after years of labour (i.e., retired). One population is highly stigmatized while the other is not, and the rationale for such unequal regard seems only to be in their relationship to the productive process,

narrowly defined.[2] As much as possible, this thesis will avoid making such a priori distinctions. Rather, the conventionally segregated discourses of leisure, welfare and productivity -- insofar as they bear on the community centre and the nature and purpose of the activities taking place therein -- will be considered as an undifferentiated whole.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly in terms of my thesis, both Etibicoke and Machan imply that parks and recreation services somehow transcend the purview of local governance. Machan suggests that in the United States (and he would likely make the same point with respect to Canada) civic provision of parks and recreation amenities indirectly exacerbates federal debt. Similarly, by equating their civic parks and recreation services with health and education services -- for which more senior levels of government generally articulate policy -- Etobicoke connects processes manifest at the local level with the exercise of higher and more central political and economic powers. Neither source, however, reveals any mechanisms of direct or indirect influence between levels of government, or even more generally between centre and periphery in the national context.

We begin, then, with the premise that parks and recreation service are not isolated urban initiatives, but part of a national fabric of social policy development. Close at hand the local configuration appears unique, particular and perhaps exceptional. Looking upwards and outwards, however, the elements of a broader pattern can dimly be perceived. The connecting threads between activity on the periphery and the overall policy regime will be explored in this thesis in the context

of a specific set of municipal recreation amenities -- the community centres of Vancouver, British Columbia. The next section of this chapter will introduce Vancouver's community centres to readers who may not be familiar with these or analogous facilities. As well, this description is the point of departure for more detailed exploration to follow. The community centre is presented as it might first appear or be experienced. While certain anomalous features are highlighted, overlay of theory and historical research is, for the most part, temporarily held in abeyance.

Uncovering the community centre: appearances and experiences

Almost all Vancouver residents live within walking distance -- a mile, two at the most -- of at least one community centre. Less certain is whether they know of its location or have ever been in it, are regular patrons or consider it the centre of their community. But even if a given resident is not among the 47.0% of the city's population who are current community centre users[3] (Marktrend Survey, 1991: Tables 45 and 50), she[4] would probably know something about her local centres -- if from no other source -- from the program brochures delivered in her mail two or three times a year.

Like the centres themselves, these brochures are diverse in appearance and content, but share a number of elements in common. Their contents pertain to a centre's program offerings for a specific season of the year, usually reflected by an image or motif on the cover. The first inside page describes the centre, its

location, the facilities it offers and their hours of operation. An inset box lists the

core administrative staff. Another section is devoted to registration procedures and

policies. Certain other components of the first page have implications which are

generally lost on the average reader. For example, members of the community

association board are listed. Annual membership fees for various ages and

categories are set out (usually a modest amount ranging from $1 to $10), and the

reader is informed that she must be a member in order to take part in centre

programs. As well, at the top or bottom of the page, the following message is

invariably found:

> (X Community Centre is) jointly operated by the Vancouver Board of Parks
> and Recreation and the X Community Association.

These references signify that the community centre involves an institutionalized

partnership between a branch of local government and a non-profit society. This

arrangement is well known by city residents and community centre users, and

most, perhaps take it for granted. This blend of public and private nonprofit agency

is, however, a distinctive (albeit not unique) feature of recreation service delivery

in Vancouver, particularly with respect to the operation of community centres.

Of greater interest to the casual reader would be the menu of centre

activities of which, with the exception of the opening page described above, the

program brochure mainly consists. The activities are generally grouped either by

age category (i.e., Preschool, Children, Youth, Adult, and "Seniors"[5]) or by

program type (e.g., Workshops, Special Events, Fitness). Every offering is

presented in a consistent format: Title of activity followed by a short description,

followed by cryptic denotations specifying the number of sessions, the day, the time, the start and end dates, the room, the name of the instructor and, of course, the fee. The configuration of data is readily understandable; it is consistent with the protocols of such publications as university calendars and night school bulletins.

Suppose a person decides, because of program brochure inducement or for some other reason, to visit a community centre. Once through the front door, she would be confronted by a reception counter and the attentive gaze of an employee standing behind, flanked by cash register and computer terminal. At that point the visitor is transformed from community resident to centre patron, impelled to justify her presence -- usually through monetary transaction -- before proceeding into the lobby or the rooms beyond. She might delay the process somewhat by browsing bulletin boards, drinking from the water fountain, or reading some of the literature on display on a nearby pamphlet rack. But the immediate, powerful inducement of first encounter with the community centre is to commit to structured activity and, as signalled by the program brochure, for every such activity there is a space, a time and a price. The program brochure does not, however, convey the full realities of community centre *activity, space, time* or *price.*

i. Activity: A municipal community centre is, according to Ramon Oldenburg (1989), "a great good place" -- one of a large number of public and private locales, removed from both home and worksite, provided (or claimed) for rest, relaxation and casual social encounter. Such inclusion is only partially justified, and mainly

to the extent that what occurs at the community centre is not always planned or controlled. People do 'hang out' at a community centre; they meet, interact, play, exchange gossip, provide mutual support -- with or without the benefit of official sanction.

More commonly, however, the community centre is formally represented as and understood to be a place for organized recreation and leisure pursuits, encompassing "educational, cultural, social and sports activities" [see Appendix A]. Hence people generally attend a centre to engage in, for example, 'self improvement' classes, art and music practice, table games, and amateur-level field and gym sports. These 'leisure pursuits' are, however, not necessarily pursued in a leisurely manner. Outwardly what seems often to be pursued is "anti-leisure" (Godbey, 1979:12): "...activity which is undertaken compulsively, as a means to an end, from a perception of necessity, with a high degree of externally imposed constraints, with considerable anxiety, with a high degree of time consciousness, with a minimum of personal autonomy, and which avoids self-actualization, authentication, or finitude." Anti-leisure very much resembles work, an impression strengthened in the community centre by the fact that 'leisure' activities are typically led, taught or otherwise conducted by an 'expert'; activity which is purely user-directed tends to be discouraged, or somehow marginalized. In some areas the relationship to work is even more direct; people are able to take on (are released for?) formal employment only because their dependents are engaged in community centre childcare programs or activities for the retired. Thus the

community centre is also a site where one form of non-leisure (structured recreation) secures participaton in another (wage labour).

The representation of the community centre as a place of leisure is further qualified with reference to a great deal of activity which does not conform at all to any recreation or leisure paradigm. For example, to a greater or lesser extent, every community centre provides family support, health services and therapeutic and counselling programs for certain 'special needs' populations. In addition, the centre is often the focus for community based planning initiatives, and the location for other meetings around issues of local concern. Indeed, rather than trying to categorize the activities of the centre around what is *included*, it is perhaps easier to define boundaries with respect to what is specifically *excluded*. Formal policy statements prohibit, or at least impede, activities of a commercial, for-profit nature. Also discouraged are partisan political and sectarian religious gatherings. But even these constraints are at times circumvented through the arms-distancing mechanism of a rental contract.

In sum, what takes place at a community centre, like the centres themselves, is most striking in its diversity. An ongoing, unresolved tension exists between the elements of formal recreation activity, conventional social program initiatives, and the casual uses invented by the centre's 'patrons.' The result is a miscellany of welfare "satisfiers" (Gough, 1993), a mix that changes through time and differs from place to place.

ii. *Space:* In relation to the community centre, both internal and external space must be considered. In either dimension, limiting or enabling factors impact upon how and to what extent the community centre is used. Visits to the centre are affected first by location, and second by the physical layout of the facility, but not in ways that are intuitively obvious.

The 'community' in 'community centre' is generally conceived of in geographic terms. Each centre is located in, named for and presumed to serve a specific neighbourhood, a defined boundary of which is given as the centre's "catchment" area.[6] With minor gaps and some overlaps, the catchment areas of all centres cover the whole residential zoned surface of Vancouver. The extent and degree of coverage offers symbolic assurance that all city residents have access to community centres. Catchments also guide public planning and consultation processes. But catchment areas have little bearing on actual usage patterns, as captured through the mapping of community centre memberships.[7] These maps show for most centres that, although use increases with proximity of residence, patrons who live within their centre's catchment area are in the minority -- outnumbered both by non-patron neighbours and patrons living beyond the catchment boundaries. The true 'catchment' of most centres is so attenuated as to almost render the concept operationally meaningless.[8]

Once in the centre, visitors from far and near encounter another set of spatial considerations. Beyond its main lobby -- often not very large -- every centre is compartmentalized into a number of different activity spaces. These spaces can

be classified along a continuum from extremely specialized to fully multipurpose design. On average, every community centre has three to four rooms designated 'multipurpose.' These vary in size from the equivalent to a small classroom to the scale of a large hall, but share the common features of an open floor area with a complement of collapsible banquet-style tables and folding or stacking chairs. Thus these rooms can be adapted for physical activity (dance, yoga, martial arts, etc.) or for 'sit down' events (meetings, seminars, dinners, etc.). The chief advantage of a multipurpose room is flexibility of use. The main disadvantage is that some desired enhancements of almost every activity are compromised by the attempt to accommodate the widest possible spectrum of uses.

Often, however, the needs of an activity are such that specialized design is essential. The trade-off here is that the more specialized the design, the fewer activities can be accommodated. There is also a risk that, as program needs and demands change through time, a too-particularized spatial configuration could become obsolete.[9] Nonetheless, certain special purpose activity areas, including gymnasia and other physical fitness facilities, hobbycraft workshops, performance and display spaces, and childcare amenities are common to most community centres.

In terms of external space, the community centre cannot credibly be described as the centre of any pre-existing, self-aware and bounded collectivity. A person's proximity of residence is indicative of the probability of her eventual patronage, but does imply an automatic 'belongingness.' In terms of internal space,

moreover, compartmentalization of activity areas inhibits public congregation and interaction. In defiance of these conditions, however, a sense of community often emerges. As noted in the section above under "activity," people do meet together at the centre and form attachments to the place and to one another. The 'community' in community centre is not a product of geography, but an outcome of commingling and shared experience taking place within the centre itself.

iii. *Time:* Paradoxically, for an institution supposedly dedicated to leisure, the operating hours of the community centre tend to reflect -- rather than complement -- the standards of formal employment. Thus the buildings are open to the public[10] for a full day (usually from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) Monday through Friday, and for a rather shorter time on weekends. The centres generally close on statutory holidays,[11] and hours are reduced over the prime vacation months of summer.[12] The schedule establishes itself within a closed loop of causality. That is, the hours of operation select who uses the centre and in what manner, and these usage patterns in turn reinforce the existing hours of operation.

During the week three daily peaks of activity can be observed: midmorning, late afternoon and evening. Mornings are mostly claimed by adults ancillary to the formal workforce -- persons elderly and retired, or with disabilities; homemakers with or without preschool children; and (albeit often grudgingly admitted) the unemployed. This pattern prevails with diminishing intensity (many programs adjourning for lunch) until mid-afternoon. Around three o'clock the schools let out

and active bodies of (mainly) elementary school-aged children refill the house. The centre then functions as an unofficial -- or possibly official -- latchkey,[13] until the working day is over. In the evening after supper is the time for stereotypic recreation; the formal workforce arrives to relieve the stresses of the day through physical workouts, hobbycrafts and games playing. Weekend activity is harder to classify, other than to note the prevalence of 'family' oriented programming and neighbourhood-scaled special events.

Within the overall timeframe dictated by hours of operation there is a finer distinction to be drawn between scheduled versus drop-in programming. The logic of a set program schedule dovetails with the logic of multipurpose design. The intent in both instances is to optimize the centre's capacity: providing a maximum range of services to a maximum number of patrons. Such timetabling of activity is undoubtedly more rational from an administrative point of view -- and more in the interest of the general public -- than a purely drop-in arrangement. On the other hand, for the individual user it is more convenient to drop-in when service is desired, and demands of this nature cannot be entirely ignored. For that reason, no community centre is able to fully timetable its program of activities.

Community centre time continues the pattern of organization evident in community centre space. Activity in both dimensions is segregated into managed units -- analogous and parallel to the general organization of labour. Total control, however, is never realized, nor -- whether by individuals or by collectivities -- is

community centre time fully self-directed. Leisure remains at once oriented to work, and yet distinct from work.

iv *Cost:* The most visible aspect of community centre activity cost is the program fee. Participation is largely conditional upon payment. The amount, listed in the program brochure for every activity, is tendered (in advance usually) at the counter by the front door. Thus, in order to gain access to leisure, one generally has first to earn money. A certain irony is inherent in the situation. Those who work full time will have more means, but also less opportunity to participate. Correspondingly, those who are employed part time or are unemployed may have abundant opportunity, but will likely lack the means.

As a matter of Park Board policy, usually duplicated by association resolution, every community centre makes some effort to reduce or eliminate fiscal barriers to participation. The elderly and the young pay reduced program and membership fees. Persons with disabilities and on social assistance can qualify to receive passes for free or cheap admission to programs. Senior staff are empowered to waive program fees upon request, or in cases of demonstrable need. In these instances the recreation programming available through public community centres is explicitly a form of targeted welfare.

If the issue of activity cost is considered in a wider frame, however, it becomes apparent that all use -- even that for which a fee is charged -- involves some level of subsidy. Even in the most favourable of circumstances the

community centre is not a fiscally self-supporting institution. Government subsidy, supplemented by fundraising endeavours, underwrite a portion of operational and capital development costs. The extent and compostion of subsidy varies from location to location, but in no centre is entirely absent. On the whole, this portion of the cost equation is invisible to the centre's patrons (who, after all, usually pay to take part), but it is on this basis that the community centre is fairly described as a context of not only targeted, but also universal welfare.

Simultaneously at the centre of community and on the periphery of the welfare state, Vancouver's community centres present a challenging case for social policy analysis. Elements of institutionization and of spontaneity mixed together, the community centre is a zone of tension between higher policy regimes and localized decision making, between state system and grassroots organization and between detached rational-bureaucratic structure and grounded community initiative. Other intersections further complicate the analysis: within the community centre recreation co-exists with social programming; welfare merges with productivity; and labour blends with leisure. This commonplace -- and commonly overlooked -- "parks and recreation" amenity has, in short, immense theoretical interest.

Scope of this study

This thesis specifically deals with the community centres for which the Vancouver Park Board has formal responsibility. Thus two public community centres in the city are excluded from consideration -- one operated by the Social Planning Department and the other by a non-profit society reporting directly to City Council.[14] These facilities are exceptional in several other respects which impede point by point comparison with the Park Board facilities. Non-public "community centres" in the city are also external to this study. Several such facilities are operated by the private non-profit sector, usually to serve a particular ethnic or religious community.[15] These limitations are imposed only to make the work manageable; it should not be assumed, however, that these other centres are unrelated to the ones included in the study group.

The community centre has in fact many analogues, both in Vancouver and in other jurisdictions. Some of these -- neighbourhood houses, community schools, and community halls for example -- are historically intertwined with the development of the community centre, and are therefore examined to the extent of that connection. Comparison begs to be made with the equivalent parks and recreation amenities in other cities -- most typically referred to as "recreation centres" -- but no attempt has been made to conduct a cross-jurisdictional analysis (although, admittedly, such a study would have considerable value). Neither is this study historical in any rigorous sense, although (in the absence of an authoritative

history[16]) it does trace influences upon the community centre as far back in time as seems necessary to explain its genesis.

Methodology

This thesis represents an attempt to make sense of personal work experience. To that end, all analysis is grounded upon a bank of recalled data amassed during almost eighteen years of employment in municipal parks and recreation. All the minutiae of community centre practices, from specific program interactions to overall management protocols, are included in these assets. No attempt, however, has been made to reconstruct field notes or to document specific observations after the fact. This thesis is not intended as a work of retrospective ethnography.

Instead, the approach taken can best be described as praxis. Experience in the field provided a base upon which to assess the theoretical material encountered in the classroom. Applicable theory, in turn, guided further investigation. Thus research did not follow a 'normal' trajectory of social policy analysis. That is to say, work did not proceed from consideration of the formal articulation and deployment of welfare intervention by state agency, through to an assessment of eventual outcomes. Instead, the study began with the fact of the community centre, from there attempted to trace the political and policing[17] instruments which brought this institution into being, and continue to influence its development.

To make such linkages, first hand perceptions alone are insufficient. Experience was therefore supplemented by document analysis and, where clarification was required, by querying of work peers and other informants in the parks and recreation context. The documents analyzed came from many sources: routine communications encountered in the course of duty, reference literature on file at Park Board Headquarters, documents of all kinds at the Vancouver Public Archives (where almost all Park Board files prior to 1977 are held). Certain of what were claimed by some fellow insiders to be fundamental purposes and principles of the community centre were gradually revealed by this research to be post hoc rationalizations. The picture of the community centre which emerged at the end was considerably revised from appearances at the outset.

Plan of the thesis

The organization of subsequent chapters roughly traces the outward trajectory of praxis alluded to in the previous section. As the thesis moves through summations of experience supplemented by documentary evidence, progressively more theoretical argument is brought to bear. The theoretical ground is staked out first, however, in Chapter Two, with the synthesis of various social policy and allied perspectives into a framework that has application to local government and community based social service delivery. Here the writings of Karl Polanyi and social policy critics influenced by him are key. Also included, however, is the work of some theorists who connect urban sociology with the sociology of consumption,

as well as a range of other material which describes the relationship of community level social processes to national level political, legal and economic systems.

Chapter three examines the community centre in its historic dimensions, revealing critical developmental processes not deducible from what exists on the landscape today. In essence, this chapter is the genealogy of the community centre, tracing its antecedant branches of community organization, recreation, social work and public education. These branches have converged somewhat in the current era but are not yet synthesized into a coherent whole. Chapter Four explores the reason for this ongoing state of non-resolution. The community centre is described as a policy "field" (Moore, 1979; Cohen, 1987) encompassing agencies of the (local) state, the (incorporated) community of users, and (quasi) professional staff. Each of these agencies has some ability to define and direct the community centre, but with significant limits to autonomy none is able to achieve unilateral dominance. The penultimate chapter explores the economic (in the Polanyian substantive sense) dimension of the community centre field. Changes to the mix of market, redistribution and reciprocity components through time and from site to site are considered to show how, under one overarching administrative framework, divergent strategies are suited to local conditions. The final chapter challenges the marginal status within social policy studies of "leisure" services, and of other community and volunteer agencies as well. The thesis concludes that activity in peripheral fields can have enormous influence on the organization of policy regimes.

Chapter Two: Double movements in social policy: decommodification, dual politics and semi autonomous fields

To bring the community centre within the scope of social policy analysis requires some adjustment of perspective. Even though the word 'policy' implies the legal instrumentality resident in state power, one has to transcend the "equation of social policy with the institutionalized welfare state" (Walker, 1983:132). Instead, one's attention is directed to external processes which may or may not interact with formal governance. Walker's proposed definition for social policy nicely sums up the necessary shift in emphasis: "The rationale underlying the development and use of social institutions and groups which affect the distribution of resources, status and power between different individuals and groups in society" (Walker, 1983:142).

Walker is pouring old wine into a new bottle, however. His reformulation of social policy is highly suggestive of the "holistic" (Block & Somers, 1984) approach of Karl Polanyi (1944, 1947, 1977), recently rediscovered and brought into the social policy mainstream. Polanyian ideas which have been taken up by contemporary social policy theorists (notably Block, 1987a, 1987b; Offe, 1984; Rein and Rainwater, 1987) can be summarized as follows: (1) social policy is associated with the emergence of a (capitalist) market economy; (2) social policy is conceived to be intrinsically "economic" policy; and (3) "economy" is understood to be subordinate to social processes, rather than the other way around. These

principles guide the analysis of community centres developed through this thesis, but are not borrowed uncritically. An assessment is made in this chapter of Polanyi's work (remembering that it mostly predates the post World War II expansion and consolidation of social policy regimes) in light of contemporary debates as to the ongoing viability of the welfare state.

Polanyi's work is not without ambiguity and unresolved conceptual difficulties. His tendency to make explicit reference only to the legislative enactments of the central state, for example, undermines the holistic vision of social policy inherent in his argument. This imbalance is especially problematic with reference to parks and recreation services, which almost universally are projects of local governance. Thus the Polanyian frame adopted in this thesis is supplemented by analytic perspectives (e.g., Dunleavy, 1980 ; Saunders, (1986) that locate collective consumption process specifically within the "urban agglomeration" (Castells, 1976:148).

Finally, as it is the stated intent of this thesis to bridge the distance between local organization and central authority, consideration will be given to Ostrander and Langton (1987), who attempt a similar connection. In particular, the model of "semi autonomous fields" developed by Moore (1978) and applied in the context of social policy by Cohen (1987) will be used to expose the indirect policy instruments that constrain and facilitate community centre operations.

