ANIMATING THE CHURCH'S PARTICIPATION

IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

HELPING TO TURN THE TIDE OF SOCIAL MINISTRY

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to develop a set of guiding principles and to articulate appropriate roles and functions for an animator to use in church sponsored community development work. I used a case study involving my animation of the Economic Animation Project in Sydney, Nova Scotia, which was part of the Maritime Conference of the United Church of Canada's involvement in community development started in 1988. The study focuses on a self-help housing initiative in the community of Whitney Pier and the development of a women's resource centre in downtown Sydney. The study considered the animator's responsibilities in the community and within the church. I compared the work of animation in this case study with the literature about community development, participatory research, the church's participation in social change and organizational transformation.

Research in the field of organizational transformation is considered as a framework for understanding and facilitating organizational change within the Maritime Conference of the United Church of Canada. Although the setting for this study is a specific church based community development project, the study identifies implications these

principles, roles and functions have for the church, the field of community development and animators in similar community agencies.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The churches are becoming more actively involved in community development in the Maritime region of Canada. Although the churches have provided much of the ethical and spiritual foundation for most of the cultures in the region, they have not seen their roles as institutional agents of social change. There have been prominent individuals within the churches who are both strong Christians and social activists, but seldom have the institutional churches given much more than moral support to these individuals' efforts. This individualized faith response changed for the United Church of Canada in 1988, when they employed an animator to "mobilize social ministry with the United Church of Canada in the Maritime Conference" (Tye, 1987, p. 6). Through its Economic Animation Project the United Church demonstrated its intention to participate more effectively and actively in the community development process.

The United Church is similar to other social agencies which, although inexperienced, are attempting to improve their involvement in the community development process. The United Church has broad educational and social concerns for the community, which go beyond its religious concerns for

its members. These broader concerns are held in common with other organizations, such as the Young Women's and Young Men's Christian Associations, public libraries, and public schools. Such community service organizations often need to reexamine their relationship with the community and their contribution to the community development process, and they often ask themselves what role their staff should play in community animation. This study examines an animator's roles in the community development activities of one particular church.

Background of Study

The United Church of Canada's recent involvement with community development in the Maritimes has been the Economic Animation Project. This Project is based upon a model of employing an animator to work with both the community and the church. The animator's task is twofold, to improve the contribution the church makes to society and to respond to locally determined socio-economic needs. I have been the animator with the Maritime Conference of the United Church of Canada since March, 1988 and continue much the same work under my present job title of Coordinator of Social Ministries.

In search of guidance in this role, I talked with other animators working with church and community agencies and sought literature in adult education and community development; I discovered little is written on the role of animator in encouraging the church's participation in community development.

The Economic Animation Project provided me with opportunity to experiment with various models and ideas gleaned from my participation in the Master of Adult Education programme at Saint Francis Xavier University. The Economic Animation Working Group, responsible for overseeing the Project, was quick to support my request to use the Project as a testing ground for my graduate work. The group frequently contributed useful feedback on my work. My written reports about various communities' initiatives and activities provided detailed and useful documentation on many aspects of the Project. Personal reflections as recorded in my journal afforded me the opportunity to consider the challenges, questions and learnings I had as animator, during the four year Project.

The Economic Animation Project started nationally in 1986 when the United Church of Canada hired a national animator to encourage the conference offices of the United Church to participate in the community development process in their own regions. Maritime Conference engaged in 2 years of needs assessment and organizational development

within the United Church and in the community before formally participating in the Economic Animation Project in 1988.

My work, as animator, with the Project began in March, 1988. Prior to the beginning of this study I was engaged in needs and resource assessment in several communities (e.g. Moncton, Saint John, and Truro) and was starting to work with 2 communities in Prince Edward Island and Sydney to develop programmes specific to their needs and resources. For the purposes of this study I primarily draw upon my experience of developing a housing project and women's centre in Sydney, Nova Scotia.

Problem Situation

In assuming the role of animator an educator must be conscious of the learning needs of the participants and of the group development needs of the organization. Educational opportunities must be provided to meet both sets of needs, while still addressing the socio-economic needs of the community. In this context, I was conscious of Freire's (1970) contention that education is never neutral. This means that when one is working to address an individual's needs one must be careful to ensure that these are integrated and compatible with the broader goals of the

group and the longer-term goals of the community, otherwise the whole enterprise will fail.

When an animator works with an agency such as the church, with its set patterns and structures, the function of facilitator of organizational change becomes important. Animators working with such agencies first have to struggle to keep their agency's particular characteristics and demands in balance with the culture and demands of the local community. However, the animator often must facilitate organizational change in order for the agency to better respond to the needs of the community. These considerations caused me to raise four primary questions about my role as animator working in the church. These were:

1. What roles or functions can an animator play in assisting the church in its participation in community development?

2. How can an animator facilitate organizational transformation within the church in order that the church might better participate in community development and other forms of social change?

3. What has been the church's commitment to and involvement with social change and in particular with community development?

4. What potential does the church have as an animator of social change and community development?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this thesis is to develop a set of guiding principles that animators may use to facilitate a church's role in social change through participation in community development activities. A secondary purpose of this study is to articulate and describe appropriate roles and functions for animators to embrace in church and community work. An animator who works for a church has to keep in balance two aspects of the job. The first aspect is common to most animators involved in community development; it involves group building, needs assessment, programme development, networking, and evaluation activities. The second aspect is within the church; it involves enabling small groups of interested church members to work more effectively with community groups in addressing the socio-economic needs of their communities. This aspect of work within the church has two major components: first as an educator, to contribute to the learning of the participants, and second as a facilitator of organizational change occurring in the church, to remain faithful in its commitment to a ministry of love, justice and peace in a changing society. In order to achieve these two purposes I use my work as animator with the Economic Animation Project as a case study and reflect upon that experience in light of the related literature.

My long term goal is that this thesis contribute to the transformation of the church and similar organizations. By doing so the values and ideals churches advocate may be better lived out by them and may form part of the lived experience within local and global communities. Particularly within the church I anticipate that this thesis will support and challenge those trying to turn the tide of social ministry towards social change, so the church, the whole body of Christ, becomes fully engaged in a ministry "of acting justly, showing mercy to others, and living in humble fellowship with God" (Good News Bible, 1976, Micah 6:6-8).

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this thesis is community development within the context of religious educational activities. It examines the facilitative process and the role of animator as educator and facilitator of this process. The study is a case study and I have extracted from it some guiding principles and some descriptions of useful animator roles and functions, which may be of interest to other community development animators working within a religious organizational framework.

Several limitations must be recognized in interpreting the results and findings of this study. The study primarily

examines the role of animation in the church's participation in community development. Limited claims are made about the role of staff with regard to promoting other forms of social change in the church. The study is limited to one case study. It examines the role of animation in the Economic Animation Project of the Maritime Conference of the United Church of Canada. Nevertheless, results of this study may have broader application beyond the United Church of Canada, and may be of interest to other agencies, churches, and faith communities or other regions.

The Economic Animation Project was a practical application of the church's participation in community development; it was the Project in which I was employed and with which I am still associated. Many of my insights, therefore, are drawn from my personal involvement. The participant observer is recognized as a valuable research method (Hall, 1981). Although my personal experience and perceptions have tremendous value, on occasion my intimacy with the Project may portray a partial bias toward it.

Explanation of Terms

There are several terms used throughout this study that have specific and restricted meaning. The first term that requires clarification is the word <u>church</u>. I use the singular term, church, to encompass the ecumenical Christian

church; when I refer to a particular denomination I state that specifically. I also use the term church to designate a group of Christians acting or consciously being together because of their faith. I have intentionally included this informal meaning in order to demonstrate that the term is not limited to the institutional church.

I have chosen to speak of <u>animator</u> and <u>community development</u>, rather than the broader terms of educator and adult education, but I acknowledge that community development is an area within the field of adult education. I have chosen the term animator to encompass the adult education leadership roles involved in the community development process, rather than using more restrictive terms such as facilitator or organizer. Animator is an appropriate term for the church, as it is derived from the Latin, *animus*, meaning spirit. Therefore, an animator is one who breathes spirit into or who enlivens the spirit within a person or group. The term is also consistent with the facilitative style of leadership provided within the community development process.

The concept of <u>development</u>, when applied to society, often carries with it connotations of economic and industrial growth. Frequently this style of development presupposes heavy financial investments and influential leadership from outside the community. I use the word development to describe a holistic understanding of social

change that includes a "commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation" (Freeman & Pratt, 1989, p. 4) and encompasses the social, economic, cultural, familial and spiritual dimensions of society. Sometimes the process of development is confrontational or reactive and when this happens it is often labelled as disruptive. An overemphasis on this kind of approach denies the stronger process of "evolving the possibilities of" (Webster, 1972, p. 227) that which is more attune with development in the biological world. Therefore, my usage contains dimensions of building on life within, and making ready the social context to nurture and sustain that life. The animator, one who enlivens the spirit within, facilitates the possibilities of growth within a community. Development does not promote unrestricted growth, but incorporates a commitment to social and economic justice.

The term I use to describe my animation work is <u>social ministry</u>. Social ministry includes any interaction the church may have with the broader community. For example, social ministry encompasses support for activities such as food banks and advocacy for human rights. I use the term throughout this thesis to include a commitment to social justice.

<u>Organization of the Thesis</u>

This introductory chapter describes the background of the study and situation which gives rise to this study's purpose of articulating some guiding principles, roles and functions for community development animators working within a church and community context. I then clarify several terms used with particular meaning in this thesis and provide an outline of the thesis.

The second chapter examines literature relevant to the topics of community development, participatory research, and the church's participation in social change and community development. In order to provide a framework for understanding the role of animation in facilitating the changes the churches need to make in order to meet the challenges that have grown out of their involvement in community development, I have also included some literature on organizational transformation. Comments on literature related to the fields of adult education and social change theory, popular education and cooperative organizations are integrated as appropriate.

In the third chapter I summarize the work I undertook in Sydney, Nova Scotia with the Economic Animation Project of Maritime Conference of the United Church of Canada. In particular I examine my role as animator, within that community and the church. In Chapter 4 I integrate the learnings from the Economic Animation Project with the literature reviewed in chapter 2 and, through analysis, I

develop a set of principles, roles, and functions which can benefit other animators. Whether animators work for the church or for other similar agencies, this set of principles, roles, and functions can improve their understanding of and commitment towards their agencies' participation in the community development process.

In Chapter 5 I summarize the lessons learned in terms of principles, roles and functions for animators and articulate the implications of these for the church, for community development, and for animators. These are presented as conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter I examine literature in the fields of community development, participatory research, the church's participation in community development and the role of the animator within the church organization. I also review organizational transformation literature, because the church often experiences organizational change as it endeavours to meet the challenges of social ministry.

Community Development

Community development is a field in which theory and development of models have followed practice, rather than vice versa. Many animators receive their formal education and training in the field only after practising in it. This circumstance has led to some obscurity within the field and to some confusion over the term community development. Therefore, first I describe, define, and explain community development models. After that I review some of the principles that have evolved from its practice. Then, I review participatory research, which is one of the approaches to community development most applicable to this study.

Descriptions, Definitions and Models

The term community development has often been used in an all-encompassing manner which has become meaningless to many people. Wileden (1970) states that, "Community development can well represent almost everything to some, but when too broad in its approach it may appear meaningless" (p. 75). Many authors, and I suspect a far larger percentage of practitioners, assume that community is defined by geography. Community is a neighbourhood, village, or possibly a group of homes along a country road. Roberts (1979) however, suggests that:

The concept of community relates not to geography

and location but to the shared interests and

common objectives of groups of people, who may or

may not be situated in a definable locality but

who are in communication with one another. (p.

167)

In removing the geographical boundaries from the definition,

Roberts indicates that one can build community among people

who want to work toward a common goal.

Wileden (1970), however, supports the notion of community having some geographical boundaries. He gives local people responsibility for choosing community boundaries. Wileden defines community development as

the process by which people in an area, which they

choose to think of as a community, go about

analyzing a situation, determining its needs and

unfulfilled opportunities, deciding what can be

done to improve the situation, and then move in

the direction of achievement of the agreed upon

goals and objectives. (p. 80)

Communities have many different dimensions to them,
including economic, social, cultural, spiritual and
political (Roberts, 1979). Some authors use the phrase
integrated community development to describe these various
dimensions to their work. Peck (1988) describes this
relationship: "Community, like a gem, is multifaceted, each
facet a mere aspect of a whole that defies description" (p.
60). North America has numerous projects where political
and business developers have assumed that one aspect
exclusively, often economic, can proceed with few negative
repercussions on other aspects of the community, such as
environmental and cultural ones. To develop a holistic
perspective, however, efforts are made by some community
development programmes to "encompass social, cultural, and
economic goals within the same organization" (Wismer & Pell,
1983, p. 69).

Roberts (1979) warns that the concept of community
often can be too narrow; he urges a perspective that
recognizes the context in which the community finds itself.
 "A community . . . is not merely and necessarily a discrete
and self-contained group in its objectives and purposes, but
is connected to other communities in a wider social system"
(p. 49). As Peck (1988) points out, present day

communication creates global community which is becoming much more of a reality in people's daily lives.

There is some optimism attached to community development, partly because its purpose is to raise the level of local confidence about bettering the community, but also because of significant successes in its work over the last few decades. Roberts (1979) cautions people not to have unrealistic expectations of community development efforts and he acknowledges that other models of social change are also needed. "To be talking about community development is not to be holding it out as the only kind of social and political change" (p. 39).

Several authors have compiled lists of characteristics associated with community development. Campfens (1983) attributes community development with the following:

> (a) broad citizen participation in development plans; (b) local initiative and self-help promoted and supported by government funding and technical expertise; (c) development of local leadership and human resources indigenous to the community; and (d) integration and coordination of various government and voluntary agencies in their service delivery at the local level. (p. 1)

Similarly, M'Timkulu (1983) stresses local participation as key to developing effective networks of change:

> (a) community development activities are least stigmatizing . . . (b) community development activities provide a forum for social interaction . . . (c) a wide range of activities provides many entry points . . . (d) participants can progress from peripheral to central attachment . . . and (e) participants are both givers and receivers of services beyond the traditional forms of support. (pp. 97-98)

Some writers (GATT-fly, 1983; Wismer & Pell, 1983) place great importance on direct or immediate community benefit as the primary purpose of community development. Others (M'Timkulu, 1983; Peck, 1988), however, emphasize the building of relationships within the community and feel that if these relationships are open and growing the practical implementation of the goals of the group will proceed with less difficulty. Peck (1988), perhaps more than other writers, stresses this community building approach:

> Don't worry for the moment about what to do beyond
>
> that [starting communities]. . . . Don't worry
>
> much yet about feeding the poor, housing the
>
> homeless, protecting the abused. It is not that
>
> such actions are wrong or even unnecessary. It is
>
> simply that they are not primary. They are not
>
> likely to succeed unless they are grounded, one
>
> way or another, in community. Form a community
>
> first. (p. 326)

Many practitioners put great weight upon material improvements in communities as criteria for their success and some describe their work as "community economic development". Wismer and Pell (1983), who view their work in this way, also uphold the integrated approach to development because they see "the development process associated with community economic development" (p. 72) as beneficial to women and marginal communities.

Adult educators such as Brookfield (1984) and popular educators such as Barndt (1989), Hall (1981), and Nadeau and Ng (1990) put greater emphasis on the adult education dimensions of the enterprise. With wide local participation

being a primary goal of community development, the development and education of the individuals must be promoted. Usually, the skills and knowledge gained by participants are learned experientially through the community development effort itself. Therefore, the process must be flexible and the leadership sensitive to the learning needs and goals of the individuals involved as well as to the overall direction and needs of the whole enterprise. Roberts (1979), Sauve (1985), Campfens (1983), Freire (1970) and Wileden (1970) agree that the primary role of outside animators is as educators. As educators they do not provide information necessarily, but rather they facilitate the learning of those involved, including the learning which is happening for the animators.

The connections between community development and adult education are both philosophical and historical. Elias and Merriam (1980) note the social and political goals of adult education in their exploration of its philosophical roots, especially in the progressive movement in education and the various radical movements like Marxism and socialism. MacDonald (1986), Welton (1987), and Delaney (1985) describe the Antigonish Movement, one of Canada's significant community development efforts, which has served as a foundation for the many adult education programmes of Saint Francis Xavier University over the years.

As community development has evolved into an area of study and practice within the field of adult education, more attention has been directed to clarifying the process and models used within community development. Roberts (1979) summarizes the community development process as a series of stages: "learning of our situation; formulating objectives for a change in that situation; learning group skills in planning and organization; group decision-making and action; and evaluation" (p. 167). The process described by Roberts is also similar to that suggested by Campfens (1983) and Wileden (1970).

Principles of Community Development

The principles stated in this subsection have been gleaned from various writers; these principles provide a basic approach to community development. There is consistency among various authors (M'Timkulu, 1983; Roberts, 1979; Wileden, 1970) about the primary principles of community development. Basically, community development ought to promote wide participation, leadership development, education and growth of community members, cooperation and trust among community members, the offering and receiving of services by all community members, and a mutually respectful relationship between community members and government leaders.

Community need not be defined by geography, but often is. However a community defines itself, it must be a

definition the community truly owns (Roberts, 1979).
Communities must have a common interest or goal in order to
be a community, not just be a group of people (Roberts,
1979).

Community or group building needs to be a high priority
in the initial stages of community development and an
integral part of the vision or long-term purpose (Roberts,
1979). Communities, like the larger societies of which they
are a part (Toynbee, 1953), are a web of integrated parts
and when growth of the community is pursued all of these
parts must be taken into account (Peck, 1988; Wismer & Pell,
1983).

Because communities are multifaceted (e.g. spiritual,
economic, familial, political or cultural) responses need to
represent those different facets (Peck, 1988). A coalition
comprised of separate groups, each addressing these
different facets, becomes a valuable model for coopeartive
community development work.

There is danger that community development efforts can
become focused narrowly on the specific needs of a community
itself and disregard the needs and other aspects of the
national and global context (Roberts, 1979). The use of
popular educational tools for social analysis, such as GATT-
fly's (1983) Ah Hah! seminar, has proven valuable in
addressing this challenge.

Although community development can generate optimistic feelings within a community, the community development model has limitations about what social change it can achieve (Roberts, 1979). A broader understanding of social change is helpful in order to understand the many factors that influence society and how change is resisted.

The benefits of the community development process ought to be shared as broadly as possible. Toward this purpose cooperatives, credit unions and other collective organizations are helpful models (Kuyek, 1989). The principles delineated in this section are shared widely across the various models of community development. However, one model or approach that is particularly relevant to this study is participatory research.

<u>Participatory Research</u>

The concept of popular knowledge, central to participatory research, upholds the belief that people know, or are capable of finding out, what they need to know to improve their lives. Poor people and people who are marginalized for other reasons find that their knowledge is viewed often as unimportant, whereas, the knowledge of outsiders is considered invaluable (Hall, 1981; Tandon, 1981). Welton (1987) refers to popular knowledge as "knowledge for the people". Gaventa (1988), of the Highlander Research and Education Centre, speaks of

reappropriation, development and popular participation in the social production of knowledge.

Participatory research is sometimes called participatory action research. It is a process whereby people who are to be served by community development are the researchers into their own needs and resources for the purposes of developing and implementing an action plan. According to Stewart (1989) participatory research presents a danger because it is susceptible to cooptation by governments and universities when traditional development approaches are in crisis and they are searching for alternatives. Kidd and Kumar (1981) show how World Bank and United States American International Development educators used the attractive and dynamic methods of participatory research, but intentionally obscured the goal of liberation from oppression which is central to these forms of radical education. Maclure (1990) acknowledges other abuses in relationship to funding agencies and professional researchers. He states, "While a study may be labelled as participatory research, there may be little indication as to who the participants are, or what the nature of their participation is. . . . At one extreme it amounts to little more than token involvement" (p. 7).

From the literature, several basic principles can be extracted about participatory research. Some of these principles are: The long-term goal is the production of

knowledge by the poor and oppressed and a process of social improvement (Tandon, 1988). The knowledge created by participatory research is more easily integrated and applicable to participants' lives. Knowledge creation is an empowering process (Freire, 1970). Social analysis is integral to participatory research's method and purpose. The production of knowledge involves analyzing community and social structures (Barndt, 1989; Speeter, 1978). Group building skills are integral to the participatory process because knowledge production is for purposes of community betterment, not individual gain (Ashe, 1978; Barndt, 1989; CUSO, 1985; Kuyek, 1989; Speeter, 1978).

Some authors argue that the real goal of participatory research is to achieve social change not to create new knowledge. For example, Brookfield (1984) states the "ultimate goal of [participatory] research is radical transformation of social reality" (p. 142). Tandon (1988) clarifies the goal of participatory research in his response to the ambiguities found in the writings of Brookfield and earlier writings.

> The primary objective of participatory research is the production of knowledge and encouraging the poor and oppressed, and those who work with them, to generate their knowledge, control their knowledge and control the means of production of knowledge. . . . Social change has never been a direct outcome of participatory research and therefore it cannot be construed as one of its objectives. Social transformation requires several types of intervention: organizing, mobilizing, struggle, knowledge (control over

> knowledge, control over means of production of
> knowledge, appropriating knowledge produced by the
> dominant system). Participatory research can make
> a small but important contribution to the social
> change process but it cannot lead directly to
> social transformation. (p. 12)

Much of the criticism of participatory research emerges from its use of qualitative research methodology, which is suspect by many empirical researchers. Brookfield (1984) defends the qualitative research methods used in adult education and community development. He contends that qualitative research methods are appropriate for adult education, because understanding, recording, and appreciating the learning of others depends greatly upon the researcher's sensitivity to the group's culture. In this way the researcher also functions as a co-learner, better able to categorize data and identify themes and concerns important to learners.

Critics have ignored the fact that quantitative research methodology is used often alongside qualitative research methods by those using participatory methods. In clarifying this issue Tandon (1988) explains,

> if concrete information has been collected from a
>
> large number of people in a given situation for
>
> the strengthening of people's action, surveys and
>
> questionnaires are appropriate. Participatory
>
> research is a methodology of the alternative
>
> system of knowledge production. It is not a set
>
> of tools, techniques and methods. (p. 13)

The literature about participatory research shows it to be a helpful and flexible approach for community development participation. The variety of contexts in which it has been used demonstrates its flexibility. These include Prince Edward Island (Boyd, 1987); Appalachia (Gaventa & Horton, 1981); Aotearoa or New Zealand (Small, 1988); Ottawa (DiGiacomo, 1990); India (Tandon, 1981); Europe (Fletcher, 1988); and the Philippines (Pagaduan, 1988). Maguire (1987) in her application of participatory research in feminist research determines that it is beneficial in this context as well. In the next section I examine the churches' participation in social change and community development.

The Churches' Participation in Social Change and Community Development

The literature from the institutional church indicates a strong Biblical, philosophical and theological rationale for the church's significant involvement in social change of various kinds. The church has a rich tradition of teachings about community life from which it can draw ideas and promote understanding.

The Bible is full of teachings that espouse similar values and principles to the community development process: (a) love your neighbour--even across social barriers (<u>Good News Bible</u>, 1976, Luke 10:25-37); (b) love your enemy--love

those who do not love you (<u>Good News Bible</u>, 1976, Matthew
5:38-42); and (c) show a right relationship with God through
acting justly, show mercy to others, and live in humble
fellowship with God (<u>Good News Bible</u>, 1976, Micah 6:6-8).

Building upon this Biblical example are several
philosophical and theological principles which support the
church's participation in social change and community
development. This provides hope for a better world because
God actively loves the world and wants this world to be
transformed from a society which experiences hatred,
injustice and violence into a world of love, justice, peace
and community (Williams, 1984). People can generally be
trusted in working towards the goal of love, justice, peace
and community, because God is working through and with them
to realize the transformed world. This means that God's
active love may be expressed by people of various faiths or
by those who may have no expressed spirituality at all
(Devasunderam, 1977). A person's faith in God and love for
each other is exhibited in the economic decisions the
individual makes and through the economic structures in
society. The task is to change these structures to
represent better God's will for a loving, peaceful, and just
community (Nadeau & Ng, 1990; Novak, 1978; Williams, 1984).