Karl Polanyi's decommodification thesis

Karl Polanyi's influence on social policy perspectives has been indirect, and mainly posthumous; during his lifetime his theoretical contributions were for the most part debated - and contained - within the fields of economic history and anthropology. He rejects classical liberal economic theory on the grounds that, with its paradigmatic dedication to "the deductive exploration of the logic of maximizing under the constraint of scarcity" (Stanfield, 1986:33), liberal economics is concerned solely with the aggregate of human behaviours within a constructed system (i.e., the market) relatively recent in origin and uneven in its penetration of socio-cultural functioning.[18] In opposition to the classical paradigm, Polanyi advances a "substantive" (Dalton, 1990:160; Stanfield, 1986:38-41) understanding of economy, which considers the entire material provisioning of a society. Polanyi's contention is that the economic dimension is normally an intrinsic component of a wider social functioning, and not a prime determinant of other aspects of human behaviour. On this key point, Polanyi not only contradicts classical liberal perspectives but also diverges as well from the Marxist tradition.

In <u>The Great Transformation</u> (Polanyi, 1944), and in more detail in the <u>Livelihood of Man</u> (Polanyi, 1977), Polanyi discusses three such systems of provisioning, which separately or in combination dominated all pre-capitalist economies. (1) *Reciprocity*, which involves economic exchange through symmetrical social relationships, typically through kinship lines; (2) *Redistribution*, which refers to the centralized collection and subsequent allocation of goods and

services; and (3) *Householding,* which describes production by and for a closed, self-sufficient group. Polanyi de-emphasizes market exchange as a provisioning mechanism of what he terms socially "embedded" economies. Although conceding the existence of markets even in antiquity, he emphasizes their "limited and unexpansive nature" (1944:57). Polanyi regards all markets as artificial entities; those of pre-capitalist epochs he describes as highly specific in function, intensively regulated, and largely peripheral to the socio-cultural mainstream.

The first stage of what Polanyi refers to as the "great transformation" -- the attempt to create a total "self-regulating" market -- was deliberately engineered, he argues, through a series of legislative interventions in the early nineteenth century. For self-regulation to be achieved, the market system had to be closed; it could not co-exist with alternate economic practices. The logic of pricing goods for exchange was therefore extended to other essential components of industrial production - labour, land and money ("their prices being called respectively...wages, rent and interest" (1944:69)). Because labour, land and money are not true commodities (in the sense of items produced for sale), Polanyi's term for this distortive extension of market logic is "commodity fiction" (1944:Chapter 6).

In Great Britain, which provides the central case study of Polanyi's <u>Great Transformation</u>, the primary legislative instruments in the commodification process were the Enclosure Acts with respect to land, the creation of a gold standard with respect to money, and the Poor Law of 1832 with respect to labour. Of the three fictitious commodities, Polanyi regards labour as most important. "[It] is the

technical term used for human beings," he notes, "in so far as they are not employers but employed" (1944:75). The reduction of human beings to the status of commodities and the subordination of human society to an external economic system had an effect on people's lives which Polanyi compares with the effects of Third World colonization (1944:164). The devastating factor in both instances was not, he insists, exploitation leading directly to material impoverishment, but the "disembedding" of the economy from supportive social relations.

Polanyi argues that the installation of a self-regulating market was a utopian experiment, doomed on two counts. First, on top of the massive intervention required to set up the system in the first place, the so-called "laissez faire" economy could only be sustained by ongoing state involvement through instruments such as antitrust and trade union regulation. Second, a theoretical equilibrium of marketplace supply and demand could only be attained through extreme cycles of boom and bust. In the process both the natural world and cultural institutions would be destroyed by the oscillations between overproduction and stagnation (Polanyi, 1944:73). That such a catastrophe was averted was due to protective counter reactions against the imposition of the self regulating market. These had the effect of partially "decommodifying" the fictitious commodities of labour, land and money.[19] For example (again Polanyi cites from British experience), currency was controlled through the establishment of a central banking system, land protected by agrarian tariffs and working conditions improved through legislation beginning with the Factory Acts of the 1840s. In these early

interventions can be detected the genesis of, respectively, financial policy, agricultural policy and social policy -- all of which, according to Polanyi, together constitute economic policy.[20]

Polanyi concludes his chapter on the self-regulating market with the observation that:

> Social history in the nineteenth century was thus the result of a *double movement:* the extension of the market organization in respect to genuine commodities was accompanied by its restriction in respect to fictitious ones. While on the one hand markets spread all over the...globe,...on the other hand a network of measures and *policies* was integrated into powerful institutions designed to check the action of the market with respect to *labour*, land, and money (1944:76 -- my emphases).

This passage is at once a useful summary and one of the sources of conceptual difficulty in the application of Polanyi's decommodification thesis to social policy. The explicit reference to "policies" in connection with the "labour" market defines, from a Polanyian perspective, the fundamental object of social policy (whether or not the parallel affects upon land and money are, as Polanyi claims, extraneous to social policy, they are certainly external to any overlap of 'social' and 'leisure' policy[21]). Difficulties arise, however, with the implied relationship between social policy and the economy. Laying emphasis on "powerful institutions designed to check the action of the market" overlooks other described effects of policy on labour markets. It should be remembered, for example, that Polanyi also credits social policy interventions with the establishment of labour markets in the first place. Furthermore, in an analysis of the Speenhamland Act, an amendment to the Poor Law initiated by landed aristocracy late in the eighteenth century, Polanyi

argues that policy intended to resolve individual cases of destitution had devastating economic and social consequences. Speenhamland, he asserts, failed because it attempted to insulate workers from the labour market, ignoring the profound economic restructuring then taking place in the wake of the Enclosure Acts. Thus the making of social policy is not necessarily 'protective' in its motivation nor its outcome; rather, the protective counter movement is a specific, post market phase in the historical development of social policy.

The question as to what exactly the protective counter movement protects remains at issue even today. Contrary readings of Polanyi are possible. Claus Offe (1984:263) for example, derives from Polanyi the contention that "'welfare' institutions are a pre-condition of the commmodification of labour power." On that basis he asserts that the orientation of social policy is to "the constitution and continuous reproduction of the wage-labour relationship" (Offe, 1984:100). Polanyi's statement that "the organization of capitalistic production itself had to be protected from the devastating effects of a self-regulating market" (1944:132) seems to validate this paradoxical notion that decommodification protects commodification. From the same source, however, Stanfield (1986:122) derives the conclusion that "[t]he protective response is, inherently, not a supplement to the market economy but a signal to replace that child of utopian experimentation."

Which reading is 'correct' -- that of Offe or of Stanfield -- is immaterial; more intriguing is the fact of their arrival at contradictory conclusions from the same conceptual starting point. Each has embraced one vector of Polanyi's double

movement and ignored its opposite. The impact of the double movement is thus seen to linger on, not as action and reaction complete in historical time, but as an enduring paradox in social policy -- unresolved and perhaps unresolvable.

Polanyi and the contemporary welfare state

In The Great Transformation, Polanyi's gaze is firmly retrospective, yet his analysis has perhaps greater bearing on social policy developments ensuing from the date of publication. Polanyi would no doubt have been surprised by the eventual turn of events. He regarded the emergence of the post war welfare state as confirmation that "market mentality" (1947) was obsolete. In this respect he was part of what Block (1987:13) describes as a "broad consensus that an optimal combination of economic efficiency and social equity could be achieved within the framework of capitalist democracy." What Polanyi could not have expected (but what his work in a sense anticipates), is that the idea of a double movement within social policy would later resurface in critical re-assessments of the viability of the welfare state. Ironically, this critical re-assessment both contributes to the breakdown of the old consensus and forms the nucleus of a "new social policy consensus" (Block, 1987:13).

Critical reassessment of welfare was in the beginning a project of Marxian analysis. Fundamental to the Marxian tradition is that the state acts in the interest of capital; that the state might act in the broader social interest is an amended perspective, formed mainly in response to the ubiquitous emergence of welfare

states throughout the industrial capitalist world. Divergent explanations for state commitment to "welfare" have been put forward by Marxist scholars, not perhaps in contradiction to one another, but certainly not fully reconciled. One assessment is that welfare represents at least a partial victory arising out of class struggle, and provides to the working class a measure of independence from the subordinate relations of production (Mishra, 1990). A counter point of view (e.g., Wayne, 1986) is that welfare socializes production costs by maintaining a reserve workforce, freeing workers from caring for their "nonproductive" dependents, and enhancing labour capacity through education and health measures. The implication is that the state acts solely in the interest of capital after all. A third perspective, first articulated by James O'Connor in 1973, revisits the idea of a double movement -- nine years after Polanyi's death.

O'Connor notes the fundamental tension in the modern welfare state created by the demand to enhance conditions for capitalist accumulation on the one hand and the need to preserve its own legitimacy on the other. Capitalist accumulation is favoured by low taxation and minimal regulatory intervention, conditions which seriously constrain the chief means of preserving legitimacy -- the expansion of welfare programming. Given these irreconcilable and progressively increasing demands, O'Connor concludes that existing structural arrangements are inherently crisis prone. The issue of crisis, and its transformative potential, is further examined in Habermas (1976). He considers the effect of crisis on the political, economic and socio-cultural "systems." He asserts that contradictions

displaced through these systems could be manifested unpredictably as legitimation crisis (loss of popular support in the political system), rationality crisis (inability to steer the economic system), or motivational crisis (erosion of a participatory response from the socio-cultural system). Gough (1979:54) de-emphasizes the crisis scenario somewhat, but concludes that, because of the twin imperatives of accumulation and legitimation, social policy is constrained to either (1) increase labour power, (2) lower reproductive costs, or (3) maintain overall social harmony.

The correspondences between neo-Marxian dualist accounts of the welfare state and Polanyi's concept of the double movement are striking. In both cases the state is depicted as acting in a contradictory manner. Polanyi's account of the state creating and sustaining a total market system is recast in Marxist terms as the state ensuring optimal conditions for capital accumulation. The marshalling of a protective response, with who or what protected being far from clear, has corresponding uncertainties in legitimation strategies. When this dualism is recast in spatial terms, and shown to operate through the dimension of centre and periphery, further parallels become evident.

A variation upon the idea of a double movement, which Saunders (1986:306) refers to as the "dual politics thesis," informs the equation of urban sociology with the sociology of consumption. Dual politics theory provides an important elaboration upon the Polanyian idea that, in contrast to the deliberate state interventions which originally created and continue to sustain a market system, the decommodifying response was spontaneous and diffused through

social, economic and political formations. Thus, Saunders (1986:302) observes a "tendency for consumption interventions to be focused on local, electoral levels of the state while production interventions gravitate towards higher level corporatist institutions...." He qualifies this assertion by acknowledging the central location in most countries of "state consumption provisions in cash (i.e., the social security system)" (ibid:303). Even so, the view that "consumption interventions" are distinctly urban phenomena suggests that local rather than central authority is the prime generator of redistributive social policy. Such a conclusion is difficult to square with the focus of most social policy analysis, to say nothing of the bulk of Polanyi's own examples, but serves at least to broaden the horizons of social policy debate.

Although the dual politics thesis derives, at least in part, from neo-Marxian perspectives of welfare state instability, some theorists who share this orientation are reluctant to concede that the local state has a significant social policy profile. Gough (1979), for example, counters with a two-pronged argument. First, he asserts that the scale of social welfare intervention in the post-war era has required increasing centralization, such that areas that were once the responsibility of (or relegated to) local government and charitable organizations are now concentrated in a corporatist welfare state. Second, he advances an instrumentalist claim to the effect that -- despite its specialized functions -- local government is not autonomous, but merely an administrative sub-apparatus of the nation state. However, Gough's evidence -- drawn mainly from the British context -- is internally

inconsistent. He observes that spending on social services by local government is extensive and in fact increasing as a share of GNP (Gough, 1979:96-7), while simultaneously tax revenues to local government have shrunk as a proportion of total government income. These contradictory trends have been resolved, Gough notes, "by an increased flow of funds from central to local government" (ibid. 97). Gough emphasizes the potential for these transfers to be a "weapon of economic and social policy" (ibid:97) in the hands of central government, while downplaying the possibility of independent functioning at the local level.

Ironically, Gough's observation of a centralizing trend in welfare, also made by Offe (1984), points to the importance of the local processes as, at least historically, the original wellspring of social policy. Gough also offers no reason why innovation at the periphery should not persist, even as responsibility for established social services moves to the centre. Rather he infers a central locus of control, and hence of power to innovate, from an increasing incidence of transfers from higher to lower levels of government. This inference might bear out in the case of centrally mandated services, but is certainly questionable with respect to the very many non-mandated social programs sponsored by -- amongst other agencies -- the local state.

Locating a 'post market' substantive economy

Thus far I have emphasized possible congruencies between a Polanyian based social policy and certain dualist themes in neo-Marxian analyses of the

welfare state. There are also critical differences between these perspectives, particularly as they pertain to the viability of welfare engagements. That Polanyi is cited to support both sides of the question is, as Block notes, ironic (Block, 1987). Block's Polanyian inspired critique of theories of the "welfare state in crisis" is sound, but his faith in the ability of the state to create "new structures of accumulation" and thereby manage the economy out of crisis is arguably misplaced. Again, the particular examples that Polanyi gives of the protective counter movement may support such interpretation, but Polanyi's "holistic" understanding of the economy ultimately undermines Block's position. It also represents the point of departure between Polanyian and Marxian theory.

The neo-Marxian critique of the welfare state perpetuates the narrow economic determinism and base-superstructure division of classical Marxism. The processes of production and distribution, located within the sector of private ownership, constitute 'the economy." In contrast, the public sector only *redistributes* value created in the private sector, and therefore -- while also a site of consumption -- is in itself nonproductive. Hence the reproductive and legitimating functions of social policy, albeit necessary state activity, are construed to be a drain upon the "economy." This same dichotomy also informs the dual state analysis. "Production interventions" (i.e., those that support capital accumulation) are privileged with such critical importance as to require centralized control, while "consumption interventions" (characterized as mainly of legitimation

value) are relegated to the periphery -- both spatially and in terms of relative importance.

In contrast to Marxian perspectives, and for that matter to classical liberal economics, Polanyi regards the economy not as a determining base, but as an inherently sociocultural phenomenon. In this respect McClintock and Stanfield (1991) are correct in their assessment that, in Polanyian terms, the crisis of the welfare state is cultural in origin, and can therefore only be resolved by the restoration of a welfare culture. How this might be achieved in concrete economic or policy terms, however, remains unstated. The problem is that, while Polanyi gives a detailed taxonomy of pre-capitalist, culturally-embedded economies, and further claims that post-capitalist decommodification successfully "re-embedded" the economy, he is very vague as to the actions taken. He describes the protective counter movement as diffuse and spontaneous, but his specific citations are to legislative actions of the central state, and not to any other agency.

The reason for Polanyi's neglect of external agency is readily apparent. He is, in fact, caught in a contradiction of his own making. In depicting the establishment of a self-regulating market as totally destructive of prior, socioculturally embedded, economic forms, he negates the possibility of a protective response -- a response which was essentially economic -- generated at the socio-cultural level. Any overt description of such non-state decommodification would be an acknowledgement that commodification was in the first place incomplete. Block finds in this area of ambiguity support for his claim that state

managers have independent powers of policy definition. There are, however, other possibilities with respect to the decommodification thesis which neither Block nor Polanyi explore. The first is whether any elements of precapitalist economic organization -- redistribution, reciprocity or householding -- survived to constitute part of the protective counter movement. The second is whether, in the wake of market dominance and state intervention, other substantive economic forms could have emerged.

Polanyi's terminology further obscures the issue. The provisioning principle of "redistribution" in Polanyi's substantive economics is the closest analogue to the dominant mechanism of formal state social policy (Hettne, 1990:216). But, in the Marxian tradition, "redistribution" has particular resonance as a dynamic secondary to "distribution." The subordination of one to the other is, however, challenged by Rein and Rainwater (1987:148-9). They argue that the distinction between distributive and redistributive activity in complex industrial economies has become so hazy as to have no analytic significance whatsoever. Government transfers not only support the end recipients but also expansive structures of information compilation and service delivery, which are deeply intermeshed with the "private" sector.[22]

Unfortunately, state sponsored redistribution, in contemporary social policy practice, is more controlled by than controlling of market operation. What the state initially acquires is calculated as a portion of individual and corporate income. Likewise allocation of resources is rationalized (if not actually conducted) more or

less inversely according to prior marketplace outcomes. The net outcome is a social policy constructed in such a way as to remain dependent upon an external economy. This is not to suggest that state social policy is superfluous to the requirements of sustained capitalist functioning, but to point out that, insofar as social policy is predicated *solely* on state-directed (re)distribution, a tendency towards crisis cannot be refuted. As Offe observes (1984:199-200), even if the instability of welfare regimes represents "a conscious tactical misrepresentation of reality[,]...what is real in the minds and perceptions of people will be real in its consequences."

The same objection partially qualifies the suggestion of Rein and Rainwater (1987) -- made with explicit reference to Polanyi -- that the "industrial relations tradition" be combined analytically with the "social protection policy tradition" to form a coherent social policy whole. Bargaining, even when it is collective, remains very much a market mechanism. But, while formalized industrial relations does not truly decommodify; the "relational system" (Rein and Rainwater, 1987:147) established between unions and employers does to some extent protect the labour force. The collective bargaining unit thus might represent a new economic form, belonging neither to the pre-capitalist categories identified by Polanyi, nor fully to the constructs of market self-regulation and state intervention.

Where one new substantive economic form can be found, other examples may exist. Some analysts, making explicit reference to Polanyi, do explore non-state dimensions of the protective countermovement. Mayhew (1989:557) identifies

"Coxey's Army," an unemployed protest movement in the United States at the close of the nineteenth century, as part of "the protective half of the double movement." Mayhew is, however, firm in her conviction that while "Polanyi's concept of the double movement is powerful in explaining change in the late nineteenth century...[it] needs modification to explain events in the late twentieth century" (ibid:561). Hann, however, (1992:151-56) applies a Polanyian model to describe how housing in contemporary Hungary is delivered through a blend of market enterprise, state distribution and informal reciprocal exchanges. Stanfield (1990:202) makes the point explicit: "The protective response is by no means limited to action through state apparatuses. Trade unions and other voluntary associations such as trade associations, civic organizations, historical-preservation societies, and naturalist societies play a major role."

It appears that, to discover the post-capitalist substantive economy, one has to look beyond both the functioning of the market and the instrumentality of the state. Furthermore, the construct of what is meant by 'productivity' has to be broadened considerably. This point is well articulated by Hewitt (1983:79) in his critique of strictly economistic accounts of welfare: "[p]hysical effort, tending, nurturing, the display of [wisdom], authority and artistic creativity are all different forms of labour with their own specific outcomes and productions." Bishop and Hoggett (1989) associate these kinds of activities with what is conventionally regarded as leisure in their model of "the unrecognized economy." In Polanyian terms, leisure might be regarded as decommodified labour -- or perhaps

uncommodified labour -- in the expanded realm of productivity. This substantive economic activity on the periphery is not, furthermore, just a marginal concern of social policy. As Chorney (1991:53 -- my emphasis) puts it: "it is one of the more intriguing aspects of capitalism that in order for it to function successfully, it has always required *either the survival of pre-capitalist institutions and modes of social interaction* or the intervention of the State to ameliorate conditions and shore up the accumulation process." Chorney adds that the erosion of these institutions and modes "essentially provided free of charge, contributes to the necessity of the State providing compensatory services...usually financed out of the taxation system (ibid:54).

Centre and periphery in social policy -- bridging the gap

The persistence of modes of social interaction in the contemporary era, beyond the influence of state or market, is hardly a new discovery. This theme has been well developed through countless treatises on civil society (well summarized in Seligman, 1992; and, in terms of an Aristotelian provenance, in Racine, 1995) and, on a finer scale, of community. Popular and academic interest in these areas has, if anything, grown more intense in the wake of attempts to undo the welfare state in the West and the collapse of soviet-style command economies in the East. Whatever the cause of this resurgence, many recent writings on civil society and community (e.g. Squires, 1990; Davies and Shragge, 1990; McKnight, 1987, n.d., 1994) either describe or are marked by acutely anti-state and, in particular, anti-

policymaking sentiments. Social policy research in these areas is -- likely in consequence -- underdeveloped.

The stubborn fact remains, however, that pure forms of either state provision or communitarian self sufficiency are extremely rare. Between these poles lies a vast territory of organizational ambiguity. Here one encounters various quasi-governmental bodies, non-profit agencies, and public interest groups acting and interacting in a tangle which defies easy taxonomy. In many instances this organizational activity may be, historically and operationally, an extension of government. Upon such a premise is based most of the literature of decentralization (see, for example, B. Smith 1985:Chapter Nine; Lemieux, 1986; Simeon, 1986) as well as many critiques of community development (Holdcroft, 1978; Cowley et al, 1977). In other instances, however, an evolution from grassroots initiative is clearly evident. Yet analysis predicated upon this observation, perhaps because of the antipathy between communitarian and policy orientations noted above, remains largely undeveloped.