Justice must be a primary goal of the church's
involvement. A charity response, by itself, is no longer
adequate (Boyd, 1987; Canadian Conference of Catholic

Bishops, 1977; Novak, 1978; Roman Catholic Bishops of the Atlantic Provinces (1979); Third World Christians from El Salvador, Guatemala, Korea, Namibia, Nicaragua, Philippines and South Africa, 1989; Williams, 1984). The church must be willing to go beyond its institutional needs, if it is to have integrity in its work of community development. It must be clear that its primary focus is the betterment of society (Biddle & Biddle, 1965; Novak, 1978). The church must see society as an integrated whole; the church is not a fragment that can be separated from the rest (Novak, 1978). The global community of which the church is a part must be seen as a whole.

The discernment of God's will, as experienced by the Christian community must be undertaken in active dialogue with Christians around the world. The church is part of the local culture in which it is located and the limitations of that culture can in part be overcome using the perspectives of people from other cultures (Freeman & Pratt, 1989; Third World Christians et al., 1989).

Although many researchers strongly encourage the church's participation in social change and community development, some are critical of the church's actual practice. Reeve (1986) points out that the United Church of Canada has made some very strong statements on the Canadian economy, but sometimes weakens this stance when it transfers the statements into programmes. There are occasions when

the church has lead the way in challenging social issues--
such as when the ecumenical coalition, Task Force on the
Churches' and Corporate Responsibility, led a campaign to
stop bank loans to South Africa (Williams, 1984). However,
the World Council of Churches's Commission on the Church's
Participation in Development (Freeman & Pratt, 1989) and the
Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (Third
World Christians et al., 1989) advocate that the church
convert itself to or commit itself to being a church which
sides with the poor. This is the theological and political
objective towards which organizational transformation of the
church must be directed.

Some authors express confidence in the church's
potential and suggest specific contributions the church can
make towards social change and community development
processes. Some of these suggestions are: (a) promote and
incarnate the teachings that contribute to an ethical
foundation and spiritual dimension for society (Goulet,
1974; Sorokin, 1941; Toynbee, 1953); (b) promote trust in
all parts and age groups of society (Erikson, 1963); and (c)
demonstrate the church's commitment to cooperation through
words and action (Williams, 1984).

Some experienced workers in the church challenge
themselves and the church to offer more to the social change
process. Boyd (1987) urges the church to explore, within
its own membership and with others in the community, the

value and limitations of a charity response to social problems and to seek more effective ways to address the causes of such concerns. Freeman and Pratt (1989) and Kuyek (1989) believe the church should offer more of its financial resources to community development initiatives that cannot secure funding from traditional lending institutions.

A major concern of social activists in the church is that lay training centres and theological schools are not providing appropriate courses, nor encouraging their students to improve their animation skills. Nadeau and Ng (1990) have presented this challenge to the theological colleges. They say "By training both ministers and lay leaders in the principles, method and theology of popular education we are saying that the practice of justice was essential to genuine religious faith; that social justice was not a marginal ministry" (p. 13). McKee (1989) in her book on *diakonia* (Greek for service) outlines a programme for training church members in local congregations in the ministry of reaching out to those in need in local and global communities. Her ecumenically sponsored programme describes a two year course that is conducted in connection with theological schools. In the next section I examine the role of an animator in a church supported community development programme.

Roles of An Animator Within a Church Organization

In community development, much of the animator's work may be undertaken with community and church members working and learning together. A role identified in the literature makes reference to the church's role with community members. It urges the church to provide spiritual support to people involved with social change and to those who are victims of social injustice (Hutchinson, 1989; Novak, 1978). The victims of social injustice experience the costs of systems that do not value their place in society. Similarly, those working for social change often are anxious about the risks they take in their community work (Kuyek, 1989). Both groups are ridiculed often and ostracized from the uplifting and sustaining parts of community life. They are not welcomed at community events, nor affirmed for their leadership in the community. These negative attitudes wear heavily on one's spirit, and can lead to negativism and cynicism.

The animator's role with church members is similar to an animator's work with other community groups. However, there are several points mentioned in the literature specific to the animators work within the church. Kuyek (1989) points out that personal commitment of church members and maintaining the purpose of social change is enabled through reflecting upon active solidarity relationships with the marginalized. Most members of the church, and the

church as an institution, have little understanding of,
relationship with, and even sympathy for, those who are
socially and economically marginalized in society. Those
who do express an interest in working in this area of
ministry often have to overcome misinformation and myths
that have been developed by the dominant culture to maintain
distance between society's lower and middle classes.

The animator can play a particular role in helping
church participants reflect upon their experience of working
with marginalized people. Kuyek (1989) points out that
helping church participants reflect on their experience of
work with marginalized people provides an opportunity to
develop personal commitment to the social change goals and
prevents dehumanizing charitable responses.

The Roman Catholic Bishops of the Atlantic Provinces
(1979) advocate the action/reflection model of learning as
an appropriate model for involvement in social change, which
would enable the church to avoid being stalled in debate
that is separated from experience. The Bishops propose,

> a programme of involvement, reflection and action
> in each of our dioceses. We will commit our time
> and resources for the purpose of bringing people
> together at parish, deanery, diocesan, and
> regional levels to reflect critically and propose
> lines of action to overcome the problems of
> regional disparity. (p. 85)

The weakness of acting without reflecting on the
implications for the church is illustrated through the
experience of the Commission on Religion in Appalachia
(CORA), an ecumenical organization which develops programmes

for the economically depressed Appalachian region of the
United States. The Working Group on the Appalachian Crisis
(1986), reviewing CORA's 30 year history, praised it for its
initial work in the region, but said the church failed to
consider its own participation in the economy, and felt
powerless with regard to regional disparity.

The action/reflection model upholds that the final or
perfect action does not need to be found before some action
can be taken (Roman Catholic Bishops of the Atlantic
Provinces, 1979). Kuyek (1989) encourages using reflection
to improve the effectiveness of the work and to integrate
new learnings within the various dimensions of participants'
lives (e.g. economic, social, familial, spiritual).

Kuyek (1989) challenges the church, and other agencies
new to the community development process, to move beyond the
safety of working only and directly with those who need
help. Animators need to engage actively with other
community development groups, such as coalitions, and to
build relationships with people and groups in the community
who are offering leadership in community development.

MacDonald (1986), a United Church minister who spent
many years developing credit unions and cooperatives as part
of the Antigonish Movement, believes it is important for
animators to work with businesses and government agencies.
Through this cooperative process they can identify concerns
they hold in common in order to strengthen the community's

social and economic fabric. The literature about worker
cooperatives documents several traditional business and
financial institutions that are willing to assist
cooperatives to implement their plans (Worker Ownership
Development Foundation, 1985).

Barndt (1989) DiGiacomo (1990), Nadeau and Ng (1990)
urge animators to integrate popular education, social
analysis, and community development into the training of
church leadership, so that these leaders become familiar
with and skilled in these related disciplines. McKee (1989)
urges that the concept and ministry of *diakonia* be
revitalized in order to provide a framework for integrating
this work into the life of the church.

One cannot assume any more commitment of church leaders
to the principles and practices of adult education than they
have given to social change. Nadeau and Ng (1990) point out
that gaining educational skills is not a high priority for
most church leaders. As adult education moves to recognize
the need for lifelong learning so too must the church work
towards making adult education a lifelong commitment. In
the past the church assumed that education was optional
after a child was confirmed as a full member of the church.
 Nadeau and Ng (1990) say education must be directed towards
the goals of liberation and justice for "to educate to
transformation is . . . a commitment to a consistent,
structured and long-term pastoral practice" (p. 17).

Tandon (1988) contends that knowledge gained through participatory research sometimes reinterprets information from the dominant class. An animator, sometimes situated between vulnerable members of the community and the dominant class, needs to ensure that this transfer and reinterpretation of knowledge is done sensitively and with the active leadership of the marginalized groups. In these educational situations the question of power and the biases of the dominant class must be addressed (Hall, 1981).

Tandon (1988) recognizes that participatory research is one of several interventions necessary in order to promote social transformation. The flexibility and creative approach of participatory research makes it vulnerable to abuse and distortion however, unless its principles are upheld (Kidd & Kumar, 1981). The animator promoting participatory research needs to ensure full community participation in the process, including final evaluation.

Facilitating Organizational Transformation

Some of the literature about organizational transformation appears well suited for the church, although most of the literature on organizational transformation is written for a business audience. Levy and Merry (1986) and Peterson (1991) have gleaned information from the literature that can be applied to communities such as kibbutzes and

non-profit organizations. Owen (1990) has examined organizations in need of change or in transformation and discusses what type of leadership is necessary.

Organizational transformation literature starts from the assumption that organizations sometimes require radical changes in order to stay attuned with their changing context (Levy & Merry, 1986). The type of change necessary is not of the same order as that which is achieved by planning sequentially. Levy and Merry refer to change that is slow and gradual as a first-order change. The type of change that comes dramatically and usually following institutional chaos or significant decline in the organization is referred to as second-order change. They compare the two types of changes and note several significant differences. A few of the major differences are that first order changes are quantitative, incremental, logical, involve changes in one or two characteristics, and do not change the basic viewpoint or paradigm of operation. By contrast, second order changes are qualitative, revolutionary, seemingly irrational, involve changes in many characteristics, and result in a new perspective or way of doing things.

Levy and Merry (1986) place first-order change in the up-swing or developmental portion of the second-order cycle of planned change. Although second-order change often occurs in revolutionary jumps, it can be facilitated from the inside or from outside and, therefore, it is

transferable (Levy & Merry, 1986; Peterson, 1991). Levy and

Merry suggest that leadership in these situations needs to

be "anthropologically oriented . . . and open to emerging

organizational patterns" (p. 90).

Owen (1990), an Episcopal minister in the United States

and a consultant for organizations undergoing rapid change,

views the leader as one who recognizes and enables the

spirit of the organization to emerge. It is a different

style leadership from one that advocates a needs to control

agendas and to work toward specific task objectives.

> Leadership under the conditions of transformation
> is a collective, a constantly redistributed
> function, and not the private property of the few
> or The One. The role of leadership is to engage
> in the quest (pose the question) for the
> realization of human potential. And the goal of
> leadership is not the establishment of some
> perfect state (the Right Thing), but rather the
> heightened quality of the journey itself. (p. 6)

Peterson (1991) is open about the inspiration that he

sees leading the transformation process: "The

transformational activity we seek to enhance is based in the

message of the Gospel (and the values it implies--love,

justice, compassion), and the movement of the Spirit in

history" (p. 94). Owen (1990) is less subtle about the

direction and source of the Spirit, but acknowledges that

energy comes from beyond the leader: "Leadership invokes

and invites Spirit to lay down new footprints" (pp. 109-

110).

Organizational transformation is not an easy task and it is not solely dependent upon having transformative style leadership. Levy and Merry (1986) and Peterson (1991) agree that a changing context in which the organization operates is a major contributing factor in encouraging an organization to reexamine its purpose and practices.

Organizations are made up of many parts. Each of these parts needs to undergo this transformation. This is true both within an organization and within a network. For example, the church is made up of many different groups as well as constituting part of a network of agencies engaged in social service and social change. Pressure from within the church and from organizations involved in social services often is applied to the church as a way of encouraging the church to remain true to its charity work commitments.

Peterson (1991) promotes the principles of broad participation, socio-economic justice, social analysis, community building, action/reflection learning and cooperation, which are consistent with the principles of community development. The style of leadership described by Owen (1990) is very similar to the leadership style appropriate to an animator in community development. The role of animator was seen as educator and facilitator of both group development and group transformation. Organizational transformation and community development are

both engaged in transformation, the former is more limited within an organization and the latter within the more fluid and complex context of society.

Summary of the Literature

In the literature there is a consensus about the characteristics of community development including: broad participation; self-help and self-education; trust among participants; development of local leadership; participants as both givers and receivers; community building; social analysis urging social justice; and mutual respect among local participants, government and business. The community development literature stresses that a community's boundaries are as it determines them for themselves. The stages of community development as outlined in the literature are: learning about the social context; formulating objectives; developing skills in planning and organization; making group decisions and actions; and evaluating. The literature also identifies the historical and philosophical roots of community development as emerging from the adult education field.

Participatory research literature shows participatory research to be consistent with the purposes and practices of community development. Participatory research is particularly focused on the popular production of knowledge for social improvement. Participatory research also has its

roots in the field of adult education and has demonstrated its flexibility as a methodology in various geographical and social contexts.

Biblical, philosophical and theological literature supports the churches' participation in social change and community development. Some of the contributions the literature suggests the church can make to the social change and community development process include: the encouragement of the ethical foundation and spiritual dimensions of society; and more of its financial resources. Some authors are critical of the churches' participation in social change, while at the same time urging the church to extend its involvement. Most authors suggested that church involvement should be on an ecumenical basis.   In order to strengthen the churches' participation in social change and community development, authors urge the churches to integrate the development of skills and knowledge into the training of church leadership (Nadeau & Ng, 1990).

The literature describes roles of the animator working within the church in much the same way it does for animators working with other community organizations. Some points the literature suggests for animators working for churches are: to provide spiritual support for participants and other leaders; to build solidarity relationships between church and community participants; to use the action/reflection model of learning to develop participants' understanding of

social injustice and possible responses; to develop networks
with church and other social change organizations; and to
promote cooperation with government and business when there
are compatible goals.

The literature on organizational transformation
describes the radical changes an organization sometimes
require to stay pertinent to its context. The literature
points out that because change in an organization is
cyclical, involving gradual or planned change, i.e. first
order change and radical, i.e. second order change the
leadership required for the various stages differs. The
literature on organizational transformation discusses the
need for all parts of an organization to participate in the
transformation process. Finally, the literature urges the
animator to be clear about the long-term goals of the
transformational process and to ensure the process is based
upon the values of love, justice and compassion.

CHAPTER 3

ECONOMIC ANIMATION PROJECT

In this chapter I examine the work I undertook as animator of the Economic Animation Project with the United Church of Canada in the Maritimes. I structure the chapter by first describing the background and context of the Project and then articulating the Project's principles and model. I describe the work I undertook in Sydney, Nova Scotia with a housing programme and women's resource centre, and I describe my role as animator. Finally I describe the longer term impact of the Economic Animation Project.

Background and Context of The Economic Animation Project

The initial Economic Animation Project occurred over two years from March, 1988 until June, 1990. At that time the Project was extended to June, 1992 under the name of the Social Ministries Committee. During these two periods I served as animator and coordinator of social ministries.

The Economic Animation Project was administered by the Economic Animation Working Group. This Working Group established a smaller Steering Committee, which was responsible for developing detailed strategies to be used within the Project and this sub-committee provided personal

and professional support to me as animator. I was a full
member of both the Steering Committee and the Working Group.
 Therefore, when I refer to work undertaken by the Economic
Animation Working Group, I include myself in their action
and planning activities. As a staff person, although I had
a lot of influence, I note that leadership was shared widely
with others.

The United Church of Canada is comprised of members
forming congregations in local communities. On some
occasions several congregations are joined together to form
a pastoral charge and a pastoral charge, may have one or
several congregations within it. The pastoral charges are
brought together to form a presbytery. Presbyteries are
often the size of a county, and in the Maritimes there are
14 presbyteries. The presbyteries in this region form the
Maritime Conference, bringing together the three Maritime
provinces, the Gaspé Peninsula, and Bermuda. Within the
General Council, which is its national governing body, the
United Church of Canada has 13 conferences.

The Working Group included representatives from several
Conference committees and the communities involved. The
committees represented were: Christian Development; Church
in Society; Communication; Evangelism and Discipleship;
Rural Life; United Church Women; Urban Ministry; and World
Outreach. The community representative from Prince Edward
Island, a woman potato and hog farmer, was on the Working

Group when it began, and the representative from Sydney, a Black man and volunteer in the Whitney Pier United Mission, joined the group after Sydney was identified as one of the sites of focus for the Project. Three staff engaged in similar work from Halifax and Saint John Presbytery were members of the Working Group. Finally, there were two members-at-large. They met 3 or 4 times a year for 1 or 2 days each meeting.

The Economic Animation Steering Committee, which met monthly, was selected by the Working Group from within its membership. It was comprised of the chair and secretary of the Working Group, and a member-at-large.

As animator I had two clear mandates: to work with local communities as a community development animator and to work within the church to facilitate organizational learning and change. I was to help communities with needs-and-resource assessment, group building, networking, resource identification, programme development, leadership development, and evaluation. This work included helping to set up income generating and housing projects, a women's resource centre, an educational and lobbying group for farmers, and a provincial association to promote the development of fishing communities.

Within the church I acted as an educator and organizer to enable the church and its members to participate more effectively in local and regional programmes of social

change. As the Project matured and I started to bring the

challenges of the community clearly before the church, I

also became involved in facilitating a change process within

the church.

The Economic Animation Project was a specific response
to the economic recession of the early 1980's. At that time
the 30th General Council passed a statement called "The
Church and the Economic Crisis" (United Church of Canada,
1986). Along with a call for the United Church to lobby for
various government policies, this statement urged the church
at local and regional levels to commit more effort "to
study, discuss and dialogue about the economic crisis and
economic alternatives, in church and community" (United
Church of Canada, 1986, p. 10). This request was not very
different from statements other churches had made over the
years. What made this resolution unique was that it also
called on local congregations and presbyteries to

> seek opportunities for *joint study and action* with
> other denominations and community organizations,
> in *coalition* to: (a) clarify community and
> societal problems; (b) develop alternative
> policies and projects and; (c) act, through
> political pressure, community development and
> network-building to create a broader base of
> public support for social justice. (p. 10)

A timely and large financial contribution made the

hiring of additional staff possible and allowed the Project

to get started immediately. The financial gift enabled the

hiring of a national animator for a period of three years

between 1986 and 1989 and the hiring of part-time staff for

a two year period for each conference in Canada. The United

Church made a strategic decision to put its funding into a

programme that sought social change through local community

development. The church was no longer satisfied with its

traditional charity response to people hurt by an ailing

economy; the General Council's Division of Mission In Canada no longer wanted to direct its energy to building more effective food banks and soup kitchens.

There was a group of four or five individuals who initiated the Economic Animation Project in the Maritime Conference. They were an ad hoc group drawn from the Church and Society and Urban Ministries Committees of Conference. They strongly believed that the United Church needed to change its response to socio-economic problems in local communities and as a Conference. They contended the Project needed to address creatively the underlying reasons for the crisis and not just the symptoms. The Maritime Conference Project's developers realized that this transformation of social ministry would be difficult, but they viewed the opportunity of staff and finances available through the national Economic Animation Project as a unique opportunity.

This ad hoc group of experienced church and community workers who developed the proposal for the Project foresaw some obvious pitfalls. They foresaw a danger of the Project becoming successful in the communities in which it was located, but having little significance to the Conference. They did not want to see the impact of the Project become buried under the regular work of the church. The charity model was dominant in the church's involvement with the community and the organizers of the Project were concerned that the church's wider body might not understand fully the

social ministry model that the Project represented. With
that concern in mind the Maritime Conference proposed to
promote social ministry within the Conference. The primary
goals included (a) to mobilize and educate the church
constituency, (b) to encourage and support existing social
ministries within pastoral charges, presbyteries, and
Conference and, (c) to assist the United Church in becoming
an advocate of groups involved in socio-economic change
(Tye, 1987).

Earlier--in the fall of 1986 in Saint John, New
Brunswick--the Project's leaders consulted with
representatives of community groups to determine whether
there were groups in the region who saw value in the
Maritime Conference becoming involved in the Economic
Animation Project and whether there were groups who wanted
to work with the United Church in this effort. During this
consultation they were encouraged strongly to proceed. With
a strong endorsement from community groups throughout the
region, a very convincing proposal, wide support from within
the church, and the money to pay for it, the Project
received overwhelming approval from the Maritime Conference
annual meeting in May, 1987.

The Project's leaders realized that two years was a
very limited time to get communities involved in a project
and to see significant changes and results. The Project
leaders wished also to make an impact on the Conference.

Recognizing these limitations, the Working Group first made a decision that my work as animator would have to be focused sharply on one or two presbyteries, but that the work in those presbyteries had to serve as examples for the rest of Conference. Members of the Working Group thought that a visible example would be more likely to influence people within the Conference to change their opinions and ways of working than relying on petitions and workshops.

The task, then, was to make the project at a local level as beneficial as possible for that particular community as well as instructive for other communities within the Maritime Conference of the United Church. It was the responsibility of local leadership and the animator to work at making the project beneficial to the local community, and the responsibility of the Economic Animation Working Group to ensure that the project would be instructive for other communities.

Prior to my arrival in March 1988, the Economic Animation Working Group had begun work. One of their first tasks was to prioritize presbyteries in which I was to work. They chose five of the Conference's 14 presbyteries in which I was to carry out the initial community assessment of socio-economic needs and resources. The Working Group selected Sydney, Chignecto (Moncton and Amherst area), Saint John, Prince Edward Island, and Truro as these five presbyteries. The boundaries of the communities within each

presbytery were determined by local groups of people; these boundaries did not always coincide with presbytery boundaries.

During this project phase I assisted these small groups of church members and, sometimes, other community members to carry out assessments of the needs and resources in their communities and in their churches. This work had several purposes: to identify the community's socio-economic concerns; to ascertain if the local groups who were working on these issues wanted church support; to help the presbytery determine if and what it wanted to address in its community; and to help the Conference Working Group make a final decision about the two presbyteries in which my work should be focused.

Due to the fact that three of the five presbyteries would not have as much of my time after this initial phase as during it, we designed the assessment in such a way as to enable local people in the church and community, without my direct support, to follow up on initiatives that might be identified. We facilitated this process by having a local person or persons participate with me in the community interviews. Each presbytery identified different needs and each responded differently.

At a consultation called Round-Up in November, 1988 representatives from the five original presbyteries and the Economic Animation Working Group worked together to define

and use approved criteria to select the two priority presbyteries. These criteria are as follows: that (a) there be a socio-economic need the community and church wanted to address; (b) there be resources within the community and church to address this need; (c) there be a potential for, or openness towards, an ecumenical approach; (d) there be a group in the community (actual or potential) that wants to work with the church to address the need; (e) there be some vision of how addressing the identified need would produce structural or permanent change; and (f) that the choices represent both rural and urban contexts.

Based on previously agreed upon criteria, the participants at Round-Up decided by consensus that I would work primarily in the Prince Edward Island and Sydney Presbyteries. The rural concerns were addressed through the work done by Prince Edward Island Presbytery with the Farmer/Clergy Working Group, which was formed to educate the church and community with regard to agricultural issues and lobby on their behalf when requested. The urban focus concentrated on Sydney, Nova Scotia, particularly industrial Cape Breton, where there were increasing hardships caused by high unemployment and major cutbacks in government services. In the three remaining presbyteries I would be available as a resource person for specific events and to help groups keep in touch with others in the network within the Conference.

This study is limited to the work I undertook in Sydney Presbytery, where I worked with a Presbytery Economic Animation Working Group, comprising seven people, on two projects. The major project was in Whitney Pier, a neighbourhood within Sydney, that identified the need for affordable and adequate housing for low income families. The second project was with a group of women, called Women Unlimited.

Guiding Principles and Process of the Project

The Project did not have explicit principles and models which guided it and my role as animator. Many of its principles and values were implicit in the Project's reports and activities as work proceeded. The principles that were explicitly stated include: (a) a realization that God's shalom (peace with justice) is through community development, (b) an understanding that social ministry is integral to faith response, and (c) a belief that local leadership must control development.

The Economic Animation Project also did not have an explicit process model when it began its work in 1988. The initial goals and the explicitly stated guiding principles assisted the Working Group and the Steering Committee to provide direction for the process. In April, 1989 I articulated aspects of the process in a Kit (King, 1989),

intended for local group use. The <u>Kit</u> was developed as a
response to inquiries from presbyteries, beyond the initial
five selected, who wanted to participate in the Project. It
suggests a process of congregational involvement, ideas for
extending the impact of the Project into the local
congregation and presbytery, a strategy for communicating
with the Conference Working Group, an outline for a workshop
on women and poverty, and a list of print and audiovisual
resources. During implementation the Project followed a
step-by-step process. This process is summarized here.

1. The Conference Working Group chose the five
presbyteries in which the Project would concentrate.

2. The Working Group directed me to write letters to
people in each of the five presbyteries whom they felt would
be interested in working with the Project. The letter to
the presbyteries outlined the purpose of the Project and
said I would be in touch.

3. I contacted a key person in each presbytery to
confirm interest in coordinating and arranging a schedule
for a visit.

4. The initial conversation with the contact person and
other interested people identified groups that might be
interviewed, and the contact person arranged appointments.
The list included sectors of society who are affected
negatively by the socio-economic situation and who may want

support. The list also included groups or individuals who are supportive of these people.