A promising foray in this direction can be found in Ostrander and Langton (1987), where several authors argue that the non-profit sector should not be seen as independent from either the state or market sectors. DeLaat (1987) proposes volunteering as the link between the three sectors, an argument that seems less than convincing but one that shows how a consideration of the substantive economy adds richness to the analysis. More striking is Salamon's (1987) revelation of the funding dependency of the non-profit sector as a whole on

government sources, and his conclusion that "voluntary failure," rather than the more frequently asserted market failure, instigates government involvement in social policy initiatives. In other words, the typical progression is from relatively independent associative initiative to an increasing dependence on state financing. From a Polanyian perspective this means that the protective countermovement, at least in some instances, originates outside of the state before being embodied in it.

None of the authors in Ostrander and Langton describe the process by which association is captured by state influence, nor discuss in any detail the relationship that ensues (although the book ends with not one, but two, chapters calling for further theory development). To explore this dynamic between centre and periphery, a useful tool can be found in Moore's (1978) concept of "semi-autonomous fields" as proposed by Cohen (1987) for social policy analysis.

Moore is a legal anthropologist concerned with "those social processes which operate outside the rules, or which cause people to use rules, or abandon them, bend them, reinterpret them, sidestep them, or replace them" (Moore, 1978:4). Her research describes how the attempt to impose a formal legal code in a post-colonial setting is compromised by the creative reworking of laws through and according to indigenous sociocultural traditions. Moore's observations confirm that "[s]ocial transactions usually take place in the service of objectives to which legal rules are merely ancillary shapers, enablers, or impediments," and she concludes therefore that "a partial rule by rules is all that can be achieved" (ibid.).

With the objective of developing a "vision of decentralized community control," Cohen (1987:374) borrow's Moore's construct of the semi autonomous field and applies it to the context of North American criminial justice. He also broadens the definition of the term to encompass all "social units which can generate rules, customs and symbols internally and which have the means to indu[c]e compliance -- but which are vulnerable to rules and decisions from the outside world" (Cohen, 1987:371). In addition to the non-statist, non-centralized whole societies with which Moore's work is principally concerned, Cohen identifies six other such fields: (1) community boards and citizen panels; (2) self-help and mutual aid organizations; (3) workers' councils and trade union assemblies; (4) self-regulating bodies such as professional associations and universities; (5) collectives, kibbutzim and similar collective arrangements for shared living and working; and (6) feminist, anti-nuclear and environmental networks (Cohen, 1987:371-4).

The definition and examples of the semi autonomous field cited by Cohen generalize the concept such that the term "social policy" can appropriately be substituted in place of "law" or "rules." Adoption of this bipolar perspective would certainly enrich social policy analysis where, as noted above, formal articulation by and through the state is often considered the whole of the matter under study. In contrast, the work of Moore and Cohen suggests that the creative reformulation of policy by external agency merits at least equal attention.

The suggestion that social policy is made at the centre and remade on the periphery is, however, excessively linear. Understanding instead the relationship as dialectical brings into focus two points more or less lost in the transition from Moore to Cohen. First, the semi autonomous field is only for a transitory period -- if at all -- a 'natural' formation (this observation is perhaps more valid for those fields in Cohen's taxonomy, than for that in the original research context of Moore). The myriad of regulatory instruments which subtly constrain and direct the dynamic of each field quickly become essential to its effective operation, if not its existence, within an encompassing sphere of state influence. Second, the locus of some -- if not all -- policy innovation is not the state itself, but its peripheral fields. Semi autonomous fields not only react to and reshape policy imposed from a higher level, but more critically, originate elements of new policy, prior to its appropriation and formalization by the state.

Conclusion

The expanded social policy perspective developed in this chapter, encompassing not only outputs of intentional statecraft, but also inputs from the state's peripheral fields, will inform the subsequent exploration of the community centre. In the next two chapters, the community centre will first be shown to derive from decommodifying traditions rooted in the nineteenth century, and second, be revealed as a site of interplay between semi autonomous fields. The penultimate chapter will then explore the influence of the formal policy environment upon

"substantive" policy innovations occuring at the community centre, and the last chapter will suggest the extent to which the community centre experience may have relevance to other social policy arenas.

Chapter three: The birth of the community centre

> More than anything else that can be named, Vancouver lacks a genuine civic spirit. The city has grown rapidly. People have come from all over and have not learned to pull together toward agreed objectives. They need experience in working in union and community centres can give them that experience. The centres will develop community spirit, and out of the community spirit a civic spirit should grow. (Editorial, The Daily Province, March 1939 -- quoted in Thorton, 1971:51).

The more or less balanced distribution of community centres across the city, all under the administrative aegis of the Park Board, might appear a triumph of rational planning and managed deployment by central authority. Such an impression is in fact reinforced by the official Park Board history (Steele, 1986) which describes an orderly progression -- guided by the Board -- from the simple park fieldhouse, to the community hall, culminating in the fully evolved community centre. Nothing indeed can be deduced to gainsay this scenario in the current state of community centre affairs. But an examination of the historical record quickly reveals a much more chaotic genesis, involving at first multiple agencies with contending visions about what a community centre should be, and then an uneven realization of these visions at each site. Examination of these founding visions and how they were incorporated into the community centre is critical to an understanding of the institution that exists today.

Roots

> This rally is being called for the purpose of stimulating interest in Community Centres as war memorials, also to emphasize their relationship

to such other community issues as improved housing, recreational pursuits, cultural expansion, modernized schools, town planning, and better living in general.... ("Community Centres Rally," City of Vancouver Archives (hereafter CVA): Undated (sic) pamphlet 581).

The first community centres in Vancouver -- Marpole, Sunset and Kitsilano -- opened within a span of fourteen months from December 1949 to January 1951. These designated "war memorials" were the outcome of an intensive campaign for capital funds beginning in the last months of World War II and culminating with the approval of local area plebiscites in December 1948. Although the buildings were new, the idea of a constructed centre of community was not. Even the term "community centre" had been used previously -- in Vancouver and elsewhere -- as an alternate label for facilities associated with four different traditions of decommodification extending well back into the nineteenth century: fieldhouses, neighbourhood houses, community schools and community halls. These antecedant facilities were very much ancestral to the modern community centre, in that their decommodifying functions became part of the make up of the war memorials, and of the entire system of centres subsequently developed.

i. Fieldhouses: In the winter of 1931 and again in 1932 the Vancouver Park Board sponsored what was referred to in the media at the time as a "fieldhouse program" or "community centre" program. This initiative, launched in the early years of the Great Depression, involved organized "classes" in sports, games and crafts to "[k]eep the children off the streets and give parents an interest outside of their homes" (Vancouver Sun, 20 March 1932). Also a priority was "work among unemployed youths from 18 to 25" (ibid.).

The designation "fieldhouse program" to describe activities taking place exclusively in church basements, school gymnasia and community halls seems perhaps incongruous, but the use of this term was in fact quite significant. In the common parlance of the time the fieldhouse was a building located adjacent to playingfields and playgrounds on public parks, providing indoor play space for times of inclement weather. Some contemporary fieldhouses in major American cities were quite imposing structures (Curtis, 1917:70), but those few in Vancouver existing by the early 1930s were at best wash/change rooms and playground storage attached to a park caretaker's residence. So more suitable locations were found for the 1931-2 fieldhouse program, but its derivation from a park based tradition is clear.

Urban parks throughout industrialized Europe and America were created in their variant forms through public acquisition or preservation of enclaves of decommodified land. Originally, park land was manifest in neoclassical or romantic idealizations, with frequent overlap between the two (Cranz, 1980). A tract of constructed wilderness within the city characterized the romantic park, a place of escape and of poetic retreat 'back to nature.' A grand geometric garden exemplified the classical form, with its orderly configuration -- symbolic of human domination over nature -- designed to stimulate cerebral contemplation. Romantic or classical, however, the ideology of use remained more or less consistent. The park was space removed from relationships of commerce and employment -- in

effect a classless oasis, equally accessible to those who owned property, and those who laboured.

Beginning late in the nineteenth century, and continuing through the course of what was known as the reform era, the decommodified land dedicated to park use was tailored anew to the presumed requirements of decommodified labour. Romantic woods and classical gardens were surplanted (though not completely obliterated) by flat playing fields and tarmac expanses of equipment such as swings, monkey bars and teeter-totters.[23] The dominant ideology also shifted; integration of all classes gave way to specifically working class betterment through "rational recreation" (Rojek, 1992). Particularly targeted were children and youth, for whom the new utilitarian parks were intended as a safe and healthy environment. With such lofty objectives supervised playgrounds were initiated in Boston in the late 1880s and rapidly diffused across the continent, appearing in Vancouver by 1911 (Vancouver Park Board [VPB] Annual Report, 1912). The next fifty years would see a slow but steady expansion, park by park, of this kind of summertime recreation programming in the city.

Thus the fieldhouse program of 1931-2 represents an ambitious (albeit ill-timed) effort to establish on a year round basis what had deep roots as a seasonal undertaking. Although this particular attempt failed, the fieldhouse as concept and program remains an important precursor to the community centre proper in at least two respects. First, in Vancouver and across the North American continent the fieldhouse embodied the connection (not as self-evident as may appear in

retrospect) between park landscapes and an expanded range of recreational uses. Second, the fieldhouse project of 1931-2 signaled the Vancouver Park Board's commitment to establishing a permanent playground program in indoor facilities. This commitment was not abandoned, but put on hold during the Depression and subsequent war years.

ii. Neighbourhood Houses: At least two facilities[24] were built in Vancouver prior to World War II in conscious emulation of the British and American settlement house. Officially known as "neighbourhood houses," but also referred to as "community centres," these were formal charitable initiatives spearheaded by the Community Chest (later to become the United Way). In the settlement tradition, relief of poverty and therapeutic response to conditions of social, medical or psychological distress were the primary objectives.

Social settlements were one of the key decommodifying institutions in and from which the practice of social work evolved (Parry et al, 1979). The settlements originated in London in the early 1880s when students of Oxford University established what was essentially a missionary enterprise in the East end slums. The idea quickly travelled across the Atlantic and settlements opened in New York and Boston. American settlement programs developed in response to the living conditions and health problems encountered amongst impoverished, non-English speaking immigrants. Amongst the many programs sponsored by the settlements -

- laying a foundation for later Reform initiatives -- were playgrounds and "rational recreation".[25]

Recreation was slow to acquire a professional identity distinct from social work. On the playground and in fieldhouses the explicit emphasis on physical development was coupled with an unmistakeable subtext of moral improvement.[26] Social work, for its part, commonly used recreation as a means to a therapeutic end. The practice of "social group work," in vogue up to the 1950s, involved using recreation as a basis for building group trust, prior to collective identification and solution of problems -- guided, of course, by a social work professional. Social workers had therefore a natural interest in the development of community centres. They articulated visions of what these facilities could and should be, using such catchphrases as "schools for citizenship" (Jennison, 1946) or an "answer to modern living" (Vail, 1949). In sum they pictured a community centre patterned on the model of the neighbourhood house, though perhaps on a grander scale and stablized by public funding rather than subsisting on charitable donation.

iii. Community schools: "Community education" was a significant formative influence on Vancouver's community centres, even though "community schools" as such did not materialize in Vancouver until the early 1970s. While there is a certain compelling logic in using the public school, where core infrastructure and administrative supports are already in place, for purposes additional to the instruction of children, the actual practice appears to have begun in Flint, Michigan.

From the early 1930s, "lighted schoolhouses" in Flint were kept open late into the night, six days a week all year round. The Flint model, formally called "community schools" -- and sometimes "community centres" -- was quickly copied across the continent. These first-wave community schools were generally promoted as a pragmatic means to combat juvenile delinquency and to provide educational opportunities through the entire life course (Campbell, 1972; Minzy and LeTarte, 1977).

Of course, the concept of community education predates Flint, and some proponents argue (e.g., Clark, 1977:5; Fantini, 1982)) is even integral to the idea of mass public education. In Polanyian terms, public education is a project of decommodification whereby certain labour cost -- specifically that of creating a trained and disciplined workforce -- is removed from the arena of labour market transactions. Explicit extension of this decommodification in order to benefit labour as well as -- or instead of -- capital is a notion with inherent populist appeal, and is evidently perceived by some educators to be in their professional interest as well. Thus one prominent advocate of commmunity education, describing the school as "a public facility located in the center of community" (Minzey, 1972:152) speaks of

> an educational philosophy which....enlarges and enhances the role of the public school so that it....becomes responsible for all aspects of education as it relates to the community. ...[E]ducation is no longer interpreted to mean formal types of classes but any experience leading to the more successful handling of experience. *Thus the public schools have some kind of responsibility for almost all activities that take place within the community* (my emphasis).

From seeing the school as a centre of community it is but a small step to viewing the community centre as educative in function. Traditionally, much community centre activity is organized into the form of "classes," or what Thornton (1971:51), terms "adult learning opportunities." Some of this orientation likely stems from the fact that the British Columbia Ministry of Education was the pioneer provider of recreation services throughout the province (Moist, 1989). Thus education professionals, like social workers, were disposed from the beginning to support community centre development.

iv. Community halls: A front page feature article in The Vancouver <u>Province</u> Saturday Magazine, 25 March 1939 (C. Scott, "Vancouver's Fourteen Communities"), reveals the strength of neighbourhood identity prior to World War II, and documents a staggering number of charitable, recreational and local development projects in which fourteen community associations, covering the entire city, were then engaged. The associations discussed in the article all belonged to an umbrella organization formed in 1936 -- the Vancouver Communities Council. The special goal of the Council was to develop "a community centre in each of the (fourteen) districts, if possible in parks where tennis, bowling and other outdoor sports can be played." The article noted that three "community halls" were already in existence.

Community halls were not unique to Vancouver; they were in fact the typical community centre of the time throughout Canada. Distinctively churchlike in

appearance -- although predominantly secular in function -- the typical hall consists of a rectangular assembly room with a stage at one end opposite a main entry and cloak rooms. Extending from one or both sides is usually a kitchen (with a service hatchway opening into the hall proper) and storage rooms. Some more elaborate halls have a basement built on a similar plan to the main floor, minus the stage and kitchen.

In many respects community halls are a vestige of pre-capitalist economic organization -- more a form of precommodification than decommodification. The halls were usually erected 'barn-raising' style by community-organized volunteer work crews. The responsible 'community' was most often delineated geographically, but in some cases was defined through ethnic or other affiliation. A modicum of fundraising was required to cover construction costs, but the bulk of capitalization was realized through donated labour and materials. Local authority became involved, if at all, by providing public land on a decommodified basis -- either free of charge or for a token leasehold amount.

Several such halls still stand on public land in Vancouver. At least one is under the direct jurisdiction of City Hall,[27] but the Park Board has legal title to the majority (some forming the oldest component of subsequently developed community centres). In spite of its ownership status, the Park Board historically has had little involvement with the day-to-day operation of the Halls. The halls are managed today as they have always been managed. An incorporated non-profit society is generally in charge, covering overhead costs -- utilities, maintenance and

possibly a small stipend for a caretaker -- through annual membership fees supplemented by occasional rentals and fundraising events.

The branches converge

> The value of a community centre was seen in its being community-based with a wide participation of many people with a variety of ideas.... [N]o one group or organization "had a corner" on this job of community centres. Rather it was a community enterprise.... [However]...the strong sentiment of the group was that the broad, widespread interest and development of community centres demonstrated a public need which should be met by government. (Thomas, 1946:10-11).

In the closing months of World War II, the campaign to build community centres began in earnest. In its initial stage, however, there was not yet a concept of the commmunity centre as was later to emerge. At the community and non-profit level the initial drive was to establish new halls and neighbourhood houses -- projects which had been stalled by years of depression and war. Citizen groups in other areas, possibly inspired by the Flint example, lobbied for community access to public school facilities (Robinson, 1951:18). The Park Board signalled its intent to re-establish its suspended "community centre" program because of the "urgency of youth problems" (Province, August , 1944). But signs of convergence between all these separate initiatives soon became apparent, and more ambitious visions of community centres began to emerge.

Space does not permit a detailed examination of the post-war community centre campaign, but some highlights marking the convergence of influences and the scaling up of the concept should be noted:

i. "Survey Report of Group Work and Recreation of Greater Vancouver (The 'Norrie Report')": Commissioned in 1945 by the Community Chest and Welfare Council of Greater Vancouver,[28] the Norrie Report was the earliest postwar initiative to plan recreation service delivery[29] in Vancouver. The Report first defined the respective roles of public and private nonprofit agencies, assigning to the former residual responsibility in cases of voluntary failure, or when such responsibility was "universally acceptable" to the electorate, or "required for the maintenance of accceptable standards of health and public welfare" (7). On the presumption of such universal demand, the Report then determined that "[f]or the planning and conduct of activities important to its neighbourhood living every neighbourhood should have a public community centre" (19). Finally the Report examined the contending possibilities of voluntary effort, Park or School authorities to provide such a facility. Voluntary effort and Park authority were dismissed respectively as too inefficient and too expensive avenues of development. The school, "as it enlarges its concept of educational responsibility and...undertakes to meet the need for adult education" was deemed the logical choice (19-20).

ii. Community Centres Rally, November 26, 1945 (see Appendix B): This rally, held in the Pender Auditorium in Vancouver, had an agenda both of public education and of lobbying for government support. The films, exhibits, models and literature on display promoted a vision of the community centre combining elements of the neighbourhood house model and of school based centres, with art and cultural programming given special emphasis. Speakers at the rally were mainly social

work teachers and practitioners, including two local neighbourhood house directors. Media reports the following day made it clear that the primary target of the rally's lobbying effort was the federal government, which was called on "to set aside a fund to aid in the establishment of community centres" (Vancouver Sun, 27 November 1945:11).

iii. University of British Columbia Community Centres Institute: The Institute was a two day conference early in 1946 targeting "those who are working to build a community hall or to establish a community centre;...those who want assistance in planning to make the most effective use of existing community buildings...;...those who are co-operating with school authorities to make use of the school's facilities for programs...; and...those who...are planning recreational and educational programs in a community which has as yet no established community centre" (Thomas, 1946:9). Organizers of the Institute, the first of a series of similar training sessions, were the UBC Social Work and Extension Departments. According to the published conference report (Thomas, 1946), the 109 participants (made up of both centre employees and volunteers) agreed that government should develop community centres and voluntary agencies should be involved in their operation. There was also consensus that "the use of school buildings in any widespread system of community centres was paramount." The Community Centres Institute represents the clearest intermingling of the four antecedant branches of discussed above, and also the initial direction of facility development (i.e., through the school system).

iv. The Weir Committee: In 1947, George Weir, Minister of Education for the Coalition Government of British Columbia, "appointed a committee to make recommendations...for the initiation of a programme of constructing and operating community centre buildings in Vancouver" (PBCBC, Minutes, CVA: Loc. 48-B-3: File 1). The committee reported back in 1948 with a long range plan to build twenty community centres -- ten in parks and ten in schools -- one for each of the social areas defined in the Norrie Report. Weir, however, was no longer Minister (Thornton: 1971:) and his successor, no doubt unnerved by a cost sharing proposal that would commit the Province to half of capital costs, shelved the report. It was never formally released, but members of the committee went public with their findings two years later (Vancouver Sun, 4 May 1950). Their capital financing formula required a community to first raise $20,000 which would be matched by the city; the Province would then contribute the balance, estimated at approximately $40,000 per centre. A "Central Operating Committee" composed of the Superintendents of the Park and School Boards together with a "representative of a city wide community centre organization"[30] was proposed to provide overall administration. The Committee was to be "assisted by a 35 member advisory council (representing) various government, public, community, recreational, sports and town-planning bodies" (Ibid.). The Weir Report stressed "over and over again the importance of maintaining 'neighbourhood autonomy,' along with the necessity for a high calibre of executive direction in each Centre (Ibid.).

v. The Park Board Community Buildings Committee (PBCBC): Active from 1945 through to the early 1950s, the PBCBC was a committee of the whole Board and senior management. Its primary function was to mediate the increasing demands placed on the Board by grassroots organizations seeking to establish community centres on park land. One of the first issues raised in committee, prompted by the fundraising activities of the Kitsilano Community Association, centered on the question of operational control. The PBCBC was concerned that, unless a formal operating agreement was in place, "control might be lost of the building for which funds are now being collected by a number of Kitsilano organizations" (PBCBC minutes: 12 February 1946, CVA, 48-B-2). As a basis upon which to draft such an agreement "the Superintendent of the Park Board was instructed to ascertain the exact relationship of the Board and the five community [hall] associations presently operating on Park property" (ibid.). At a subsequent meeting, control of community centres was again the focus. Elizabeth Thomas, the organizer of the Community Centres Institute and featured speaker at the Community Centres Rally, was in attendance. "Asked for her advi[c]e on the general set up of such centres in order to help clarify the Board's future policy in this regard...Miss Thomas noted particularly that any such centres located on park property, must be under the direct control of the Board" (PBCBC minutes: 5 March 1946, CVA, 48-B-2). Thomas then made the observation that "projects of this type could not possibly be carried on if they had to rely solely on fees and charges made for services rendered, but would require substantial outside financial grants toward their

operation" (ibid.). Ms. Thomas had, in effect, summarized the critical difference

between a community centre and a community hall.