    5. I met with the local group to clarify their purpose for undertaking this research and to identify questions to be asked during the interviews.

    6. I was accompanied by one or two members of the group to the interviews. During the first few interviews I took the lead and later encouraged the other members to lead the remainder of the interviews.

    7. The information from the interviews was shared with everyone in the group. We used this information and our experience to understand the socio-economic context and to identify contributing causes of the problems addressed.

    8. We attempted to agree on the focus of the group's work, taking into account the needs and resources of the community and the church resources and opportunities available.

    9. We prepared our presentation to Presbytery and sought their approval.

    10. A summary of the findings and agreement were shared with the people interviewed who had expressed an interest in receiving it.

    11. A new group, made up of church and community members who had participated in the initial community assessment, met to confirm everyone's interest in working together on the chosen focus.

12. The new group developed plans to address the concern identified. In the five chosen presbyteries the plans were developed in such a way that the local group could proceed alone if I was not able to continue to support their work directly.

13. A consultation, which included representatives from the five presbyteries, chose the two presbyteries in which I would focus my work.

14. Over the next 19 months I worked in Sydney and Prince Edward Island Presbyteries assisting them to develop and implement plans that addressed their chosen focuses. This was done through week-long trips to the area, during which we would meet with government agencies, community groups, or church groups to gather the support and resources needed to reach our goal.

15. The Project was evaluated by the Conference Executive soon after the Project's first year of operation, although it was not very far through the process at that time. A more realistic examination of the Project occurred at the April, 1990 consultation, which resulted in the continuation of the Project under a newly formed Social Ministries Committee.

Sydney Presbytery's Response

Sydney Presbytery was one the two presbyteries selected for focus by the Project's Economic Animation Working Group. Presbytery formed the Sydney Presbytery Economic Animation Working Group to oversee their participation. The activities undertaken by Sydney Presbytery consisted of three components: the initial organizational activities, the Whitney Pier housing efforts, and a women's resource centre.

Initial Organizational Activities

Two members of the Presbytery Economic Animation Working Group and I conducted the initial needs and resources assessment in the Industrial Cape Breton region in May, 1988. Some of the people we interviewed were poor or otherwise marginalized, but all were members of, or could easily form, an organized group. We felt it was beyond our ability, because of time and experience, to initiate and organize local groups. Our role was to act as secondary support to primary agents of change at the local group level.

The concerns that were identified included: single mothers on social assistance, housing for low income families and single men, day care, literacy education, programmes for youth, food banks, dependency on government grants and unemployment, care and housing for the pre-senior and elderly, lack of opportunity to participate in economic decisions, poor education for employment, exploitation by

landlords, and weak church support. An underlying theme we heard most often was the demoralized spirit of the people in the community.

One of the interviews we conducted was with the Whitney Pier United Mission, a United Church of Canada mission centre established to address the needs of people in Whitney Pier. Whitney Pier is a community, which although a part of Sydney, formerly was separated geographically from the bulk of the city by the steel plant and coke ovens. The community serves as residence for many of the workers in the steel and mining industries. Many residents in Whitney Pier belong to clearly identifiable ethnic groups such as Caribbean Black, Polish, Italian, and Greek, who moved to the community to work in these industries. Several sections of Whitney Pier originally had company-owned housing.

We were told by one of the leaders of the United Mission that there was a great need for affordable and adequate housing in Whitney Pier and that there was already a group of people who had identified a need for such housing, but who had been unable to obtain governmental or non-governmental assistance toward acquiring such housing. We also learned that there was a group of women in Sydney called Women Unlimited, who had been trying for several years to establish a women's resource centre, but again the group was unable to attract government support to proceed. Both groups indicated they would welcome any efforts the

United Church would make to support efforts to realize their
goals.

The federally funded Sydney and Area Community Futures
Committee, made up of business and community leaders,
indicated they were interested in working with the church on
these two initiatives. We later learned that the support
from Community Futures was primarily individual staff
support as opposed to the Committee as a mandated agency.

Based on the May, 1988 report Sydney Presbytery was
chosen, by the Round-Up consultation, as one of the two
priority presbyteries. A component in this decision which
was missing was a clear signal from Sydney Presbytery itself
that it was supporting these initiatives. In June 1988,
they had responded quickly to the offer of my time, but when
it came to proceed with the two proposals, they were not
ready to make such commitments. We realized that we had
failed to involve a broad group of people from the
presbytery in the initial assessment period. It also was
unfortunate that one of the presbyters involved in the
initial assessment moved away prior to the project's
implementation and a second person had poor working
relationships with many members of the presbytery.

During the next few months, my time was spent with a
Sydney Presbytery Economic Animation Working Group, (which
was slow in being appointed), and helping it to discern
whether the suggested areas of work were appropriate for

Sydney Presbytery. This work was undertaken while the Presbytery Working Group and I developed more trusting working relationships with members of the community, particularly with people representing the housing and women's centre initiatives. The Presbytery Working Group supported the housing proposal in January, 1989 after seeing a National Film Board production called, <u>The Church and The Hearth</u>, the story of a similar effort in the Annapolis Valley region of Nova Scotia. This film encouraged the group. It was not until September, 1989 that the Presbytery Working Group supported the exploration of developing a women's resource centre. At that time they endorsed an application from Women Unlimited for United Church funds to conduct a feasibility study.

Between November, 1988, and October, 1989, the Presbytery Working Group spent much of its time educating itself about community needs and resources. This was a difficult period for the Presbytery Working Group, because they were frustrated waiting for the housing and women's resource centre groups to get organized. During this time I assisted with the organizing of the Whitney Pier and women's resource centre groups and helped build relationships between them and the Working Group.

In October, 1989 the Conference Executive decided that the Economic Animation Project, due to limited funds, would not be continued past its two year initial period and would

end in March, 1990. The Presbytery Working Group's reaction
to the news from Conference was to affirm their commitment
to support the projects. Although they said they were
disappointed, they were not discouraged. They referred to
this initiative as an animation project and said that after
being enabled they would continue with it. A comment from
one of the group indicates that their commitment had grown
significantly:

> We don't have a choice. Things are worse now
> [with the economy] than they were when we began,
> because the government and business has cut us
> off. The church needs to stay in there. We have
> shown we can do something, so we will keep at it.

This commitment was expressed by the presbytery's subsequent
involvement in the Whitney Pier housing activities and the
women's resource centre.

Whitney Pier

In January, 1989 we discovered there were other
economic concerns in Whitney Pier that needed to be
addressed. The Community Futures Committee had started
discussions with other members of the Whitney Pier community
who were interested in establishing a restaurant with a
small grocery store attached to serve the varied ethnic
communities which make up the community. Local people
ordinarily had to travel to Halifax to purchase spices and
other baking supplies unique to their diet.

In order to identify other needs and to rally support for both the restaurant and housing efforts, the Community Futures Committee and the Presbytery Working Group called a community meeting. This was primarily a meeting of 15 to 20 invited leaders of the community and included business people, civic leaders, clergy, Black United Front representatives and Whitney Pier United Mission representatives. A primary concern of the Whitney Pier Community Group, which only met a few times, was the marginalization they felt in civic affairs and in the priorities of Community Futures. The restaurant idea was unable to attract sufficient energy and leadership and the Whitney Pier Community Group failed to proceed beyond sharing complaints.

Before it finally died, it became clear that the Whitney Pier Community Group required time before it would be able to muster support for the housing concerns which had originally sparked the discussion. In September, 1989, out of frustration and on a spur of the moment, I suggested that we convene a meeting of people interested in the housing project. Since that meeting they have met weekly and organized themselves into Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing Society.

The leadership for Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing emerged primarily from the families who wanted housing. An elder in the community, and member of the Board of Directors

of the United Mission, acted both as the dreamer and the chair of the organization. A former staffperson of Community Futures, who left that organization in the fall of 1989, volunteered his administrative and community development skills to the group. In the summer of 1990 they started to construct the first of 11 homes, all of which were completed by 1992.

Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing met weekly throughout this period, identifying the available resources and determining their exact housing needs. For example, they had many groups offer assistance with rental or continuous cooperative housing, but the group became firm in their determination that they wanted to own their own homes. The proposal that finally was adopted had financial or in-kind contributions from the City of Sydney, Canada Mortgage and Housing, Canada Employment And Immigration Commission, Royal Bank, United Mission, United Church of Canada, St. Andrew's United Church, Sydney, Community Futures Committee, New Dawn (a community development organization), friends, volunteers, and the families themselves. The members contributed their sweat labour to the building of their own homes and most assisted others in their building as well. Each family has a small mortgage to pay. The size of the mortgage and interest rates depend upon the family's ability to pay, because the group decided to use the low interest loans from the church to make homes affordable to very low income

members.   In 1991 the group had an evaluation session that
reviewed its work and that noted some of their learnings and
frustrations during their work together.

<u>Women's Resource Centre</u>

The development of a proposal for the women's resource
centre took many different turns in the road and often there
was a great deal of scepticism about whether it would ever
be realized.   The first point of tension involved deciding
whose project this was to be.

Women Unlimited were clearly the initiators.   Women
Unlimited is a network of women's groups and individuals who
are clearly feminist and "pro-choice" with regard to
abortion rights.   The Presbytery Working Group said that it
did not wish to undermine Women Unlimited's stance on
abortion and that it could support the effort if Women
Unlimited were willing to operate a centre open to any women
in the community who needed such a service.   Difficulties
arose when joint initiatives with Women Unlimited, Community
Futures, and the Presbytery Working Group sparked broader
community support and conversations started with other
community women's groups known for their "pro-life" stance.
 Indications were that broader support might mean
compromising Women Unlimited's stance.   The reaction from
Women Unlimited was silence, and we went for several months
with no communication.   Finally, I was able to hold a direct
conversation with the leaders of Women Unlimited and assured

them we were willing to reconsider our strategies for developing interest in the project. I also discovered through this conversation that they had heard criticism of the project voiced by some leaders within local United Churches. I was able to assure them that this opinion was not the stance of the Presbytery.

Soon after that, in September, 1989, the Presbytery Working Group ratified Women Unlimited's application for funds to conduct a feasibility study. I contacted women's centres in other parts of the province and country and heard from them about their regret in becoming dependent upon government funding. They were feeling controlled and constrained in their programming and they were fearful of having funding withdrawn. Based upon this information Women Unlimited decided that a proposal needed to be tested. The proposal was that the centre be a building that would be purchased cooperatively by various women's groups. These groups who presently rent office space in various parts of the region would move into the building and would therefore contribute their rent towards paying the mortgage of the building. In order to succeed they needed the commitment of enough groups who were willing to relocate and provide sufficient funds from their rents to pay the mortgage, and who could raise adequate cash up front to pay the down payment. The feasibility study, completed in the spring of

1990, determined that it was a viable proposal and on
International Women's Day in 1992 they opened their doors.

<u>My Role as Animator</u>

My role as animator had various components. In this
section I describe my role as animator in Sydney, in the
community, and in the church.

<u>Animator's Role in Sydney</u>

I was the primary resource person for Sydney
Presbytery's Economic Animation Working Group. During their
first year the chairperson was ill and I provided much of
the agenda and led most of their discussions about what they
would do as a committee. It was my responsibility to
interpret the Project and to gain support within the
Presbytery. I did this through speaking at United Church
Women's and Presbytery meetings and during services of
worship. Fortunately, the Presbytery had some time before
the community groups were ready for the church to become
more involved. My role was to help the Presbytery Working
Group learn about the types of responses we could make to
the community groups if and when we were asked, and to
reflect upon their frustrations of waiting to be asked.

In Whitney Pier my role was more complex. A leader of
the Whitney Pier Non-profit Housing group set the agenda and
led the discussions. My contribution initially was to help

them get organized internally and to make connections with the presbytery and the Conference. Then I was asked to identify some of the resource people or groups that could be helpful in their task. Very early in the process, the former staff person with the Community Futures Committee volunteered his time to work with the group. I supported these two leaders by providing access to a network of people, financial supports, and information resources. Neither of the two leaders had much experience with group building and, therefore, when this seemed to be a problem I was asked to assist directly.

It was a desire of the Conference and Presbytery Working Groups, and some Whitney Pier members, that some of the Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing group might turn their attention to other socio-economic concerns in the community after the housing project was complete. With this objective in mind I encouraged shared leadership for the group's tasks, while encouraging leadership development.

It was in this area that I came into conflict with the group's leader. He did not want some of the people I was encouraging in leadership to continue to be in the group after their houses were finished. I knew he disagreed with some of their ideas, but I was surprised by his strong opinions of these people. Through some very frank and heated discussions, sometimes with the whole group and on occasion with the other two leaders, we worked through the

conflict to a point where we could continue. The basic area of conflict is still unresolved and some members of the group have stopped attending meetings. In response to this tension and to other challenges faced during the project, I offered personal support to the leaders and some members of the group. Most of my support was given to a volunteer who found conflict very difficult to address.

Women Unlimited was comprised of a confident group of women and, therefore, they asked very specific things of me. For example, my first task was to help them identify the women's groups in the church and community who might support their effort to open a women's centre. My interpretation of which groups we should approach was broader then they initially wanted (i.e., they did not want anti-pro-choice activists), which caused some friction, but this friction was cleared up and we developed fairly close working relationships. My second task was to help them secure funds from the United Church for a feasibility study, which I did.

Animator's Role in the Community

Usually the work I did in the community involved church and community people working together. I was a resource to both. I based my approach upon my conviction that if the church is going to improve its participation in community development, people in the pew must become more familiar with the real needs and resources of their community and

must build close working relationships with those providing community leadership.

As an animator in the community I performed the following activities. I worked with low income and marginalized people in an attempt to increase their skills and self-confidence in providing for themselves and their families. For example, in the Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing group I encouraged the members to take on tasks that would develop their skills in group organizing and house building.

I facilitated group development, through suggesting various tasks and leading exercises that promoted group building and organizational development. Group goal setting and discussions with representatives from other housing groups were two activities that advanced this work.

In an effort to encourage leadership development within the Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing group I assisted them in identifying the concerns they could raise with potential resource people about the group's relationship with such outside support. I also urged as many members as possible to take on the leadership roles needed for the group's administration. I worked with the leadership of the Whitney Pier Non-Profit group in planning its meetings to include opportunities for interim and final evaluations, although it was difficult on some occasions to facilitate this work

because of the controlling leadership style of the group's
leader.

I promoted networking with other housing groups through
an effort I initiated to form a Sydney area non-profit
housing network. I intended that it would provide mutual
support for its members and provide opportunity to coalesce
around lobbying government support for housing. Although
such an organization did not result, several meetings of
interested groups did occur which provided encouraging
support during the formative stages in Whitney Pier Non-
Profit Housing group's life. Networking was also promoted
by the Conference Working Group in their support of a
Whitney Pier group member participating in the founding
meetings of Nova Scotia Association for Non-Profit Housing.

Both Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing and Women
Unlimited used my experience with writing funding proposals
in preparing their submissions for financial support. As an
animator I often was asked to provide personal support for
people involved with the Project. On some occasions this
was through helping someone deal with conflict in the group
or at other times is was through talking with people about
events in their lives beyond their involvement in the
Project. By doing this I showed an interest in the people
involved.

I used the action/reflection model of education to work
towards the goal and principles of the Project. After each

meeting of the Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing group I spent time with a community volunteer and on occasion other members of the group reflecting on the meeting and on what was learned from the experience. Through participant observation we identified the values, principles and process of group building and community development.

Animator's Role in the Church

At the Conference level, I worked closely with the Economic Animation Working Group, and its Steering Committee, and they guided the animation work in great detail. They realized that I had job responsibilities in both the community and the church.   At the Conference level, the Working Group and Steering Committee took more responsibility for guiding the educational, communication and organizational tasks within the church. For example, they informed the committees represented on the Working Group and the Conference Executive on the work of the Project and they were instrumental in maintaining these committees' support through the period when it appeared the Project would not be extended past its original two year period. Before the Working Group had community representatives it was very dependent upon me for knowledge of local situations and guidance about what they could do. During the initial stages of needs-and-resource assessment the Working Group relied upon my interpretation of events; for example, a group's interest in working with us. During

Round-Up when community and presbytery representatives were present these local representatives spoke for their situation and, therefore, appropriately diffused my influence on the Working Group's decisions.

Sydney Presbytery's Economic Animation Working Group was comprised of church members and community representatives. This group, and the community groups with which we were working, provided guidance to my work at the local level. During the period when Women Unlimited was cautious about the United Church's participation in the women's resource centre project, the presbytery Working Group provided insight into the political dynamics at play and the personalities involved. This guidance helped me to intervene in the situation quickly before caution grew into suspicion.

My work in the church called upon both my educational and my organizational skills. For example, whether we were in a Working Group meeting, presenting a report to Conference Executive or in a strategizing session, we emphasized that we had an educational task before us. While dealing with a specific organizational problem, we were at the same time trying to provide learning opportunities relating to the church's participation in community development. My role was to assist those providing leadership to pursue both educational and organizational objectives.

In promoting the Project we used print and video media to advance our message. We had only two years in which to work, and we had to share the examples of work in social ministry as widely as possible. For example, we prepared several programmes for <u>Spirit Connection</u>, United Church Television's programme on the inter-faith Vision channel. We also used these programmes locally at workshops and presentations.

My organizing skills were utilized in some of the administrative tasks of the Working Group. This meant that I also assumed some administrative tasks. Within an institution as large as the church, the line between administrating and strategizing is cloudy. In order to keep the Project on track, to learn from our mistakes as quickly as possible, and to get as much institutional support as possible we had to become good strategists. The proposal of the Steering Committee and Working Group for a special consultation in April, 1990 in response to the evaluation of the Project and the Conference Executive's negative recommendation about the Project's future demonstrated the sensitivity and knowledge that had been developed within the Project's participants. My earlier experience of work within the administration of the church was well tapped during this and other strategizing sessions.

As we went along some of the goals we set for ourselves evolved. Often the new goals were of another order,

different in kind from the changes foreseen at the beginning of the Project. For example, we no longer perceived a gradual and modest alteration of the church's social ministry as the type of change that was needed. Rather, we identified transformation of the church in its relationship with the community and how it understood its ministry as of primary importance.

As the Project evolved, the community started to make demands on the church that the church found were difficult to respond to without making some radical changes in its structure and practice. Staff had been hired previously to work primarily within the structures of the church, and not in the community. Now, there was an identified need to move social ministry's priorities from charity to social change. However, there is a long tradition of charity work within the church and there are many people within the church and community who have vested interests in maintaining this orientation. The Economic Animation Working Group and a few others saw the need for organizational transformation and observed a lack of church leadership encouraging such organizational transformation. It was the opinion of some leadership within the church that the Project was an opportunity to use some funds available from General Council and when those were no longer available the Project would be terminated. They showed little commitment to examining the Conference Executive's evaluation report, which made

recommendations on encouraging other presbyteries to develop Economic Animation working groups and communicating the experience of the Project to local congregations.

Using literature about organizational transformation (Levy & Merry, 1986; Peterson, 1991), the Steering Committee worked not only on the integration of social ministry within the church, but also on the transformation of the church's organization that was necessary in order to integrate social ministry within it. We drew on the experience and tentative lessons of Peterson's (1991) Organizational Transformation Project that was being developed at the same time as the Economic Animation Project. An example of the influence of the Organizational Transformation Project on the Economic Animation Project is shown in the design of the April, 1990 consultation. The planning group for this event, primarily participants in the Economic Animation Project, wanted the Conference Executive and later the annual meeting of Conference to consider some of the organizational recommendations of the evaluation report. These recommendations were based upon a commitment to strengthening of the United Church's commitment to social change and less reliance on the charity model of intervention into society.

The consultation planning group recognized that the hesitancy of accepting this new form of ministry was fuelled by a grief for traditional charitable styles of social

ministry and asked community participants, early in the
session, to speak of their experience as participants in the
Project. They told how the Project gave them hope in
difficult situations and why the Project was more
encouraging than their previous interactions with churches
based upon a charity model of ministry.

The consultation planners proposed no recommendations,
nor assumed the Project would continue. However, as the
church leadership heard the stories of the community
representatives they were able to move beyond their
allegiance to the past and see new hope in the future which
was being encouraged by the Project. Once cautious church
leaders were able to talk about the past expressions of
social ministry, put them aside, and embrace a new concept
of social ministry with social change as its goal. The
consultation planners facilitated this process conscious of
the needs of an organization that is in the decline/crisis
and transformation stages in the cycle of second order of
change (Levy & Merry, 1986).

I also encouraged church and community leaders to read
the literature and take training programmes to better
understand the challenges facing the church. The effect of
the Economic Animation Project on the Maritime Conference
through organizational transformation illustrates only one
aspect of its long term impact. It also influenced the

lives of participants, organizations, and churches in
several communities.

Long Term Impact of the Economic Animation Project

The Economic Animation Project achieved much within its
two year mandate. The work in Sydney was focused on housing
and a women's centre. Both of these activities were
successful in contributing to local efforts to realize the
community's expressed needs.

Currently, through the United Mission's association
with the Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing group, an
intentional process of organizational transformation is
underway for the United Way. The result of this process is
not yet evident, but it is addressing the concerns the
Project had with regard to the controlling style of
leadership in the United Mission.

The Social Ministries Committee of Sydney Presbytery
has not been active since the completion of the last house
constructed in Whitney Pier. The Committee could be
revitalized if committed local leadership was provided. The
Conference Social Ministries Committee does not have an
active relationship within this presbytery committee,
because of a lack of local initiative shown at this time and
because other areas of the region and issues demand the
Conference's attention.

The Social Ministries Committee of the Conference has maintained and developed its work and it is active in encouraging the church's participation in efforts initiated by fishing communities, woodlot owners, and farmers in an effort to bring more stability to primary resource industries. One indication of the growing understanding and support for the church's participation in social ministry has been the continuation of staff support for this work, while other areas of ministry are losing staff.

It is difficult to assess how effectively the Project has helped realize God's *shalom*. Since the period when the Project began in 1988, the recession in regional, national and global economies has hurt many more people than the Project has been able to assist. This is not to take anything away from the achievements of the Economic Animation Project, but to point out that the socio-economic context in which it operated was deteriorating. However, the realization of God's *shalom* is not met solely by socio-economic indicators. The most valuable comment on the value of the Economic Animation Project, as a vehicle for the church's participation in community development, was expressed in the many requests from community participants for the church to continue its work. In the next chapter I discuss these outcomes and compare the process and results with the literature.

CHAPTER 4

LESSONS LEARNED

In this chapter I first discuss the principles, roles and functions of an animator drawing upon the experience of my study and related literature.

Principles, Roles and Functions for Animators

Reflecting upon the Economic Animation Project and the related literature has enabled me to analyze some principles, roles and functions beneficial to animators promoting community development with the church or a similar agency. In this section I discuss some implicit principles, roles and functions that were not identified by anyone during the Project. These implicit principles, roles and functions were expressed in the manner which the Project carried out its work; occasionally they were written in some of its documents, particularly in the Kit that was developed to assist local committees to participate in the Project. The implicit principles included a principle of faith, principles of power, a principle of social justice, principles of respect and cooperation, and principles of strategy.

Principle of Faith

God wants shalom, peace with justice, for all creation and each person within it. The church's social ministry and participation in community development are faithful responses to God's will. This principle is important for people who have a religious faith, so they can integrate their participation in social ministry and community development within their spiritual life.

Throughout the Economic Animation Project's work and evaluation, we recognized the spiritual dimension of community building as a valuable resource which the church can offer to the community and the individuals involved. Some authors of social change theory (Toynbee, 1953), religious studies (Novak, 1978) and community development (Kuyek, 1989) affirm that the church has a contribution to make to the community development process.

Sensitivity is necessary, as Devasunderam (1977) illustrates, in order that this dimension is responsive to the needs and interests of the community and participants. To promote the institutional needs of the church is secondary. Liberal minded Christians have been reluctant often to discuss their faith with non-church people, for fear of creating barriers. A reluctance to share this dimension of the church with the wider community often leads to misinterpretation and mistrust.

Principles of Power

Empower marginalized people within their communities, in order that they control their participation in and direction of community development. Community development is based upon an assumption that there are people and groups of people marginalized from the power to control their own welfare. The purpose of community development is to redress this injustice by assisting those marginalized to claim control of their lives.