'Constructing' the community centre

> ...we cannot emphasize too much the desirability and indeed the absolute
> necessity of keeping the good will of the community association without
> whose enthusiasm the community buildings could not have been
> constructed, remembering also that the people of the individual communities
> will be paying for the buildings for the next twenty years. It might appear on
> the surface that the Park Board should take over the whole operation
> without reference to the associations, but in our opinion this course would
> not only be very much more expensive, but would result in the centres
> being used to lesser advantage than if we worked in harmony with the
> community associations ("Recommendations on the operation of community
> centre buildings," (Park Board Staff Report), November, 1950 CVA, City
> Clerk Special Committees, 28-E-5).

The post-War community centres campaign was conducted by social work,

park and education professional interest groups interacting with neighbourhood

organizations. Not surprisingly, therefore, the end result was a facility which

combined features of the neighbourhood house, fieldhouse, public school and

community hall (see Table 3-1). But, although the influences were many, in the

final analysis it was those who financed the new centres -- neighbourhood

organizations and the Park Board -- who were to have the greatest defining

impact.

Grassroots fundraising alone would doubtless have been sufficient to realize

the $20,000 or so to build something on the scale of a community hall. But as the

community centre concept became more elaborate, fundraising targets were raised

and the associations began looking for government assistance. The appointment

TABLE 3.1   62

The influences of four decommodifying traditions upon the community centre

Decommodifying Tradition	mass education	private and public philanthropy	public parks and recreation	grassroots reciprocity and cooperation
Prototype Community Centre	community school	settlement house and neighbourhood house	playground and fieldhouse	community hall
Professional Alliance	teaching	social work	leisure practice	none
Physical Legacy	instructional space	unclear	gymnasia and hobby rooms	large assembly area
Organizational Legacy	integration of school and community centre facilities	professional-executive administration	local state sponsorship	community association involvement
Program Legacy	adult education course	"group" social work	sports and hobbycrafts	local area advocacy and planning input

of the Weir Committee gave rise to widespread anticipation that Provincial monies would be allocated to community centre development. When the Weir report was shelved, three highly active associations along with the Park Board were left hanging. The associations had at this point each raised a minimum of $40,000 and the Park Board (with foreknowledge of the Weir recommendations) had committed $20,000 to one project (VPB Minutes, 22 March 1948, CVA, 48-F-1, File 5). The respective totals, however, were far short of what was need to begin construction (about $60-100,000 per project). To break this impasse the PBCBC, in collaboration with City Council, developed an alternative capitalization strategy which first formalized the precedent of matching neighbourhood based fundraising to the level of $20,000, and then stipulated that the balance required would be raised through local area plebiscite. The first such plebiscites, for Kitsilano, Marpole and Sunset -- along with Kerrisdale Arena -- were held in December 1948.

The plebiscites passed and the first three community centres constructed before operating budgets became an issue. Based on the community hall example, association activists assumed that the new centres could be self-financing through modest membership fees and occasional rentals. Once the buildings opened, however, operating reality confirmed what Elizabeth Thomas had predicted: the centres required external subsidy. City council was approached for support, and responded with a $4,000 grant per facility -- an amount that the Park Board Superintendent stated publicly was insufficient (Vancouver Sun, 10 January 1950). To remain solvent, the associations were forced to commit extensive amounts of

time and space at their centres to profit-generating activities -- dances, bingos and hall rentals (Robinson, 1952). Not only did these activities partially displace the programming uses for which the centres were intended, they also generated a backlash against the community centres. Neighbours adjacent to the centres objected to the disturbance caused by dances and rentals and private hall operators protested what they considered unfair competition.

These complaints reawakened Park Board concerns with respect to control, latent since the inception of the capital funding campaigns. The Park Board Superintendent proposed to the Community Buildings Committee that an operating agreement between the Park Board and the associations be negotiated regarding the operation of the community centres, and he outlined certain "basic requirements"[31] (PBCBC Minutes: 14 August 1950, CVA, 48-B-4) of such an agreement. The Park Board's unilateral desire for an operating agreement was fortuitously coupled with an opportunity to pressure the associations into compliance. At the same time as staff were working out the draft agreement, the associations were demanding a secure source of subsidy for their centre operations, and at a higher annual amount than the city had initially granted. In November of 1950, the Park Board released a "Statement of Policy" (Appendix C) defining in contractual terms the role of the Park Board and associations in the operation of community centres. This document, the original of the Joint-Operating Agreement in force today (see appendix D), fleshed out the Superintendent's earlier proposal, omitting only his suggested termination clause. Even so, the

provisions of the contract clear put the stick in the hands of the Park Board, but with this stick came a carrot. The Park Board committed to a longterm cost-sharing arrangement based on a staff estimate of $13,000 annual operating costs for each centre ("Recommendations..." 1950:4, CVA, City Clerk Special Committees, 28-E-5). The proposed formula required the association to contribute only $5,000 of this amount, whereupon the Board would cover the balance of $8,000.

Community centre associations generally perceived the Joint Operating Agreement as an assault upon their autonomy, and their concerns in this regard were quickly justified. The costsharing proposal described a relationship between Board and Association in which the latter would be allowed "a major part in the operation of the centres" while the former would stay "a much as possible in the background." But a shift in thinking was already evident in the Park Board's 1950 Annual Report, which stipulated that "the centres will operate on a partnership basis, the Board laying down general policy and being responsible for broad programme outline, the details of operation within these limits being the responsibility of the Director working with the community association...." By April 16, 1951, the respective roles of Board and association were reversed entirely, as the Board formally resolved that responsibility for "overall programme rests with the Board through its administrative staff, assisted by the programme committees of the associations" (CVA, Park Board Minutes, 48-F-2, File 2).

The community associations remained, however, in dire need of financial subsidy and subisidy was contingent upon their acceptance of the Joint Operating

Agreement. After a token show of resistance, the associations all eventually signed. The deal bound Park Board and associations together in a partnership to manage the community centres but the 'agreement' between the two sides was more nominal than real. Adversarial as the relationship proved, however, the JOA enshrined local state and grassroots interests in the community centre, and -- temporarily at least -- marginalized the influence of social work and education professionals.

Struggle over policy definition

> As your President of the past year I feel that I owe it as my duty to bring to your attention a trend that seems to have i[n]advertently crept in under the Parks Board supervision.... This is a tend[e]ncy toward overemphasis of the outdoor physical activity program such as we see in the large American sports centres. This program is totally foreign to the plans laid down by the [original] founders of the centre. A swing in this direction can be done only at the expense of the rest of [the] community activities for which the Centre has been set up (Fleming [?], 1951 [?]: CVA, Add. Mss. Sunset Community Association, 68-8-6).[32]

The associations' vision of the community centre fundamentally conflicted with that of the Park Board. The Park Board was predisposed to regard the community centres as an opportunity to reinstitute the abortive fieldhouse project of the early Depression era. This project, as we have seen, aimed at extending the supervised playground season through the winter months. When broad based interest in community centres re-emerged in the postwar era, Park Board channelled its response mainly through its Playgrounds division. As the buildings themselves became a reality, Park Board and City Council agreed on the

advisability of "a full time director under the control of the Park Board" (City Clerk Special Committee, Minutes, 6 November 1950, CVA, 28-D-5). Summer playground leaders had by that time been restyled as "fieldhouse directors" (Park Board Annual Report, 1949:73), probably in anticipation of their deployment to manage the new facilities. Similarly, in 1950, the 'Supervisor of Playgrounds' for the Park Board had 'and Community Centres' appended to her job title. The Park Board's costshare proposal, discussed above, was predicated on the assumption by Park Board staff that centre directors and assistant directors could be transferred to playground supervision over the summer months.

In marked contrast, the position articulated by the community associations was that "[c]ommunity centres are far removed from playgrounds and field-houses. Their field of activity enters every phase of the arts and sciences, their programmes extend into the adult age level, they are educational as well as recreational and their programme must embrace co-operation with all local organizations,..." (Brief..., (Marpole/Sunset), 1951:3, CVA, Add. Mss. 68-4-5). On this basis the associations rejected the appointments of playground supervisors as centre directors, and criticized "the placing of professionally trained community centre personnel on playgrounds [as] economically unsound" (ibid:2). Association representatives insisted that the director of a community centre should be "a professional social group worker" (Robinson, 1951:52), echoing the argument of "UBC experts" at the Community Centres Institute: "The executive director should receive a salary equal to that of a school principal, (pointing) to his investment in

six years training leading to a Masters Degree in Social Work. This, they feel, is the minimum requirement for a Centre Director. His assistant should have at least a BSW" (Vancouver Sun, 25 Aug 1950:18). On the Park Board side these recommendations "met with a sharp rebuff. The Park Superintendent insisted that a girl at $150 a month could handle the job, and that the appointment of a professional person was completely unnecessary" (Robinson, loc. cit.).

Association resistance to the transformation of community centres into indoor playgrounds was only partially successful. They were initially able to pattern the primary staff position at the community centre after its counterpart at the city's neighbourhood houses, and hire 'executive directors' with backgrounds in social work. But, because these directors were also expected to provide direct program leadership as well -- working upwards of fourteen hours a day (Robinson, 1951:67) -- these first appointments did not long endure. Once the first JOA was in effect, subsequent hiring was mainly done from the playground leader pool. The associations also prevailed on the matter of year round operation; only for the first two years did the community centres close for the summer. But the overall programming focus narrowed, to become by 1959 "basically sports and games" (Odegaard, 1959:5).

This observation was made by a representative of the American National Recreation Association, contracted to evaluate the community centres on the occasion of "the opening of the sixth of these tributes to man's leisure time" (Odegaard, 1959: "Preface"). Discovering -- in addition to the limited repetoire of

programs -- inefficient scheduling, generally poor facility design, and consequently low rates of participation, Odegaard made nine recommendations (Appendix E) to remedy the situation. Predictably enough, given the mandate of the organization he represented, Odegaard mainly focused on ways to enhance the centres' capacity to deliver a fuller range of recreation services.[33] Odegaard's work ultimately influenced a return to professional direction of the community centres; instead of social work or education, however, the key profession was now recreation.

Three generations of community centres

> The community centres to date have been primarily recreation centres. Some social services supplementing the recreation program...have been developed in conjunction with the Vancouver School Board. All are now visualized as multi-service centres. Those presently being developed using secondary schools as the focal point enable community services to be more effectively provided at minimum cost" (M. Smith,[34] 1971, "Notes," CVA: 47-D-3, Mss. File No. 12]).

The six community centres examined in the Odegaard Report were all constructed in a first wave of community centre development, referred to here as the 'war memorial' phase. Important precedents were set in this phase (which has therefore been discussed in some depth), but the capitalization and operating procedures of the war memorials could not be successfully applied in all of Vancouver's neighbourhoods. Two more waves of development took place -- a 'community development' phase and a 'planned amenity' phase -- to complete the community centre system which now exists.

The war memorial approach worked well in the relatively affluent, 'suburban' (at that time) neighbourhoods of Vancouver. It was relatively easy for grassroots organizations in those areas to raise the initial $20,000 required to trigger matching funds and mobilize the votes of local homeowners in a plebiscite. But funds were hard to come by in less affluent neighbourhoods and, even when the threshold amount was raised, plebiscites frequently went down to defeat. The preponderance of absentee landlords in the East End and inner city areas of Vancouver made it particularly difficult to win voter approval for local improvements bylaws in those areas. Thus, the proliferation of community centres was stalled after constuction of the first generation 'war memorials,' mainly on the West side and South slope of the city.

The 'community development' phase, beginning in the mid 1960s, broke this impasse. The local improvement plebiscite approach to centre financing was abandoned in favour of a city-wide capital plan, which packaged a number of public works across the city for voter approval. The change in strategy coincided with an increased availability of fiscal transfers from senior governments. Some of these came in the form of capital grants (Thornton, 1971), but perhaps of greater importance were the various community development and employment training grants of that era, Canadian counterparts to the American 'War on Poverty' initiatives (Loney, 1971). These enabled the staffing of "recreation projects' in certain areas of perceived need. The recreation projects provided interim program

activities and, more critically, served as bases from which to organize local support for community centre development.

A third phase of community centre development, overlapping with the preceding, is still ongoing. Referred to here as the 'planned amenity' phase, it involved, firstly, (in the mid 1970s) the bureaucratic rationalization of Park Board, followed in 1980 by the preparation and release of a Park Board 'MasterPlan.' The MasterPlan articulated policy and guidelines for general parks and recreation development across the city. Capital plan spending subsequently was concentrated on the renovation and expansion of existing buildings. New community centres were built only as a planned component of major residential development projects -- mainly on 'let go' industrial land -- and these have been financed in large part by developer levies.[35]

Over these phases of development, community centres not only expanded in the sense of physical dispersal, but also in terms of their orientation and character. For example, the social activist and citizen participation ethos of the community development phase restored the community centres as a context for social work. Similarly, a reinforced connection with the education tradition occurred as a result of the construction of many of the newer centres on school grounds. But education and social work professionals did not become active again in any directive capacity (their direct involvement mainly drawn off intoneighbouhood houses and community schools) but the discursive influence of these traditions did regain a measure of prominence.

Conclusion

Since the close of World War II to the present day, a critical period in Canada -- as elsewhere -- in terms of social policy development, a network of community centres emerged to cover all of Vancouver. The current deployment is in fact remarkably consistent with early articulations of the community centre vision. What occurred in the realization of the vision, however, was not an orderly progression according to a master blueprint, but a gradual centralization from disparate grassroots, professional and state initiatives.

Of the four decommodifying traditions which have impacted upon the look, organization and programming of community centres, none has been able to achieve a monopoly of defining power. The recreation and communitarian traditions, however, have been embodied in a Park Board and local association partnership that manages the affairs of each centre. Although this partnership originally marginalized the directive inputs from education and social work, these traditions have to some extent been to a degree incorporated into the discourses of leisure professionalism, and thereby remain influential in the community centre context.

Chapter four: Many hands on the steering wheel: the community centre policy field

This chapter applies, in slightly modified form, the Moore/Cohen "semi autonomous field" thesis (discussed in Chapter Two) to the contemporary community centre context. The community centre is viewed not as a single field, but as an intersection of three fields: (1) the Park Board, a branch of the local state, (2) the community association, an organization of community centre users, and (3) senior community centre staff, a quasi-professional grouping. Thus in addition to the vertical relations between a given field and central authority (noted by Moore and Cohen), relations between fields must also be considered. The aggregate of these fields and the interaction between them will be referred to hereinafter as the community centre policy field.

It should be stressed that in this context "fields" are not interest groups, although they may to some extent represent the institutionalization of interests pertaining to the development of the community centre as described in the preceding chapter. The Park Board has, for example, some historical affiliation with the idea of the community centre as a recreation centre; community associations have naturally tended to emphasize and promote a literal 'community' centre; and various professional groups have advocated the uses of education or social work. But ownership of any of these visions relating to the community centre no longer attaches -- if it ever did -- to any one interest. The field concept is instead

indicative of a social, cultural or political formation having some measure of independence, but subject to inducements or constraints effected by higher level authority. Constraints may take the form either of direct and obvious command communications or, more subtly, of imposed operating limits -- invisible unless crossed.

The three composites of the community centre policy field will be examined in turn below. In each case, discussion will focus first on the defining elements of the field, the policy environment which either brings the field into being, or invests it with a recognized formal structure. Then consideration will be given to the external controls or inherent limitations to which the field is subject. It will become apparent that the enabling and constraining aspects of field definition are often one and the same. Through the course of the chapter as well some notice will be taken of how interactivity between fields affects the operation of community centres.

The Park Board

Technically, the term 'Park Board' refers to the seven Park Commissioners elected to a three year term of office. In popular usage, however, the reference is to the entire organization, including not only its political apex, but also its entire edifice of technical and bureaucratic support. The Park Board in its wider sense has inherently a dual nature. On the one hand, it is a manifestation of the state -- a humble appendage of the greater leviathon but, in terms of constitutionally defined authority, 'state' nonetheless. At the same time, however, the Park Board

operates at several removes from the highest level of the state, at the bottom of a hierarchy that consists in order from the top of the federal government, provincial government, civic government, and lastly the Board itself. Partly the instrument of these more senior governments, and yet dedicated to the localized concerns of green space and leisure consumption, the Board is neither fully directed, nor fully independent. In this sense, the Board is recognizably a semi autonomous field.

Some might contend -- in keeping with the instrumentalist view of Miliband (1969), Cockburn (1977) and others -- that the state is a unitary entity, and that these removes between the Park Board and the central government merely represent an extension of administrative control. This perspective, however, does not reconcile with the fact that the Park Board has long had an antagonistic relationship with Vancouver City Council.[36] It is scarcely credible, then, that the Board would automatically comply with the dictates of even higher levels of governance, or acts simply as the local agent of a unitary state. Designating the Park Board as a semi autonomous field, besides being in keeping with the dual state perspectives of Castells (1983), Dunleavy (1980) and Saunders (1986), has the added conceptual advantage of enabling parallels to be drawn between the Board and the other peripheral formations of association and professional staff.

The Park Board's existence is predicated upon legal constructions involving all levels of government. In the first place constitutional arrangements (Constitution Act (1867): Sec. 92(7)), devolved from the Federal to Provincial government responsibility for "Municipal Institutions." In British Columbia, the relevant

legislation covering most instances of local government incorporation is the Municipal Act (1977-57-28), but a special statute now applies to Vancouver (1977-53) -- the Vancouver Charter. In part, this legislation transfers certain responsibilities to the City which otherwise would remain with the Province (Bish, 1990:5). In other respects, however, the Charter defines powers of property taxation, policy definition and self-legitimation (through an electoral process) whereby some measure of independent operation by the City is possible. The Charter also provides for a Park Board elected separately from City Council, mandated to develop and maintain the city's parks, greenspaces and recreation services.

The elected Park Board is unique to Vancouver (at least in Canadian experience[37]) but the Charter's provisions on this point were less an innovative fiat and more a post hoc recognition of a pre-existing local arrangement. Shortly after Vancouver's incorporation in 1886, City Council appointed a Board of Park Commissioners (as is typically the procedure even today in other jurisdictions) but then, for the second term of office, included balloting for Parks Commissioners along with School Trustees, Mayor and Council. This precedent has been followed ever since.

While in the furtherance of its mandate, the Park Board is empowered by the Charter to develop and carry out policy, and even to enact bylaws, it does not have separate taxation authority. It remains dependent on City Council for its operating budget. The financial relationship between the two bodies involves a

strict accounting of projected revenues and expenditures, with any monies realized by the Board above budget targets credited to City general revenue. The Board therefore has a built in incentive to keep its involvements -- financially at least -- as simple and straightforward as possible. Conversely, the Board is not highly motivated to maximize its fiscal return from programs and services. But these constraints have not prevented the Park Board from -- indirectly -- expanding its programs and services. Its technique for doing so, however, has involved the forging of yet another link in the great chain of governance described above. Effectively, the Board has licensed organizations in the nonprofit sector -- community centre associations -- to develop programs and services on its behalf. The arrangement sidesteps the accounting complexities that direct involvement would entail. It also brings a second semi autonomous field into the community centre equation.

The Community Association

The standing of the community association within the national policy regime is in many regards comparable to that of the Park Board. Association and Board both are legal entities only because of constitutional and legislative enactments at higher levels of governance. Both have been charged with responsibilities and discretionary powers by an immediately senior authority, to which they remain subordinate. The dual nature of the Park Board also has its community association parallel: while the association is indisputably a grassroots organization, it is also

in some respects an outpost of government. Again, the designation "semi autonomous field" is most apt.

In common with other grassroots organizations, every community association has its genesis in voluntary impulse. Substantive economic activity -- relationships of reciprocity and cooperation forged with a provisioning objective -- coalesces into a proto organization. In order to achieve its objectives, and in response to externally imposed definitions, the organization becomes progressively more formal in structure and proceeding. In the process, the organization passes through a series of critical thresholds: establishing positions of leadership, determining a regular schedule of meetings, adopting rules of order, incorporating itself as a nonprofit society, becoming perhaps an employer or the recipient of state funding. Eventually the proto organization becomes recognizable as the typical community association extant in community centres today.

Nonprofit societies are also a provincial responsibility under Section 92 of the constitution. The British Columbia Society Act (1977[38]) defines the process by which organizations can acquire and maintain legal status as a nonprofit corporation. An The process requires the organization to file its constitution and bylaws with the designated provincial ministry. These documents outline the name and purpose(s) of the proposed society, declare its nonprofit status, and articulate the rules by which the society will conduct its business. The application must be supported by the signatures of at least three directors (this being also the minimum number of members required to achieve society status). Thereafter, the

organization must on an annual basis report on its financial activity, director identities, and changes to the size and composition of membership. Incorporation establishes the organization as a legal entity, able to enter into contractual relationships with minimal risk of liability to individual members.

As a society, a community association also enters the sphere of federal level policy making. By definition, a registered nonprofit society is exempted from federal level income tax (its income is not "profit," and therefore not taxable). In addition, some associations have taken a further step, applying for and receiving charitable status in relation to the Federal Income Tax Act. As a charity the association is entitled to issue receipts for tax exemption in return for monetary donations. Nonprofit and charitable status constitute, in effect, an indirect subsidy by the state of a certain class of organized enterprise.