It was the experience of the Economic Animation Project that we did not need large numbers of participants in order to meet the group's needs. The Working Group asked a local contact person to gather a small group of people motivated by similar values to do the initial assessment of needs and resources. I recommended the formation of groups between 2 to 5 people in the early stages of the work. The comments made during the evaluation about the impact of the projects, in the local community and in the church, in relationship to the small number of people involved, confirmed our recommendations. This finding is consistent with Kuyek's (1989) idea that part of the empowerment process is to foster a confidence in what people can achieve through working cooperatively in small groups. However, Roberts (1979) notes that community development is not the only vehicle for social change and sometimes mass involvement is still appropriate.

Another aspect of empowering people is to build a trust in their abilities. In this respect the church demonstrated its trust in local leaders by respecting their guidance, and by working alongside them. It was the trust in local leadership, an underlying value of participatory research (Hall, 1981; Tandon, 1981) which made the use of this approach to community development beneficial in the Economic Animation Project.

The energy, confidence and determination that were set free in the church and the communities in which the Project engaged gave evidence to the power that can be unleashed in the empowerment process. The excitement that comes through participation is identified by Freire (1970) and Roberts (1979). This was evident in Sydney Presbytery Working Group's determination to continue its involvement in the housing activities and women's resource centre after they received news that the Conference Executive was preparing to terminate the Conference Project. The Project's third explicit principle, "local leadership must control local development" was extremely important in guiding how I animated local community development. Urging the Sydney Presbytery Working Group to wait for the Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing group to determine how its project would evolve, was critical to the Whitney Pier group developing trust in the church's Working Group. This finding is consistent with several authors (Campfens, 1983; Kuyek,

1989) advice to develop local leadership and the human resources indigenous to communities.

Another principle of power is that a project should move the church towards being in solidarity with the poor and marginalized in society. This principle moves the church from the initial step of declaring justice as a priority in its work to declaring with whom they will stand in the struggle to realize that justice. The church has influence, by virtue of being part of society and its historical place in society. It has a choice with whom it will stand in situations of injustice. For example, the Project's experience confirmed the value of taking a stand when we learned the initial church funding for Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing was instrumental in levering money from government and banks to support the housing project. The ethics of using its influence are complex. However, if the church were to commit itself to be a church in solidarity with the poor, decisions in some situations would be easier to make. This is the type of stand that is urged by many Third World Christians (Third World Christians et al., 1989).

This principle is not to idealize the poor and other marginalized people as virtuous or the beacons for all community development efforts. Being "in solidarity with" means being open, honest and truthful with others; sometimes that means disagreeing. The dispute between the leader of

Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing and me, is a case in point.
My loyalty was to the broad participation of the group's members and I felt I needed to challenge the control being exerted by the leader to restrict that participation. However, my disagreement did not result in an immediate change of structure, behaviour or attitude. That is to say my will was not imposed upon the leader or the group. It was not my group. My challenge pointed to a principle I felt was vital to the long-term health of the group. This is the style of solidarity relationships that is discussed by Kuyek (1989) and Third World Christians et al. (1989). Both of these writings also encourage relationships between the church and the poor to be mutually beneficial so as to overcome the patronizing attitude that develops often between helper and helpee. However, this means that it is a mutual struggle. The freedom that is gained by the marginalized brings life affirming benefits to the church. Within the life of the Project, there was some recognition of the benefit of new relationships and the changes that were occurring for the United Church, but the number of church participants who would identify this as a gain for the church would be small. Most church participants would still see it simply as a good project to help others.

Sometimes the mutuality of a struggle is difficult to see, particularly at this point in the church's life, when it remains aligned with the dominant culture. As the church

engages in the issues of injustice and social change it will
become clearer what real respect the church has and what
privileges have been bestowed upon it for being a
stabilizing agent that maintains the status quo. The
experience of churches in the Third World has been that this
is the point where the church recognizes its own
marginalization and oppression and the struggle becomes
mutual or truly in solidarity. Up to that point the church
is moving towards being in solidarity with the poor and
marginalized. This has been the experience of the World
Council of Churches Commission on the Churches'
Participation in Development (Freeman & Pratt, 1989).

<u>Principle of Social Justice</u>

**Use social analysis to help the church and community to
better understand the dynamics and causes of, and effective
responses to, the socio-economic needs within their
community.** The use of social analysis assumes a commitment
to social justice. The experience of the Economic Animation
Project was consistent with the related literature (Boyd,
1987; Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1977; Freeman
& Pratt, 1989; Hutchinson, 1989) in urging the church to
make this commitment. In the Saint John, New Brunswick
consultation held in 1986, participants from marginalized
groups in the community said that too often when the church
addresses their concerns, "church people see it as charity
rather than justice" (Tye, 1987, p. 4).

<u>Principles of Respect and Cooperation</u>

Respect and encourage wide participation in community development. This principle is fundamental to the attitude and practice of the animator. In this Project I believe an attitude of respect was the basis for promoting the practice of participation. The respect that was shown by the Sydney Presbytery Working Group to the members of the Whitney Pier Non-Profit group by urging them to take leadership in determining the type of housing and organization they wanted was a strong encouragement for them to strengthen their participation. Much of the community development literature promotes wide participation (Hall, 1981; Roberts, 1979; Tandon, 1981). Respect is also a significant value promoted in the wider field of adult education through the promotion of self-directed learning, which is based on the trust and respect for individual preferences (Mezirow, 1985). In the church's literature this is discussed in terms of love of neighbour (<u>Good News Bible</u>, Luke 10:25-37 & Matthew 5:38-42). In adult education and community development it is usually referred to as respect (Mezirow, 1985; Roberts, 1979).

Participation needs to be promoted to include all individuals, regardless of background, class, educational level, religious beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, and so forth. If a person chooses not to participate that is an individual choice, but the animator should encourage

all people to become involved. At the beginning of the
housing initiative several people who were approached to
join the group chose not to participate. One family joined
later when there was a vacancy. This attitude of openness
is consistent with the suggestions of Freire, (1970) and
Kidd and Kumar, (1981) that the goal is to try to encourage
the participation of the poor and marginalized. The
participation of the poor and marginalized is particularly
important, because they are the ones who must be involved,
if the process of community development is going to have any
integrity and value to those most in need.

Respect must guide participation and therefore, **the
principle of cooperation must be the goal of how people
relate to one another.** This cooperation must go beyond
individual relationships to include cooperation among
groups. For the church this means cooperation with other
ecumenical and community groups. Cooperation with groups
from other parts of society also contributes to better
integration of the church's community development efforts
within the community. Our Maritime society has reached a
point where cooperation among groups is considered to be the
norm and where caution is exhibited towards groups and
individuals who want to act independently.

The Project's experience was that broad participation
of the community and representatives from other faith
communities, at the local level and on the Conference

Working Group ensured that the Project had integrity and value to both community and church. People within the United Church and other faith communities generally support this ecumenical approach. The United Church of Canada has prided itself as being a leader in ecumenical work. I sense there is growing support for ecumenical work amongst those in other denominations who are working for social change. For example, the Halifax Roman Catholic Diocesan Justice Congress held in the fall of 1993, actively pursued ecumenical leadership and participation.

Another principle of respect and cooperation is that a community must define itself, its boundaries, and have a common unifying concern. This principle was not clearly acknowledged within the Economic Animation Project, but it was assumed that the Black Caribbean community, who were spread throughout the city of Sydney were fully qualified to participate in Whitney Pier Non-Profit Housing. This experience is consistent with Robert's (1979) statement that "not geography and location but . . . shared interests" define a community (p. 167).

This principle may seem obvious and taken for granted on most occasions. However, the danger of inappropriate outside professional or institutional influence is still very real. There is bureaucratic pressure in governments and organizations like the church for a project to include the same geography as it uses to define its own boundaries.

<u>Principles of Strategy</u>

Use the action/reflection mode of learning to examine and refocus the direction of community development efforts, including changes identified in the organization promoting community development. The action/reflection mode of learning is basic to the work of the animator. This is as true for the education of the individuals involved as it is for the groups with whom they work. Each community development effort is a complex and unique experience, and no individual or group can say what precisely is needed without reflecting on that particular experience.

This was true for the Sydney Presbytery when they did their initial community resource-and-needs assessment. They went into their community and asked the opinions and thoughts of people who needed support or were trying to help others. Then they reflected on this experience and the information they gathered to determine the areas of focus for their work. This example of a group doing participatory research to determine its focus is consistent with CUSO's (1985) summary of the application of this methodology.

However, **the animator has a responsibility of contributing to the planning and organizational transformation when it is pertinent.** The Economic Animation Working Group set up a Steering Committee in its first meeting to "make political decisions" for this purpose. This responsibility was vital to the Project's work. The

Steering Committee's work was not done secretly nor in a manipulative manner, but neither did it shy away from using the responsibility and power given it.

The literature about organizational transformation (Peterson, 1991) assisted the Project's leadership to identify the type of leadership which was helpful later in the Project, as we came to understand and recognize the characteristics being displayed by the church and its leaders in terms of the cycle of second-order planned change (Levy & Merry, 1986). Leadership sensitive to grief is important in situations where the organization is expressing denial that the organization has changed. A leadership pursuing stability, which is needed in the development phase, would not be helpful in this phase.

The organizational transformation literature (Peterson, 1991) helped the Project's leadership understand the dynamics between one part of the church and another part. We came to see that we could not afford to ignore what the national church thought about social ministry, because it had a significant influence upon the worldviews of the people within Maritime Conference. Organizational transformation literature was particularly helpful to the Project's leadership in understanding the dynamics of resistance and identifying the levers to facilitate change within the church. We realized that we were not dealing with changes that could be facilitated gradually, as had

been done through long range planning committees and administration. Thus we concentrated on helping people change their worldview (or make a paradigm shift); after this we were more successful in winning support from within the church.

Another principle of strategy is that engagement with local community development needs to done with a knowledge of and in relationship to the regional, national and global context. In Canada's present society of rapid communication and global trade this principle is one that will become more of a reality whether it is intentionally upheld or not. The merit of this principle being promoted within the community development process is that the benefits and learnings of this broader context can be transferred into the local setting and vice versa. If there is ignorance of the wider contexts, the danger is that the local community becomes an object in the change taking place and not a subject contributing to changes taking place in this wider world. For example, there were two national consultations on the economy sponsored by the General Council's Economic Animation Project to which the Maritime Conference Project sent four delegates. These were effective in developing our understanding of the socio-economic context and put us in touch with some valuable groups with whom we worked.

The literature on the church's participation in community development (Freeman & Pratt, 1989; Third World

Christians et al., 1989) upholds the value of being aware of the global society within the community development experience. The Economic Animation Project showed little recognition of this dimension and I consider it to be a weakness of the Project. There were efforts which indicated an openness to this perspective by including a person from the Conference World Outreach Committee on the Economic Animation Working Group and the involvement of Habitat for Humanity, an organization that builds houses in North America and many Third World countries, in the building of one of the houses in Whitney Pier. However, with the pressure of time to demonstrate how the church could use the community development model to address local socio-economic problems, the global vision was given little attention. In addition to these principles, the animator's roles and functions influenced the outcome of this Project.

Animator's Roles and Functions

As animator I had both educational and organizational roles and functions. However, educational tasks were integral to all roles and functions. For example, when I was balancing the accounts--an organizational role--I considered the learning of participants in the Project who might receive the report. Similarly, I provided opportunities for marginalized and church participants to meet together and build working relationships as part of my organizational role. When there were occasions to tell the

story of the Project within the church, the marginalized people were asked to speak for themselves; these presentations provided them with learning opportunities. For example, Whitney Pier Non-Profit members made presentations at two annual meetings of Maritime Conference and the April, 1990 consultation where they told of the Project's significance in their lives. **These opportunities, along with the actual work in needs assessment, social analysis, programme development and evaluation comprised learning opportunities for the participants about community development and the church's participation in the process.** This is consistent with Roberts (1979) assertion that leadership is learned when a group member represents the group within a wider audience.

The building of relationships was an important part of the learning process about community development. Members of the Sydney Presbytery Working Group were encouraged to participate in open meetings of the Non-Profit Housing group. Building such relationships helped the church members to learn about the commitment that is expected by community members for church participants in the community development process. This is consistent with Kuyek's, (1989) suggestion to build active solidarity relationships with marginalized people, and not just to learn about people at the church's food bank.

One of the most valuable ways I found for sharing information about options available to respond to a particular situation was to give an example of what another group did in a similar situation. Similarly, Kuyek (1989) refers to the animator needing to function as a resource person on occasion to expedite a group's learning. Freire (1970) cautions that no education is unbiased, and therefore, the process of sharing information needs to be empowering and sensitive to inherent cultural and class values.

Part of my role as animator was to identify resource people and to develop relationships between them and local community participants. The information we received from Inter-Church Housing in Kentville and other women's centres across Canada saved weeks or months of frustration and prevented lost momentum for the Project.

Kuyek (1989) strongly encourages networking in order to prevent animators from feeling isolated in their work. Having a supportive and knowledgable network available is extremely important professionally and personally. Biddle and Biddle (1965) and Williams (1984) encourage networking in order to cultivate ecumenical relationships of trust that may lead to collaboration on issues or concerns.

For most people engaged in the community projects, community development was not a separate and distinct part of their lives. It was usually part of their family and

community life; their co-workers became friends or are at least people for whom they cared. On occasion when a leader was sick I was asked to fill in. On other occasions a person needed to talk about the pressures the Project was putting upon their family life. I was asked to provide spiritual guidance or support to spiritual questions a participant was addressing. **It was my experience that offering personal support was critical to the value of the work, and without it, key leadership would not have been able to function well.** Sometimes the frustration level of the work or the pain of the people with whom they worked became too much for them and they needed some distance to reflect on their commitment to this work. These discussions included concerns of a spiritual, religious and professional nature. Biddle and Biddle (1965) and Novak (1978) encourage the church, its staff and members to offer this support, while respecting the religious experience of others.

It surprised me when people with no religious community raised spiritual questions with me, but it happened regularly. Having some training and experience in informal counselling and spiritual guidance, I often assumed roles in these relationships that went beyond my role as animator.

The animator's role is to help those offering leadership to identify the areas where they want to learn and to facilitate this education or training. In addition, animators must continue to examine their own learning needs

and be open to working with other participants to realize them. Modelling my willingness to learn new skills and knowledge and to change attitudes was a strong encouragement to Project participants for them to do the same. Nadeau and Ng (1990) encourage church people to move beyond talking about their faith to <u>orthopraxis</u>, modelling their faith in their action. This approach not only allows for leaders to show integrity in their work, but also encourages others to do the same.

The task of building trust, opening communication lines, clarifying assumptions and values was very important in order for group members to work together effectively. During the initial meetings of Sydney Presbytery Working Group I played a key role in organizing the group's agenda and in facilitating community building exercises. **As other leadership within the group was identified and became confident in promoting the development of the group, I eased out of this role.** This is consistent with Kuyek's (1989) exercises in group building which are designed to develop trust and communication without making the group dependant upon the animator to maintain these principles.

In this Project I was called upon to facilitate some aspects of the organizational transformation process. The Working Group expected me to use every opportunity to interpret and promote the Economic Animation Project. This took the form of speaking at youth or women's meetings,

preaching in worship services (in Catholic parishes on
several occasions), and presenting at presbytery and
Conference annual meetings. It also involved working with
print and audio-visual media to produce articles and
programmes that told the Project's story. Usually my role
was to develop a story idea, provide the background
research, and identify people who could be interviewed or
write the article. On a couple of occasions I travelled
with the television crew and assisted in the production of
programmes for Spirit Connection, a weekly United Church of
Canada television programme. Near the end of the Project,
the Working Group was quite intentional in using such
opportunities to raise more substantial issues around
organizational transformation and shifting the church's
paradigm of ministry from charity to justice. **The use of
various media in the learning process** was consistent with
the literature. CUSO (1985), Freire (1970), GATT-fly
(1983), and Kuyek (1989) have shown the value of art,
poetry, song and drama in reaching illiterate people and
others who find it difficult to learn in more traditional
(left-brain) modes.

I often had tasks such as arranging a meeting space,
providing reading material, or organizing billets for
participants. On occasion I was able to share these
administrative responsibilities with others in the group and
use these opportunities to encourage greater participation

and skill development of group members. Preparing some
reports and presentations were shared among several
committee members. My role was to coordinate and help these
members carry out their responsibilities. Ashe's (1978)
recommendations for animators in assessing rural needs
illustrates the value of organizing the work effectively and
to ensure accurate communication within the community.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to develop a set of guiding principles and to articulate appropriate roles and functions for an animator to use in church sponsored community development work. I used a case study involving my animation of the Economic Animation Project in Sydney, Nova Scotia, which was part of the Maritime Conference of the United Church of Canada's involvement in social change. In this chapter I present some conclusions about animation of community development within a religious educational context. Based on these conclusions, I draw some implications for the church, for community development, and for animators. Finally, I make some recommendations directed to the church and to animators.

Conclusions

The church has substantial biblical, philosophical and social teachings which urge it to engage in the social change process. These proddings come from both within and outside the church. The literature about community development and participatory research promote principles that are consistent with many of the values promoted by the

church. The church, being sensitive to the spiritual dimension of life, has unique and valuable resources to offer to society and to a community searching to better itself.

The history of adult education, particularly as practised and studied in Canada, demonstrates that community development and participatory research are rooted in adult education. The common principles of adult education, community development, and participatory research continue to guide practitioners in the three fields along three parallel and sometimes converging paths.

The Economic Animation Project was welcomed by the communities in which it worked, and it assisted them in their local initiatives. It was successful in its short term projects of building housing--11 homes were constructed--and developing a women's centre--a women's resource centre was opened. There is modest optimism about the longer term influence the Project will have upon both the communities involved and the United Church in the Maritimes.

The Project was evaluated highly by members of the church and community. Community and church participants went beyond simply giving the initiative a good evaluation. To ensure its continuation, they were persistently proactive in keeping the church's attention on the Project.

Based upon the literature and the experience gleaned from the Economic Animation Project I identified principles, roles and functions useful in guiding animators working in community development initiatives with organizations like the church. These are presented here in a generic format.

<u>Principles</u>

1. Empowerment of marginalized people within their communities, increases their participation in community development activities.

2. Social analysis helps members of the church and the community to better understand the dynamics of, causes of, and effective responses to the socio-economic needs within their community.

3. Showing respect to all participants and encouraging wide participation in community development activities are basic to the principles of community development.

4. The action/reflection mode for community development activities promotes learning in refocussing the direction in the activities and/or changes in the organization promoting community development.

5. The church needs to continue to move towards being in solidarity with the poor and marginalized in society.

6. A community must define itself and have a common unifying concern.

7. Local community development activities need to be udertaken with a knowledge of and in relationship to the regional, national and global contexts.

Roles and Functions

1. An animator should facilitate the empowerment of those who are marginalized in the community.

2. An animator should facilitate the learning of individuals and groups within the church and community about community development and the church's participation in that process.

3. An animator should identify individuals and groups that can become part of a network of people who can be a resource and provide critical feedback to the animators' work. Animators have the responsibility to assist others with whom they work in developing a similar network of support and critique.

4. An animator should be available for personal support for the people with whom she or he works.

5. An animator should encourage leadership development within the church and community.

6. An animator should facilitate group or community building within church and community groups.

7. An animator should encourage the use of various media to promote the goals of the community development effort.

8. An animator should facilitate the process so the group or community takes on full leadership responsibility and the animator becomes less vital.

These principles, roles, and functions have important implications for the church, for community development, and for animators.

Implications

For the Church

The church may have little experience in community development, but it brings unique and valuable resources to the effort. The church can contribute to social change in a constructive manner, using a model of community development. In this study the continuation of the Project speaks well for the church's commitment to community development, especially at a time when the church was decreasing staff in other areas.

The church has a tremendous potential for greater involvement. There are 13 presbyteries in the Maritime region; each could facilitate local involvement, if the Project's model is continued. At present, half of those presbyteries have demonstrated a strong interest or are already active in social ministry projects. The institutional potential of the church's financial resources is small alongside the wealth of human resources that lies

within the people of the church. Many of these people have specific skills and interests that are potential assets to the community development process. Almost all of these people have the primary quality necessary--namely, a concern for their community's future.

If the church works in coalition with other community groups, this initiative will assist the church in examining the values it is promoting and practising. At the same time, working in coalition puts the church in a position whereby it may be criticized for its past action or inaction, or even its present effort. Hearing the church criticized may make some church members hesitant about participating. To weather these attacks requires strong and creative leadership. The challenge for the church is to prepare its leadership in the areas of adult education, popular education, community development, and social ministry.   The church will need to place more emphasis on trained and educated leadership if it is to improve substantially its work in this area of social change.

It is a challenge for the church to fully include socially and economically marginalized people within its membership and leadership. This process involves not a smooth sequential change, but requires a transformation of the church.

For Community Development

Many of the lessons learned in this study have applicability to other organizations, new to the field of community development. It is anticipated that organizations such as food banks and YMCAs can benefit and learn from this study and encourage greater involvement of their membership in the community development process.

The principles and processes of community development are compatible with the values and programmes promoted by mainline churches in Canada (i.e. United Church of Canada, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, and Lutheran). Those engaged in community development should be encouraged to look to the church for resources for their community organizing efforts.

Practitioners and writers in the community development field should raise their awareness about the church's work in this field and they should urge the church to contribute its resources to this effort. It would be helpful to the church and to community development activities if more research and analysis were undertaken about the roles the church can play--and those it should not play--in community development initiatives and process.

For Animators

The Economic Animation Project was built upon a model where I worked as animator in communities in which I was not

a resident. My entrance and invitation into the community was through the church. This allegiance gave me initial acceptance and creditability, but subsequently it was my responsibility to establish trusting relationships. Living in community members' homes, working on their farms, and piling lumber in their new houses provided me with opportunities to demonstrate my willingness to work alongside them and my interest in learning from them. The valuable knowledge I gained and the trusting relationships I developed with the people were vital to my becoming an effective animator in the group.

The animator who works with the church in community development activities needs to realize that the church is not homogenous in its support for the church's participation in community development. Although animators should encourage the church's participation at local and regional levels, they should not assume the church is committed fully. Similarly, people in the community need to feel confident amongst themselves as a group before they can be expected to enter into new relationships with people from the church. I found that I had to ensure that members of the community felt personally empowered before they could comfortably enter into new relationships as equals, instead of as people needing others to help them.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions and implications I make several recommendations. These are directed to the church and to animators.

For the Church

1. The church should make a long term commitment to more significant involvement in social change, particularly with community development.

2. The church should reexamine its priorities, internal structures and relationships with society in order to better enable it to participate in social change.

3. The church should put greater emphasis on developing its leadership in the areas of adult education, popular education, community development, and social ministry.

For Animators

The following recommendations are proposed specifically for animators who are working with the church in the community development process. I base these recommendations on my personal experiences with the Economic Animation Project and the literature in the related fields.

1. Share your religious faith and philosophy of life with others, and open yourself to be influenced by others engaged in the process of community development.

2. Keep a journal, as it provides an opportunity to build the action/reflection process into everyday personal

experience and helps to identify problems and responses early, when changes are easier.

3. Build trust and share leadership in community and church groups. This helps the group and the animator grow together and prevents burn-out.

4. Clarify for yourself, your employer, the church, and community members: with whom are you prepared to stand in solidarity? It is important to be clear about this before a confrontation, because during a confrontation there is usually not the time to think things through or sort out one's feelings.

5. Learn about the previous and present work by the church in community development.

6. Learn about the local neighbourhood culture and its religious expressions. Cultural change, spirituality, and community development are intimately connected.

7. Be humble. As an outsider animator, representing the church, power and privilege are part of the dominant culture. Avoid falling into an acceptance of this power and privilege.

8. Do not be laissez-faire in your leadership. As an animator, you have experience and resources that can save people time, reduce frustration, and make the community development process more rewarding for them and their communities.

9. Learn about and use the network that the church has available to social change and community development as a national and international institution.

10. Use participatory research methodology with church and community groups. It is valuable to secondary as well as primary change agents.

For many years the promotion of social change has been viewed as a low priority in the church. I believe the tide is turning in the Maritime Conference of the United Church and that positive change is underway. Whereas the oceans' tides are a natural phenomena, beyond the control of humanity, the changing tide of social ministry is dependent upon human participation. It is a cooperative effort with God. My wish is that this thesis may help change the tide of social ministry for the betterment of our communities and the church.

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