The association is not only provided with resources through its society and charitable status, but also subject to external monitoring and control. Its revenues, as a nonprofit society, cannot confer a material benefit upon any of its members, and its expenditures must relate to its constitutional purposes. The regulations imposed upon charities are even more stringent, and preclude certain engagements (e.g., advocacy or lobbying activities) in which the association might otherwise be involved. Other constraints might be triggered if the association conforms its application to one of the pre-defined categories -- for example, the operation of a sporting or recreation centre -- which have standing approval as legitimate charitable causes. Once the centre is established under this heading,

alternate non-recreational uses of the facility are inhibited. Other controls inherent in society and charitable status take the form of positive inducements, such as government grant programs -- eligibility for which is conditional upon society and (often) charitable registration. The availability of funding may influence an association to change its programming priorities simply to harmonize with state policy objectives.

By virtue of its formal legal status, the community association is able to enter into contractual agreement with the Park Board to operate the community centre as a partnership. The terms of this partnership, in theory at least, are governed by the standardized Joint-Operating Agreement (JOA) first negotiated in the very early period of community centre development and expanded and revised over subsequent years. The contemporary JOA (see Appendix D) retains some of its double edged character which gave the pioneer associations pause. On one hand clause 19 provides the material basis for independent functioning by the association: "revenues generated by the use of the designated facilities[39] shall be received by the Association and expended on program costs, equipment, supplies, community recreation services and other objects as are consistent with the Constitution of the Association...." (JOA: Clause 19). The arrangement (the economic implications of which will be explored in the next chapter) appears extraordinarily generous. On the other hand, while almost all clauses call for consultation on administrative decisions, Clause 23 of the JOA makes it very clear where ultimate power lies: "Where required, final decision will rest with the [Park]

Board." Other provisions of the Joint-Operating Agreement should be briefly noted: Park Board representatives are entitled to attend and address all Association meetings, and both parties are obliged to give to the other an annual accounting of finances and program initiatives. In sum, the association is free to manage the affairs of the community centre, but not in the manner the association might, of its own volition, choose.

The controlling, and at times warping, effect of policy instruments can be seen in the developmental trajectory of the typical community association. At the stage of grassroots "proto-organization" -- in all instances pre-dating the construction of a community centre -- the association would likely have advocated for a wide range of projects perceived to be in the "community interest." If the community centre was given priority status, it was as a base from which to lever the development of other amenities and services for the locality. With the successful outcome of the community centre campaign, however, a shift in orientation inevitably takes place. Advocacy and activism lose ground to the demands of facility management and service provision. Other studies of urban community-based organizations (e.g., Ng, 1989; Ng et al, 1991; Collin and Godbout, 1975) have noted a similar displacement.

The process of engagement with the state involves several trade-offs for the community association. In return for a legal standing and an expanded resource base, the association becomes subject to external monitoring and remolding, and risks becoming alienated from the community whose interests it professes to

serve. On these grounds, some critics (for example Ng, 1989; Ng et al., 1991) condemn state penetration of volunteer agencies. They choose to overlook the wider benefits resulting from the connection between the local organization and the state. And such benefits are real: Amenities and services are created; by sustaining itself, the organization is able to perpetuate these amenities and services; and a measure of decentralized control is effected. Furthermore, interaction between centre and periphery is at least potentially reciprocal. Although state policy exerts a defining force upon local organization, the community centre experience shows that it is also possible for local organization to have impact upon policy regimes.

The Professional Staff

The professional field does not, in contrast to the two preceding, appear as a named entity in organizational chart representations of the community centre. The constructed partnership between the Park Board (as representative of the body politic of the city) and a community association (as representative of local interest) does not admit staff as independent agents, but as functionaries taking direction from and accountable to both parties. Yet some staff at least are positioned not only to influence the Board and/or association on policy matters, but also to make independent decisions on the day to day operation of the community centre. They are perceived as, and hold themselves to be, leisure professionals. Moreover, according to some studies (for example, Rojek, 1992; Stormann, 1993;

Whitsun & Slack, 1989), the directive power of professionalism is dominant -- if not decisive -- in the realm of parks and recreation service delivery. Coalter (1990:107), however, cautions that the autonomy of what he calls "proto-professional" organizations in public sector leisure services is often exaggerated. Coalter's view is obviously consistent with Cohen's identification of professional organizations as prospective semi-autonomous fields.

Claims to professional status have been a widespread occupational fixation throughout most of this century. Henry (1993:110-114) identifies three sub-categories of professionalism, which in chronological order of emergence are: (1) the traditional professions of medicine and law; (2) "industrial semi-professions,...accounting, architecture, banking, engineering, and so on..." (Henry, 1993:112); and (3) "liberal welfare 'semi-professions'...teaching, nursing, social work, youth work, housing and planning, as well as the leisure professions" (ibid:110). Henry also identifies the strategies and value sets by which each occupational group in the liberal welfare category has sought to secure its professional status. These involve claims that the work (1) is primarily altruistic rather than economically motivated; (2) requires specialist knowledge "essential to the addressing of a highly significant social problem"; and (3) is a "central and full-time concern of those in the occupational group, rather than...a subsidiary concern of those working in other fields" (Henry, 1993:110-11). On the strength of these claims, according to Henry, the liberal welfare occupations have sought to

establish certification training programs and monopoly standing in terms of practice.

Leisure specialists are not the only "proto" or "semi" professionals within the liberal welfare and industrial categories that are connected with the community centre. In Chapter Three above, the teaching and social work professions were shown to have exerted a shaping influence during the early period of community centre formation. In the current era, the Park Board bureaucracy is constituted in such a way that planners, engineers,[40] accountants and architects -- along with leisure professionals -- all have some measure of impact upon community centre affairs. At both Board and association levels, professional advisors are able to structure how and what information is presented so as to determine, to a great extent, the outcome of the decision-making process. The direct influence of the non-leisure professionals remains principally with the Board alone. With respect to the local associations, staff who are nominally leisure specialists -- recreation managers, coordinators and programmers -- have a far greater profile. It would be wrong, however, to suggest that this control of information at either level is total, or that the response to information received is always predictable.

At the community centre, the local area manager, the centre coordinator and usually the centre's programmer(s) routinely attend the monthly meetings of the community association directors. In addition the coordinator and programmers, along with other site staff, are actively engaged with sub-committees established by and reporting to the directors. But the functional relationship of staff to

association extends beyond the exercise of persuasion at meetings. Technically, for example, the association determines program priorities, funding strategies and takes in revenue; but most of this activity is in fact initiated and all is carried out by professional staff. In addition, staff often recruit patrons to serve on the association's board of directors (an undertaking that may be driven by the necessity to maintain a sufficient level of member participation in relation to constitutional requirements, but which also works as a controlling mechanism). Professional staff engage with the volunteer directors and committee members -- if not the body of centre patrons as a whole -- in what can fairly be described as a relationship of tutelage (see Sommers, 1989, for a detailed exploration of this dynamic in a community centre context). Thus decisions and actions nominally taken by the association may rather reflect the preferences and priorities of staff. And staff, furthermore, may be expressing their own agenda, or be following directives from above.

Leisure professionals also exert influence outside the confines of the community centre. Most Park Board leisure staff belong to the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA), although membership is not a condition of employment. The BCRPA maintains close ties with provincial ministries concerned with recreation, leisure and tourism. Very senior Park Board staff may also be involved with the parent body of the BCRPA, the National Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA). As a national level organization the NRPA naturally engages with the federal government, particularly with respect to sport,

health and parks administration. Professional affiliation is an avenue of influence over higher state policy formation and, simultaneously, an agency of professional development.

The means by which standards of practice are effected for Park Board leisure professionals are, however, loose in the extreme. Educational qualifications stipulated for both the coordinator and programmer classifications (the latter being an entry level position in terms of full time city employment) are "a degree or diploma in physical education, recreation or a related discipline". Nowhere is "related discipline" defined, and thus amongst the incumbents of leisure specialist positions one can find staff with backgrounds in management, education, economics -- even the occasional English graduate! Ongoing professional development for these staff -- beyond the annual conferences of the BCRPA and the NPRA -- is mostly a matter of individual selection from a wide variety of seminar or coursework opportunities. Annual inservice workshops are also held for Recreation Division employees, which may focus on any topic from internal housekeeping concerns to more theoretical practitioner issues. Standard competencies upon which formal and consistent training might be based either have not been articulated or are not widely recognized.

The aspirations of the leisure occupations to professional status are undercut, not only by the unevenness of competencies, but also by certain dominant ideologies within the field. The tradition, for example, of "automatically associating leisure with 'freedom' and 'choice'" (Rojek, 1992:368) tends to level the

distinction between practitioner and client. Invitations to self-actualization, which is usually how leisure programs are presented, further preclude the establishment of an asymmetric agency relationship -- fundamental to the professional ideal.

That said, it remains the case that the ongoing development of community centres cannot be accounted for solely with reference to the dialectic between the local state and grassroots organization. Leisure workers may only be "semi" or "proto" professionals, locked within the hierarchy of governmental bureaucracy and reluctant or unable to impose a dependency relationship upon any client group. Even so, as advisors and managers they are strategically placed to maximize any influence that they can bring to bear, as part of a whole dynamic -- the community centre policy field -- greater than the sum of its parts.

Equilibrium in the policy field

Within the community centre policy field there is simultaneously a pull towards consistency and a push towards diversity. The main force in the direction of consistency is the Park Board field (although in a wider frame the Board may also contribute to the uniqueness of Vancouver's recreation delivery compared to other jurisdictions). Generally, the Park Board applies consistent policies and procedures to every centre. When the Board does make exceptions, they are usually in response to pressure from associations, who are the main force in the direction of diversity. Although cross communication and influence occurs between associations, the association field is a site specific entity dedicated to its own

priorities. The professional staff field can exert force in either direction: on one hand they have ongoing contact with peers, lateral mobility, and partial alignment of occupational outlook; on the other they come from a mix of formative backgrounds and bring different orientations to the work at hand. The power that each field brings to bear is not constant at every community centre, nor is it static through time. No one field has ever managed to completely dominate; no one field has ever been completely displaced. A number of factors -- some already mentioned -- ensure that this equilibrium is not entirely lost.

If, for example, the Park Board was more fully autonomous from City Council, and had independent control over its finances, it might then be tempted to overturn the provisions of the JOA which assign community centre revenues to associations. The Board, however, would likely proceed with caution. Historically, as an elected body, the Park Board has been disinclined to match its weight against the combined mass of the associations -- it being unclear which side ultimately has the superior leverage. The Board is particularly vulnerable at the ballot box. Civic elections in Vancouver normally attract little voter interest, and only a fraction of the voters who turn out cast ballots for Park Board commissioners. Those that do are presumably a core parks and recreation constituency, so conceivably the associations might -- if they so desired -- mobilize enough opposition to unseat incumbent commissioners. A second factor is that associations have been frequently the training ground of commissioners prior to their induction into the civic political arena; conversely, after suffering electoral

defeat, some Commissioners have re-emerged as association executive members. A certain harmonization of perspectives is a natural outcome of such crossover involvement, which might also induce the Board to respect the independence of the associations.

There are contexts and occasions when the relationship between association and Board is more antagonistic than collaborative. However, the fundamental fact of centre dependence on the core subsidy received through the Park Board has always curbed any association desire for full independence. As well, though association activists may at times challenge the legitimacy of the Park Board as a controlling authority, they do so conscious of their own vulnerability to similar challenge. Vacancies for association directorships, though at times hotly contested, are more often than not filled by acclamation at barely quorate annual general meetings. Minority interests can at times secure a dominant position on the association executive and, in that capacity, speak and be heard as the voice of "commmunity."

Professional staff are often intermediaries between Park Board and association, technically -- under the terms of the JOA -- accountable to both parties. This position can be an uncomfortable one, especially in conflict situations, but it can also be advantageous. As a unionized City employee, a centre coordinator can, without jeopardizing her employment, choose to overlook compromising directives from the association executive. Conversely, unwelcome interventions from higher up in the Park Board hierarchy can often be mitigated

with reference to 'how the association might respond.' The association is also a source of independent validation and legitimation of staff determined agendas. Most important, as will be discussed more fully in the next chapter, the association provides swift and convenient access to resources.

Conclusion

The semi autonomous fields concept, borrowed from an analysis of legal instrumentality, describes equally well certain aspects of the operation of social policy. Policymaking transcends the central production of codes and regulations, and the mobilization of welfare services. It embraces processes on the periphery, where these services -- if they were not created there in the first place -- are subject to reworking and redesign. The creative forces in policymaking at either level are essentially economic. Hence the next chapter will explore the economy of the community centre.

Chapter five: The community centre economy

The concept of semi autonomous fields developed in the previous chapter accounts for how community centres can diverge in their development from one another, even while becoming progressively subject to regulatory intervention. This chapter illustrates the fact of diversity -- and, where it exists, of uniformity -- by examining the community centre as an economic entity. The approach taken is once again grounded in the contention that social policy is in equal measure economic policy.

The term 'economy' is used in this chapter in the substantive, Polanyian sense discussed above in chapter two. Thus material 'provisioning' at the community centre is shown to have three constituent elements: (1) market exchanges -- the production and sale of 'leisure' programs; (2) fiscal transfers -- resource structuring by state command; and (3) relations of reciprocity -- volunteer activity of various kinds. Classical economic analysis and formal social policy both tend to conceptually segregate these three dynamics. It is argued here, however, that the mechanisms of exchange, transfer and reciprocity are so interconnected -- in the community centre context at least -- that to overlook any one of these elements is to create a distorted impression of the whole institution.

While not all aspects of the community centre economy lend themselves to quantification, budget reports and other financial documents relating to the centres do provide some useful indicators. These indicators are examined in both historical

and geographical dimensions. A localizing trend, in terms of volume of income from transfers and exchanges, is revealed in community centres generally, reversing an earlier trend towards centralization. Evidence for regarding this reversal as a transition from standardization towards organizational diversity is presented, in the final section of this chapter, with reference to the contrasting economies of two community centres.

Provisioning the centre; provisioning the community

The three components of the community centre substantive economy -- market exchanges, fiscal transfers and relations of reciprocity -- will be considered in turn in this section. This sequential organization is intended to facilitate discussion only, not to suggest that these pieces are in any way detachable from one another. The elements are in fact layered and interconnected in complex ways, and involve not only the activities taking place at, or impacting on, the community centre itself, but also their effect upon economic processes occurring elsewhere.

i. Commodified exchanges: Whether leisure in industrial capitalism has become commodified is a matter of some dispute (see, for example, Kelly, 1986; Chan, 1981; Rojek, 1985), but there is no doubt that the sale and purchase of leisure programming dominates at most community centres. The community centre is a service industry of sorts, and the services consumed are produced on site. This

production is sustained through further commodified exchange: purchase of goods and services from suppliers and payment of wages and benefits to employees.

At every community centre the nominal dealer in program activity is the community association (although the services in question are in fact organized and delivered by staff). The fiscal calculus involved in commodified programming is fairly straightforward: The labour and material costs of the activity (plus perhaps a fixed percentage to cover administrative costs), divided by the intended program fee, yields the minimum number of registrants required to 'run' the course. If fewer than that number actually sign up, the program is likely to be cancelled. Popular programs are repeated season to season; less popular programs are quickly dropped. The process, in short, is governed by market logic, but with one critical difference. As a registered nonprofit agency, the association cannot profit from any surplus generated, nor is such a surplus taxable. If the association's affairs are handled reasonably well, and strictly on a commodified basis, the organization will tend to accumulate a steadily expanding surplus.

The Park Board also draws revenue from commodified sources at or around the community centre (pools, rinks, racquet courts, etc.), but does not factor this revenue into community centre budgets. The separation of cashflow, although somewhat artificial, is not unjustified. The fiscal calculus on the Park Board side is quite different to the one outlined above; a fee is charged for the use of an amenity and the point is not to break even (or better than even) but to come as close as possible to budget projections. Any amount less would have to be

compensated for somehow; any amount more would merely be lost to city general revenue. In those areas where a planned revenue surplus is built into the budget, the return is assigned against the subsidy required by the whole organization. Thus, on the whole, the Park Board is structurally inhibited from generating a surplus. At the same time, however, by covering the overhead expenses of the community centre and by assuming responsibility for certain of its related cost-intensive, high-risk amenities, the Park Board creates the conditions whereby the associations can realize a surplus. These structural supports are just one example of how commodified programming at the centre depends upon prior decommodified arrangements.

ii. Fiscal transfers: Polanyi identifies in traditional economies a provisioning principle he terms "redistribution," which has, in the modern era, a close equivalent in resource allocations ordained by the state. The "policy" in social policy here comes to the fore, but but not necessarily in forms that are widely recognized. While some command mechanisms of provisioning are fairly obvious, others prove extremely difficult to isolate. The deliberate movement of actual sums of money from the state to individuals or organizations ('direct' transfers) can be documented and quantified; the structural benefits ('indirect' transfers) that the formally 'nonprofit' Park Board and associations enjoy are rather more elusive. Both organizations are beneficiaries of a theoretical "tax expenditure" by the state equivalent to what they would owe were they not tax-exempt entities. The amount in question, however, is undeterminable, since the income generating capacity of

Park Board and associations is at least in part a function of their nonprofit, tax-exempt status.

The principal transfer upon which much of the community centre operation depends is, of course, the allocation made on an annual basis from the city tax-base to the Park Board, covering the core costs of administration, utilities, wages, maintenance and supplies. The Park Board rarely looks beyond the city for other sources of decommodified transfer; again, it is inhibited from doing so because of the budgetary control exercised by the City Hall over Board operations. Outside of the civic budget process, the Park Board has no separate means to handle revenues, or to carry finances from one year to the next. Associations, however, are not so constrained, and so their finances are integrated with a wide array of transfer mechanisms.

These mechanisms involve many more dimensions than that, already discussed, of 'direct' and 'indirect' transfers. Assuming the former -- that is, a tangible benefit accrues from the state to the local organization -- various scenarios are conceivable. The benefit may be realized in monetary form (i.e., a cash grant) or as an assigned right of resource extraction (a casino gaming licence, for example). If payment of money is involved, it can come directly from government, or be channelled through non governmental sources (as in the case of charitable donations or private foundation endowments). A transfer may be received directly by an organization, or be received first by its patrons (as a childcare voucher, for example) to be later exchanged for a service provided by

the organization. The money when it is received may have no apparent strings attached (i.e., a subsidy to help an organization carry out its business), or be contingent upon the fulfilment of defined obligations (as in cases when the business of government is 'contracted out' to local organizations). In either case, the transfer may be earmarked as 'capital' or as 'operating' funding.

Unlike the income realized from market exchange programming, transfers do not of themselves allow for the building up of a fiscal surplus. Money is received for a specified period or defined objective, at the conclusion of which a financial accounting must be made to the funding agency. Since surplus funds are generally required to be returned to their source, funds are generally spent before such reckoning takes place. But transfers do create the conditions indirectly whereby it is possible for the local community centre operation to generate a surplus. Transfers received by the association usually underwrite program activities for those who could not otherwise afford to pay for them -- the poor, the elderly and the young. With the areas of marginal return thus covered off, the remaining population becomes the target for market driven programming. These, as we have seen, tend to generate a steadily expanding revenue surplus.

What then happens to the surplus from commodity programming, if it is neither taxed nor absorbed as profit? Potentially at least, this resource can be dedicated to additional projects of decommodification, qualitatively different from those resulting from the transfer scenarios described above. In effect, the 'transfer' decision with respect to the accumulated surplus is made at the local level, rather

than by external agency. Such decommodifying decisions can take many forms, including program subsidies for perceived 'special needs' patrons, sponsorship of community festivals and other kinds of special events, or donations to other organizations and causes. Possibly the most common allocation, however, is to capital development at the community centre. The surplus funds are either routinely spent on furnishings, equipment or minor renovations, or are committed over the long term to an eventual major renovation and/or expansion of the physical plant.

The external and internal transfer processes described above provide together the material basis for the association to qualify as "third party government" (Salamon, 1987:36 passim), although these transfers work in different ways. Those received from external sources position the association as an arms length administrator of a state-owned facility and, at times, as a contracted provider of designated welfare services. But through internal transfers (given that there is a pool of surplus income to draw upon) the community association acquires -- albeit to a modest extent -- statelike powers of its own.

Of course these 'statelike powers' of the association have to be considered in the context of the overall community centre policy field, as discussed in the previous chapter. The association's autonomy is firstly circumscribed by the oversight function of Park Board, expressed in the terms of the Joint-Operating Agreement. Secondly, and perhaps more critically, the association depends heavily upon professional staff to manage its affairs and to generate a significant pool of

surplus income in the first place. Both the commodified and decommodified arenas of the commmunity centre operation demand very specialized skill sets. Success in the commodified arena requires an entrepreneurial ability to compete with increased production of leisure services in the private sector. Success in the decommodified arena calls for high level 'grantspersonship' -- the competence to negotiate the maze of formal transfer mechanisms described above. Even if these specialized skills were to be found amongst the active members or the association, it remains unlikely that volunteers would be able or prepared to commit sufficient time to undertake all the required tasks. In normal circumstances, therefore, professional staff handle almost all the market exchange programming, and a great deal of background work on grants and other transfers. Inherent in these responsibilities, as we have seen, are significant powers to priorize centre programming, to set organizational objectives; and to direct the decision-making processes of the association board.

iii. Relations of reciprocity: Classical economic theory and social policy analysis rarely venture past the point reached thus far. The dominant discourses of both instead construe market exchange as 'the economy' and fiscal transfers as a method -- warranted or unwarranted -- to redirect and possibly supplement 'normal' economic functioning. Provisioning accomplished by means other than market exchange or fiscal transfer lie outside the frame of reference. Thus the relations of reciprocity which develop at and through the community centre are commonly

overlooked. This activity is inherently voluntary, and at the community centre at least four kinds of volunteers can be distinquished:

(1) *Organizational*: The formation and maintenance of a non-profit agency is a labour-intensive process and, by law, this labour cannot be paid. As a registered society, the community association requires considerable investment of time from at least a core of its membership, in order to sustain the functions of an executive board and subsidiary committees. Notwithstanding the extensive background work performed by professional staff, this kind of volunteering is not just a routine formality. Organizational volunteers are, to every funding agency, visible representatives of community and community centre interests. Their claimsmaking activity is critical to the successful attainment by the organization of grants and other transfer income.

(2) *Formal*: According to convention, these are the 'true' volunteers -- the people whose work is directly supplementary to the paid workforce at the community centre. Organizational volunteers, for example, are not generally included in this class. Many community centres have in place a system to recruit, train, deploy, recognize and reward the formal volunteers. At some centres a paid "volunteer coordinator" is assigned these tasks; more commonly, volunteer coordination is an understood part of the programmer's role. The volunteers so 'coordinated' are often drawn from the (again in the formal sense) non-working population: students, retirees, and unemployed persons. Some may eventually advance to paid

employment at the community centre; others make a long term commitment to their volunteer role.

(3) *Casual:* People who regularly attend a community centre often 'pitch in' to help with programs and with special events. Their commitment may be ephemeral, but such efforts -- in combination with the work of formal volunteers and staff -- is essential to the community centre operation. The contributions of casual volunteers are, however, rarely recorded, and only sporadically recognized and rewarded.

(4) *Communal:* The types of volunteer activity described thus far all derive from a fundamental stratum of volunteer initiative, involving community building activity and the set up of networks of mutual aid. The community centre is both a product of such initiative, and a forum for its continuation. The provisioning focus of communal volunteering ranges from the tangible (making childcare arrangements, sharing knowledge of how to access resources) to the relatively intangible (offering companionship, providing crisis support). In contrast to the preceding forms, communal volunteering is neither channelled through the organization, nor directed by staff. Staff and official volunteers may participate in the communal volunteer activity at the centre, but their job functions are incidental to the transactions that result.

To apply the label "relations of reciprocity" to all this volunteer provisioning is, of course, to consciously echo Polanyi's terminology for certain dynamics in precapitalist substantive economies. It should be noted, however, that reciprocity in the postcapitalist institution of the community centre deviates from the Polanyian

archetype. Reciprocal exchanges are not necessarily symmetrical, and certainly not organized along kinship lines. Metaphorically, at least, the community centre economy might seem closer in spirit to Polanyi's "householding" principle, except that the household in this instance is neither closed nor self-sufficient. A concern over precise terminology need not detain us. The point is rather that the search for elements of a substantive economy reveals not that certain principles have survived intact from a precapitalist era, but that new forms have emerged, integrated with the dominant market form.

The microeconomic processes discussed above reveal the community centre to be a site of production as much as a site of consumption. As well, what occurs at the community centre is related to productive and consumptive activities taking place at other locations. The mechanisms of market exchange, fiscal transfer and relations of reciprocity thus should not be viewed in isolation, but each in the context of a broader economy.

For example, in terms of market exchange, one should consider not just the sales and purchases conducted at community centre office, but also the external purchases of groups and individuals who use the centre and participate in its programs. Whether one has to buy equipment and tools for a crafts class or the appropriate clothing and shoes for fitness workouts, the cost of a community centre activity is rarely just that of the program fee. In a more general sense, much

of what a patron is first exposed to in the community -- and becomes progressively more proficient at -- may instil a lasting pattern of consumption.

The fiscal transfers ultimately received by the community centre likewise have their externalities. The tax exemptions enjoyed by the community centre operators mean a loss of revenue to the central state. This shortfall is compensated for, presumably, by correspondingly augmented personal and corporate sector taxation. On the other hand, those centres that are registered charities are able to extend tax exemption to private sector donors. The net advantage either way to the community centre is eventually passed back into the general economy through wages paid to employees and business conducted with suppliers.

The communal volunteering aspect of relations of reciprocity is, as already suggested, external in operation and effect. Its full range, however, extends far beyond the community centre itself. Communal volunteering encompasses the activities of various groups -- clubs, societies, sports leagues, etc. -- for which the community centre provides a place to meet and organize. Each of these groups is supported by its own volunteer system. Many persons whose lives have been enriched by these organizations may never have stepped foot inside a community centre.

'Double entry' bookkeeping at the community centre

It should be apparent from the preceding section that the whole reach of the community centre economy does not reduce to a system of financial accounts. Yet accounting does of course take place at the community centre and, moreover, the financial records involved provide useful insight into the community centre economy. Specifically, the 'books' show a trend over recent years in which the integrative influence of the Park Board appears to be in relative decline as, correspondingly, the economic organization of community centres has become more localized and particular.

At each community centre not one, but two bookkeeping systems monitor and control monetary affairs. One is designated "Park Board," and the other "Association." However, neither of these labels is, especially in light of the "policy field" analysis of the previous chapter, strictly accurate. Reflecting the subordination of Park Board finances to the City Council budget process, the official community centre accounts on the Park Board side are actually a section of the City's general ledger.[41] The civic budgetary system imposes a standardized regime over all community centres -- or rather, standardization would be imposed if there was not a separate 'association' bookkeeping system.

In contrast to the situation of the Park Board, the community associations are not required to cast a budget, much less have it approved or commit to its projections. Association finances thus can be and indeed are -- within the tolerances of accounting convention[42] -- organized in a different way at every

centre. A certain program category, for example, may be set up at a given centre as a source of general revenue, while at another location the cashflow from the same program category might be kept in a discrete sub-account. The composition of association finances is also extremely varied, coming from a broad mix of commodified and decommodified revenue sources. Finally, there is a much broader range across the city -- in terms of volume -- on the association side than the Park Board size. Park Board budgets, mostly determined by facility size, run from a low of approximately $305,000 to one extreme high of $857,000; association revenues, which reflect the local capacity to generate funds, range from approximately $179,000 to $973,000.

The systemic bifurcation in community centre finances is problematic in several respects. First, it disguises the fundamental unity of the community centre economy. Second, the two sides are difficult to consolidate, and even if consolidated would -- as we have seen -- provide incomplete information. Third, the uneven earning power of associations gives rise to significant inequities between centres. These inequities, furthermore, are impossible to calculate precisely, much less resolve.[43]

In other respects, the separation of association finances from those of the Park Board is undeniably advantageous to all three fields. The arrangement provides the means to hold revenues at their place of origin and to quickly allocate spending where it is needed. Nominally, the association, whose executives control the centre purse, is the direct beneficiary. But professional staff also benefit from

having resources close at hand since, in comparison, access to city funds is rarely certain and always slow. And, again, since administration of the centres is in this way simplified, a structural benefit is realized as well by the Park Board.

Quite apart from any inherent advantages or disadvantages, the separation of Park Board and association finances provides a convenient way to document the trend towards localization. The premise here is that the structure and derivation of Park Board finances, being relatively consistent from site, represents a force towards integration and standardization. Conversely, the finances of the associations, coming from a multitude of sources and representing vastly different programmatic priorities, are an index of overall diversity. The greater the level of association income and expenditure, relative to the Park Board budget at its community centre, the more that centre is likely to be locally defined and organized.

The relative proportion of Park Board to association finances at any one site and in any given year has little, if any, significance with respect to the proposition stated above. The cumulative data from all centres through time, however, would reveal any important trend in the relationship between the two partners. Unfortunately this information is difficult -- on both sides -- to isolate, and historical records are far from complete. As well, the steady but uneven increase in the number and size of centres over a forty year period makes longitudinal comparisons in absolute dollar values extremely misleading.

Yet some tracking is possible, because the relative financial contribution of Park Board and associations has, from the beginning of their partnership, been an issue of some importance. Therefore, at irregular intervals, studies have been conducted -- with varying methodologies and degrees of rigor -- to calculate this breakdown. The resulting estimates provide intermittent benchmarks (recorded in table 5-1 in percentages, for comparative purposes) that show, first, a centralizing trend in the early years of community centre development, and then -- at least since the early 1970s -- an apparent reversal towards decentralization.

TABLE 5-1: 'Complete' Community Centre operating budgets: Historical changes citywide in the relative proportion of Park Board and Community Association finances

Year (Source)	Park Board (City) Percentage	Association Percentage
1950 (Staff "Recommendations...")	31	69
1951 (Ibid.)	62	38
1971 (Thornton, 1971)	75	25
1973 (Levine, 1979)	71	29
1977 (Ibid.)	66	34
1987 (Vulliamy, 1989)	61	39
1993-4	51	49

The percentages listed in the top two rows in Table 5-1 are based upon incomplete data, but the historical record outlined in Chapter Two confirms that the

associations went from a high degree of independence and income generating capacity to a marginalized status in a relatively short period of time. Indeed, one of the pioneer associations folded in the early 1960s, and for over two decades its centre was managed directly by the Park Board. The data for the later period is somewhat more reliable, and reveal a remarkable progression on the association side from a quarter share to near parity with the Park Board.

Several different scenarios could be advanced to account for the long historical curve of first Park Board, and then association prominence. These include:

i. Improvements to the physical plant: Remodelling or expansion of community centres can have a positive effect upon program (association) revenues, while at the same time possibly reducing overhead (Park Board) costs through realized efficiencies. Civic capital plans in the last fifteen years have focussed on the remodelling or expansion of existing centres, rather than the construction of new ones. This explanation does not, however, account for the initial centralizing trend.

ii. Association maturity: As noted in the preceding chapter, each time a community centre opens, its association must shift its emphasis from local area advocacy to facility operation and service delivery. The changeover from one mode to the other can be highly disruptive to the organization, and the development of required new competencies takes a great deal of time. The aggregate of such transitions might produce results similar to those shown in Table 5-1, given that new centre development has tapered off over the last two decades.

iii. Welfare state expansion and retrenchment: The historical timing of the transition from a diminishing to an expanded association profile is, however, particularly intriguing. It suggests a connection with the more general pattern of welfare state development in the post-war era. The reversal in association fortunes might then reflect local efforts to compensate for erosion in state support. The community centre experience, if such a connection could be established, would be a case study of wider relevance to nonprofit sector crisis response.

The shift from Park Board to association in terms of financial leverage allows for the possibility of diversity between community centres, but does not in itself demonstrate that such diversity exists. Such a case can only be made by examining actual community centres. Accordingly, in the next section, two community centres with strongly performing associations are compared. In substantive economic terms, the provisioning arrangements in place at each site do not appear to reflect system-wide norms, but rather a calculated response to local circumstances.

A tale of two centres

The two community centres compared in this section, identified as 'Northeast' and 'Southwest,' are real facilities, not composites. Their names are altered not so much to hide their true identities (which, given the limited number of possibilities, would be a futile exercise), but to emphasize their polarity on a continuum of economic organization. The two centres are, in effect, archetypes of

market-based and transfer-based provisioning. What each in its own way manifests is a highly successful adaption to local conditions. Since their circumstances are entirely different (see Table 5-2), it follows that their economies will also be dissimilar.

Southwest, one of the first generation War Memorial community centres, is the city's largest community centre proper (that is, no indoor pool or ice arena is attached). The neighbourhood surrounding Southwest centre is the second most affluent in the city, and the most affluent of those in which a community centre is located. Single family housing dominates, and most of these homes are owner occupied. Northeast community centre mainly serves a subsidized rental housing complex in one of the poorest neighbourhoods of not only Vancouver, but of the entire country. Northeast centre is considerably smaller and (as one of the second generation "community development" centres) newer than Southwest.

In terms of programming, Southwest conforms very closely to stereotypic notions -- described in the opening chapter of this thesis -- of the proper uses of a community centre. Activity is organized seasonally; through the course of a year four programming cycles take place in which thematic sessions or classes run for a set number of weeks, each conducted on a given day, at a particular time, in an assigned room. To take part in these activities, one must pre-register and pay a specified amount of money. Punctuating the annual cycle are a number of one-time special events and workshops of varying durations, which may not require pre-registration, but generally still require payment of a fee. A recently issued (Fall)

TABLE 5.2 110

Northeast and Southwest neighbourhoods compared

1991 Census	SW	NE	City of Vancouver
Mother Tongue English	78.3%	32.6%	59.9%
Av. Household Income	$83,741	$17,380	$45,180
Av. Household Size	3.0	1.8	2.3
Dwelling Owned	81.2%	9.1%	40.9%
Dwelling Rented	18.7%	90.8%	59.1%

TABLE 5.3

Northeast and Southwest community centres compared

	SW	NE	All Centres (averaged, N=19)
Patronage 1993	221,867 visits	221,343 visits	151,540 visits
Association Reserves	$219,669	$14,000 (est)	$151,311 (range: $10,000 to $335,065)
Association Income 1993	$490,132 (79.1% market sources)	$973,249 (88.9 % transfers)	$422,427 (range: $179,017 to $973,249)
Park Board (City) Budget 1993	$374,883	$504,499	$445,625 (range: $305,476 to $857,338)
Total Budget	$865,015	$1,477,748	$868,052

brochure for Southwest lists 185 separate programs, events and workshops, almost all of which involve a charge to the participant.

The program listings at Northeast are fewer -- the physical plant being considerably smaller -- and less focussed on leisure. Recreation programming for all ages is still much in evidence, but often as the means to a therapeutic objective rather than an end in itself. Many of the individual brochure listings are not 'recreational' at all, but are instead social services such as a medical clinic, a home meal delivery, a 'tag program' (daily room checks for local seniors), a "single mom's" food bank, and various counselling, mentorship and job-training programs for youth. This list does not include some special projects co-sponsored by the centre, such as a police storefront and an alcohol and drug research project. Furthermore, the level of subsidy is unparalled amongst the city's community centres; Northeast's brochure states that its programs "are free...to those living in the (local) communities."

The program brochure does not, however, reveal all the activities taking place at either Southwest or Northeast. Volunteer activity, in all four of the categories described above (organizational, formal, casual and communal) are critical components at both sites. There is some documentation of organizational and formal volunteers, but little basis upon which to quantify and compare, either in terms of hours committed or wage value equivalents. Both centres have large executive boards (23 directors at Southwest; 18 at Northeast), to which several standing and ad hoc committees report. The "seniors programmer" at Southwest

is also the designated "volunteer coordinator," and her responsibilities pertain exclusively to the formal volunteers -- those who commit time on a regular basis to assist in program delivery or office support. The formal volunteers who log more than twenty hours a year (some sixty individuals in the past year) are recognized at an annual 'volunteer' dinner. An additional benefit to formal volunteers, subject to some conditions, is the right to priority registration -- free of charge in some cases -- in a centre program of their choice. The formal volunteer experience at Northeast often revolves around a context of skill training or "pre-employment" programs. Volunteers work a regular shift in return for a small honorarium. The major difference between the two centres in terms of formal volunteering would appear to be that at Southwest, such volunteering is conceived to be entirely separate from work, while at Northeast, it is seen as preparatory to paid employment.

Staff informants at both sites stress the importance to their operations of volunteers, one going so far as to say that "we couldn't function without volunteers." They also recognize the value of casual volunteering, particularly to the successful running of major special events and (particularly in the case of Northeast) of fundraising activities. Communitarian volunteering activity -- the networking and informal organization around issues and needs -- is observed and, where possible, nurtured at both sites, but desciptions of its nature and significance are, at best, sketchy.

All these 'relations of reciprocity' are made possible by -- and contribute to -- a financial flow which, of course, can be measured at both centres and compared (see Table 5-3). Any contrast between Southwest and Northeast is not readily discernable from their Park Board budgetary allocations alone. The budget assigned to the former is slightly greater, but this in the main is accounted for by a difference in building size.[44] A comparison of association incomes, however, not only reveals a high contrast, but also confutes what the neighbourhood demographics might lead one to expect. The revenues of Northeast (highest in the city) are almost double that of Southwest (which, notwithstanding, is ranked 5th overall). It is, however, the respective sources of revenue at the two centres which are most revealing. The defining difference between the two centres is their respective sources of income. In the last complete fiscal year, 79.1% of revenue at Southwest came from the activity fees charged to patrons, the rest from a mix of sources including memberships, grants and coffee shop sales. At Northeast in a comparable period, 88.9% of income was generated from grants from eleven donors, including private corporations, foundations, and all levels of government. The balance of income was mainly derived from unspecified fundraising initiatives.

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, an association's sources of income will determine its capacity to build up a cash surplus (or what, in most associations' financial reports, is referred to as "members' equity"). Market-driven, commodified programming tends through time to generate high equity. Conversely, decommodified transfer sources tend not to allow for a surplus at all, and hence

low equity is the result. True to form, Southwest shows a current members' equity of $219,669, while Northeast shows less than $14,000. Thus, while Northeast is the stronger performer in terms of annual financial volume; in terms of accumulated reserves its position is relatively weak.

The Southwest and Northeast community centres generate income in very different ways, but each has adopted an optimum strategy to match its neighbourhood profile. It would be very difficult for Northeast, given the prevalence of low income households in its catchment area, to realize significant revenues from commodified programming. It is well situated, however, in terms of potential donor support for social service delivery. In contrast, although Southwest does receive some grants, its local area demographics hardly fit the priorities of most granting agencies. So instead it realizes a high margin of financial return in certain program areas -- fitness classes being a particularly lucrative example. With its nonprofit status, and subsidized overhead costs, Southwest enjoys a market edge over its private sector competitors.

The contrasting circumstances and strategies of Southwest and Northeast represent opposite ends of a continuum along which all other community centres in the city locate themselves. These 'middle' centres are not likely -- all other factors being equal -- to match the fiscal performance of Southwest and Northeast.[45] Their patrons may be able to pay program fees, but generally can afford less than the clientel at Southwest. On the other hand, their neighbourhoods are not 'poor,' and for that reason not priority targets for grant transfers. While the

strategy these centres should adopt is not so clearly defined by circumstances, they must, in each of their programming involvements, pattern themselves after Southwest or Northeast.

Community centres in jeopardy?

The provisioning strategies of both Southwest and Northeast (and by extension the rest of the city's community centres) are made possible by policy decisions formalized at higher levels of government. It follows, then, that all community centres are jeopardized by state-engineered changes to social policy. The threat to centres like Northeast is perhaps the more pronounced. Any determined move by senior governments to achieve deficit reduction by eliminating or sharply curtailing grant programs would devastate these centres directly and indirectly. Directly, because major income sources would be at once cut off; indirectly, because these centres would then be forced to compete for scarce resources with similarly affected nonprofit agencies.

Centres like Southwest are perhaps less immediately vulnerable. However, private sector involvement in leisure and recreation has become steadily more pronounced over the years, and community centres are therefore finding themselves directly competing with, for example, commercial fitness clubs. The advantageous tax status of the association thus becomes potentially a bone of contention. In the United States, private healthcare sector lobbyists have successfully force the federal government to "level the playing field" by requiring

nonprofits to pay income tax, and by curtailing their activities in specific areas (Estes & Alford, 1990). It is not inconceivable that such a scenario, affecting the more lucrative areas of community centre operation, could unfold in this country.

Chapter six: From the social policy of recreation to the re-creation of social policy

In examining the circumstances that gave rise to and continue to sustain Vancouver's network of community centres, this thesis has highlighted certain particulars, possibly unique to the local scene. These include: (1) a convergence of grassroots, state and professional energies, (2) a Park Board that is separately elected, yet fiscally dependent upon City Hall, and (3) Community Associations that are -- in comparison to most nonprofit sector, neighbourhood-based agencies -- unusually well resourced. These and other factors have combined to produce the conditions whereby community centres can be tailored to locally determined specifications.

The shaping of community centres at the local level is, in a literal sense, 'social' policymaking. In contrast to social policy as conventionally described, this variant form is generally unsystematic, at times faltering, impossible to steer from any central point, and not always inclusionary. However, the workings of this ground level (or, depending upon one's metaphorical preference, 'peripheral') social policy are not -- or at least should not be -- a marginal concern of social policy conducted at a higher or more central location. Human lives and livelihoods are impacted, and this impact is a material, economic force.

This, what might be termed 'folk' policymaking (to distinguish it from state-defined policy processes), does not take place in a vaccuum. There are numerous

linkages -- some obvious, some very subtle -- between both levels of social policy. The regulations and procedures imposed from above set the conditions by which a community organization lives, in a manner which is at once enabling and constraining. On the one hand the organization is invested with form and substance; on the other its operations are channelled and confined.

The community centre example demonstrates as well that folk policymaking is both creative and "recreative." It is creative because a great deal of social policy innovation appears to take place at the periphery. In fact, when one considers the matter at any length, one is hard pressed to imagine innovative and creative policy processes occurring anywhere else -- certainly not in the well-insulated removes of central bureaucracies. All of the major pillars of state managed social policy -- social security, health insurance, pensions -- are, at root, extrapolations of the self-protective, 'decommodifying' initiatives of grassroots labour and community organization. The state does not originate social policy so much as appropriate it.

Folk policymaking is "recreative" in two respects. First, the term gets at the heart of the meaning of recreation -- activity that is restorative from the alienating effects of wage labour, and -- paradoxically -- is productive as well (Stormann, 1989). Recreation in these respects is inherently social and public, even though, as Rojek (1985) notes, the current trend is toward private and individual modes of experience (The trend may signal a retreat from active engagement in the policy arena as well, but this possibility cannot be dealt with here). Second, folk policymaking is "recreative" because it not only innovates but, in the encounter

with formal policymaking, also re-creates, reworks, redefines the regulatory environment. As Moore (1978:1) observes: "The making of rules and social and symbolic order is a human industry matched only by the manipulation, circumvention, remaking, replacing, and unmaking of rules and symbols in which people seem almost equally engaged."

The example of the community centre also reveals that what may appear to be decentralized state systems may in fact be incompletely centralized grassroots innovations. The appearance of an arrested process of state absorption poses, first of all, the question as to why some areas of social policy are more fully integrated into government than others. The explanation of the dual politics theorists, is that those areas that are more essential to production have been centralized to ensure that they are adequately controlled, and that areas that are related purely to consumption, being of lesser import, have been left to peripheral governance. This analysis, however, is predicated on what seems a rather narrow view of both production and consumption. An alternate explanation is that the productive processes of the community centre are of necessity small-scale and community based, and cannot be centralized beyond a certain level.

A second issue is to what degree centralization is necessary. In an era of state retrenchment and downsizing, this question has broad relevance for social policy. Before one advocates the devolution of welfare support to the community, one should first understand why such supports were centralized in the first place. The development of community centres shows the centralizing process as a the

gradual forging of links between folk and formal policy levels. These connections were not always welcomed by local agency, but neither could they be resisted. Resource allocation and structuring interventions of the state are essential to the provisioning capacity of local institutions. It follows that the links between centre and periphery cannot be severed without seriously impairing this provisioning capacity.

This observation brings us to a consideration of nonprofit entities like the community association as "crisis buffers" (Estes and Alford, 1990). In a limited way, the community centre example shows, this function is possible. Some of the social programming undertaken in the current era by community centres may have been instituted, intentionally or not, to fill gaps created by the ebbing of the welfare state generally. However, community centre productivity in the area of social programs can, at best, only be partially independent of state resources. Neither the market nor the reciprocity components of the community centre economy will long endure in the absence of a transfer-based economic foundation. Economic crisis at the level of the state could prompt changes in taxation or funding policies, and such changes -- even if relatively minor -- could have a profound impact on local institutions such as community centres.

The extent of impact is difficult to prejudge, however, since the critical social policy mechanisms -- especially those on the periphery -- are not well understood. More research is obviously called for, on the "folk" as well as the "formal" level, with particular attention to both the creative and recreative dynamics of

policymaking. However such research is conducted, it should begin by identifying the local institutions that sustain the welfare of individuals and collectivities, and from there trace connections back to levers of state control. Such an approach -- against the grain of conventional practice -- might contribute to a revised understanding of the nature and scope of social policy.

NOTES

1. It seems a fitting irony that a synonym for "unnecessary" or "trivial" should be based on the Latin root, "otium," meaning leisure. Also interesting is that the Latin for "work" is negotium (literally, non-leisure), which survives today in such words as "negotiate" and "negotiation."

2. The conceptual segregation of welfare and leisure is furthermore perpetuated by "social formalism", which is how Rojek (1985:3) characterizes "the dominant research tradition in the sociology of leisure." Social formalism treats leisure as an aspect of human existence uncontaminated by "power, knowledge, signification, interdependency, agency, and the mode of production" (ibid.1). This essentialist understanding of leisure rests on a false conceptual dichotomy; "society is thought of as being 'above' individuals and individuals are presented as 'alone' or 'separate' from society" (ibid.:96). Leisure is portrayed in terms of individual experience, as "free time" rather than as "an effect of systems of legitimation" (ibid:16). Social formalism would recognize recreation facilities as servers of that individual experience, but would ignore the wider context in which this service takes place.
   According to Coalter (1988:25), social formalism, or what he describes as "leisure-centeredness" penetrates the domain of policy analysis as well. Generally, Coalter observes, leisure policy focuses either on the 'fit' between leisure provision and a loosely defined leisure need, or elaborates upon practitioner concerns (that is to say atheoretically) about the logistics of recreation service delivery. These analyses are conducted in isolation from mainstream social policy and are thereby deprived of the latter's more extensive theoretical base. Coalter concludes that if leisure was analysed from a wider social policy frame, its assumed distinctiveness might well disappear.

3. The community centre user may not necessarily frequent the community centre closest to their place of residence. Many travel considerable distance, even from other municipalities in the region.

4. Users -- particularly frequent users -- of community centres are significantly more likely to be female than male (Marktrend Survey, 1991:Table 50).

5. Finding a non-derogatory nomenclature for the older adult population has been a source of some difficulty. The term "Seniors" is used more than any other, but variant terms include "retired citizens," "senior citizens," "55 plus," "mature adults" and "a good age."
   Also problematic is the age at which a person attains "senior" (or whatever) status. At one time the threshold was set more or less consistently at the age of retirement -- 65 years. But more recently, in recognition of the fact that many people opt for early retirement, some centres have included in this category

persons as young as 55 years. Eligibility for reduced fees in Park Board operated facilities remains fixed, however, at age 65.

6. Different city departments will, however, define different boundaries for the same neighbourhood, and it is uncertain whether any of these accord with the perceptions of local residents. See Muller (1990) for a discussion of how imposed boundaries affected a planning consultation process in Vancouver.

7. Such an exercise, using Landtrak GIS software, was conducted for three community centres (West Point Grey, Kerrisdale and Killarney) during the preparation of the Park Board's (1992) Management Plan. In each case, a randomized 10% of the centre's membership data base was plotted by household address on a map of the city (the program defaulted on those members living outside of the city limits). The intent was to determine if there was any evidence of residential areas not served by the existing supply of amenities.
The result in all three cases was a concentric 'shotgun blast' pattern centered on the community centre site which, however, did not necessarily align with its defined catchment area. In all three cases, though, at least some membership was drawn from every other community centre catchment. Because of technical problems, the mapping exercise was abandoned, but the end result of mapping all community centres in this manner would likely have been inconclusive. The spread of membership was such that it was doubtful whether any areas of marginal service could have been identified.

8. A community centre's draw is often in fact city wide, if not region wide. Why this is so is a matter for speculation. An individual might prefer a centre close to work or on a commuting route, rather than one close to home. Another might have an interest in a unique program offering, or want to maintain social ties formed in other contexts.

9. Racquetball courts are a good example of too much specialized space developed in response to a 'trend' which turned out to be a fad.

10. Many centre facilities are rented after hours by private groups, mainly for gymnasium sports and social events. This is not considered public use.

11. Although ancillary facilities like pools, rinks and fitness centres generally remain open on these days.

12. Admittedly, summer is also the time when opportunities for outdoor recreation displace the attractions of indoor recreation.

13. "Latchkey" is the term for childcare which, in contrast to "daycare", takes place before and after school hours, rather than all day. Both services are primarily designed to meet the needs of working parents.

14. The first is the Carnegie Community Centre and the second is Britannia Community Services Centre.

15. Included for example are the Croatian Community Centre, the Chinese Cultural Centre and the Jewish Community Centre.

16. Steele (1986), a commissioned history of the Park Board, touches on community centre development in one chapter.

17. In a word, "policy." There is a conscious echo here of Parry et al (1979:1): "'Policy' is not an easy noun, shading into matters of policing on the one hand and blurring with politics on the other."

18. See Stanfield (1986:41-7) and Block (1990:chapter two) for a fuller discussion of Polanyi's critique of the "economistic fallacy."

19. The timeliness of this saving response might suggest that a kind equilibrium process at work, and on that basis Polanyi's theory has been labelled "radical functionalism" (Hann,1992). Polanyi, however, is careful not to infer that the protective counter reaction was in any way historically necessary.

20. Here Polanyian social policy diverges, for example, from the 'social administration' paradigm, dominant at the time Polanyi was writing, which placed social policy in a discrete category from economic policy.

21. The establishment of public parks in both the urban and rural realms is, however, certainly an instance of land decommodification. Oddly enough, Polanyi does not explore this rather obvious and, even in the nineteenth century, significant state intervention.

22. For example, Esping-Andersen (1990:149] estimates that Scandinavian welfare states employ about 30% of the workforce. Even Gough (1979:Chapter 6) notes the interpenetration of public and private sectors.

23. Cranz (1980) describes the (North American) continent-wide transition of civic parks from their original romantic and classical conceptions into their contemporary utilitarian and recreational forms. Macdonald (1984) looks at the same process as it affected the development of Vancouver's Stanley Park. His conclusion, that the struggle over park definition was class-based, suggests a line of investigation (not pursued in this thesis) into subsequent community centre development.

24. According to Alexander (1954), Alexandra (now Kitsilano) Neighbourhood House opened in 1938. Gordon Neighbourhood House (in Vancouver's West End) was at that time already in existence.

25. Holdon, 1922 (1970); Davis, 1967; Carson, 1970 give a fuller accounting of social settlements in both England and the United States.

26. The notion of the body as a locus of disciplinary control by and through the state has been, of course, a central theme in post-structuralist theory. The primary text is Foucault (1979), nicely summarized in Rabinow (1984:170-239) and Hewitt (67-84). Donzelot (1980) and Squires (1990) have analysed aspects of social policy and social work from this perspective. But, with the exception of some tentative work by Rojek (1985:150-57, 1989), the rather more obvious case of recreation and leisure practice remains relatively unexplored.

27. A Staff report to Vancouver City Council, dated July 5, 1993, recommends the renewal of a lease to the Victoria Drive Community Hall Association "at a nominal rent of $10.00 per annum." The Report also notes that such a lease arrangement has been in effect since 1924, when the hall was built.

28. Now the 'United Way'.

29. The Norrie report also, in the wake of the elimination of Vancouver's ward system, also divided the city up into twenty "social areas" which evolved into the "planning areas" used by the City today.

30. The likely reference here is to the Greater Vancouver Communities Council -- already referred to earlier in the chapter in connection with community halls -- which was the organization that finally released the Weir Report to the media!

31. The Superintendant's stipulations can be summarized as follows: (1) the centres would operate in the best interests of citizens as a whole -- memberships could not be limited in any way; (2) Park Board bylaws would apply to centre operations; (3) centre space could not be rented without formal Board consent; (4) Park Board would set overall policy directions; (5) The Board could suspend Association operation of the centres, although the associations would have the right to appeal to City Council; (6) Short of such an appeal, Board decisions on all matters of dispute would be final; (7) The Board would have representation on the Centre management committee (i.e., the Association executive) which would be required to meet a minumum of once monthly.

32. According to Robinson (1951), Robert Fleming was elected president of the Sunset Community Association in the Fall of 1950. He took over from Stan Thomas, the first president of the society, who had served for many years. The quotation is from an unsigned, typewritten draft found at the Vancouver Public Archives among papers of the Sunset Association dating to 1951.

33. Whether this was the outcome hoped for is not clear. Upon its release, the

Odegaard Report was criticized for not resolving "difficulties" with the associations (Park Board Annual Report, 1960).

34. Marshall Smith was writing as the Director of Recreation for the Vancouver Park Board. He was also an informant on the early development of community centres for Thornton, 1971.

35. Currently under development, for example, is the "Roundhouse" Community Centre on the former Expo lands North of False Creek.

36. An early example of this is demonstrated in an extract from the Park Board Minutes of 1890 -- a mere four years after the City's incorporation: "(T)his Board views with regret a recent attempt to interfere with its affairs on the part of the City Council,...as the Board is an independent body, its members being elected by the people and directly responsible to the people, they consider it their duty to protest against and if necessary resist any interference with park matters on the part of any outside body or corporation." (quoted in Stroyan, 1966: Section II, Item 12).

37. More typically, parks and recreation services are assigned to an appointed commission or line department of city government.

38. Formerly the Societies Act of 1920.

39. Certain income operations of the Park Board at or near community centres are external to the JOA. These include swimming pools, skating arenas, racquet courts and most "fitness centres" (or weightrooms).

40. The General Manager of the Park Board is required, by formal resolution grounded in precedent, to be registered professional engineer.

41. The general ledger separates the city's finances first into departments, then into divisions and branches within those departments, and (if necessary) down to an operational unit within a branch. A community centre would be one such operational unit, within the recreation division of the Park Board 'department.' The Park Board also has a budgetary monitoring tool of its own -- the work order summary report -- an intermittent compilation of individual transactions within general ledger accounts. The account headings used in both kinds of printout are the same, but the latter breaks down into finer categories.
Every two weeks, computer generated printouts of the general ledger and work order summary are circulated to the staff at different levels, with information pertaining to their area of responsibility. The printout received by a centre coordinator would, for the centre's salaries, benefits, supplies, utilities, etc., show the current and year-to-date expenditures (or revenues) against a year-end budget projection. Any significant discrepancy between the actual and projected figures would call for corrective action -- or at least a convincing memo of explanation.

The civic general ledger and the Park Board work order system ultimately record the same financial activity. However, since certain categories of expenditure are recorded first as ledger entries, and others as work order postings, reconciliation between the two systems is (except at year end) extremely difficult.

42. The associations must keep financial records with sufficient rigor to meet the standards of the Society Act. The Act requires the yearly filing in Victoria of a financial report, which is usually prepared by a professional auditor. Accounting conventions are such that the annual report provides the best basis for comparing the financial performance of associations, and the relative financial profile of the associations with the Park Board. The report identifies expenditures and revenues in several subaccounts, corresponding to different program areas. The total of revenues minus the total of expenditures gives the surplus or deficit for the year. This amount adds to (or subtracts from) the accrued surplus of the association from prior years.

43. Senior Park Board managers and planners usually get around this problem by only considering the 'official' city budget of community centres when making resourcing and development decisions. It is either assumed that association finances constitute a neglible residuum, or are in proportion to the civic allocation at every site. As this chapter shows, however, neither assumption is warranted.

44. Complicating the analysis somewhat is the fact that building maintenance costs at Northeast are partially subsidized by a provincial crown corporation. The subsidy is calculated on a percentage basis, and for the last complete cycle amounted to just over $100,000. If maintenance was solely a Park Board responsibility, as is the case at most community centres, then clearly the gap between Southwest and Northeast would even be narrower.

45. Southwest and Northeast are joined in the top six income earners by two associations at centres whose neighbourhood demographics are similarly at extremes. The other two associations have access to unusual revenue generating resources -- one owns its own bingo hall, and the other operates a high volume parking lot.

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APPENDIX A: What is a Community Centre?

What is a Community Centre?

BOARD of PARKS
and RECREATION
CITY OF VANCOUVER

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY CENTRE?

It is a facility which offers educational, cultural, social and sports activities. Anyone can use it, everyone is welcome. There are 23 public Community Centres in Vancouver.

WHO OPERATES THE COMMUNITY CENTRE?

Community Centres are jointly operated by the City of Vancouver, Board of Parks and Recreation and your local Community Centre Association.

Park Board staff look after the daily operations and programs of the Centre to ensure people of all ages and abilities have access to activities that meet their interests.

WHAT TYPES OF PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES ARE OFFERED?

Creative Arts, community events, free workshops, dance and cooking classes, martial arts, educational programs, music lessons, sports, health and fitness and public meetings. Some Centres also offer swimming and skating.

For more information, visit or telephone your local community centre or refer to the program brochure.

WHO USES THE COMMUNITY CENTRE?

Everybody--families, friends, children, teenagers, adults & seniors, clubs, people who gather and meet, and people who speak different languages all use the Centre.

APPENDIX A: (cont'd)

HOW DO I JOIN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE?

You join by buying a membership card. The cost for a single or family membership is under $10 per year. Some programs are free and others have a fee. Activities are available regardless of income. Please inquire about fee reductions.

WHY DO I NEED A MEMBERSHIP CARD?

A membership card is required to register for programs. The membership fee helps to buy new equipment for programs, sponsors free community events, and assists with publicity costs. Your money helps us operate.
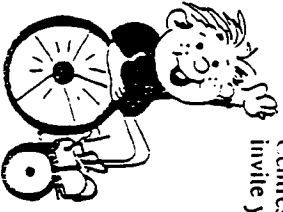
HOW CAN I GET MORE INVOLVED?

Come to a class, attend an event, speak to staff, be a volunteer or join a group that helps to plan future Centre activities.

IS THE CENTRE FOR ME?

Yes! Vancouver Community Centres are for everyone. We invite you to come and visit us.

This is a list of all the Community Centres in Vancouver:

Britannia Community Services Centre	253-4391
Carnegie Centre	665-2220
Champlain Heights Community Centre	437-9115
Champlain Heights Community School	438-4041
Douglas Park Community Centre	876-3371
Dunbar Community Centre	224-1374
False Creek Community Centre	665-3425
Hastings Community Centre	255-2606
Kensington Community Centre	327-9101
Kerrisdale Community Centre	266-8331
Killarney Community Centre	434-9167
Kitsilano Community Centre	734-4974
Marpole-Oakridge Community Centre	327-8371
Mount Pleasant Community Centre	
Ray Cam Centre	874-8165
Renfrew Park Community Centre	251-2141
Riley Park Community Centre	434-6688
Strathcona Community Centre	879-6222
Sunset Community Centre	254-9496
Thunderbird Neighbourhood Community Centre	325-1202
Trout Lake Community Centre	254-0427
West End Community Centre	876-9285
West Point Grey Community Centre (Aberthau)	689-0571
	224-4815

APPENDIX B: Community Centres rally (CVA – used with permission)

und. ˙531

Community Centres Rally

Pender Auditorium — 339 West Pender Street
Monday — November 26, 1945 — 8:00 p.m.

FILMS National Film Board documentaries: CHILDREN OF THE CITY — WHEN WORK IS DONE — A PLACE TO LIVE IN — WAR WHERE YOU LIVE — CHALLENGE TO CRIME.

EXHIBITS A series of illustrative panels in diagram, script and photography: LESSONS IN LIVING—The artists' approach to town planning: SCHOOL OF TODAY —A nursery school at Castleford in the English Midlands: THE NEW COMMUNITY— Adaption of the famous Richard Neutra project in San Pedro. California, to East Vancouver's much-discussed "27 Blocks", these three exhibits prepared by the Art in Living Group: and WHAT THE ART CENTRE CAN DO FOR YOUR COM-MUNITY—a comprehensive graphic survey prepared by the National Gallery and National Film Board. Ottawa, under the slogan: "Begin With What You Have".

ARCHITECTURAL MODELS COMMUNITY CENTRE—From origin-al model at New York World's Fair. illustrating the new community movement in Britain: WHITWOOD MERE INFANTS' SCHOOL. Leeds—designed for light, space. service. colour and beauty: THE NEW NEIGHBORHOOD—adapted from the Neutra development designed for the City of Los Angeles Housing Authority. All models constructed by the Art in Living Group.

LITERATURE COMMUNITY CENTRES—Canadian Council of Education for Citizen-ship: YOU AND YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD — Revere Copper and Brass. New York: PLANNING VANCOUVER—Vancouver Town Planning Commission: A PLACE TO LIVE—Hazen Sise, Canadian Affairs Series: COMMUNITY CENTRES —Ministry of Education. London: CANADIAN REVIEW OF MUSIC AND ART— Community Centres issue. August-September, 1945: MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR AUDITORIUM AND STAGES IN COMMUNITY CENTRE BUILDING—Prof. J. A. Russell. University of Manitoba: AN ADVENTURE IN COMMUNITY PRIDE— North Vancouver Community Centre.

DELEGATE SPEAKERS KATHLEEN GORRIE. Director. Gordon Neigh-borhood House: COL. HUGH ALLEN. Execu-tive Director. Vancouver Welfare Council: HAROLD PARKER. North Shore Neighbor-hood House and Lynn Valley Community Centre: ELIZABETH THOMAS. Department of Social Work. U.B.C.: and a representative from the Junior Board of Trade. to be announced later.

SEE B.C. ELECTRIC WINDOW DISPLAY BEGINNING THURSDAY PRIOR TO RALLY

This Rally is being called for the purpose of stimulating interest in Community Centres as war mem-orials, also to emphasize their relationship to such other community issues as improved housing, recreational pursuits, cultural expansion, modernized schools, town planning, and better living in general, with accent on the artists' role.

SPONSORED BY THE

LABOR ARTS GUILD

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE

"ART IN LIVING" GROUP, FEDERATION OF CANADIAN ARTISTS

TICKETS 50c—on sale at 641 Granville Street

APPENDIX C: *The first (1950) community centre Joint-Operating Agreement. The original of the document transcribed below was for Sunset Community Centre. Identical agreements were drafted for the Kitsilano and Marpole Community Centres.*

STATEMENT OF POLICY AS TO THE JOINT OPERATION OF SUNSET MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CENTRE BETWEEN THE SUNSET COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION AND THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, NOVEMBER 22, 1950

1. The building to be set aside and made available for joint operation between the Community Association and the Park Board to provide for the recreation, comfort and enjoyment of the public.

2. The Board to spend towards the maintenance and operation of the building on items mutually agreed upon, such sums of money as the City Council may from time to time make available for the purpose.

3. The Community Association to abide by the Park Board By-laws which may be in force from time to time governing conduct and use of park properties.

4. No agreement for the use of the building by any other agency to be entered into without the written approval of the Park Board.

5. The Park Board to control the overall policy governing the operation of the building.

6. No additions or alterations to be made to the building without written approval of the Park Board.

7. The operation of the building to be under the general supervision of a Management Committee which shall meet at least once a month, the Park Board to have the privilege of appointing a representative to act on this Committee, said representative to be entitled to one vote.

8. The Community Association to submit before the fifteenth day of each month a statement showing all receipts from the operation of the building for the previous month.

9. The Community Association to submit within one month after the end of the fiscal year a properly audited statement of receipts for the said fiscal year.

Appendix C (Cont'd)

10.   This Statement of policy to be basic but subject to such further arrangements for the better carrying out of the purposes herein as shall from time to time be mutually agreed upon and to come up for renewal each and every year within sixty days after the end of the fiscal year.

Signed on behalf of the Community Association and the Board of Park Commissioners, respectively.

(source: Robinson, 1951)

APPENDIX D: A sample of the Joint Operating Agreement currently in effect.

THIS AGREEMENT made the   day of   A.D. 1979

BETWEEN:

<div style="text-align:center">

an Association incorporated under
the Societies Act of the Province
of British Columbia,

</div>

(hereinafter referred to as the
"Association")

OF THE FIRST PART

AND:

THE BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
of the City of Vancouver, of the
Province of British Columbia,

(hereinafter referred to as the "Board")

OF THE SECOND PART

WHEREAS the Community Recreation facilities, swimming pools, ice rinks, parks and amenities, (hereinafter referred to as "Facilities"), controlled or owned by the Board within the _____Community, (being the area described in Appendix "A" attached hereto), have been set aside, erected and made available for the recreation, comfort and enjoyment of the public;

AND WHEREAS it is intended that those mutually agreed facilities described in Appendix "B" (hereinafter referred to as the "jointly-operated facilities"), are to be operated jointly and in close co-operation by the Association and the Board;

AND WHEREAS the Association and the Board wish to set out in writing their respective positions with regard to the joint operation of the said facilities;

NOW THEREFORE THE PARTIES HEREBY AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

1.   The Board shall have the control, care, and maintenance of all facilities, spending thereon such sums as may be allowed each year by the City Council of Vancouver.

2.   The parties shall agree upon an operating budget based on such sums of money as the City Council shall make available to be expended on the operation of the jointly operated facilities including subsidized program, daily maintenance, light, heat and other utility services as may be required.

APPENDIX D (cont'd)

3. *The Board, subject to budget constraints, shall maintain all facili-
ties in a state of good repair to the satisfaction of both parties. The
Association shall notify the Board in writing, of any dissatisfaction with the
maintenance of the jointly-operated facilities. The Board will be required to
respond to the Association within Fifteen (15) days advising that the necessary
repairs have been made or explain the reason for the non-repair or delay.*

4. *Designated facilities as per Appendix "C" shall have, subject to
budget constraints, full-time coverage with operating staff provided by and
accountable to the Board.*

5. *The operating hours of the jointly-operated facilities shall be
mutually agreed upon by the Board and the Association.*

6. *The operating staff shall comply with all reasonable directives
of the Association and their duties and working hours shall be mutually agreed
upon by the Board and the Association, keeping in mind that such agreed duties
and working hours cannot be inconsistent with the agreements entered into,
from time to time, between the City of Vancouver (including the Board) and
the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Vancouver Municipal and
Regional Employees Union on behalf of their members. The Association shall
be notified of all such agreements.*

7. *The Board shall allow three designated representatives of the
Association to participate in the interview of prospective Recreation
Division programming and clerical support staff. The Association will be
notified of changes in the custodial staff where possible. The Board shall
consider all reasonable comments of the Association in fulfilling their
responsibility of hiring staff.*

8. *The Association and Board shall collectively prepare a job
description that accurately reflects the function to be performed by each
staff member within the various jointly-operated facilities. The job
description will be renewed at the request of either party.*

APPENDIX D (cont'd)

9.   In the event that the Association shall desire a change in the
operating staff in the designated facilities, the Association must show
cause in writing to the Area Manager concerned, with a copy to the Board and
the Director of Recreation.

10.   Should the Board desire to make any temporary or permanent change
whatsoever in any staff assigned to all, or any, of the jointly-operated
facilities, the Board shall advise the President of the Association, where
possible, of such intended changes. New staff shall receive, where possible, a
minimum of Fourteen (14) days in-service training within the jointly
operated facility, prior to any change.

11.   Vacation time for Recreation Division programming and clerical
support staff in the designated facilities shall be arranged by the Area
Recreation Manager, in consultation with the Association, and suitable
arrangements for coverage will be insured by the Area Recreation Manager.
Where possible fifteen (15) days notice of vacations will be given in
writing to the Association. The Association will be advised of vacation time
for custodial staff where possible.

12.   The Community Recreation Co-Ordinator and the Association
representatives shall consult together and prepare the program of
activities to be conducted in the jointly-operated facilities.

13.   Copies of all financial statements prepared by the Association
which are related to the jointly-operated facilities, shall be submitted
to the Board or to its designated representatives.

14.   The Association shall, within the first quarter of the fiscal
year of the Association, submit to the Board an audited statement for the
previous fiscal year.

15.   The Board through its designated representatives, shall submit to
the Association a monthly report of revenues and expenses relating to the
jointly-operated facilities.

APPENDIX D (cont'd)

16.   The Association and the Board may require at any time an account-
ing of expenditures by the other upon giving to the other fifteen (15) days
notice in writing, provided that such a request shall not be unreasonable.

17.   The Board shall receive notice of all meetings of the Association
and its Directors. The Board's representatives shall be entitled to address
all such meetings.

18.   The Association shall abide by and comply with the by-laws, resolutions
and directives of the Board and the City of Vancouver which may be in force .
from time to time governing the conduct and use of the facilities.
"Neither party shall make any additions or alterations to the facilities
nor enter into any agreement for the use of the facilities without first
consulting each other."

19.   Subject to the provisions in Appendix "D" all Association membership
fees and other revenues generated by the use of the designated facilities
shall be received by the Association and expended on program costs, equipment,
supplies, community recreation services and other objects as are consistent
with the Constitution of the Association.   Funds generated by the operation
of facilities listed in Appendix "E", for which the Board assumes financial
responsibility, shall be received by the Board.

20.   The Association may allow the consumption of alcoholic beverages in
the Centre, by obtaining the consent of the Board. The written consent of
the Area Manager may be accepted by the Association as the consent of the
Board. It is the responsibility of the Association to ensure the necessary
liquor permit is obtained.

21.   Any equipment purchased from the funds of the Association for use
in jointly operated facilities, shall belong to the Association and shall
not be loaned or used elsewhere or disposed of without permission of the
Association. Such equipment shall, for the purpose of the insurance by
the Board, be grouped with other equipment in the facility and included
in the inventory of the facility.

APPENDIX D (cont'd)

22. The Association should obtain and make available to the public, information about community athletic, social and cultural groups and should encourage the membership and participation of such groups in the Association and its Board.

23. Any disputes arising out of this Agreement or the interpretation thereof shall be determined by the President of the Association and the Director of Recreation, and if no resolution can be arrived at the dispute shall be referred to the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation. Where required, final decision will rest with the Board.

24. Where there is mutual concurrence, certain provisions peculiar to specific areas will be included in the Agreement. These special considerations, where applicable, are defined in Appendix "D".

25. This Master Agreement is subject to such further arrangements for the better carrying out of the purposes herein as shall from time to time be mutually agreed upon and shall be taken to be renewed every two years unless notice of termination has been given by either party in writing in accordance with Clause 27.

26. This Agreement may be terminated by either party giving three (3) months notice in writing addressed to the Chairman of the Board or the President of the Association, as the case may be.

THE CORPORATE SEAL OF:)   C/S
was hereunto affixed in the presence of:)

_____)

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD.:

_____
PRESIDENT

_____
SECRETARY

_____
CHAIRMAN

_____
SUPERINTENDENT

_____
Director OF RECREATION SERVICES

APPENDIX D (cont'd)

APPENDIX "A" - COMMUNITY AREA

APPENDIX "B" - JOINTLY OPERATED FACILITIES

The facilities to be operated jointly and in close co-operation by the Association and the Board, are described in Appendix "B" as follows:

APPENDIX "C" - FULL TIME COVERAGE FACILITIES

The following facilities shall have full time coverage with operating staff provided by and accountable to the Board:

APPENDIX "D" - SPECIAL PROVISIONS

The following special provisions are jointly agreed on by the Association and the Board:

APPENDIX "E" - BOARD CONTROL OF GENERATED FUNDS
(Including Revenue)

APPENDIX E: Odegaard Report Recommendations

A STUDY CF THE PRCGRAMME

IN THE

CCMMUNITY CENTRES

IN

VANCCUVER, BRITISH CCLUMBIA, CANADA

PREPARED FCR THE

BCARD OF PARKS AND PUBLIC RECREATICN

FEBRUARY, 1959

NATICNAL RECREATICN ASSCCIATICN
8 West Eighth Street
New York 11, New York

APPENDIX E (cont'd)

CITY-WIDE OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The observations and recommendations listed on the ensuing pages
are either applicable to programme features of all centres, or to the ad-
ministrative operation of all centres. It will be noted that many of the
items do not deal exclusively with programme. Many of them deal with areas
and facilities, administration, personnel and finance. At the same time,
all comments dealing with these four subjects are only mentioned insofar
as their relationship is to programme.

1. It will be noted in Chart III that each of the centres has
more than ample space available at all times in every day to do more pro-
gramming. It was noted that a majority of the Centre Staffs and Associa-
tions commented on a lack of space as one reason for not operating more
programme. Therefore, because of this conflict of fact and belief, it
is recommended that each centre maintain a building use chart which
should be reviewed from time to time.

2. Nearly all of the centres have a real programme problem
brought about by the general design and location of rooms. It is the
writer's understanding that each centre association was responsible for
its own architectural design. Though no construction is without some
flaws it is probable that the functional use of the centres would be
improved if the design were done through one central body. It is,
therefore, recommended that all future community centres be designed
and constructed under the authorization of the Board of Parks and
Public Recreation.

3. With few exceptions the amount of programming done in
the areas of arts and crafts, music, dance, drama, nature lore, tours

4.

APPENDIX E (cont'd)

5.

and exhibits is a very small part of the total programme which presently
is basically sports and games.

It is probable that there are many reasons for this one sided
emphasis. Four of them will be discussed here:

a. Nearly all of the centre directors are physical education majors
or minors. None of them are recreation majors. It should also be noted
that there is no opportunity in British Columbia to obtain such a major.
It is only natural for these people to subconsciously push those activi-
ties with which they are most familiar. There are two recommendations
regarding this situation.

    (1) <u>It is recommended that the Supervisor develop special-
        ists in these fields who will hold classes in each of
        the six centres; these same specialists could also hold
        advanced classes in two or three geographically located
        centres</u>.

    (2) <u>It is recommended that a Recreation Major be developed
        as soon as possible in the University of British Columbia.</u>
        Such a course would enable the present centre staff to fur-
        ther their training as well as provide for the future
        centre staff needs.

b. With consideration of point 3a it is recognized that the present
staff will need more guidance and direction in the consideration of these
subjects. It is, therefore, <u>recommended that the Supervisor supply the
centre staff with a list of some of the activities within these areas</u>.
(partial list below)

APPENDIX E (cont'd)

6.

Activities and Breakdown

Arts and Crafts: Aircraft modeling, basketry, batik, dyeing, bead craft, block printing, bookmaking, bookbinding, cabinet making, cardboard construction, carving, cellophane craft, cement craft, cloth pictures, cookery, crayonexing, crepe paper craft, coconut carving, drawing, dressmaking, electrical work, embossing, embroidery, etching, finger painting, fabrics, glass work, glue craft, jewelry making, knitting, leather craft, map making, mechanics, metal work, millinery, needlework, painting, paper craft, photography, plastics, pottery, printing, quilting, raffia work, rugmaking, sand craft, silk screening, sculpture, sewing, sketching, snow sculpture, strip confetti, stagecraft, tin craft, toy making, weaving, whittling, woodcraft.

Illustrations of breakdown:

CARVING: bone plastics, soap, wood

METAL CRAFT: copper, iron, pewter, silver, tin

MODELING: aircraft, cabinets, clay, miniatures, ships, snow sculpture

WEAVING-RUGMAKING: basketry, fabrics, grasses, pin needles, raffia

PHOTOGRAPHY: taking pictures, processing, developing, mechanics, motion pictures, projecting, lantern slides

PAINTING: charcoal, crayon, finger, oil, pastels, pen and ink, water colors

SEWING: appliqueing, crocheting, cross-stitch, embroidery, hemstitching, knitting

Dancing: Acrobatic, ballet, barn dance, classic, clog, eurhythmic folk, gymnastic, interpretative, minuet, social, square, tap and others.

Illustrations of breakdown:

FOLK: games, singing, schottische festival, mazurka

SOCIAL: waltz, fox trot, tango, rhumba, conga

SQUARE: settlement days, plantation period, other lands, mountain folk, country rhythm, musical

APPENDIX E (cont'd)

<div align="center">7.</div>

Dramatics: Carnivals, ceremonials, charades, circuses, come-
             dies, doll shows, dramatic games, fairs, festivals,
             follies, impersonations, informal dramatics, marion-
             ettes, masquerades, mimetics, minstrel shows, mock
             trials, parades, peep shows, plays, Punch and Judy
             shows, puppetry, radio dramatics, reading, plays,
             shadowgraphs, storytelling, story acting, stunts,
             tableaux, vaudeville.

Illustrations of breakdown:

CEREMONIALS: ritual, pageants, symbolism, dances,
               imitations

COMEDIES: one-, two-, three-act plays, musicals,
            operettas, dialongues

FESTIVALS: holiday celebrations, national, state, local
             and individual birthdays, folk days

IMPERSONATIONS: imitations, charades, dramatic, game

PLAYS: of different lengths, operettas, comedies, farces,
         tragedies, play readings

READINGS: poems, monologues, dialogues, stories, excerpts,
            impersonations, dialect

Music: Instrumental: bands of all types, bugle corps, chamber
         music groups, fife and drum corps, harmonica play-
         ing, mandolin and guitar group, orchestras, saxo-
         phone ensembles, string quartets, symphonies, toy
         symphonies

         Vocal: choirs, choruses, caroling, community singing,
         glee clubs, mother singers, opera groups, oper-
         ettas, oratorios, quartets, rote singing, recitals,
         singing games, trios, whistling groups, musical
         appreciation groups.

Illustrations of breakdown:

BANDS: harmonica, rhythm, dance, military, string

ORCHESTRAS: swing, dance, entertainment, ukulele, sym-
              phony

CHORUSES: men's, women's mixed

CHOIR: a cappella, church, oratorios

VOCAL: solos, duets, trios, quartets, octets, choruses

APPENDIX E (cont'd)

8.

c. It is also recognized that the residents of the area must be asking for the basic sports and games activities since the programme is, in part, decided by their desires. It must be further recognized that most of these expressions stem from their own personal background plus the influence of publicity mediums. Furthermore, since the centre membership reaches only 6% to 7% of the people, there is ample evidence that the present programme is not meeting their needs or desires. It is, therefore, recommended that more programme be based on the needs of the people and that the proper promotion be done to stimulate the desire to participate.

d. Nearly all equipment (capital as well as materials and supplies) is in the sports line. There is a marked lack of equipment for use in all other recreation activities. Also, the various rooms, though not specifically designed for the cultural areas, are often not utilized as they could be. It is, therefore, recommended that equal consideration be given to the securing of equipment for the nonsport activities and, further, that the present rooms and spaces be considered for a greater variety of activity.

4. All Centre Staffs and Associations expressed a need for more and better promotional methods to not only make the people aware of the programme, but also stimulate them to want to participate. It is recommended that Supervisor, Centre Staffs and Association Programme Chairman meet to explore the many avenues of promotion. These might include, though certainly not be limited to, radio and TV (announcements, discussions, demonstrations, excerpts of program), newspaper (announcements, schedules, articles, information in topics, results, many pictures), flyers, special events and co-sponsorship of activities.

5. There has been a too rapid abnormal turnover of centre

APPENDIX E (cont'd)

9.

staff. Obviously, there are many reasons in addition to salary why people leave positions. However, in the many cases reported to this writer it seems that salary is the basic cause. It is easy to understand why such a rapid turnover will adversely affect programme. It is, therefore, recommended that the salary schedule and requirements of the Centre Staff be reviewed with an attempt to bring them in line with other professionals having similar responsibilities.

6. It has been stated in all centres that there needs to be more staff. It has also been stated that, at present, there are not sufficient funds (tax and Association) to hire enough to meet the demand. At the same time the preceding charts point out a great deal of rescheduling possibilities which could relieve the schedules of the staff. With these thoughts in mind it is recommended that (1) the Supervisor and Centre Staff review present methods of recruiting and training volunteers, and explore new possibilities and (2) the time schedules of the Directors, Assistants and Supervisors be reviewed with regard to the activities schedule.

7. The various centres expressed a belief that there was little or no segment of their district in the ill and handicapped classification. Since the six centres have a combined populace of 175,000 and since Vancouver is three times that population, it would seem that there must be many ill and handicapped. It is recognized that it takes trained specialists to work with these people. At the same time the groups or associations who do work in this field are constantly hoping to secure available space which the centres have. It is therefore recommended that the Supervisor contact the proper authorities to see if recreation opportunities are now being provided to the eill and handicapped and, if not, if the department can be of service.

APPENDIX E (cont'd)

10.

8. All of the Centre Staff and Associations have stated that planning the fall programme is exceedingly difficult as the Centre Staff is away from the Centre during the summer and loses all contact. Also, there is not enough time in early fall to plan the programme. Another factor considered in this recommendation is that there are few other recreation buildings or gymnasiums in any district thus making the Centre a true Centre of the District. A third factor is the Vancouver weather. The mild weather which not only prevails most of the year, but also intermittently during the winter makes it advisable to be able to use the building as a focal point of programming rather than an identity in itself. It is, therefore, <u>recommended that the Community Centre be used</u> <u>as a focal point in an over-all park development on which programme should</u> <u>operate year round.</u>

9. As previously stated, there is a need to explore more avenues of promotion. Also, it is recognized that many people want an opportunity to compare their work and ability with those of other people. It is further recognized that a healthy competitive programme is worth while. It is, there, <u>recommended that the Supervisor and Centre Staff</u> <u>thoroughly explore the many avenues, regional or city-wide, of activi-</u> <u>ties, contests, shows and displays.</u> These might include play days, hobby shows, millinery displays, and leagues.

10. At present most of the Centres are judging the success of the programme by attendance. This, of course, must be one of the criteria, especially if used to compile per capita participation cost figures. At the same time it frequently results in the great majority of the people being not planned for, in this case 93%. It is, therefore, <u>recommended that the Supervisor and Centre Staff develop a form to help</u>

APPENDIX E (cont'd)

11.

<u>evaluate programme</u>.

11. Many centres already have several organizations (nonrecre-
ational) regularly renting space for meetings or to operate activities
which are open to the public and which are money raisers. It is the
writer's understanding that there is serious consideration being given
to expanding this rental system including the scheduling of certain
spaces and rooms by other agencies. It is well for a community centre
to provide a community service by providing space when it does not in-
terfere with programme. Unfortunately, a proposed programme may col-
lapse before it starts if its start is postponed because of a continu-
ing rental agreement. It is, therefore, <u>recommended that no rental</u>
<u>agreement (written or oral) be established on a long-term basis</u>.

12. All of the centre directors and assistants have at least
one activity specialty in which they are more than capable of teaching.
Since their specialties cover a wide variety of programme areas it is,
therefore, <u>recommended that the teaching abilities of the centre staff</u>
<u>be catalogued and utilized in their own centres as well as on a city-</u>
<u>wide basis</u>.